2026 GOLDEN PINE CONES

You picked them! Now, read all about the winners ... inside!

The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 112 No. 44 https://carmelpinecone.com Oct. 30-Nov. 5, 2026

TRUSTED BY LOCALS AND LOVED BY VISITORS SINCE 1915

Jerome's survives, but office complex destroyed

■ Carmel Valley fire devastating to many

By CHRIS COUNTS

WITH FLAMES and smoke billowing skyward behind it early Wednesday morning, Jerome's Carmel Valley Market appeared doomed. But thanks to light winds and a quick response by firefighters, the market escaped the blaze with almost no damage, while a two-story office complex behind it burned to the ground. At least four art studios and galleries next to Jerome's were also badly damaged, along with some offices, a tattoo parlor and a home. The fire erupted around 3 a.m.

"Looks like very black smoke coming out of the roof right about where Jerome's would be," one resident reported on Facebook shortly after the fire erupted. "This is just awful."

A woman who lives nearby described what she saw.

"I walked up Paso Hondo to Murphy's side gate," she said. "The fire hasn't spread widely to Murphy's, but the apartment complex by the Rombi Wines tasting room looks completely gone. There are quite a few people waiting it out on Center Street."

Other firsthand accounts indicated that at least five fire

See **FIRE** *page 30A*





PHOTOS/(LEFT) MIKE BUFFO, HOUSE OF 8 MEDIA, (ABOVE) DOUG STEAKLEY

A two-story office building in Carmel Valley Village (left) was destroyed in Wednesday's fire, while Jerome's Market (center right of photo) was left relatively unscathed. Rescue workers (above) survey the destruction.

Down to the wire for TOT increase

By MARY SCHLEY

THE FIGHT over a ballot measure that would increase the transient occupancy tax rate by 2 percentage points to 12% is drawing to a close, and proponents and opponents are doing their best to convince voters to take their sides. In the runup to Nov. 3, they've been peppering the city and surrounding areas with signs, writing passionate letters to the editor and sharing their positions with anyone who will listen.

Not surprisingly, the hotel industry and some other business owners have come out strongly against it — and raised more than $30,000 to bolster their campaign — while the full Carmel City Council and a highly active group of residents are stridently arguing in favor of the TOT increase, Measure M, as well as its sister ballot measure, N, which seeks to raise the local sales tax by .375%.

Big money

Combined, the city estimates they'll generate an additional $3.8 million for the general fund, and every council member voted to put them on the ballot.

The group that supports the taxes, Citizens for Carmel's Future, has raised more than $12,000 to fund its pro-M and pro-N campaigns, mostly from city residents, compared with the hotels that dominate the opposition's donations, according to forms filed with the California Fair Political

See **ELECTION** *page 24A*

Medi-Cal keeps the hits coming

■ Unnecessary surgeries, fraudulent prescriptions, hospice care for the healthy

PROSECUTORS ANNOUNCED yet more charges this week against alleged scammers accused of operating large health care fraud schemes in California and costing taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

Among those charged are two Southern California medical professionals who allegedly defrauded Medicare of $135 million through medically unnecessary arterial

Capitol Access

By CAITLIN CONRAD

procedures at two Los Angeles-based clinics. Another group of alleged fraudsters is charged with deceptively billing the government $138 million in three hospice schemes. Included in that group is a Los Angeles man who federal prosecutors say ran more than a dozen hospice facilities that collected $107 million in claims despite non-death discharge rates above 75% — and exceeding 90% at some sites. Such rates set off alarm bells, as hospice is designed for people on their deathbeds.

Swindlers on the loose

News from the Department of Justice that swindlers may have cheated state and federal governments out of money intended for those who truly need it has lost some of its shock value. Similar headlines about California-based cases have appeared throughout the year as federal officials crack down on healthcare fraud schemes. Some in our deep-blue state may even brush off the revelations as another way for the Trump administration to point fingers at California. But this month, the admonishments are also coming straight from Sacramento.

In a letter dated Oct. 15, California State Auditor Grant Parks warned the governor and legislative leaders that

See **FRAUD** *page 29A*

County rejects federal claim of 310 illegal voters

By KELLY NIX

MONTEREY COUNTY officials this week rejected a federal demand to help identify 310 people the government described as "likely aliens" on local voter rolls, calling the action an "assault on the integrity" of the county's elections. Officials also maintain there is no evidence that the people identified are unlawfully registered. However, in California, it's also true that nothing is done to verify the citizenship of voters.

'Hand over records'

On Oct. 23, two federal agents delivered a letter from U.S. Attorney Craig Missakian to Monterey County Registrar of Voters Gina Martinez. The letter said 310 people are unlawfully registered in the county and asked officials to segregate any ballots from those individuals until their citizenship could be verified.

"Within 48 hours, we ask that you commit to working with the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security to identify who on the accompanying list is a citizen and who is not," the three-page letter said.

Figures disputed

Missakian also asked Martinez to provide all records concerning the people on the list, including Social Security numbers, driver's licenses, voter registration applications and documents submitted or obtained during registration or licensing.

"This process will protect American citizens' votes while preventing noncitizens from participating in the federal election in violation of federal law," the letter said.

The DOJ also asked the county not to process any returned ballots from people on the list until their citizenship status could be determined.

On Tuesday, Monterey County officials rejected the

See **VOTERS** *page 28A*

ICE chastises sheriff's office for thwarting arrests

By KELLY NIX

U.S. IMMIGRATION officials this week condemned the Monterey County Sheriff's Office for "harboring" two people sought by federal agents who were released from the county jail in Salinas. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement accused local officials of "siding with criminals" after a Monterey County supervisor personally intervened as federal police waited to apprehend the men.

Early Tuesday evening, several agents in green tactical vests marked "Police ICE" waited outside the jail, hoping to detain two men the agency said have prior arrests for DUI, drug offenses and providing false identification to authorities.The federal agents were unable to arrest the men.

After learning Tuesday that ICE planned to detain them upon their release, the sheriff's office placed the jail on lockdown from 5 to 8 p.m. The lockdown halted inmate releases, new bookings and visits.

Cmdr. Andy Rosas said the lockdown was intended to

See **ICE** *page 25A*



SCREENSHOT FROM KSBW ACTION NEWS 8

On Tuesday, supervisor Wendy Askew (right) told an ICE officer outside the county jail that no inmates would be released who are "at risk" of being detained by the feds.

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Sandy Claws

By Lisa Crawford Watson

Love at first sight

For 10 years, life as she knew it meant coming home at the end of the day to her partner, their dog and their house in Monterey. Then, like in an alternate-reality movie, she woke up one morning in a cottage in Carmel, alone and without a dog.

"I could handle everything about the changes in my life except the absence of a dog," she said. "So I checked the Monterey SPCA county website to see if there might be one who needed to go for a walk. Not a Rottweiler, German shepherd or Doberman, but something I could handle."

There, staring back at her from the screen, was "Teddy Bear," a sturdy little French bulldog clearly mixed with something — perhaps some pug, maybe some Boston terrier? Add in a bit of English bulldog, and this was Teddy Bear.

She had just separated from a Boston terrier.

"The SPCA said they'd put him on hold, so I could come walk him," she said. "I arrived with my mom, saw that big, soft face and eyes that could broker world peace, and said, 'Yeah, we're not leaving without you.'"

Someone said he was so ugly, he was cute. It's all a matter of perspective, his person said.

The only problem was that she'd moved with her elderly mother into a two-bedroom apartment behind



Bruno's Market, which didn't allow dogs. So she called her therapist and said that, as a caregiver for a person with Alzheimer's, she needed a letter confirming Teddy Bear as an emotional support dog.

"Two hours later, Teddy Bear was in my car," she said, "heading home. I need him, and he gets that."

Teddy, now 2, has become a fan of the water. Although he's been to Carmel Beach, he and his person are partial to the paths at Asilomar.

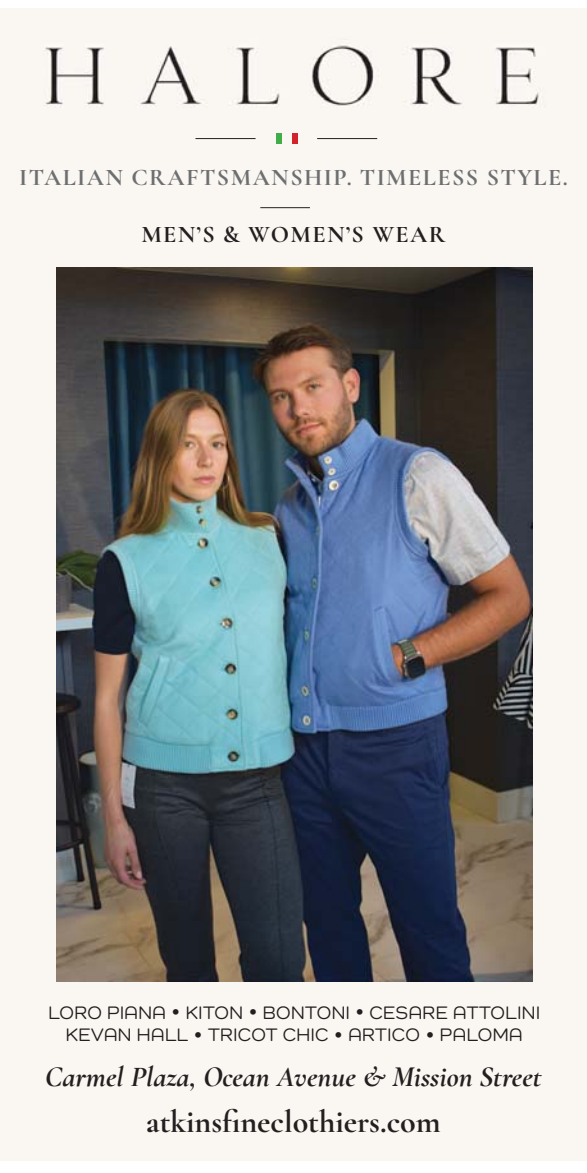
















Desal to cost as much as $825 million, utility says

By KELLY NIX

California American Water now estimates its proposed desalination plant will cost about $825 million, but the utility says a "low-cost financing framework" would reduce the long-term impact on Peninsula water bills by nearly $600 million.

The company, which announced the estimate in an Oct. 23 press release, has long argued that its desalination plant is the only drought-proof water-supply option for the Monterey Peninsula. The new estimate is more than double the $329 million figure Cal Am provided as recently as 2019.

The privately owned utility attributed the increase to a lengthy approval and permitting process, legal expenses and the resulting construction delays.

"These delays have exposed the project to labor and construction material cost escalations, as well as significant legal expense, resulting in a total construction estimate of $825 million," Cal Am said. "We understand that this estimate may be concerning, and we want customers to know that affordability is central to our approach."

Cal Am submitted an application to the California Public Utilities Commission, which approved the project in 2018, to update the cost estimate. The filing also proposes a financing plan and a method for addressing project costs in customer rates.

Cal Am estimates that the lower-cost financing measures in its application would reduce the impact on customers by $588 million.

The utility said it would seek low-interest state loans, a Department of Water Resources grant and more than $500 million in secured bonds, which carry lower interest rates. The company also proposed additional savings for low-income customers.

"We recognize that any increase in a water bill can be difficult, especially for households already managing tight budgets," the company said. "To provide additional support, California American Water has requested an increase in our customer assistance discount to 50% for essential water use in 2027."

Monthly rate increases for low-income customers would also be capped at $10.

The desalination plant is one of three components of the Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project. The other two are aquifer storage and recovery and Pure Water Monterey, a wastewater-recycling project.

'Water deficit'

The Monterey Peninsula Water Management District contends that the expanded Pure Water Monterey project, which supplies more than 60% of the Peninsula's drinking water, is sufficient to meet the region's long-term needs.

Cal Am counters that California Public Utilities Commission-approved environmental planning documents and supply-and-demand estimates show the Peninsula will face a water deficit by 2050, and that desalination is the best way to address the region's long-standing water-supply problems.

"Our analysis indicates that if a drought hits, the Peninsula could experience a supply shortage within three years," Cal Am said in the press release.

LandWatch Monterey County criticized Cal Am's revised estimate. "In 2018, the commission approved a 6.4 million-gallon-a-day plant for $239 million. Cal Am now wants $825 million for 4.8 million gallons a day — four and a half times the per-gallon price ratepayers were promised," LandWatch Director Michael DeLapa said.

CUSD GOVERNING BOARD | TRUSTEE AREA 2

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Council Meetings	Pushed for fewer meetings	Fought for a schedule that complies with the City Charter
Council Pay	Led the effort to increase Council pay	Authored a referendum that gave voters the final say on the pay raise
Election Costs	Supported a costly special election for the pay increase	Fought for a regularly scheduled November vote with negligible cost
Council Benefits	Supported taxpayer-funded medical benefits for elected officials	Authored a City Charter amendment requiring voter approval for City Council pay raises and new benefits

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Police & Sheriff's Log

The doorknob was on the floor

HERE'S A look at some of the significant calls logged by the police departments of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Pacific Grove, Monterey, Seaside and Marina. This week's log was compiled by Mary Schley.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11

Monterey: A 57-year-old man was arrested at Washington and East Franklin streets for driving on a suspended license.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Suspicious circumstances at Monte Verde Street and Ocean Avenue.

Pacific Grove: Report of a civil issue near the 2700 block of Ransford Avenue. The reporting party wanted officers to document the incident. Information only.

Monterey: A 21-year-old woman was arrested on Del Monte Avenue for probation violation and driving on a suspended license.

Monterey: A 26-year-old man was arrested at Camino El Estero and Anthony Street for driving under the influence of alcohol, driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08% or greater, and driving while his license was suspended or revoked for DUI.

Monterey: Passing a completed check or other instrument with intent to defraud reported at Fisherman's Wharf.

Monterey: Shoplifting reported on Fremont Street.

Monterey: Camp abatement on Figueroa Street.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Monterey: Overdose reported on Del Monte Avenue.

Monterey: Offensive words in a public place reported on Fremont Street.

See **POLICE LOG** *page 51A*



The gavel falls

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

Sept. 25 — Judge Jennifer O'Keefe sentenced Monterey resident Tessa Knight, 26, to six years in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation after Knight admitted to one count of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated. The charge constitutes one strike under California's three-strikes law.

Shortly before midnight Oct. 8, 2023, California Highway Patrol officers were dispatched to a reported head-on collision between a Mazda SUV and a Subaru sedan on Highway 1 near the State Route 183 exit in Castroville. Highway 1 has one lane in each direction at that location. Officers found the vehicles disabled on the northbound and southbound shoulders, both with significant front-end damage. Both drivers were trapped inside their vehicles.

CHP identified the Subaru's driver as Keenan Jackson. Jackson was unresponsive and died despite paramedics' efforts. Paramedics were treating the Mazda's driver, identified as Knight, when Officer Peter Todd noticed signs of alcohol intoxication. Before Knight was transported to the hospital, Todd conducted a brief DUI investigation and determined that she was under the influence of alcohol.

A subsequent forensic analysis of Knight's blood by the California Department of Justice found that her blood-alcohol concentration was approximately 0.19%, more than twice the legal limit. A motorist who witnessed the crash told officers that Knight had sped around her and into the oncoming lane

See **GAVEL** *page 50A*



Some exclusions apply. See a sales associate for more details. Financing available upon approval.

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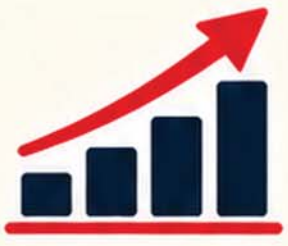
VOTE NO ON MISGUIDED MEASURE M



It's a tax we don't need and a risk we can't afford.

1 PROVE IT'S NEEDED FIRST

Hold off on any hotel tax increase until the City proves that additional taxes are even needed – hotel taxes are increasing far more than the estimates the City based Misguided Measure M on.



2 GO AFTER NON-PAYERS

Go after other groups who, unlike hotels, haven't been paying their fair share, like short term rentals and on-line booking agencies, where estimated unpaid taxes total hundreds of thousands of dollars per year!



3 REQUIRE REAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Tie any new hotel tax increase in the future to a legally binding requirement to spend only on deferred capital maintenance. Don't accept unenforceable political promises, demand real life proof that the City will put its money where its mouth is!



4 MAKE IT TEMPORARY NOT PERMANENT

Rather than put a permanent, "forever" tax on the ballot, limit the term of any tax to the period the City claims to need additional "make-up" payments – like 10 years in this case!



At the end of the day, after you have taken a critical look at the pros and cons, ask yourself one final question before you vote:

WHAT WOULD CLINT DO?

Paid for by Citizens Against Carmel Hotel Tax Increase Committee - FPPC#1494630

Vote Yes! on Measure N

Carmel City Council's statement as published in the County of Monterey Voter Guide for the November 3, 2026 General Election:

Measure N presents Carmel voters with an important choice:

keep local sales tax revenue in Carmel or risk having Monterey County or another regional agency claim it instead.

The total sales tax in Carmel-by-the-Sea is 9.25%, but only a fraction comes to the city. State law has long capped the locally controlled portion of the sales tax rate, but Carmel now has an opportunity to increase its 1.50% local share by 0.375%, to 1.875%. Because this recently identified 0.375% is also available to other government entities, Measure N presents a "use it or lose it" opportunity. If Carmel does not act first, Monterey County or another regional agency could permanently divert these locally generated tax dollars away from Carmel.

In a tourist destination like ours, a substantial portion of sales tax is paid by visitors shopping and dining locally. Approving Measure N would ask them to contribute a little more to help improve our village. It would add just 19 cents to a $50 restaurant bill while generating approximately $1.9 million in annual revenue for the city. Most food purchased in grocery stores is tax-exempt.

Approving Measure N would help fund long-overdue investments in critical infrastructure. Our infrastructure is old, deteriorating, and in need of immediate repair. The City Council estimates the cost to address this deferred maintenance in streets, sidewalks, facilities, stormwater management, beach hardening, and erosion control at over $100 million. Addressing this challenge is urgent.

Before asking voters for this additional revenue, the City Council made difficult choices to limit operational spending, reallocating millions of dollars toward rehabilitating our aging infrastructure. But those efforts alone are not enough. **We simply need more revenue to address these critical infrastructure needs and other city needs.**

Keep these local dollars in Carmel. VOTE Yes! on N

Endorsed by all members of Carmel's City Council acting as individuals:

Dale Byrne, Mayor
Hans Buder, Councilmember
Allissandra Dramov, Councilmember
Jeff Baron, Councilmember
Bob Delves, Councilmember

supportcarmelsfuture.org Paid for by Citizens for Carmel's Future · FPPC #1493807

CHOMP nurses rally over staffing and 'workplace violence'

By KELLY NIX

REGISTERED NURSES at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula gathered outside the hospital Monday to call for action regarding "staffing shortages, patient safety and workplace violence."

"Short staffing throughout the hospital can be very hard on patients, and they can become agitated and act out," said Oscar Sandoval, a nurse in CHOMP's emergency department. "When things escalate, it's nurses who get kicked, hit or spit on."

The rally was organized by National Nurses United and the California Nurses Association, which represents more than 750 registered nurses at the hospital.

Nurses union spokeswoman Rachel Berger told The Pine Cone that employees are seeking stronger protections for nurses in contract negotiations.

"CHOMP is like every other hospital in that workplace violence is commonplace," Berger said. "It can take the form of verbal aggression, pinching, shoving, hitting or much more."

The unions are seeking additional weapons-detection systems at hospital entrances, hands-on de-escalation training and a committee to identify vulnerabilities at the facility.

"One thing is that the reporting of violence has not been consistent at CHOMP, and you can't come up with adequate responses if you don't understand the scope of the problem," Berger said.

Mindy Maschmeyer, director of marketing and communications for Montage Health, CHOMP's parent company, said the hospital takes employee safety seriously.

'Care deeply'

"For many years, we have maintained a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program that includes training, technology, security measures, reporting and response processes, and ongoing review of incidents and trends," Maschmeyer told The Pine Cone. "We continually evaluate and strengthen these efforts because we

See **NURSES** *page 20A*

PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICE IN GREENFIELD

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

THE MONTEREY County Public Defender's Office is opening an office in Greenfield.

The office, located in the Greenfield City Council chambers at 599 El Camino Real, marks an important step toward "expanding access to justice and strengthening services for South Monterey County residents," the public defender's office said.

As staffing and operational details are finalized, the office anticipates offering on-site services one day per week, with additional availability by appointment.

The public defender's office provides free legal representation to eligible individuals in criminal matters and certain limited civil proceedings.

"Recognizing that South County residents often face limited access to legal and supportive services, the office is committed to helping bridge this gap by establishing a greater presence in the community," the office said.



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Paid for by: ALISSANDRA DRAMOV FOR CARMEL CITY COUNCIL 2026
P.O. BOX 6046 CARMEL, CA 93921 F.P.P.C. ID # 1496265

Dear fellow Carmelites,

As the election campaign draws to a close I would like to thank you for the courtesy and warmth you have shared with me.

I have had the opportunity to meet with many of you as I campaigned outside the post office, at the beach, while walking through town, before and after various city meetings and events and at coffee chats with neighbors.

Although I have lived in Carmel-by-the-Sea most of my life, these were places where I saw familiar faces, met new voters, re-connected with those I hadn't seen in a while and even made new friends.

I have often said that what I liked and learned about working in television news is that it's a team effort. Each person plays a role for the news broadcast to come together as a whole.

Working on Carmel-by-the-Sea's City Council is a similar effort—it's not about any one of us—it's what we bring together to get to a majority vote and ideally to get to an unanimous vote.

Serving on our city council is a team effort, too. I am very proud of the work we've done these past two years, and it's all five of us together who have been a remarkable team.

We have made thoughtful, responsible, reasonable and respectful decisions. We have worked hard to tackle long overdue issues including our budget and our city's deferred maintenance and to find practical solutions.

I bring a straightforward, common sense viewpoint and approach.

Above all I have and will always strive to continue to make decisions for what's in Carmel's best interest.

Carmel-by-the-Sea has been my home for most of my life. It is an honor to serve our community and I would like to continue to serve as there is much more work ahead to be done.

Thank you for your support and I ask for your vote on November 3rd!

Sincerely,

Allissandra



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Mayor (1992-2000)



Sue McCloud
Mayor (2000-2012)



Dave Potter
Mayor (2018-2024)

"Having served as mayors of Carmel-by-the-Sea, we know what it takes to do the job well. Hans Buder works hard, listens to residents, and brings people together. *He's the clear choice, and he'll make an outstanding mayor.*"

Join your neighbors in supporting Hans for Mayor

Former U.S. Representative
Sam Farr

Former Monterey County Supervisor
Mary Adams

Former Carmel Mayors
Sue McCloud
Dave Potter
Ken White

Former Carmel City Council Members
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Michelle Sours
John Stelnicki
Susie Stelnicki
Maria Sutherland
Mark Tanous
Megan Terry
Randy Tunnell
Tim Twomey
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Chris Wagner
Diana Wahler
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Sherry Williams
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Paid for by Hans Buder for Carmel Mayor 2026. FPPC #1490162

Feds investigate MoCo school district

By CHRIS COUNTS

THE NORTH Monterey County Unified School District is one of three California school districts the U.S. Department of Education is investigating for allegedly coercing students to reveal intimate details about themselves and their families without parental consent or knowledge.

"The investigations will determine whether the districts violated the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, which requires schools to notify parents and obtain their written consent before surveying students on topics that would reveal protected information," the federal agency announced.

The questionnaires, which the agency described as "invasive," probed students for details about "their sexual orientations, gender identities, mental and physical health conditions, family economic status, race and more." Students were also asked to assess their "privilege status."

Federal official Frank Miller said education leaders in California "must stop undermining parental rights."

"Schools in California seem to be collecting a myriad of protected and private information on students without involving parents, raising serious concerns that they deliberately keep parents in the dark about the most sensitive information pertaining to their children," said Miller, director of the Student Privacy Policy Office. "Students should not be pressured into identifying intimate details about themselves and their families without parental awareness and consent."

Ethnic studies

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the three school districts require students to participate in activities designed to assess their "power and privilege" and "map their identities" as part of required ethnic studies curricula.

The department also alleges that the districts "were not responsive to requests to review the ethnic studies curriculum or

See **PRIVACY** *page 28A*

Spa worker accused of sexual assault

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

A MASSEUSE at a Monterey spa was arrested Sunday afternoon for sexually assaulting a customer, according to MPD Lt. Ethan Andrews, and police are looking for other potential victims.

On Oct. 25 at 12:34 p.m., officers responded to GG's Spa and Salon on Calle Principal after a woman there called Monterey P.D. and said she'd been raped. "The victim reported that during a massage, an employee sexually assaulted her, and she immediately confronted him and called the police," Andrews said.

The worker, identified as 46-year-old Shengfeng Wang of Monterey, left before officers arrived, but they found him about an hour later in the 200 block of Dela Vina Avenue and arrested him without incident, according to Andrews.

He was booked into Monterey County Jail on a felony charge for forcible penetration with a foreign object on a victim who was unaware due to misrepresentation. He remained in custody this week on $100,000 bail.

Andrews said the case remains under investigation and asked anyone who might have relevant information to contact him at (831) 646-3822 or leave an anonymous tip at (831) 646-3840.

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★ Elect ★
Dan Miller
for
School Board

★ ELECTION ALERT ★

As everyone has now received their sample ballots and questions are coming in to me I thought I should address some of them for all of you. First of all a little background. I am running for the office of trustee for district one in the Pacific Grove Unified School District. I have lived in Pacific Grove my entire life. I attended Forest Grove School, Pacific Grove Junior High (now the Middle School) and Graduated from Pacific Grove High School. Two of my children currently attend Pacific Grove Schools. My mother worked for Pacific Grove Schools, as an elementary school secretary, for over 35 years so my knowledge and experience is wide ranging.

The issues facing the district are many. I'll address five of the most important:

1) District elections: **You can now only vote for one of the five representatives to the board. Two districts have people running unopposed. You deserve to be able to vote for all five representatives and district elections need to be reversed.**

2) Bonds and financing: **The district is now over $100 million dollars in debt! When you vote for a bond of fifty million dollars another fifty million will go to interest. We need to pay as we go not waste half the money generated on nothing.**

3) School Resource Officer: **Having someone on campus, with a gun, isn't a bad thing unless its not a police officer. The current board was misguided in getting rid of the school resource officer, a trained police person, who carries a gun.**

4) Teaching trades and skills: **The High School used to have an auto shop and wood shop. We used to have a program that allowed students to do hands on learning and to build a house from the ground up. These programs need to return.**

5) Judicious Expenditures: **There were 1,450 students at the high school when I attended. Now there are 550. Taxes and revenue for the schools go up every year. But we have built more and more buildings to serve less and less students and have gone farther and farther in debt. This needs to stop now!**

Historical knowledge is important. It gives context to many decisions and it is currently lacking on the school board. In talking to one of my opponents about the advent of district elections he asked "when did they happen." The answer? Four years ago. I bring historical knowledge and insight that I believe is a valuable asset. I will never accept any compensation to serve as your representative on the school board.

If you have any questions please email me at danmiller39@comcast.net.

Paid for by Dan Miller For School Board

Burned landmark sold

By CHRIS COUNTS

A SMALL parcel of land that was once home to one of Carmel Valley's most historic buildings has been sold to a neighbor, Trafton Chandler. According to Angolee Bode of Compass Real Estate, it sold for its asking price of $125,000. The site is at Carmel Valley and Robinson Canyon roads, next to the Farm Center.

"This property stands as a landmark of local heritage," Bode said. "For over a century, it was the site of the historic Carmelo Athletic and Social Club. Originally built in 1895, the club served as a cherished gathering space and the beating heart of the community for generations before it was tragically lost to a fire in February 2025. While the original structure is gone, the spirit of the land remains."

Chandler told The Pine Cone that it's too early to say exactly what he will do with the property, which measures just 0.3 acres, but suggested any development would be minimal.

'Open to ideas'

"For now, it's going to sit there," he said. "I'm not going to disturb it with winter coming. I don't know what I could get through the county. I'm going to have to get creative or not do much at all — I'm open to ideas."

The longtime local resident, who lives nearby, said he is sentimental about the property.

"I grew up with that building," he recalled. "I wish I could replace what was there."

Chandler noted that his late father played a key role in the development of nearby Carmel Valley Ranch. "I would want to do something with the property that he would be proud of," he added.

See **LANDMARK** *page 20A*

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Supes hear horror stories about roosters, pass tougher rules

By CHRIS COUNTS

AFTER LISTENING to residents share reports of sleepless nights living next to rooster operations in unincorporated areas, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday to approve tougher rules for people who raise the birds. Roosters crow loudly at all hours and are often raised for illegal cockfighting.

"I haven't been able to get a good night's sleep for a year," testified a woman who identified herself only as "G.G." "The toll on our mental health has gone far beyond frustration. We can't comfortably open our windows and enjoy our backyards. The unbearable odor only adds to our distress."

Cindy Slade of Aromas told supervisors that she has a neighbor with 30 cages of roosters. A second neighbor has also added roosters, and now, she said, the birds "compete against each other" in crowing contests.

"The noise spreads all over the neighborhood," Slade

See **ROOSTERS** *page 20A*

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A nearly 40-year industry veteran and NAR Hall of Fame inductee, Jeff's is known for building agent-first cultures rooted in mentorship and **g**rowth.
Our local team is thrilled to have his leadership.

Welcome to Carmel, Jeff!



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- Monterey Bay Action Committee
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- Monterey County Democrats
- PG Progressives
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CynthiaGarfieldDistrict1.net

Garfield for Council 2026 FPPC#1492380

‘Harmony Habitat’ the next pickleball?

By MARY SCHLEY

A SIGN that the Great Pickleball Feuds of 2025 left the Carmel Forest and Beach Commission feeling a little snakebit: The prospect of installing a few artsy metal musical instruments for kids to play with in Forest Hill Park is causing more than a bit of angst. Commissioners are set to vote on a project proposed by a group of young businesspeople, “Harmony Habitat — An Outdoor Music Garden for Carmel,” next month, and proponents are trying to rally support.

The project is spearheaded by Leadership Carmel, the annual chamber of commerce program that seeks to develop and inspire “community-minded business and civic leaders through service and professional growth” by having them develop, collaborate on and implement a “legacy project.” The 2024 class overhauled a seating area on the Scenic Road pathway to better accommodate people with disabilities, for example.

Common interest

The 2026 class members said their concept grew from common interests in youth, music and the outdoors. Harmony Habitat would be a way of getting kids outdoors and upholding “the cultural and creative heartbeat of our village,” they said in materials presented to the forest and beach commission in May. The group committed to raising $30,000 to purchase and install a “botanical garden ensemble” of seven “beautiful, weather-resistant, sculptural instruments designed for collaborative, all-ages play.” Their designs include metal flowers, mushrooms, trees, butterflies and the like.

The group subsequently temporarily installed one instrument, a flower, in the park to measure sound levels, and they visited a similar setup at a Monterey school, as did members of the forest and beach commission.

At the August meeting, four Leadership Carmel members took turns speaking during a nearly hour-long conversation with commissioners as they tried to assuage fears regarding potential noise impacts and attempted to convince them that Forest Hill Park — not private property or somewhere outside the city — is the best place for their project.

Among their offers were spacing the instruments out rather than having them clustered together and using coatings and other measures to deaden the sound a bit. They also said they plan to establish a fund to cover ongoing maintenance costs.

“It was a little bit concerning to have them all right next to each other,” commission chair Tamara Michie told the women at the Aug. 20 meeting after playing the

See **HARMONY** *page 24A*



PHOTO/LEADERSHIP CARMEL

This metal flower and others like it are meant to inspire artistic musical play in children.



Vote for ASSEMBLYMEMBER

DAWN ADDIS

“It’s my honor to represent the entire Monterey County Coast in the State Assembly. ***I hope to earn your vote and continue serving these special communities.”***

—Dawn



DAWN ADDIS is a public school teacher, mom, and former city councilmember who has served in the State Assembly since 2022.

Paid for by Dawn Addis for Assembly 2026

DawnAddis.org

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- Monterey Peninsula Taxpayers Association
- Monterey Commercial Property Owners Association
- Monterey Firefighters Local #3707

SIDEWALK REPAIR SUPPORT

The City Council voted 5-0 to direct staff to create a program assisting property owners with sidewalk repairs.

Under Measure S guidelines, the City will repair minor residential sidewalk damage and share the cost of major and severe residential sidewalk repairs through a new program.

Paid for by the Committee for Yes on Measure S FPPC# 1495795

Traffic solution planned for Marina

By LILY PATTERSON

ROUNDABOUTS REDUCE traffic congestion and the number and severity of car crashes, so despite a lukewarm public response to the proposed loop at Del Monte Boulevard and Reservation Road, the Marina City Council approved the project, estimated to cost $4.5 million, as the first major step toward the city's long-discussed downtown revitalization plan.

To help develop that plan — a 20-year vision for "a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly urban core with mixed-use buildings, retail and office space and new housing" along the Del Monte and Reservation corridors — the city conducted community outreach consisting of an online survey and a public workshop. Between March and June, 231 responses were received online, where opinions were split on roundabouts as a solution to improve traffic flow, pedestrian and bicycle safety in the area, with most concerned about the potential for driver confusion. The majority of the 52 residents who attended the in-person session were opposed to the traffic circle in favor of improving the current signalized intersection, according to the city's report.

Council banks on fewer crashes, less congestion

Fewer collisions

But traffic safety data trumped public opinion when, in June, the council directed city staff to begin designing a roundabout. On Oct. 6, City Engineer Scott Shepard appeared before the council to present the final layout.

To make the case for it, Marina Police Chief Randy Hopkins shared data about a similar roundabout at Beach Road and Del Monte Boulevard.

Since its completion in 2017, "the kind of collision has changed. Before the roundabout, the crashes were right-angle, two-vehicle crashes caused by stop sign violations. Some of those resulted in injuries, including a pedestrian and a bicyclist," Hopkins informed the council.

"In the last three years, there were no right-angle crashes, no injuries, and no fatalities. Nearly all were single-vehicle crashes into fixed objects, and most of those involved impaired drivers at night," the police chief said.

Millions in accidents

At the Del Monte Boulevard and Reservation Road intersection, 11 crashes have occurred since 2023. Half of those accidents were the result of stoplight violations or unsafe turning, according to police data, with two significant collisions resulting in multiple persons injured.

The cost of those accidents is considerable, according to the Federal Highway Administration, which estimates that incidents at the Del Monte/Reservation junction have had an economic impact of $6.7 million over a recent 10-year period.

Based on another study that identified the spot as a "high collision intersection," the Transportation Agency for Monterey County awarded Marina $1.7 million for the project in 2023. The agency recently approved a one-year extension on the funds for the delayed infrastructure, which will include a second phase of landscaping and other "significant improvements" to the medians along Del Monte Boulevard, according to the city.

The city initially budgeted capital funds of $1,857,500 for the project, which is expected to cost $4.5 million. During the public comment period, mayoral candidate Ana Luz Acevedo-Cabrera wondered what

See **ROUNDABOUT** *page 23A*

"Instead of raising the hotel tax rate, our City Council established the Carmel Hospitality Improvement District in 2012, and the financial results for the City have been exceptional!

Hotel tax payments to the City have grown from $4M to $10M per year since then – an increase of over $6M!

Working in partnership with our hotels to revive Carmel's then-stagnant hospitality community is one of the proudest achievements in my two terms as Mayor."

Jason Burnett, Former Mayor, Carmel-by-the-Sea.

Why does the current City Council keep ignoring the City's own prominent role in creating the CHID and denying the tremendous financial benefits reaped by the City from the 2% assessment?

Paid for by the Carmel Innkeepers Association.

Who I Am

A LIFELONG COMMITMENT
TO OUR COMMUNITY

Carmel City Councilmember
2016 – 2024.

Mayor Pro Tem
2018 – 2024.

ACC Commissioner
2014 – 2016.

Carmel Chamber of Commerce Board Member
2012 – 2016.

Carmel Residents Association Board Member
2024 – 2026.

My Plan for Carmel

PRESERVE. PLAN. PREPARE. TOGETHER.

Bring People Together
Work with residents, businesses, community organizations, and neighboring cities to get things done.

Explore Revenue Solutions
Be creative and pursue state, federal, and private funding. Find solutions, not just taxation.

Keep Our Community Safe
Support our police, fire, VIPS, CERT, and the resources they need.

Protect Our Beaches and Shoreline
Pursue grants and partnerships for beach preservation, shoreline protection, and coastal improvements.

Support Local Businesses
Show up, welcome new businesses, and make City Hall a responsive partner.

Over the past few months, I've shared who I am, why I'm running, what I hope to accomplish, and how I will serve.

Now I'd like to take a moment to say thank you.

Let's Go Carmel!



To the residents of Carmel
for the opportunity to serve this special community.

To our Carmel city staff, police, and fire
for their dedication and hard work.

To our dedicated VIPS and CERT volunteers
for helping keep our community safe.

To the countless community volunteers
who give their time and talents to care for our village—from our beaches and forests to our gardens, streets, and so many other important projects.

To the generous supporters
who have helped me throughout my campaign.

Bobby Richards

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA CITY COUNCIL

EXPERIENCED
INDEPENDENT
COMMUNITY DRIVEN

PAID FOR BY BOBBY RICHARDS FOR CITY COUNCIL

Council to consider AI policy, fire defense plan and police station architect

By MARY SCHLEY

WILDFIRE PROTECTION, artificial intelligence and new sidewalks for the Pine Inn are on the Carmel City Council's agendas for Nov. 2-3. After Monday's meeting, city hall will welcome residents, candidates and others for its traditional Election Day party at 7:30 p.m.

Monday's meeting will begin at 3 p.m. with approval of the consent calendar, which includes routine items such as monthly reports, minutes, the check register and free-use days at Sunset Center for the Carmel Unified School District. It also includes a lease for the Carmel Youth Center for library use during the Harrison Memorial Library remodel. A previous contract with the Church of the Wayfarer fell through because of the extent of the required tenant improvements.

Councilmembers will then consider the Pine Inn's proposal to replace the sidewalks surrounding its block-size hotel and retail complex, bounded by Ocean, Monte Verde, Sixth and Lincoln avenues, with pavers. Owner Richard Gunner has committed to paying the full cost, and recently appointed planning director Andrew Myrick is recommending approval, as did the planning commission.

The council will also weigh in on the 42-page fire defense plan drafted by the city's wildfire prevention committee, followed by a draft policy governing city employees' use of AI.

After the open meeting, the council will meet in closed session for labor negotiations.

The next day's meeting, scheduled to begin at 4:30 p.m., will open with two presentations and a resolution honoring artist Jo Mora.

There is one item on that day's consent agenda: the second reading and adoption of an ordinance amending the Carmel Municipal Code to implement programs in the housing element, "to remove constraints to the development of housing and comply with state housing law."

Police station

An update on the nearly decade-long effort to upgrade the Junipero Avenue police station will follow. The project has since expanded to include adjacent public works facilities. The report will include upcoming contract negotiations with another architectural firm.

Previous architects hired to work on the project include Kasavan, as well as Wald, Ruhnke & Dost and Indigo, which brought on local firm Studio Schicketanz as a subconsultant. For the latest effort, a committee of Councilmembers Jeff Baron and Alissandra Dramov and city staff reviewed proposals from eight firms, further vetted four finalists and is recommending 19six Architects, which has 10 offices throughout California.

Next, councilmembers will vote on a resolution adopting a compensation and benefits plan for at-will employees. They initially approved the plan in September, then delayed final approval at this month's meeting after raising additional questions.

They will wrap up with a closed-session conference

See **AGENDA** *page 29A*



VICKI NOHRDEN
MONTEREY CITY COUNCIL
DISTRICT 2
Fiscal Responsibility
Public Safety ★ Economic Vitality

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Nov. 3

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Lou Panetta – Past Pres. – Civil Grand Jurors' Assoc.
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Carol Chorbajian – Measure S oversight
Joe and Richard Storeli
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Sal & Rena Tringali
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Angelo Shake
Carina Powers

"I endorse Vicki Nohrden for the City Council. She thinks and acts for the community and for all neighborhoods. Monterey needs Vicki's wisdom, experience, and leadership. Join me in supporting Vicki for Monterey - District 2 City Council!" – Ed Smith, Monterey City Council

- **Monterey deserves experienced leadership that listens to residents and puts our community's needs first.**
- **I have ideas for actions to improve economic vitality.**
- **I believe in accountable government, safeguarding Monterey's history, and quality of life.**

Vicki MONTEREY CITY COUNCIL vicki4monterey.org

VOTE VICKI NOHRDEN
DISTRICT 2 ▪ NOVEMBER 3, 2026
vicki4monterey.org

Paid for by the committee to Elect Vicki Nohrden FPPC #1492098



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Carmel update of 1769 British political cartoon condemning over-taxation of the American colonies.

Paid for by Citizens Against Carmel Hotel Tax Increase Committee - FPPC#1494630

State Parks supervisor saves woman

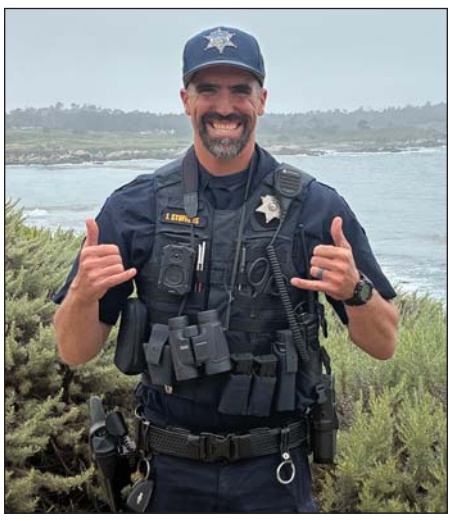
By MARY SCHLEY

AN OFF-DUTY California State Parks supervisor making a late-night trip home from training in Southern California rescued an unconscious woman from a burning car on Highway 1 near Carpenter Street shortly after midnight Oct. 9. Had Joe Stoffers not happened upon the Jeep, the 73-year-old Carmel-by-the-Sea resident might have burned to death inside.

"It was about 12:15 a.m., and I was on my way home from our advanced officer training in the Riverside area," recalled Stoffers, who lives in State Parks housing near Monastery Beach. "I was off duty but in my work truck with 'out of service' posted on the side."

As he approached the top of Carmel Hill, he saw "a vehicle that was sideways in the slow lane, and the engine compartment was fully in flames."

"I didn't really understand what I was seeing," he said. Stoffers immediately pulled over and radioed dispatch. When he didn't get a response right away, he knew he couldn't linger and had to see if anyone was in the SUV.



PHOTO/COURTESY JOE STOFFERS

State Parks officer Joe Stoffers stopped to pull an unconscious woman from a burning car.

Fully engulfed

He ran over, ripped open a back door and found it empty. When he got to the front, though, he saw an unconscious woman in the driver's seat. "I opened the door and unbuckled her and pulled her out of the car and down the highway away from the fire," he said. Stoffers ran back to his truck, successfully called in the emergency and grabbed the medical gear he always carries as a State Parks officer.

By that time, "most of the cabin was fully engulfed," he said. "I went back and pulled her a little farther away from the car," since it could explode.

Around that time, a doctor who was leaving a shift at Community Hospital "pulled over and helped me carry her down the highway farther away," Stoffers said, and together, they provided aid, including using oxygen to assist her breathing, until ambulance and fire crews arrived and took over.

"I know she survived to the hospital, but I don't know what happened after that," he said. "She was not in good shape."

California Highway Patrol public information officer Ryan Moore said the woman had been driving southbound when, for unknown reasons, she lost control of the Jeep, which hit a mile marker and then a tree before bursting into flames. She was taken to the trauma center at Natividad Medical Center, but Moore said he has not received any updates on her condition.

Stoffers, a 2003 Carmel High School graduate, has been working with State Parks since 2004.

"I started lifeguarding right out of high school and fell in love with it," he said. The job had him in the Sonoma and Mendocino areas for 15 years, but he moved back to the Peninsula about a year and a half ago. He also supervises the Monterey Junior Lifeguard program.

TA

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KEVIN HANLEY FOR COUNCIL



Passive vs. Pro-Active, Nonpartisan Leadership for Pacific Grove

	Cynthia Garfield	Kevin Hanley
Council Pay	▪ Voted to give herself and council colleagues a **130% pay increase** without a vote of the people. 1,800 PG voters signed a petition to stop the large pay increase. ▪ Voted to spend $141,000 of taxpayer funds to a political firm to craft tax raising campaigns that could help fund higher council pay. ▪ Then voted again to further pursue the pay increase wasting $63,000 of our taxpayer dollars for a **135% pay increase** by putting the failed Measure C on a special election in June, hoping for a low voter turnout.	▪ **Opposed the pay increase.** ▪ **Led the effort to oppose Measure C, co-authoring the opposition statement in the ballot materials to the 135% pay increase, which was decisively defeated by PG voters.** ▪ **Helped collect signatures for a Charter Amendment for the November 2028 ballot that would require any increase in council compensation be approved by PG voters in a general election.**
Unbalanced Budget	▪ Voted to adopt an unbalanced two-year budget that dipped into dwindling reserves. ▪ **No plan** for balancing the budget.	▪ **Proposed annual Budgets; workshops to identify possible savings & a Performance-Based Budget measuring service levels, a bottom-line that empowers the elected officials & public.**
Eroding Beach Path on Ocean View Blvd	▪ **No plan.**	▪ **Urged the council to end their multi-year neglect of the eroding beach path and work with the Coastal Commission, state legislators and others to fund and construct permanent structures to ensure our treasured beach path is preserved for future generations.**
George Washington Park Fire Risk	▪ Supported a partial effort to remove some dead trees and dry grasses that lasted only 30 days and did not solve the problem.	▪ **Proposed for the last 5 years that the council adopt a comprehensive plan for all 17 acres to eliminate the catastrophic fire risk.**
Road and Sidewalk Repair	▪ **No plan.**	▪ **Proposed that the Pavement Management Plan come before the council at least once a year to empower council members and citizens about how far behind the city is in road repairs and what's needed to catch up.** ▪ **Proposed creating a Pedestrian Master Plan led by volunteers to document "trip and fall" hazards & where sidewalks should be built.**
Speeding Drivers	▪ **No plan.**	▪ **Stop reckless drivers! Work with the police department to stop speeding/reckless drivers who are endangering PG residents.**

LET'S FIX IT PG! www.Kevin-Hanley.org

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Kevin J. Hanley for City Council 2026, FPPC ID #1495833

P.G. council greenlights forest management, fire prevention plan

By LILY PATTERSON

PACIFIC GROVE'S first significant wildfire prevention effort in a decade — a monthlong sprint to remove dead trees and overgrown vegetation from the city's largest park — wrapped up on Sept. 30. City staff and council members say they're pleased with the progress, which chipped away at a visible backlog of maintenance in the heavily wooded, 20-acre property surrounded by residential neighborhoods. According to urban forester John Kenney, special attention was paid to the border along Melrose Street and 17 Mile Drive where homes directly abut George Washington Park.

"We removed dead and downed materials, ladder fuels ands invasive plant species to create defensible space around the park. We also cleared and widened some of the footpaths for public access and removed some of the invasive plants and poison oak near the trails," Kenney informed the city council at its Oct. 21 meeting.

The city hadn't attempted any significant fire prevention work since the peak drought years of 2014-2016, when Cal Fire offered grants and dedicated crews to cities throughout the state. Since then — with exceptions for emergency tree removals — only the playground, baseball field and picnic areas at the southern end of the park have been maintained on a predictable schedule. The neglect has been attributed to "conflicting stakeholder opinions on environmental management strategies," according to the report presented to council members by Kenney and environmental program manager George Fuerst.

Seasonal work scheduled for September, March

A master plan for the century-old park was adopted by the city council in October 1999, and an attempt to amend it for better forest management was undertaken by a consultant in 2021. That plan was ultimately rejected by city officials and members of the public, who demanded a 12-month biological survey of the area.

More work to be done

In August, council members were presented with an annual forest management plan co-written by Kenney and Fuerst which incorporated the 2024 biological survey with input from the beautification and natural resources committee. Though the plan was in draft form, the council gave its immediate blessing for public works to begin clearing hazardous fuel buildup near homes and establishing 100-foot buffer zones.

"There's a 30-day window where we can do tree work before the monarchs hopefully show up, and we can do general work without the need for a bird survey. It's really the most efficient time to do this work," Fuerst said of the strict September timeframe.

State and federal law limits activity that might disturb wild bird nesting during the statutory season, which extends Feb. 1 through Aug. 31 in California. Meanwhile, P.G. Municipal Code prohibits pruning or removing trees while migrating monarchs may be present — historically October through March, though Fuerst noted that the butterflies haven't clustered in the park for more than 20 years.

The next phase of maintenance won't take place until March, he informed the council, when grasses will be mowed around the perimeter of the park.

While residents commended the establishment of a seasonal maintenance schedule for the park — which the council codified with a 7-0 vote last Wednesday — concerns were raised that the city isn't dedicating sufficient resources to fire prevention, based on last month's effort.

"I walked the park and was disappointed in many areas with the amount of fuel that was left. There are many areas in which the grasses are taller than me and go into the trees, which raises a potential crown fire situation. If we have 40 mph winds and an ignition, we have a problem," Kevin Hanley, who is running for city council, said.

"I have to agree that there is a tremendous amount of ladder fuel and fuel sitting on the ground. They got down to my area with maybe three days left in the month, and there was one guy out there clearing with a weed-whacker. If you're going to have to use a weed-whacker, get five or six people out there," resident Mike Gibbs said.

Home-hardening

Speaking with The Pine Cone on Tuesday, Kenney said that his department had applied for assistance from the Cal Fire Gabilan division and the Green Cadre, Monterey County's youth conservation workforce, but failed to recruit the additional support, since those crews are in exceptionally high demand at this point in the year. He said the majority of the work was performed by the city's contractor, Tope's Tree Service, which deployed three- to four-person crews over a total of 15 days at a cost of $38,120, according to public records.

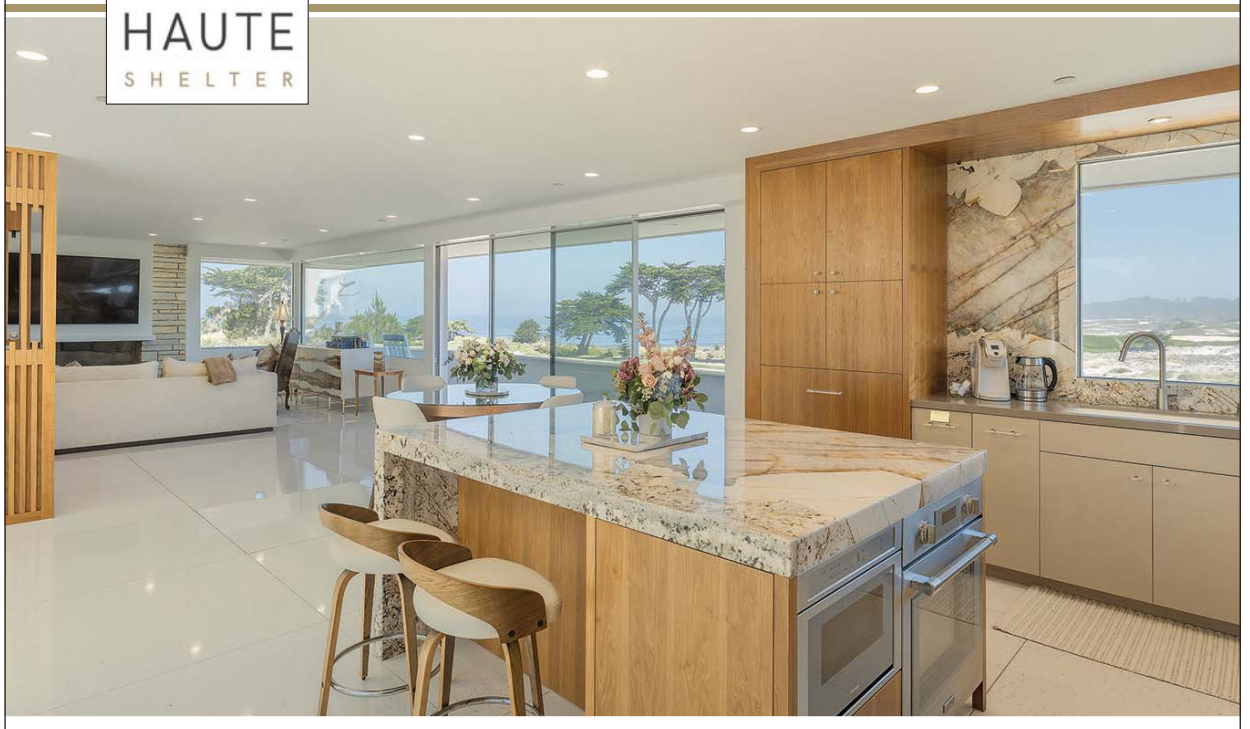
In the last several years, the Monterey Fire Department, which staffs P.G.'s station, has ramped up inspections and engagement with residents to assist with home-hardening. Such measures are useless, however, without the city's cooperation to maintain the overgrown park, which was identified in the 2024 Community Wildfire Protection Plan as a considerable risk to nearby properties. (The last significant home fire in Pacific Grove occurred in 2023, destroying the historic LaPorte Mansion just north of George Washington Park, though the suspected cause was internal.)

To increase the scope of future work, Fuerst noted that

See **PREVENTION** *page 23A*

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SPECIAL REPORT | SOUTHWEST CARMEL

DATA THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

WHAT LOCATION *Really* COSTS

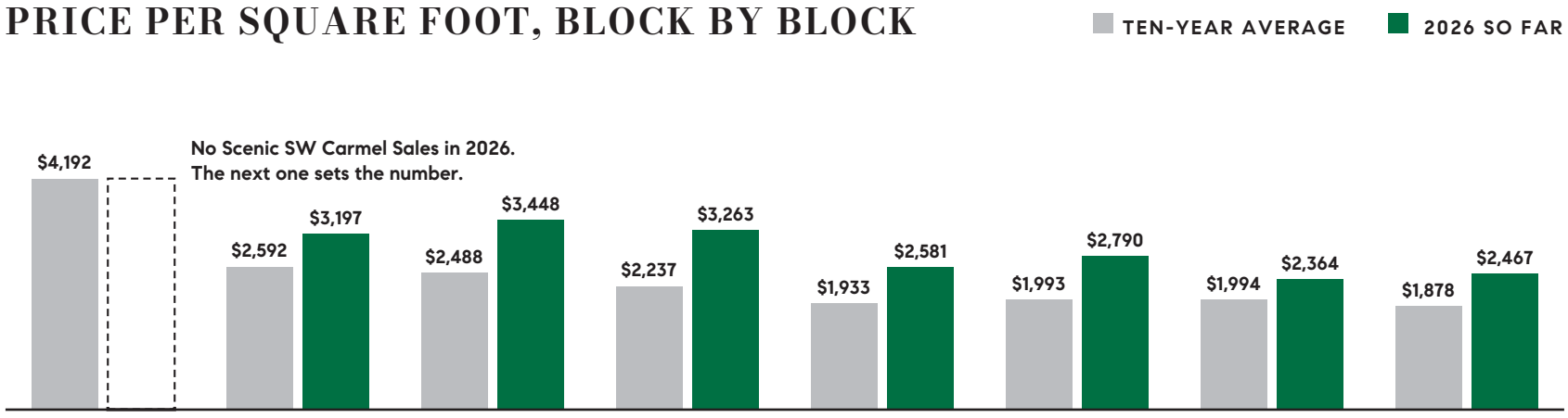
TEN YEARS OF SOUTHWEST CARMEL SALES, BLOCK BY BLOCK FROM THE BEACH



Carmel Beach and the blocks behind it, Southwest Carmel

Homes get pricier closer to the beach. We sorted 338 closed sales on eight streets, from the sand to downtown, and measured each block against the neighborhood benchmark. The gap is real, and it is widening.

PRICE PER SQUARE FOOT, BLOCK BY BLOCK



A DIFFERENT TIER

Scenic averages $4,192 per sq ft, nearly double the $2,290 area average. On Scenic, different rules and values apply.

THE VALUE LINE

Camino Real, three blocks out, sits just $53 per sq ft under the benchmark. One block farther, Monte Verde drops $357.

A WIDENING GAP

Scenic's premium grew from $1,746 to $2,383 per sq ft (2017–19 to 2023–25). Dolores's difference deepened from $156 to $723.

RIGHT NOW, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

$4,818,500
median sale price

$2,821
per sq ft, 23% above the ten-year average

~29
sales a year lately, down from 35

WHAT THIS DATA CANNOT SEE

This data does not capture renovation or finish level. Southwest Carmel homes keep getting more updated, and turnkey homes increasingly command a real premium, which may inflate some of what looks like a pure location effect. Price per square foot also leaves out ocean views (always a premium), single-level homes (uncommon here and always desirable) and garages (none, carport, one-car or two-car).



Mark Peterson and Dana Bambace

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Source: MLSListings closed sales, 338 sales on eight Southwest Carmel streets, January 1, 2017 through September 30, 2026. Premium and discount figures are each block's ten-year average price per square foot compared with the Southwest Carmel benchmark. 2026 figures are closed sales through September 30 and will move as more sales close. Scenic had no 2026 sales.

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COMPASS

Covid-era law allowing drinks to go persists

By MARY SCHLEY

A STATE law allowing restaurants to sell takeaway cocktails and other alcoholic beverages was supposed to expire at the end of the year but has been extended to Dec. 31, 2029, reflecting an ongoing desire to keep drinking flexible and allow businesses to capture a little more income.

Assemblymember Chris Rogers of Santa Rosa authored the bill, with Sen. Scott Wiener of San Francisco as its principal coauthor. Sponsored by the California Restaurant Association and supported by the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, the bill extending the original 2021 law was signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom on Sept. 30 and took effect immediately.

Rogers argued for urgency to avoid a lapse when the prior law expires on New Year's Eve. Proponents said it would help struggling restaurants, protect those that have incorporated takeaway wine, cocktails and spirits into their operations, and accommodate customers who have grown accustomed to taking drinks home. Opponents, including Republican Assemblymember Diane Dixon of Newport Beach, worried it could lead to more drinking in public and DUIs. Ultimately, no one voted against it.

Rogers' legislation doesn't, however, allow a bartender to pour a margarita into a plastic cup and hand it over. The law authorizes certain restaurants, as well as wineries, breweries and distilleries that have on-site restaurants, to sell manufacturer-sealed distilled spirits to go. These are commonly called ready-to-drink beverages, or RTDs. Eligible businesses may also offer individual servings of wine and cocktails or other distilled spirits — but not beer — to go, in containers sealed "in a manner designed to prevent consumption without the seal being broken." The buyer must order a bona fide meal, too.

More rules

In addition, the customer must present ID and order and pick up the drink in person. Wine can be sold only in single-serve containers that hold between 187 mL and 355 mL. Mixed drinks and cocktails cannot contain more than 4.5 ounces of distilled spirits each, and customers are limited to two non-manufacturer-sealed drinks per meal.

The container must be clearly and conspicuously labeled or otherwise identified as containing alcohol, and sellers must notify the ABC of their plans to sell to-go drinks and post "a specific warning sign" on the premises, online or "wherever necessary" to ensure customers understand that such beverages are restricted by open-container laws.

The required notice reads, "Alcoholic beverages that are packaged by this establishment are open containers and shall not be transported in a motor vehicle except in the vehicle's trunk or, if there is no trunk, the containers shall be kept in some other area of the vehicle that is not normally occupied by the driver or passengers. This does not include a utility compartment or glove compartment. Additionally, these beverages shall not be consumed in public or in any other area where open containers are prohibited by law."

Carmel Public Library Foundation

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LANDMARK

From page 10A

Before it burned down, the building hosted "town-hall-style meetings, holiday celebrations, birthday parties, dances and Grange meetings," according to Carmel Valley historian Elizabeth Barratt. A photo from the early 1900s shows it surrounded by agricultural fields and trees.

A busy place during its heyday in the early 20th century, the building was known by several names, including the Carmelo Athletic and Social Club Building, The Barn and the Grange Hall.

The cause of the fire was never determined, and the building's remnants were removed in July 2025. Some beams that didn't burn and an old bench were given to the Carmel Valley Association to be repurposed.

Just as the fire erupted, a debate was underway on Facebook about the building's future. Many commenters wondered whether arson was to blame, and several suggested a homeless person had been living there.

ROOSTERS

From page 10A

said. "It's not fair to residents where large numbers of roosters are being kept. I feel very sorry for people who made investments, but they're imposing on their neighbors in ways that are very hard to tolerate."

Some people who raise roosters spoke out against the new rules.

A man who raises roosters and identified himself only as Martin said he "strongly" opposes the new ordinance.

"We've spent a lot of money getting our yards up to par," he said. "If you want peace and quiet, Salinas is big enough. You can move to the city."

Another man who raises roosters and didn't give his name said the county's rules have cost him tens of thousands of dollars.

"We've been complying," he insisted. "What happens to all that investment we made? Who compensates us?"

No more than five

The new rules limit the number of roosters that may be kept on non-agriculturally zoned properties: five on properties greater than 5 acres, two on properties between 2 and 5 acres, and one on properties less than 2 acres.

The rules passed in 2015 require a property owner to get a permit to keep five or more roosters on a single property if the land isn't zoned for agriculture. The new rules don't apply to agriculturally zoned land. On nonagricultural land, they cap the number of roosters at five per property, with a few exceptions.

The rules also shift rooster enforcement from animal control to zoning.

The county planning commission voted unanimously Sept. 30 to recommend that the supervisors approve the new rooster rules.

NURSES

From page 6A

know the risks facing healthcare workers are real and evolving. We care deeply about the people who care for our community, and we remain committed to listening to our staff, learning from their experiences and investing in measures that help keep our employees, patients and visitors safe."

Nurses at the Monterey hospital voted in January to unionize. Monday's rally came as employees and the hospital negotiate their first union contract.

"Nursing is the most trusted profession, and nurses take care of patients 24/7 at CHOMP. We are there when things go wrong," said Kristine Olalia, a registered nurse in the orthopedic unit. "We should be taken seriously when we raise safety concerns."

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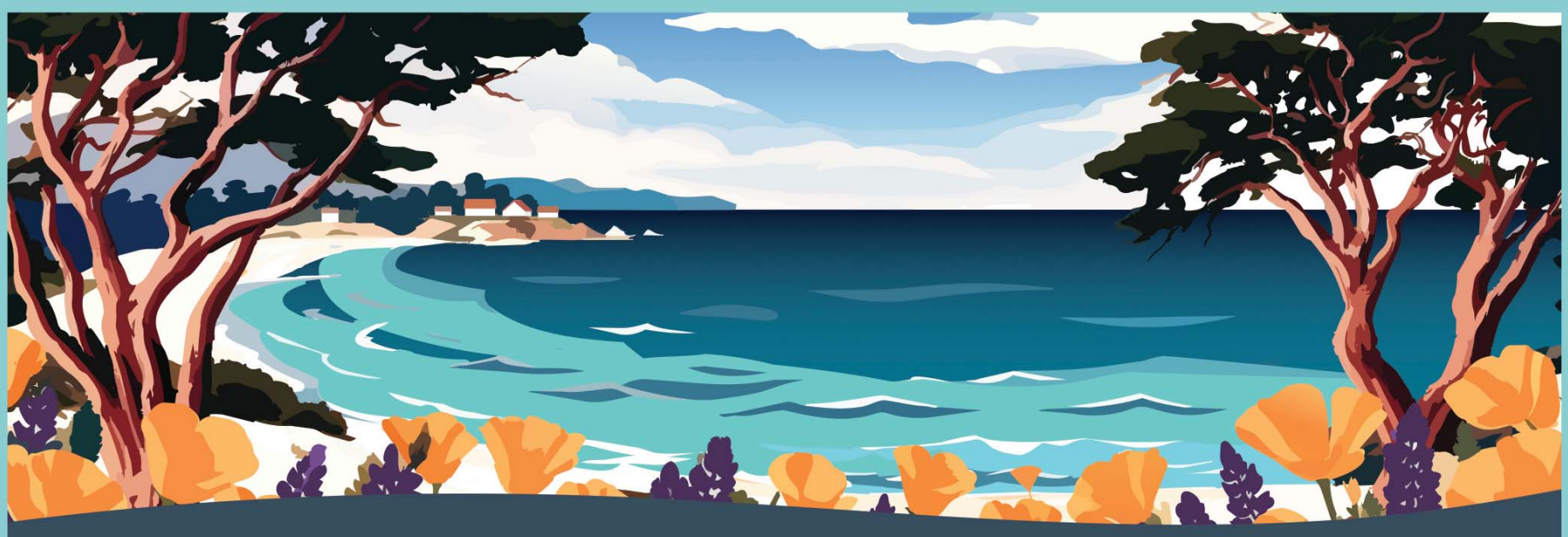
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PUBLIC NOTICES

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File No. 20261873
Filing type: ABANDONMENT
County of Filing: Monterey
Date of Original Filing: May 9, 2025
File No.: 20250886
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: **EMPOWER SPEECH THERAPY MONTEREY, 140 W. Franklin St., Ste. 203. #151, Monterey, CA 93940.**
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
EMPOWER SPEECH THERAPY MONTEREY, INC., 140 W. Franklin St., Ste. 203, #151, Monterey, CA 93940.
This business is conducted by a corporation.
S/Kayla Piorkowski, CEO
Sept. 29, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 29, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026. (PC1012).

VOTE YES ON MEASURES M & N



Repairing our streets, sidewalks, infrastructure, trees and beach can no longer be ignored

Our City Council enacted policy that now requires general fund revenues be used for capital maintenance needs. Measures M and N are necessary to support the City's 10-year Catch Up Plan

Vote Yes! and Yes! on both Measures M & N

Why Yes! on Measure M

+2% TOT paid for by hotel guests

- Carmel's hotel room rates have risen over $200/night across the past 10 years
- Carmel's hotel occupancy has remained steady at 70% as room rates have nearly doubled
- Adding $5 to a $250 hotel bill will not cause visitors to go someplace else

A little bit more from visitors. $2M more for Carmel.

Why Yes! on Measure N

+0.375% sales tax paid mostly by visitors

- Adds just 19 cents to a $50 restaurant bill
- If Carmel doesn't act now to keep these sales tax dollars in Carmel, Monterey County or a regional agency will be able to claim them

Keep $2M local sales tax dollars in Carmel.

Who is supporting Measures M and N?

Dale Byrne, Mayor
Jeff Baron, Councilmember
Bob Delves, Councilmember

Hans Buder, Councilmember and Mayoral Candidate
Allisandra Dramov, Councilmember and Incumbent Candidate
Stefan Karapetkov, Planning Commissioner and Councilmember Candidate

Andi Carr
Noel Carr
Chris Campbell
Bud Smith
Hiroomi Tada
Kim Tada
Bill Karges
Patty Ross
Nicki Sturdivant
Don Sturdivant
Donna Jett
Jenny Delves
Barbara Stout
Ellen Thomas
Paul Falworth
Harry Ross
Dylan Witt
Margaret Byrne
Nancy Collins
Erin Allen
Jim Beck
Larry Mariani
Rina Mariani
Nicholas Earl
Linda Floyd
Jerry Floyd
Laura Bowling
Linda Yellich
Michael LePage
Scott Lonergan
Kelly Brezoczky
Thomas Brezoczky
Sharon Meresman
Stan Meresman
Christy Hollenbeck
Doug Hollenbeck
Cindy Lloyd
Ian Martin
Rob Lechner
Barri Belnap
Tamara Michie
Andrew Michie
Michael Ramon
Victoria Beach
Vinz Koller
Megan Buder
Deborah Burlingham
David Burlingham
Lance Wills
Maria Rengifo-Ruess
Pete Yengst
Neal Rutta
Cary Ostrie
Jayme Case
Jeffrey Case
Shirley Faxton
Ruth Hansen
Mary Condry
Tasha Witt

Carmel residents have donated $10,000 to support these Measures.

Who is not supporting Measure M?

15 Carmel hotels have donated $25,000 to confuse the facts. Don't believe them.

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Seaside gets funding to repair bridge

By CHRIS COUNTS

CLOSED FOR three years, the San Pablo pedestrian bridge in Seaside is a step closer to reopening after the city secured the remaining funding for its rehabilitation, Sen. John Laird announced this week.

Laird said his office secured $550,000 in state funding for the project, which previously received $850,000 in federal funding.

The bridge crosses busy San Pablo Avenue and connects parkland on both sides of the road, providing a safer route for residents. Built in 1960, it was closed in 2023 because of "erosion and structural deterioration."

"For three years, Seaside families and students have been without a bridge they relied on to get around their neighborhood," Laird said. "Mayor Ian Oglesby and Seaside city officials brought this issue to my attention during a visit more than a year ago, and I'm pleased we were able to secure the final funding needed to move the project forward."

Laird said the project is about "more than replacing a bridge."

"It's about giving families a safer route to school, reconnecting neighborhood parks, and making sure residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy these public spaces for generations to come," he said.

'A real gap'

Laird met with Oglesby at the site Wednesday. The mayor said the bridge's closure in 2023 "left a real gap in our community."

"We've been working to bring this connection back, and securing the remaining funding is a major step toward making that happen," Oglesby said.

The project is in the design phase, with the final design expected to be completed by the end of 2027. Construction is scheduled to start in July 2028.

The bridge will be accessible to people with disabilities, and the city also plans to make adjacent trails more accessible.

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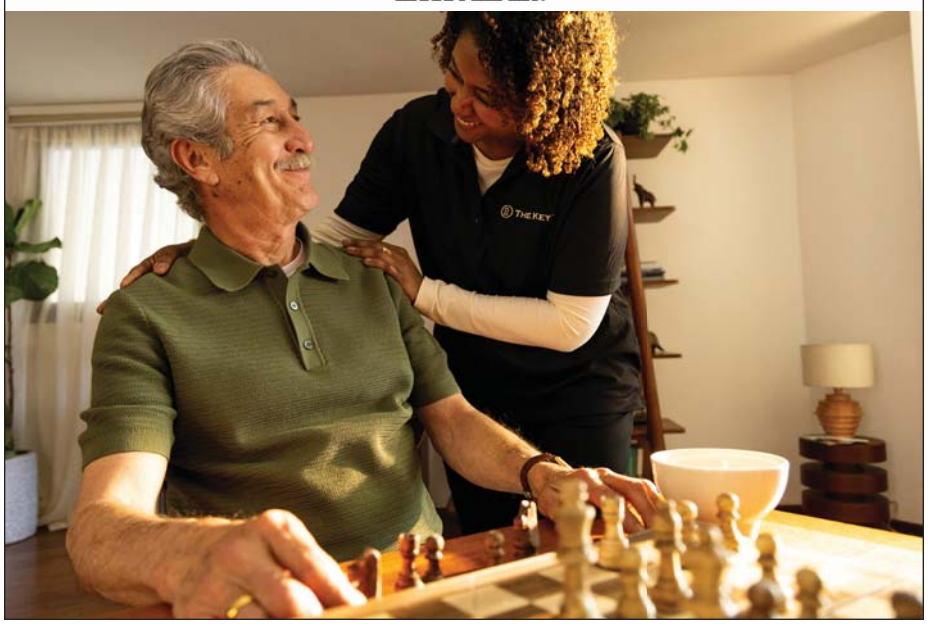
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ROUNDABOUT

From page 14A

could be done with the grant funds alone.

"Could there be crosswalk improvements or protected bike lanes? If we're going to have to pull funds out of other parts of the budget, my question would be if this is such an urgent project in comparison to, let's say, police and fire. What can we do with the amount from TAMC?" Cabrera asked.

She suggested minor improvements to crosswalks and bike lanes, but Shepard countered that "once we start touching the signalized intersection, we kind of have to do the whole thing."

Saving in the long run

Another commenter expressed support for the roundabout design, describing the intersection as "very dangerous" and referring to the Federal Highway Administration's data on accident costs and the city's potential liability for pedestrian injuries.

Mayor Bruce Delgado also emphasized that "millions of dollars are spent on a decade basis related to accidents at Reservation Road."

"You don't save money in the long run with signalized intersections," he said.

Shepard said the city is looking for alternatives to general fund dollars for the project, including developer impact fees. In 2017, the $2.2 million Del Monte/Beach roundabout was funded more than half by federal grants. The remainder was covered by impact fees, which are one-time charges that local governments may leverage on new or proposed developments to pay for public infrastructure.

According to the resolution presented to council members, which only requested their approval to call for bids on the Del Monte/Reservation project, "Staff will return with a recommendation for additional funding allocation."

"The design of the roundabout will include new pedestrian crossings and rapid flashing beacons," according to the plan. The anticipated speed limit is 15 mph, and additional signage and striping will be implemented to encourage safe driver decision-making.

PREVENTION

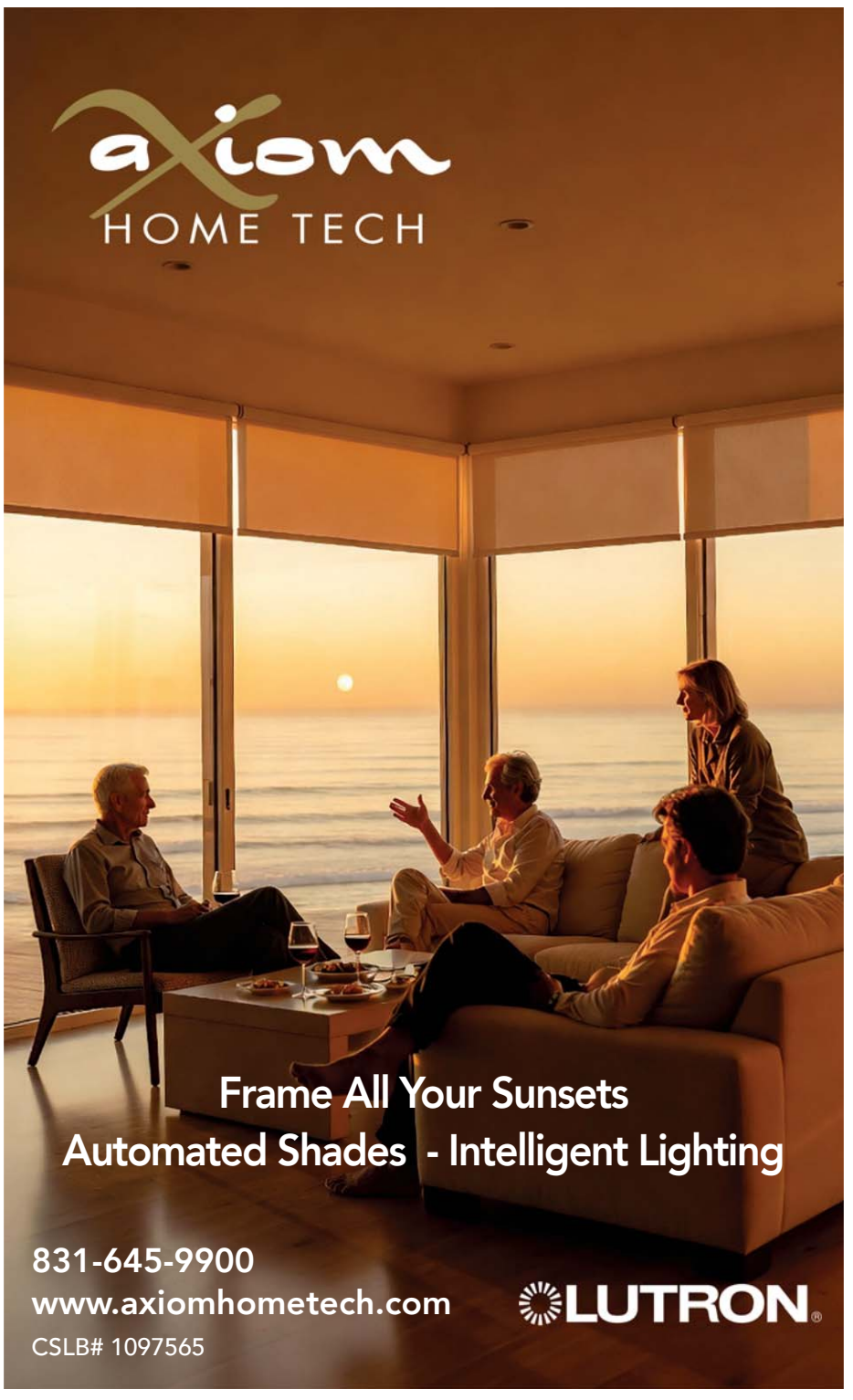
From page 18A

spring and fall maintenance work could overlap with the statutory nesting season, but at the additional cost of hiring an environmental consultant to conduct a bird survey. "And it's possible to do non-tree work during the monarch overwintering season," he said, adding that public works will carry on light maintenance and native species planting in the coming months, and emergency tree removals may be authorized by the city forester or public works department.

In addition to the carefully scheduled work windows, the plan proscribes the use of herbicides, heavy machinery or live tree removal. Council member Lori McDonnell, who serves as liaison to the beautification and natural resources committee, commended Fuerst and Kenney for "the great balance" they'd achieved between habitat protection and fire risk management.

"There will always be a risk of fire in every park. The real goal here is to have a healthy forest. It's important for our residents and for visitors who may use it. It's a valued asset in the community," McDonnell said.

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



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Monterey Peninsula Water Management District

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ELECTION

From page 1A

Commission. No one has registered opposition to the sales tax increase.

The principal arguments by those in favor of the tax increases point to the city's mounting deferred maintenance — estimated at $100 million — and the lack of funds to address it, considering much of the budget goes to operating costs dominated by payroll and benefits. Measure M opponents insist the tax will be bad for business, and therefore bad for the city's general fund, too.

Kelly Brezoczky, one of the founding members of the citizens group, Support Carmel's Future, and a member of the forest and beach commission, said she is confident voters will approve both measures. While the council and other proponents have focused on how the increased revenues will benefit the city's aging infrastructure, neither measure is specific in how the funds will be used. The council was deliberate in wording each measure broadly so as to avoid the need for a two-thirds majority approval from voters.

"I believe we have very engaged residents who care deeply about the deferred maintenance in our city and that both of these measures will pass," Brezoczky said. She cited a survey she conducted at the post office in late May that found that 18 of the 25 Carmel residents who responded — or 72% — support both tax increases, with stronger negative sentiment for the sales tax. As of last week, Carmel had 2,346 registered voters.

"So, to me, the better question is: How do we ensure that the money raised from measures M and N will be used appropriately to support the 10-year catch-up plan and the long overdue deferred maintenance our city requires?" she continued. "This is a really important question and one that I believe our city council has proactively been addressing" via its financial stewardship group, its limiting of operations spending to a percentage of general fund revenues, and other efforts toward transparency.

Opponents question

Some business owners are skeptical, however, and suggest the city should do a better job budgeting the funds it receives, a large chunk of which comes from visitors.

"This money goes into the general fund, although it is being pitched for capital improvements. There are no strings on the money," said Hog's Breath Inn restaurant owner Lee Morcus. "The city should focus on stimulating hotel reinvestment to improve and elevate the product, rates, off-season occupancies — this will increase revenue without tax rate increases."

Inns by the Sea general manager Mark Watson said the city loses nothing if Measure M fails, since TOT already supports a significant part of the budget, but if it passes, "Carmel risks interrupting the strong economic momentum that has been generating substantial increases in city revenue." An analysis by the Carmel Innkeepers Association estimates "approximately 5,000 fewer occupied room nights annually and roughly $3.6 million in lost hotel and local business revenue," he said.

Guests spending less would also disincentivize investment in properties that, if upgraded, could charge higher room rates, and therefore generate more TOT.

Pam Sheppard, owner of the Horizon Inn and the Ocean View Inn, said TOT has continued to exceed budget estimates because hotels assess a 2% fee on visitors to use for their marketing.

And if the predicted room-night losses don't materialize and the TOT increase brings in the expected $1.9 million described in the ballot language and the proponents' arguments, Sheppard and some of her colleagues, including leading opponent hotelier Mark Stilwell, join Morcus in their skepticism that the city will really use it for capital projects.

"It is highly unlikely that they will allocate all of the 'new' funds collected to deferred maintenance as the proponents believe," she said. "Their track record for keeping their word is dismal, and worse, this council has little to no experience in managing city budgets, so giving them more money to waste is not what my hard work should fund."

Brezoczky said the council's decision to make its financial stewardship committee permanent should allay some of those concerns. "This legislated action to ensure ongoing transparency and accountability provides all of us residents an ongoing opportunity to ensure the continued care for our streets, sidewalks, trees and beach remains a present and high priority," she said.

HARMONY

From page 12A

school's instruments. "That could potentially be a lot of noise if they're all in one area, because, you know, you can make a little orchestra out of the different instruments."

The sounds aren't always nice, either.

"You can get pretty loud on those," added commissioner Harry Ross. "You can make a lot of noise with that thing."

"If I lived above that, it would probably annoy the heck out of me," he continued. "But I love this idea. So I do want to work with you to try and find the right place in the city, if possible, to do it, because I think it is a cool thing."

"I was also struck by how easy it was for me to get a bad noise out of it," commissioner Neal Rutta chimed in.

But he liked the idea of testing one of the instruments in the park, trying out some sound-dampening measures and seeing what Forest Hill Park neighbors think about it.

'Make this work'

"We're all trying to find ways to make this work, because of course, why wouldn't we want to make this work? It's such a beautiful thing to have for the kids," chair Tamara Michie said. "After what we went through a year or so ago at the tennis courts, we're probably all a little gun-shy about noise and neighbors and just trying to make sure that we're doing our due diligence."

She suggested getting notices to the neighbors so they can participate in public hearings about Harmony Habitat if they want to.

The park seems like the best place for their project, according to commissioner Sarah Berling, especially since it wouldn't be nearly as annoying as pickleball play.

"We don't want another pickleball thing where we hear about that all the time, and a little bit of noise here and there isn't bad," she said. "I mean, pickleball goes on for hours."

Some speakers expressed concerns about people banging on the instruments at night, and commissioner Kelly Brezoczky reminded the group the city does not have the resources to take measures like locking them up after dark.

"I know we probably sound like we're just all a bunch of downers here, but I think all of you know what we've been through at the tennis courts," Michie said. "So, we're just a little trepidatious."

'A jam session'

During public comment, resident Chris Campbell said she admires the group's enthusiasm, "but for me, from the beginning, this has been ill-advised."

"This hearing was sort of hauntingly familiar, because I attended all of the hearings on pickleball, and it was the same kind of struggle," she said.

Even if it's harmonious, she argued, noise "has a corrosive effect on human happiness."

"I think it will be a temptation at night for people to have a little jam session, even if there are only three of them," she added.

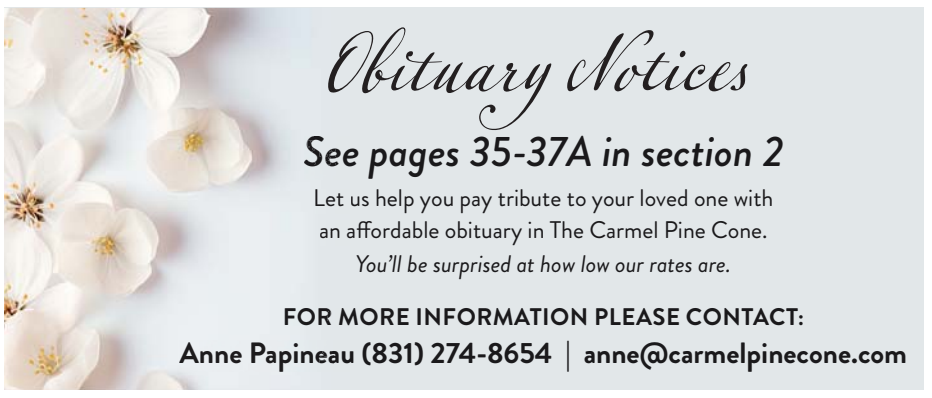
Another speaker identified as Barry said he couldn't disagree with Campbell more. "It's the only children's park you have," he said. "The noise level can be mitigated."

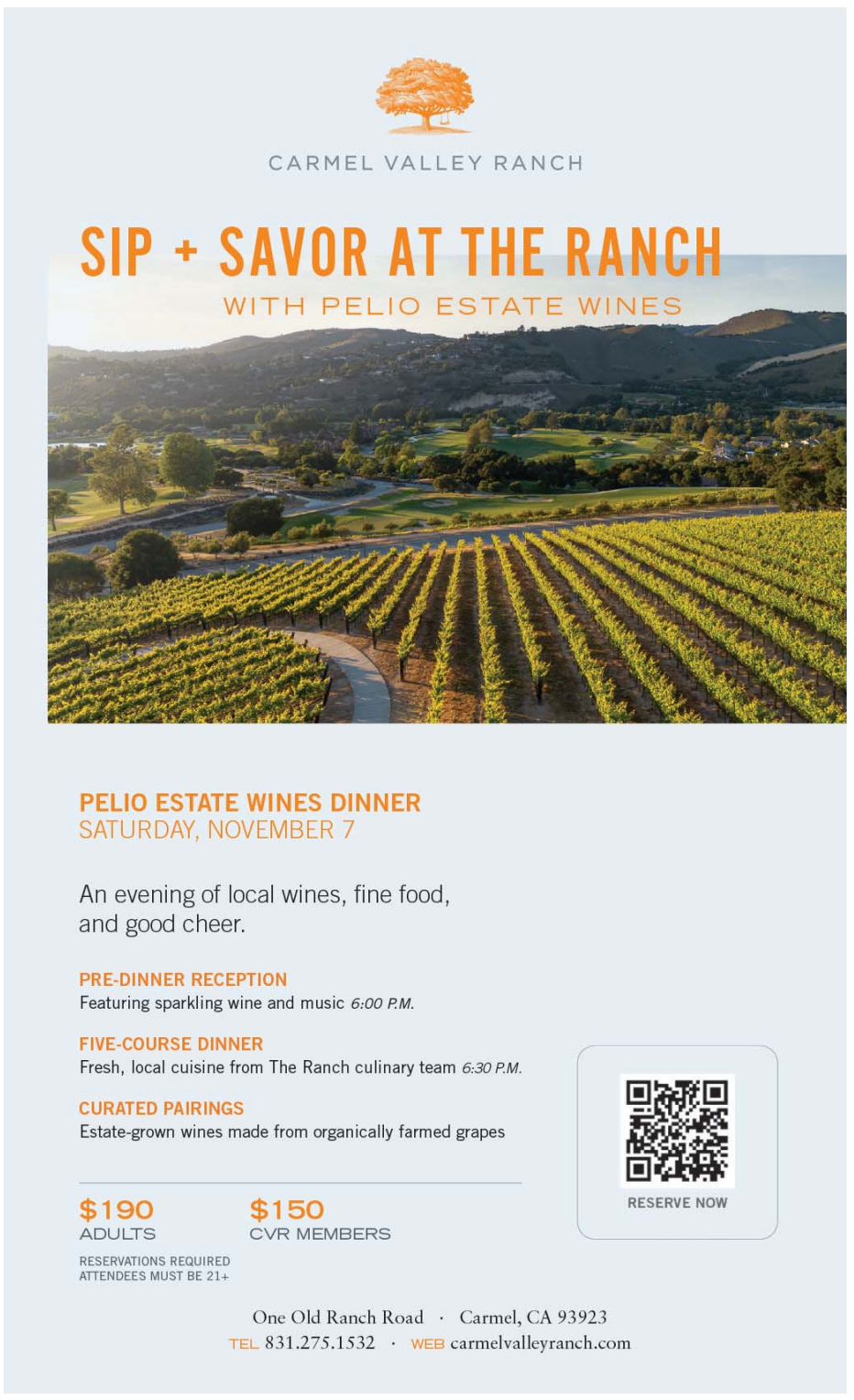
Commissioners suggested the group buy a couple more of the instruments and temporarily install them in the park so neighbors can get an idea of how they'll sound.

Last week, class representative Michelle Amirkhanian told The Pine Cone the three sculptures would be in place soon.

"We are scheduled for Nov. 12 at 2:30 p.m. for the next forest and beach commission meeting," she said. "Public works and Leadership Carmel are sending out notices by Nov. 5 to the neighboring community regarding their reflections on the pilot program."

Amirkhanian and her classmates are urging people to attend the Nov. 12 meeting to show their support. The session will be held online and at city hall at 662 Monte Verde St.







ICE

From page 1A

protect incarcerated people, law enforcement officers and community members gathered outside. Sheriff Tina Nieto similarly said her office was working with county leaders "to ensure the safety of everyone" at and around the facility.

In a statement posted on social media Wednesday night, however, ICE accused the sheriff's office of "harboring criminal aliens" from federal agents before releasing them into the community. The agency suggested the lockdown was intended to prevent ICE from detaining the men.

"This is where we are: Criminals are being protected in sanctuary cities and states, and a law enforcement facility is siding with criminals instead of cooperating with federal law enforcement," ICE said.

Monterey County follows state laws that limit local cooperation with federal immigration authorities while allowing certain forms of cooperation in specified cases, including some involving people convicted of serious or violent felonies.

'Not coming out'

Video by KSBW-TV showed an ICE officer speaking Tuesday outside the jail with Monterey County District 4 Supervisor Wendy Root Askew. They discussed whether the jail would release the inmates while ICE agents were present.

"I'll tell you they're probably not coming out," Askew said. "I've spoken to the sheriff."

After Askew said the jail would not release anyone "at risk" that day, the officer suggested that continuing to hold people who were otherwise eligible for release violated their Fourth Amendment rights.

"They will not be released in a location where ICE is present," Askew replied.

A small group of onlookers and protesters gathered outside the jail while ICE agents were there. One woman angrily confronted an agent, who appeared to gesture for her to move out of the way.

Despite the lockdown, the sheriff's office said no one scheduled for release was affected and that all releases occurred under normal protocols and schedules.

Sheriff's officials said federal authorities had not notified the office about the operation in advance. They also noted that federal law enforcement agencies are not required to provide notice when conducting independent enforcement operations within the county.

Askew worried about what she called 'at-risk' inmates

Seaside arrests

Meanwhile, the Seaside Police Department said targeted immigration enforcement took place in the city Monday and that ICE made several arrests.

"While we do not have access to the specific details of these investigations, our understanding is that the operations involved individuals suspected of federal criminal violations," police said.

The department said it would continue sharing information about ICE activity when doing so would not compromise anyone's safety or privacy, or the integrity of an ongoing investigation. It encouraged residents with questions or concerns to contact the department.

"We recognize that this is a sensitive issue that affects members of our community in different ways. Our commitment remains the same: to serve our entire community with professionalism, respect and transparency," Seaside police said.

This week's enforcement in Monterey County may be part of "Operation Safe California," a 45-day ICE immigration mission launched in early October that targets undocumented immigrants across the state. The operation reportedly began in San Diego and expanded to the Central Coast and Central Valley.



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Editorial

Keep the cameras. Set the rules.

LAST WEEK, we wrote about the Monterey County Board of Supervisors' decision to remove 63 Flock cameras, despite compelling testimony from District Attorney Jeannine Pacioni about how evidence from the county's license plate cameras helped investigators pursue murderers, armed robbers and a father who kidnapped his 4-year-old child. Our point was not that the cameras should be free of oversight. It was that removing them takes a useful tool away from investigators — leaving future victims to be preyed upon by people who would be in prison if the cameras were still there.

This week, a City Journal article by Charles Fain Lehman provides a national perspective that makes the concern harder to dismiss. Lehman looks beyond solved crimes to a more urgent question: What happens when a child is missing and police need to find a car right now?

He opens with the case of "Allie," a 12-year-old from South Carolina who believed she was meeting a teenage boy she had spoken with online. Instead, she got into a car with a 31-year-old man who drove her across three states to Arkansas. Investigators found an image of Allie entering a black Chevrolet Malibu, but they did not have its license plate number. They searched Flock's database using the car's appearance, found images showing its route and alerted authorities in Arkansas. Police arrested the man and his wife and recovered Allie. According to a sworn statement quoted by Lehman, she was shaking and asking for her mother when officers found her.

That "no license plate" detail in the story matters. A Flock camera is not useful only for scanning license plates. It can also help identify a vehicle by its make, model, color and other visible features. In Allie's case, that turned a partial description into a route investigators could follow.

Lehman recounts another case in Moody, Ala. Police say a woman who had been grooming a 13-year-old girl online picked her up along with her 9-year-old brother at a gas station. After a 911 call, officers obtained surveillance footage and used Flock cameras to track the car. They stopped it on a nearby highway and recovered both children, even before an Amber Alert could be issued. The speed was the point: If the car had crossed more jurisdictions, the search could have become much harder.

In Richmond, Va., a mother's car was stolen with her two young sons inside — one a month old, the other a 3-year-old with autism. A Flock camera detected the vehicle, and police recovered the boys within 45 minutes.

Lehman cites other recoveries in Indiana, Georgia, California and West Virginia, but he does not claim to know how many children the cameras have helped rescue in total. He reports that the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates Flock readers have assisted in the safe return of more than 1,000 missing persons since the organization began working with the company in 2024.

The connection to Monterey County is direct. Pacioni described a local case in which an estranged father kidnapped his 4-year-old child. License plate reader technology helped Monterey police locate the child in three hours and 10 minutes. Her other examples showed how vehicle evidence helped investigators identify suspects in shootings, robberies and a fatal ax attack. Lehman's article adds the part that can get lost when we talk only about prosecutions. Sometimes the cameras help police reach someone before the worst happens.

None of this makes the privacy objections imaginary. Cameras can record the movements of people who have done nothing wrong. Access can be abused, and information can be shared too broadly. Lehman acknowledges those concerns, and so did our editorial. Both essays call for strict limits on who can search the surveillance camera data, why they may search it, how long it is kept and when it can be shared. Searches should be logged and audited, with penalties for misuse. Supervisors should demand those protections and enforce them.

Many jurisdictions already impose constraints of exactly this kind — retention limits, purpose restrictions, audit requirements and limits on data sharing. The choice facing Monterey County is not between unregulated surveillance and a total ban. It is between keeping a tool that has repeatedly helped recover children and solve serious crimes, under enforceable rules, or discarding it.

They should also reckon with the cost of removing the cameras. Lehman reports that vandals disabled three Flock cameras near Allie's hometown before her abduction. Local law enforcement officials believed one of those cameras could have helped find her sooner. That doesn't prove how the case would have turned out but it illustrates the choice officials are making. When a camera is gone, its data can't be misused, but it also can't find a fleeing suspect.

Any politician who votes to get rid of license plate surveillance cameras instead of limiting what can be done with them needs to have his head examined — with a Flock camera. Besides catching criminals, maybe they're good at spotting stupidity.

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*

The value of overnight visitors

Dear Editor,

As someone who runs two hotels in Carmel-by-the-Sea, I'm asked a lot whether we have too many visitors. My honest answer is that we don't have a volume problem so much as a management problem. That's why I am urging voters to vote no on Measure M.

The overnight guest is the most valuable and lowest-impact visitor Carmel has. They park once. They have dinner in our restaurants, browse the galleries in the morning, take a long walk on the beach and shop in our stores over two or three days. They also fund about $10 million a year in city services through the hotel tax they already pay. The visitor who strains our streets and parking is the day-tripper who drives in, circles for a space and leaves by sunset.

Measure M raises the cost of being the first kind of visitor and does nothing about the second. Carmel guests already pay 10% in city tax plus a 2% hospitality assessment. Measure M takes that total to 14%. That could nudge some travelers to stay in neighboring towns and come into Carmel for the day, which is exactly the visitor pattern residents tell us they're tired of.

It also comes at a hard moment for small, older properties. Every dollar of margin we lose is a dollar we don't put into renovations, wages or the guest experience that keeps Carmel special.

Measure M is also a general tax with no sunset and no connection to the problems it's being sold to address. If congestion and parking are the concern, let's continue to build a real destination management plan: encourage midweek and shoulder-season stays, reward overnight visits over day trips and invest in parking and infrastructure. The hospitality community wants to be part of the solution.

Carmel's economy, from the restaurants and boutiques to the people who work in them, rises and falls with the overnight guest. Let's manage our visitors wisely, not tax the best ones away. Please vote no on Measure M.

Susan Dampier, *Carmel*

Tourists should pay 'fair share'

Dear Editor,

Measure M would raise Carmel's hotel tax from 10% to 12%, adding just $5 to a $250 room. Carmel's hotel tax rate has not increased since 1983 — when Ronald Reagan was in the White House.

See **LETTERS** *page 28A*

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Former Marine follows life's lead

Great Lives

By SALLY BAHO

'THE MARINE Corps was my best education," said Kent Seavey, respected local historian and retired sergeant major of the 23rd Marine Regiment. The Marine Corps taught him that when it's bad, you adjust — and to play by the rules, which he always does, even when it costs him. Seavey has lived a life filled with chance encounters that led to doing everything he can to preserve the rich history of the Monterey Peninsula.

"I see myself as a principled working stiff," he said. He's being modest — you can rarely get more than a page or two into the history of a local house or architect's work without encountering a reference to one of his detailed, thoroughly researched write-ups.

Seavey was born in Riverside in 1940 and raised by a single mother on his grandfather's 40-acre walnut and alfalfa farm. "I don't think I wore shoes until I went to school," he recalled. He attended local public schools and graduated from high school in 1957. Then he went to the post office to enlist. The draft was still in effect, and he and his buddy figured they'd just get their service out of the way. "I went with the 1st Marine Division, but an opportunity came up to join the 4th Reconnaissance Battalion," he said. That meant he could learn to jump out of perfectly good aircraft and make an extra $30 a month on top of his $100-a-month salary. He served in Asia.

'Thought I'd be an officer'

"Well, hell, I like the Marine Corps, so I thought I'd be an officer. But you needed a degree, so when I came back, I started at Riverside Community College," he said. After a heated encounter over benefits at a government office in that city, Seavey went to cool down at the museum across the street. "There was a nice collection of Native American baskets," he said. As fate would have it, the man running the place — a retired Army colonel — was looking for an assistant. So, just like that, Seavey was an assistant museum director.

He transferred to San Francisco State and finished his degree, all the while maintaining his reserve status in the Marine Corps. By the time he graduated, the Vietnam War was in full swing. So once again he went to the post office to sign up, this time hoping to become an infantry officer. Instead, a captain counseled him by telling him he was nuts and tearing up his papers. However, Seavey remained in the reserves until retiring in 1988.

Move a library

Not long after his encounter with the recruiter, Seavey saw an ad the California Historical Society had placed for someone to move a 25,000-book library. Interested and curious, Seavey applied — and by the end of the interview, he had been named assistant curator.

His museum career continued, and while working as the registrar at the de

See **LIVES** *page 36A*



PHOTO/COURTESY KENT SEAVEY

Kent Seavey's career has led him from the U.S. military bases of Asia to the front lines of historic preservation in Monterey County.

YACsters art exhibition asks, 'Who are we and who will we be?

Carmel's Artists

By DENNIS TAYLOR

THE UPCOMING multi-artist exhibition at the Pacific Grove Art Center will include a group show by three alumni of Monterey's Youth Arts Collective, the centerpiece of which is a strange, colorful, interactive, four-sided structure — 6 feet high, 2 feet wide — with a different "being" on each side.

Using acrylic on wood, each of the artists — Raven Cook, Luke Metcalfe and Iphigenia "Iphie" Wilder — independently painted one side, and all three collaborated on the fourth.

With tutelage from master woodworker Dirk Selvig, the three artists handcrafted the project, creating their "being" in three separate plywood cubes — the head, torso and legs — stacked to form a full body. Each cube can be rotated 360 degrees, making the exhibit interactive by allowing viewers to mix and match the body parts to create 64 different "beings."

Inside the body, the artists hung chimes that tinkle whenever a cube is rotated.

Their show, titled "Fragmented Being," will also include multiple original paintings and other creations by the three former YACsters in the art center's Annand Gallery.

A year in the making

The monthlong exhibition opens Nov. 6 with an artists' reception from 6 to 8 p.m. featuring musical guest Glenn Leon-Guerrero. The exhibition also includes paintings by Edi Matsumoto ("Otter Therapy") in the Dyke Gallery, mixed media by Bernadette Renois ("Starting Line") in the Boyer Gallery and work by a group of Santa Cruz oil painters ("Inspiration to the Expanded View") in the Gill Gallery.

YAC, a nonprofit, after-school art studio and mentorship program, was founded in 2000 by artists Marcia Perry and Meg Biddle as "a safe, creative space for YACsters and staff of all backgrounds, races, religions, disabilities, sexual orientations, and genders," according to its mission statement.

Cook, Metcalfe and Wilder are among more than 1,000 artists ages 13 to 22 who learned art, job and life skills, gained confidence and, in many cases, found like-minded friends through an organization with a simple motto: "Do art. Be kind."

The body of work to be displayed in their "Fragmented Being" show — a year in the making — was inspired by a collaborative theme.

"This group show reflects how memories distort who we are. Who have we been? Who are we now? Who will we be?" the artists wrote. "Our connections to surrounding environments feed the echoes of past selves and amass into nostalgia."

The narrative continues, "Picking apart memories that haunt the mind with saudade, illusions and fondness, we relinquish perceived control. In an attempt to collect fragments, we present the state of being."

Metcalfe and Cook became friends through YAC and became a couple four years ago despite being very different personalities and artistic creatures, each quirky, eccentric and idiosyncratic in their own way.

'Holding toes'

One of Cook's favorite paintings — an acrylic that elicited emotional responses from friends and strangers alike — is titled "Holding Toes." It's a rendering of two bare feet (hers and Metcalfe's), pressed sole to sole, their toes tangled in a warm embrace.

"That painting made one woman cry really hard," Cook remembered. "She said, 'This seems like the purest form of love I've ever seen.' I felt very grateful that one of my paintings could evoke an emotion like that."

Cook credits her father, Matthew Cook, and his deep passion for screaming rock music for her exotic first name.

"My dad's a metalhead," she said, feeling no real need to explain further. "My brothers are Stone Crow and Motley Wolf — metalhead names, I guess."

Cook, 25, is soft-spoken, articulate, sensitive and deep-thinking. At 21, she joined the YAC team as an employee, working as a studio assistant — still her full-time job — but her long-term aspiration is to become (drumroll) a tattoo artist.

She test-drove that dream at age 13, breaking out the needles and ink to create a

See **ARTIST** *page 38A*



PHOTO/DENNIS TAYLOR

Youth Arts Collective alumni (from left) Raven Cook, Luke Metcalfe, and Iphigenia Wilder will show their interactive, 6-foot-tall "fragmented being" and other art at a Pacific Grove Art Center exhibition that opens Nov. 6.

From the mayor's desk —

What are we protecting?

By DALE BYRNE

SADE'S HAS been part of Carmel for generations. It lost its lease, and our three-bar limit and location-specific approvals make reopening elsewhere difficult. Rules intended to protect Carmel now stand in the way of a familiar gathering place finding a new home.

Last year, I introduced WAYMISH: "Why Are You Making It So Hard?" I encouraged City Hall to shift from "No, because …" to "Yes, if …" Sade's shows why that question matters. But helpful service can accomplish only so much when the rules themselves may need attention.

Darker picture

Paul McAllister's widely circulated YouTube video, "Why Nobody Lives in America's Most Beautiful Town," prompted me to connect several problems I have encountered as mayor. While it paints a darker picture than the Carmel I know, it

See **MAYOR** *page 31A*



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VOTERS

From page 1A

DOJ's demands.

"The registrar of voters is legally prohibited from taking these actions and is therefore unable to comply with DOJ's requests," County Counsel Susan Blitch wrote to the department. "The letter does not provide specific, actionable information regarding the source or accuracy of the allegations that each of the 310 reported county residents is a 'likely' noncitizen."

County leaders called the federal investigation a "direct, reckless assault on the integrity of our local elections and a transparent attempt to undermine the incredible work of our dedicated elections department."

The county also disputed the DOJ's data. Officials said 168 of the 310 people are not currently registered to vote in Monterey County and 142 are active voters registered in accordance with state and federal law. Among those 142, 17 are first-time voters already undergoing the federally required identity-validation process before their ballots can be counted.

Blitch said the DOJ's demands amounted to an effort to "unlawfully intimidate" election officials and California voters.

"The county reserves its rights to pursue all legal remedies against the DOJ for its unlawful intimidation of election officials and California voters, and as needed to protect lawful voters from disenfranchisement," Blitch said.

'Ironclad'

Martinez described the county's election process as "ironclad" and said her office operates with the highest standards of "accuracy, transparency and fidelity to the law."

"To that end, we will continue to operate following federal and state laws in the administration of this election," she said. "We are fully focused on conducting a free, fair and secure election, and we will protect every single legal vote in Monterey County."

Two days before the DOJ contacted the county, The Pine Cone asked Martinez whether noncitizens might be on the county's voter rolls and whether any had voted.

"We currently have no record suggesting that any registered voter in Monterey County has registered or participated in an election unlawfully," she responded.

She added that applicants must sign voter registration forms and their eligibility to vote under penalty of perjury, though California does not routinely verify voters' citizenship against citizenship or immigration records.

Martinez said her office follows state law as well as federal requirements, including the National Voter Registration Act and the Help America Vote Act, and regularly works to keep voter records current, accurate and secure.

"This includes confirming and updating residences, maintaining personal identifying information, and adding or removing records," she said. Those are identity checks, not citizenship checks.

Federal pressure

The DOJ sent letters on Oct. 23 to 57 of California's 58 counties. Los Angeles County had received a similar demand the previous week.

Missakian's letter said the list of 310 people was developed "through a multilayered, multiagency investigative methodology at DHS that relied upon internal immigration records, data matching, supervisory verification procedures" and other methods.

He warned that election officials could face significant legal consequences for facilitating or ignoring federal crimes.

"I write to make unmistakably clear the legal implications of continuing to send vote-by-mail ballots to those people on the list or tabulating ballots cast by them until citizenship can be verified," Missakian wrote.

On Oct. 19, the DOJ announced criminal complaints against 28 lawful permanent residents, or green card holders, in California. The department alleged that they had illegally registered to vote and that most had cast ballots in federal elections. Eleven were arrested that day. The defendants are nationals of Belize, Canada, Honduras, India, Mexico, Pakistan and other countries.

The DOJ said all 28 defendants appeared on its statewide list of more than 20,000 people it said are unlawfully registered to vote in California. The state has disputed the accuracy of that list.

PRIVACY

From page 9A

that they only allowed parents to review parts of it."

The North Monterey County Unified School District didn't respond to a request for comment from The Pine Cone this week, but in other media reports, the district said it conducted an internal investigation and found no evidence to support the federal agency's claims.

The other two districts under the federal microscope are the Palo Alto Unified School District and the San Francisco Unified School District. Similar investigations have recently targeted school districts in Minnesota, Michigan and Maryland.

What qualifies as protected information? According to the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, passed in 1974 and expanded since, the following categories of information are protected: political affiliations or beliefs, mental or psychological problems, sex behavior or attitudes, illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior, critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships, legally recognized privileged relationships, religious practices, affiliations or beliefs, and income details.

LETTERS

From page 26A

Times have changed since then, including the cost of maintaining a small town visited by many millions. Visitors rely on Carmel's streets, sidewalks, public safety services, trees and beach. It is reasonable to ask them to help pay for that upkeep.

Even at 12%, Carmel would remain in the lower tier among California visitor destinations. Monterey and Pacific Grove already charge 12%; Marina, Sausalito and Healdsburg charge 14%; and Malibu and Half Moon Bay charge 15%.

There is little evidence that modest differences in hotel taxes determine where travelers stay. People choose Carmel for its beauty, character, restaurants, shops and accommodations. Hotel prices routinely vary by far more than the additional tax; another $5 on a $250 room is unlikely to change that decision.

Measure N is equally modest. It would increase Carmel's locally controlled sales tax rate from 1.5% to 1.875% — just 19 cents on a $50 taxable purchase. Most groceries and prescription medicines would remain exempt. Because visitors, by a conservative estimate, account for two-thirds of Carmel's dining and shopping, they would contribute the lion's share of this revenue as well.

Together, Measures M and N would generate nearly $4 million annually to help protect the community residents call home and visitors love to experience.

It is time for visitors to participate more fully in preserving Carmel.

Please vote yes on Measures M and N.

Vinz Koller, *Carmel*

Visitors have choices

Dear Editor,

Much of the argument over Measure M centers on a simple premise: The increase is modest, and visitors will pay it. But that overlooks the economic realities facing Carmel's hotels.

Operating costs have risen dramatically since the pandemic. Hotels need people to operate, yet attracting and retaining employees has become increasingly difficult. Housing within a reasonable commuting distance is expensive, as is the commute itself. Employees can work in neighboring communities for comparable wages without Carmel's parking restrictions and long, congested commutes.

There is another reality we rarely discuss. Many reservations are made through online travel agencies that take substantial commissions from the room rate. The rate a guest sees is not what the hotel ultimately receives.

It is easy to look at Carmel's hotel rates

See **OPINIONS** *page 40A*

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FRAUD

From page 1A

California's Department of Health Care Services, the agency responsible for administering Medi-Cal, is at "substantial risk" of making more fraudulent payments this fiscal year.

According to the report, the state is currently paying 28,000 providers whose risk scores place them in the top 10% under health care services' own risk-assessment tools. Among the red flags for these providers are unreasonably high numbers of claims and serving a very large number of Medi-Cal patients. The agency has investigated only 2,000 of those providers, while the remaining 26,000 are still billing the state and accounted for $12 billion in Medi-Cal spending last year.

Parks made clear that while the report was not a full audit, one of health care services may be on the way when his office has the resources to conduct one.

"Health care services' insufficient oversight of payments to Medi-Cal providers allows for a high likelihood of fraud, waste or abuse that poses a serious detriment to the state," the auditor's report says. It continues: "It is a justification for the state auditor to commit resources for future, in-depth audits of Medi-Cal's payment practices for providers."

Even without an in-depth audit, the report sheds light on how long Medi-Cal fraud has been a problem — and, perhaps more interestingly, on why it has grown under Gov. Gavin Newsom's tenure.

Long history of fraud

Health care services has been in hot water with the auditor since 2007, when it was first designated a high-risk agency. The list indicates that a department is vulnerable to waste, fraud or abuse. Health care services has never made it off the list, in large part because the department has repeatedly failed to act when there are indications or accusations of fraud.

For example, in 2023, a managed care plan reported a Medi-Cal provider to the agency for suspected fraud. The department closed the referral without taking action, and the provider went on to bill the state an additional $5.5 million before health care services referred the company to the Department of Justice for possible fraud in 2026. The incident is not isolated; it is just one example involving a large sum that Medi-Cal paid.

It also has a long track record of being fleeced by providers its own system has deemed ineligible. Case in point: In fiscal year 2024-25, two Medi-Cal providers billed the state $1.6 million in claims even though both had been banned from the program in 2022. How long has this been going on? At least since 2012, when, under President Barack Obama, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services found in an integrity review that California was not doing enough to stop payments to ineligible providers. Twice, the federal agency asked for updates on a corrective action plan, but California ignored the requests and federal Medicaid dollars kept flowing.

The fraud has only gotten bigger during Newsom's tenure, and according to the state auditor, that is mostly a result of the governor's mass Medi-Cal expansions over the past seven years.

Big and getting bigger

Over the last decade, California's Medi-Cal budget has more than doubled, while the state's population has declined 0.2% over the same period. More money for fewer people? Not exactly.

Newsom and state legislators, with the approval of President Joe Biden, eliminated asset tests for Medi-Cal recipients in 2022, allowing far more people to enroll in the program. Thanks in part to the expansions, the program now serves 14 million Californians, or nearly one-third of the state's population.

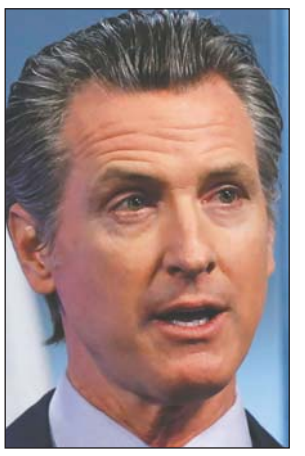
During the same period, health care services also loosened some rules for some benefits, such as by suspending prior authorization requirements for select health care services and medications. The move opened the door to schemes such as a $270 million Medi-Cal scam involving fraudulent prescriptions, which led to federal charges in 2025.

Under Newsom, what's covered by Medi-Cal has also expanded, as has spending on already problematic programs. In 2022, the governor launched CalAIM, short for California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal. The program has added all kinds of services, approving the use of Medi-Cal dollars for everything from security deposits on a lease to first and last months' rent, basic home furnishings and upscale meal services.

The expansions were designed with compassion in mind, but they've also given grifters more avenues to defraud the government.

One glaring example is the 170% increase in In-Home Supportive Services spending since Newsom took office. The program, funded with health care dollars, pays providers who cook, clean and shop for older adults and people with disabilities. In about 70% of cases, those receiving the paychecks are family members. It's a program that practically screams to be scammed, expressly prohibiting unannounced visits by state employees to check whether everything is on the up and up.

Even if random checks on Medi-Cal-funded programs were allowed, there may not be enough staff to investigate what has become so large. One of the state auditor's main reasons for keeping health care services on the high-risk list is its lack of investigative staff.



Gavin Newsom

According to the auditor's report, while Medi-Cal spending has ballooned 117% over the last 10 years, the number of health care services investigative staff per billion dollars spent has dropped 57%. The department currently has just 0.73 people to investigate every billion dollars in Medi-Cal payments, compared with 1.69 investigators in 2016. It's no wonder the department is at "substantial" risk of making inappropriate payments over the next year and has "failed" to follow up on cases where all fingers point to fraud.

Californians will likely never know just how much they're spending each year on fraudsters, but the state attorney general's office estimates that the amount stolen from taxpayers through Medi-Cal fraud could reach billions of dollars annually. The Department of Justice may make California look bad when it goes after large health care fraud schemes in the state, but California has earned its reputation for fraud all on its own.

AGENDA

From page 16A

with labor negotiators regarding the city administrator's contract.

After Monday's meeting, city hall, at 662 Monte Verde St., will host its traditional Election Day celebration in the council chambers from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. All are welcome.

For more information about both meetings, including full agendas and instructions for participating in person or online, visit ci.carmel.ca.us and click on the "Meetings" tab.

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RITA PATEL

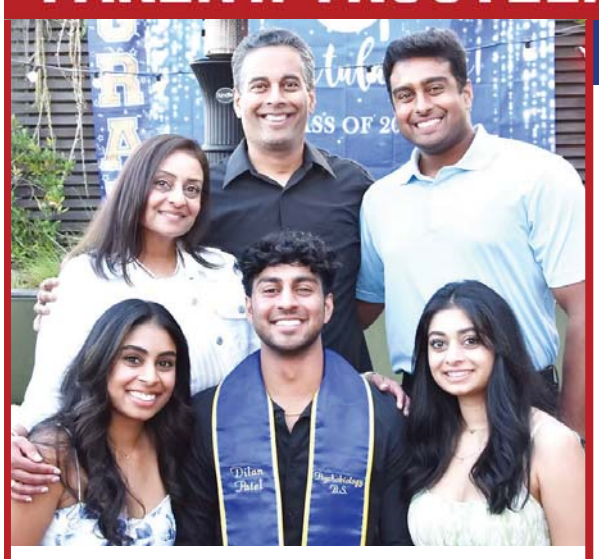
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FIRE

From page 1A

engines and two ladder trucks quickly arrived at the scene. A spot fire was reportedly burning nearby at Avant Garden, along with some wood at M.J. Murphy's. Reports indicated that nobody was injured. "Fire crew personnel and other emergency workers responded and are holding it down well," one man commented.

A few hours later, Jerome's made a grim announcement.

"It is with great sadness that we report an ongoing fire at the Center Street Marketplace," the market reported on Facebook. "Many thanks to our heroic firefighters and first responders who are actively fighting a fire that started sometime last night. Our hearts are with our neighbors whose businesses have been devastated by this fire."

Yet somehow, the market escaped with only minor smoke damage.

Pet clinic aids families

Someone was living in the office building when the fire started, according to reports, as was another person in a house damaged by the fire. Carmel Valley Veterinary Hospital announced Wednesday afternoon that it was collecting essential items for two families.

"This morning, two local families were tragically displaced by a devastating fire, losing everything they own," the pet hospital said. "We will be grateful for all donations, including clothing, toiletries, household essentials, gift cards and money. Let's come together to support our neighbors during this heartbreaking time and remind these families that they are not alone."

As of Wednesday afternoon, Carmel Valley Road was closed between Village Drive and Paso Hondo because of firefighting operations.

In a television interview, Justin Lindquist of the Monterey County Regional Fire District described the office building that burned as "old" and lacking sprinklers.

At least four art studios and galleries were damaged in the blaze. The owner of one of them, glass artist Nick Leonoff, said his space would be closed "until further notice."

"Thank you to all the first responders who showed up this morning to help our Center Street community," the artist said. "Thank you for all who have reached out to offer support."

Leonoff shared dramatic video footage online of firefighters firing a water cannon into Alan Masaoka's studio at 4:18 a.m. "At this moment I realized our whole building was in jeopardy, and we started to save the artwork in my gallery four doors down," he recalled.

Three fundraisers on GoFundMe have been started to help fire victims. One, titled "Help Stained Glass Artist Alan Masaoka After Studio Loss," had raised more than $13,000 in less than 24 hours.

"Our wonderful stained glass artist and friend has suffered the shocking total loss of his studio," said Diane Dreissen, who started the fundraiser. "Everything, including work in progress, was lost."

Another campaign is raising funds for Carmel Valley Ink Body Arts, which was destroyed by the fire. "They lost everything they worked so hard for," wrote Gisella Albarran, who organized the fundraiser.

Seeking a new space

Stephen Gillilan, whose studio offered massage therapy, craniosacral therapy and herbal remedies, also launched a fundraiser.

"My work studio was gutted by the fire," Gillilan said. "I am struggling with the loss of the beautiful, healing space I created for my clients."

Another artist who had a studio in the building is now seeking a new space. "The building is still standing, but so much damage was done to my studio and the surrounding offices and studios that we will have to relocate," Nina Temple said.

While some business owners face a very challenging road ahead, others said they were grateful that the fire left their galleries or studios untouched and expressed empathy for their neighbors.

"We are very fortunate to have survived the Carmel Valley Village Fire on Center Street," Rombi Wines said. "Our hearts and prayers go out to our great friends and neighbors who are navigating through losses during this difficult time. We wish to thank the courageous firefighters who heroically worked to fight this fire."

Chance of surviving

The Carmel Valley Association expressed its gratitude to firefighters Thursday for their efforts and urged people to support those who lost their businesses.

"We are deeply grateful that no lives were lost, and appreciative of the vigorous firefighting response that confined the damage," the group said in its weekly newsletter. "At the same time, we mourn terrible losses to Center Street businesses, a treasured mix of local services, gift and specialty shops, and craft workshops. This devastating blow has hit at the worst possible time, right before the peak commerce season that runs from Halloween through New Year's Day. The path to recovery is unclear in these early days, but we know that these businesses will need our full-throttle support if they are to have a chance at surviving."



PHOTO/CAL FIRE

A ladder truck gives firefighters the high ground in a battle against an early morning fire Wednesday in Carmel Valley Village.

Jerome's reopened Thursday morning.

"It is with the deepest gratitude that we reopen the market this morning in service to our community," the grocery store announced. "Miraculously, the market was spared thanks to the heroic efforts of our first responders. We are deeply saddened by the tragedy of yesterday's fire, and our hearts go out to our friends and neighbors who have lost their offices, businesses and homes. We hope to join our neighbors in their efforts to rebuild what was lost in this devastating fire."

Scott Anderson of Monterey County Regional Fire told The Pine Cone that the cause of the fire is under investigation.

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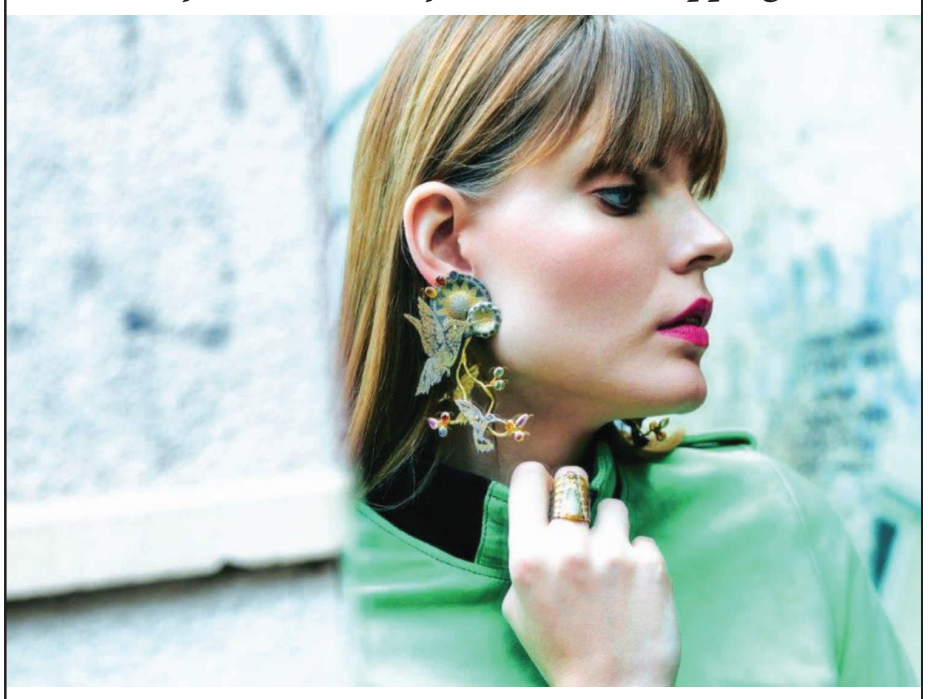
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MAYOR

From page 27A

does raise a question: Have our accumulated protections made it harder to sustain the community we want?

■ When protections become obstacles

Each rule was adopted to protect something we value. Together, they can turn a reasonable proposal into an exhausting undertaking. A shop selling its own branded nuts and retail goods encounters our limits on food stores and restaurants. A coffee business using bottled water remains caught in a water dispute. Others face sprinkler and ADA restroom upgrades triggered by a change of use.

Requirements come from Carmel, the state and other agencies. Fire safety, accessibility and water conservation matter. But meeting those requirements can involve complicated projects, mounting bills and uncertain completion dates.

The city council and commissions also spend substantial time navigating these requirements, leaving less time to plan Carmel's future. In the end, these obstacles affect residents and influence what services are available and who can build a life here.

■ Residential for whom?

The statement behind the city council dais describes Carmel as primarily a residential community. Do our decisions support that goal? We want artists, teachers, first responders and working families here, yet suitable housing is beyond their reach. Are our housing rules creating practical opportunities to build homes they can afford?

Parking affects residents, workers and visitors alike. When adequate parking is unavailable, residents struggle to shop, workers struggle to reach their jobs and visitors circle our streets. Residential neighborhoods absorb the overflow. Simply calling ourselves a residential community doesn't substitute for addressing how Carmel functions today.

■ Choosing what to protect

Carmel needs rules. Our architecture, forest and village character deserve protection. But circumstances change. Early Carmel leader Perry Newberry opposed paving our roads; few would want that policy today.

We also found that home addresses benefit public safety and help us respond to changing circumstances.

The city council and our commissions should review local rules affecting business openings, housing, visitors and parking, listening to applicants, residents and staff as time spent in hearings mounts. What does each rule protect? Is it working? Could its purpose be achieved more simply? How does it interact with other requirements?

Our dedicated staff deserve clear, workable rules and support to administer them. The review should identify practical changes, assign responsibility and set a timetable so these questions lead to action.

The goal is a village where a beloved bar can find a new home, a new business has a clear path to opening, a teacher can live near her school, and residents can park and shop in their own town.

WAYMISH? With fresh leadership in place and a new city administrator expected in the coming months, let's choose what to protect and make it easier to build a life here.

I would not trade places with any other city. Carmel has a wonderful future ahead, and I hope you'll help our city government shape it.

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

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



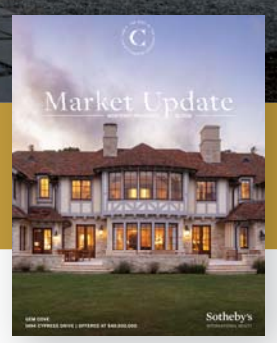








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3Q2026 MARKET UPDATE

Carmel Highlands | Nic Canning | 831.241.4458

Carmel Highlands recorded 4 sales totaling $27.9M in the third quarter, matching last quarter's transaction count while more than doubling its $12M sales volume. Two distinctive properties drove that increase: a modern oceanfront home on Yankee Point Drive closed at $9.9M, and a rare, expansive compound on Fern Canyon Road sold for $11.5M. Together, they accounted for nearly 77% of the quarter's dollars invested, each attracting a buyer seeking a very specific Highlands offering.

Both transactions involved meaningful negotiation, but their discounts appear more reflective of the individual properties and circumstances than a broader shift in values. Average days on market for sold properties increased to 182 from 50 last quarter, heavily influenced by Fern Canyon's extended marketing period. Elsewhere, we represented the Sellers on a turn-key San Remo Rd property that found a buyer in just 12 days, illustrating that appropriately positioned homes can still move quickly.



Fires just south of the Highlands appeared to interrupt deal flow during the quarter, as access challenges and buyer concerns added friction to an already selective market. Inventory remained steady at 11 active listings, though specialized offerings continue to require careful pricing and the right buyer.

Two properties offered below $2.6M remain under contract, with closings anticipated early on in the 4th quarter. Looking ahead, limited oceanfront inventory continues to constrain activity, leaving buyers seeking the Highlands' most coveted coastal settings with few options.

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The Carmel Pine Cone

Section 2

Playoffs to showcase top local athletes in many sports — especially golf

Peninsula Sports

By DENNIS TAYLOR

CENTRAL COAST Section playoffs in three girls sports begin over the next four days, while teams in five other fall sports move into postseason action over the next two weekends.

Seedings and first-round pairings were announced Thursday for the girls volleyball tournament, along with tee times for girls golf.

First-round volleyball games are scheduled for Saturday. Carmel, a Gabilan Division team, and Stevenson, the Mission Division champion, are likely qualifiers for the CCS Division 4 bracket.



Sophomore Melinda Ma (left) and junior Allison Chan are returning starters for the defending champion Pirates as they prepare for this week's CCS tournament.

Stevenson's talent-rich girls golf team is a favorite to repeat as CCS champion Tuesday at Laguna Seca Golf Ranch. The Pirates won last year's tournament by 15 strokes. Santa Catalina, which has one of the best teams in school history, also figures to contend against the section's top schools. The tournament qualifies three full teams for the NorCal Championships.

The Pirates sent a message to some of California's best teams in September, finishing second among 26 teams at the Helen Lengfeld Memorial in San Jose and third in the 12-team Crazy Horse Classic in Salinas. On Oct. 8, they defeated CCS and NorCal rival Valley Christian by 10 strokes at Spyglass Hill, Stevenson's home course.

Talent-rich team

Head coach Chris Mills will have a challenging task choosing a six-player CCS team from a roster that includes 2025 postseason veterans Lucinda Wu, Allison Chan and Melinda Ma, as well as Leah Homsy, Charise Thain, Katherine Chen and Emma Mao. All contributed significantly to the team's tournament results.

Wu, a senior, Chan, a junior, and Ma, a sophomore, helped the 2025 Pirates finish third at the state tournament, where Wu placed fifth individually.

On Monday, Stevenson overpowered the rest of the league at Laguna Seca Golf Ranch, the site of the CCS tournament, winning the PCAL postseason tournament by 45 strokes over second-place Santa Catalina.

Wu was the medalist, shooting 1 under par.



PHOTOS/KERRY BELSER

Lucinda Wu, a senior this year, helped Stevenson to a third-place finish at the 2025 girls state golf championships.

■ Volleyball playoffs for Carmel, Stevenson

Pacific Grove (24-4 overall) was 13-0 in Gabilan Division matches, with one match remaining, after Monday's victory over Carmel.

Led by setter Aspen Ashe, libero Hallie Crabbe, outside hitter Julie Watkins and 6-foot-1 middle blocker Maddie Willoughby, Carmel (20-8 overall) took a 10-3 league record into Wednesday's regular-season finale at Palma. The result was unavailable at press time.

Under first-year head coach David Crabbe, the Padres also compiled a 10-5 record against nonleague opponents. They defeated Willow Glen (22-8), Santa Cruz (20-8), King City (17-6), Sobrato (15-7), Leland (14-8), Soquel (17-12) and Stevenson (12-5).

Stevenson (13-4 overall) took a 13-0 division record into Wednesday's Mission Division finale against Soledad. The Pirates began the season winless against five nondivision opponents, all from the Gabilan Division. Those early-season losses came against Palma, Santa Catalina, Carmel and Gabilan champion Pacific Grove.

Since then, the Pirates have thrived, led by front-row power from Sienna Fozzati and Olive Furmenak, who have nearly 250 combined kills. setting from Brennecke Daley and Crete Rosenau, who have more than 370 combined assists, net defense from Clare Brandler and Caroline Bufkin, who have more than 30 combined blocks, back-row play from Gaby Tight, Ashley

Continues next page

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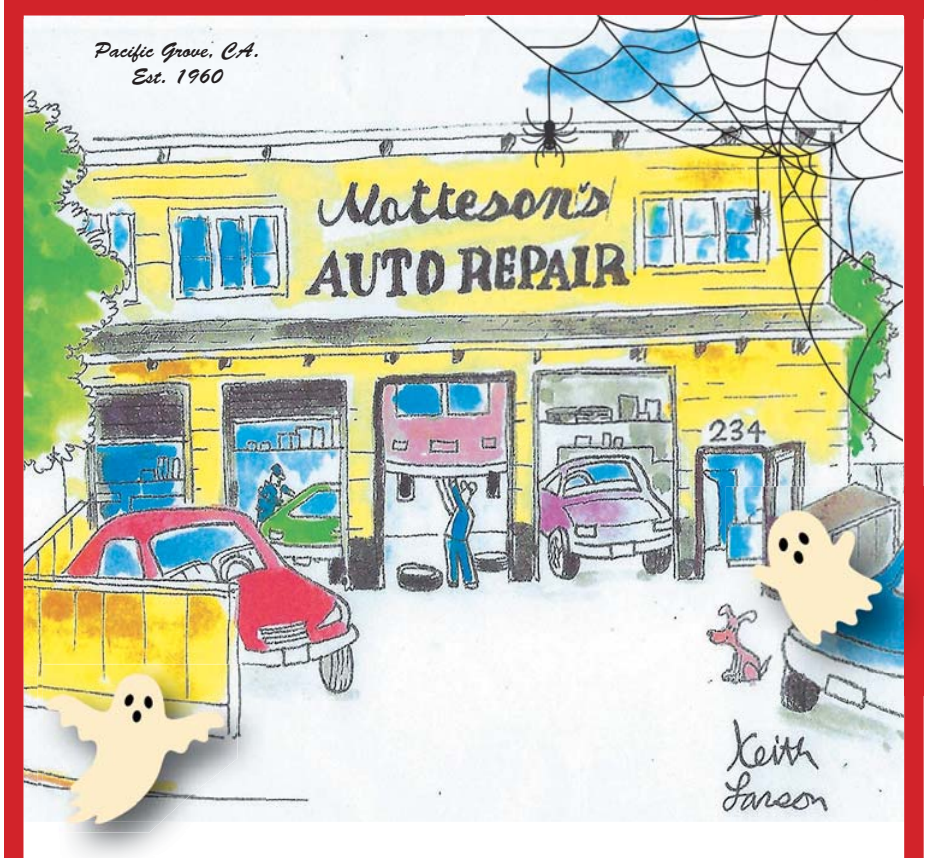
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From previous page

Dalhamer and Daley, who have more than 400 combined digs, and serving from Tight and Daley, who have more than 75 combined aces.

■ Water polo

Brackets will be announced Monday. The CCS tournament begins Nov. 7 for both boys and girls.

In the girls division, Stevenson (15-9 overall) won the PCAL title with a 6-0 record, ahead of Monterey (5-1) and Santa Catalina (4-2). All three teams could earn playoff berths.



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

A talented, CCS-bound Carmel volleyball team includes (from left) Julie Watkins, Aspen Ashe, Hannah Drew and Hallie Crabbe.

The Pirates have won three CCS Division 2 championships in the past four years, including the 2025 title.

Santa Catalina (9-10 overall) qualified for CCS in each of the past two seasons.

Stevenson's statistical leaders include Lyla Honegger (78 goals), Charlotte Morrow (61) and Kate Solomon (44). Colette Duarte (26 steals), Anna Bates (19) and Morrow (18) lead in steals. Goalkeepers Adi Smith (78 saves) and Makayla Schnitzer (57) lead in saves.

Santa Catalina's Taylor Connolly led the Cougars with a league-high 84 goals and 60 steals. Violet Bradley had a PCAL-high 51 assists, three more than Connolly. Emerson Adamski's 214 saves led all PCAL goalkeepers.

Stevenson and Carmel's boys teams are seeking deep playoff runs after strong seasons atop the PCAL. The Pirates (7-0) finished ahead of Carmel (6-1), thanks to a 10-7 victory on Oct. 1 in their only head-to-head meeting this season.

Freshman Brooks Honegger (84 goals and 46 steals), Reed Czerny (43 assists) and goalkeeper Ze' Franz (180 saves) led the Pirates to an 18-5 overall record.

Carmel (16-7) has been paced offensively by Callan Tescher (93 goals, 40 assists and 28 steals) and Sam Balas (85 goals and 23 steals), along with goalkeeper August Hohman (133 saves).

■ Field hockey

Brackets will be announced Monday, but Carmel's hopes for a postseason berth might hinge on Wednesday's regular-season finale against first-place Stevenson. Carmel likely needed a victory over the unbeaten-in-league Pirates, who beat the Padres 9-0 in September.

The Padres entered the week tied for second with Hollister, both at 7-2-1. Hollister held the tiebreaker after a 4-0 victory over Carmel on Sept. 3. The teams tied 1-1 in their second meeting. The CCS field hockey tournament begins Nov. 7.

■ Other sports

■ Football brackets will be released Nov. 8. The playoffs begin Nov. 13-14 at home sites.

■ Team tennis brackets will be released

Continues next page



From previous page

Nov. 7. The tournament begins Nov. 10 at home sites. ■ The CCS cross country championships are scheduled for Nov. 14 at Crystal Springs Cross Country Course in Belmont.

■ PCAL cross country

Carmel senior Jasper Bolante enters Saturday's PCAL cross country championships at Toro Park with the fastest qualifying time in the Gabilan Division over 3 miles: 14 minutes, 44.6 seconds. He figures to be pushed by Hollister senior Luis Perez Prieto (14:45.4), Monte Vista Christian sophomore Owen Beckman (14:57.6) and teammate Henry Bartle, a Carmel freshman (15:11.4). Another Hollister senior, Michael Briano (15:15.0), also could contend.

Bolante will be the defending champion after winning last year's Mission Division race in 15:57.0. Beckman placed sixth in the 2025 Gabilan race in 16:02.

Carmel junior Jasmin Jin placed fifth in the Mission Division girls race last fall in 20:06.5. She ranks fifth again this season, with a season-best time of 20:09.6.

Stevenson junior Landyn Martis (21:07.8) finished eighth, and senior Julianna Cullers (21:52.5) finished 11th.

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



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Stevenson won the Mission Division crown with help from Stella Ellmore (left), Gaby Tight (center), and Caroline Bufkin.

BARBARA JEAN RISING HART

Barbara Jean Rising Hart passed away peacefully in her sleep at 9:15 p.m. on July 9, 2026, at age 90. She was surrounded by her immediate family at her home in Roseville, where they lovingly kept vigil and held her hand as she took her last breath.





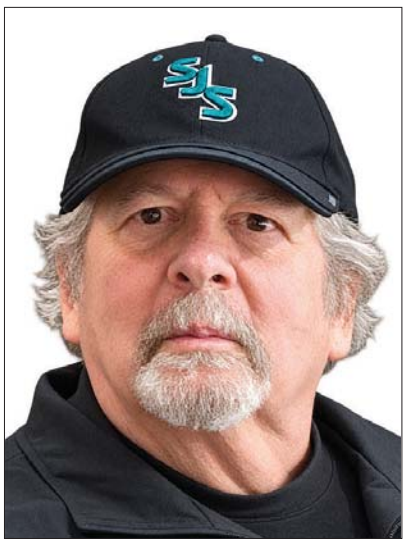
She is survived by her husband, Ren Hart; son, Lee Hart; daughter, Laura Forlini, and her husband, Todd Forlini; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. All attended Barbara and Ren's 70th wedding anniversary celebration on June 6, just one month before her death.

Barbara lived a full, rich life. She supported her husband during his military service through two wars and moved her family from base to base with strength and determination. She enjoyed many wonderful family vacations, participated with her family in successful real estate ventures and lived life exactly as she wished.

Barbara met Ren when their mothers brought them together in San Francisco. It was love at first sight for the tall, handsome soldier and the petite feminine beauty. Their love grew through a shared passion for sports, including golf, tennis, water skiing, snow skiing and sailing. Barbara also enjoyed quiet moments spent reading, gardening, playing the piano, painting and appreciating the serenity of nature in and around her home.

Ren and Barbara lived for years in San Francisco, where she was an active member of the garden club, book club and Daughters of the American Revolution. While living in Pebble Beach, Barbara enjoyed playing tennis at the Spanish Bay Club, golfing at courses around Monterey Bay, attending gala events with the Colonial Dames Society and entertaining friends at their home near Bird Rock Beach.

Barbara was a staunch advocate for every member of her family. Her strong and loving presence will be greatly missed by all whose lives she touched.



TIMOTHY JOSEPH GORDON

July 30, 1948 – Sept. 27, 2026

Tim was born in Sacramento, California, to Basil and Eloise Gordon. He spent his youth in California and attended the University of Arizona, where he majored in English.

As a young man, Tim enjoyed the outdoors, rock climbing, equestrian jumping and traveling. His many interests included literature, sports, carpentry, building and design, and automobiles. He also had a special fondness for his four-legged friends.

Tim made his home in Carmel, where he spent most of his life establishing himself as a general building and design contractor of the highest integrity. His passing has left a void in the building and design community.

He is survived by his two nieces, Christine and Noelle, and leaves behind many clients and friends, as well as his beloved feline companions, Lula, Lily and Hello Kitty.

Memorial donations in Tim's honor may be made to an animal charity of your choice.



THOMAS 'LITTLE BEAR' NASON

Thomas "Little Bear" Nason passed away peacefully at his home in Carmel Valley on Aug. 1, 2026, at age 66.

Tom was born in Carmel on May 29, 1960, to Fred and Ann Nason of Carmel Valley. He was the youngest son of four children, with siblings Gail, Fred Jr. and Marion.

Tom married his longtime love, Cara Yuma, on Oct. 22, 1983. They had two children, Bryce and Laurel.

Tom is survived by his wife, Cara; his son, Bryce; his daughter-in-law, Giovanna; his granddaughters, Quincy and Hazel; his grandson, Waylon; his daughters, Laurel and Jill; his sisters; and many nieces and nephews.

Tom dedicated his life to his family, friends, heritage and the land. He became tribal chairman and president of the Esselen Tribe in 1993. Through his efforts and guidance, he helped countless people on trail rides, during forest fires and on spiritual journeys. He worked toward a better future for everyone he knew.

One of Tom's greatest accomplishments as tribal chairman was helping return ancestral land to the Esselen Tribe. Through his efforts, an entire people gained a voice and a place to call their own.

Please join us for a celebration of Thomas Little Bear Nason's life from 1 to 5 p.m. on Nov. 8, 2026, at the Trail and Saddle Club, 85 E. Garzas Road, Carmel Valley. The gathering will include speakers and acknowledgments, with light refreshments and snacks provided.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Esselen Tribe of Monterey County.



Bettina Elaine Hotelling

Dec. 10, 1933 – Aug. 22, 2026

A CELEBRATION OF HER LIFE
Saturday, Nov. 7, 2026, at 2 p.m.
Monterey First Presbyterian Church
501 Eldorado St., Monterey, California

Reception to follow in Fellowship Hall.

To publish a legal notice in The Carmel Pine Cone contact
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(Se habla Español)

LIVES

From page 27A

Young Museum in San Francisco, he became acquainted with Tony and Suzie White (née Crocker). "They wanted me to come work for them. I thought that was an interesting idea," he said. The Whites, avid art collectors, had bought a former bank on Dolores Street — now known as the China Art Building — and asked Seavey to curate an exhibition of California art with an emphasis on local painters for a planned Carmel Museum of Art.

The couple agreed to fund it for the first year but intended to transfer it to the city, which, as it turned out, did not share their vision. Seavey recalled then-council member Gunnar Norberg insisting, "Carmel has enough art." Without the city's backing, the collection was donated to a museum in Oakland, and the building was sold.

Seavey went back to the San Francisco Bay area and worked as curator for the San Mateo Arts Council until he decided he wanted a better education. "So I went to Stanford and studied art and architecture at the graduate level," he said. Degree in hand, he moved to Carmel and branched out on his own as a historic preservation consultant.

He said one of his happiest experiences was working for the county. Elmarie Dyke, known as "Mrs. Pacific Grove," approached him about becoming the county historical coordinator in the parks department. "I was able to bring my existing skill set into that game," he said. He said he stayed for about seven or eight years but left after a conflict over his duties. "There was a difference between private interest and public good," he said. And, as the Marine Corps taught him, he always protects the public good.

Hathaway collection

Seavey has been an independent historic preservationist ever since. He has worked on countless projects to protect the historic character of the Monterey Peninsula. He sits on the board of Deetjen's Big Sur Inn and was instrumental in getting it listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

He was also brought in as a witness for Clint Eastwood when he bought and restored Mission Ranch, and he was called in to advise the Naval Postgraduate School when it built its museum in the historic Hotel Del Monte.

It was Seavey working closely with a couple others to rescue the estate of Pat Hathaway — the well-known local photographer whose impressive collection of his own and others' work numbered more than half a million historic pictures — after Hathaway died unexpectedly, leaving

Continues next page





SHARRY SCHMIDT LAUTER

March 18, 1951 ❖ Oct. 1, 2026

Sharry Schmidt Lauter was tragically taken from us on Oct. 1, 2026. She was born March 18, 1951, to Daniel and Loretta Schmidt of Turlock, California. The second of three children, she grew up with her brothers, Michael and Thomas. She graduated from Turlock High School and earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of San Francisco in 1974, which she later put to use in her teaching career. More importantly, while living in San Francisco, Sharry met her future husband and life partner, Vince Lauter, whom she married in 1973.

Sharry was a bright light in the world, with a radiant smile — an unforgettable figure who forged lifelong bonds and exuded her trademark warmth, optimism and compassion wherever life took her. She was her family's rock, raising three sons as Vince's career with the Department of Defense moved the family around the world before they settled in Monterey in 1993. A devout Catholic, she had uncompromising integrity and brought joy to those fortunate enough to have her in their lives. Sharry was also known for hosting large family gatherings and for her exceptional cooking. More than anything, she deeply loved and cared for her family, who returned that love and care. She cherished every moment she spent with her seven grandchildren.

Sharry was preceded in death by her parents, Daniel and Loretta Schmidt. She is survived by her husband, Vince; sons, Vincent III (Morgan), Michael (Jody) and Daniel (Katherine); seven grandchildren, Penelope, Olivia, Millie, Valentina, Wesley, Donovan and Rocco; and brothers, Thomas (Clara) and Michael (Dana).

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Monday, Nov. 9, 2026, at Carmel Mission Basilica. Interment will follow at 1 p.m. at San Carlos Cemetery in Monterey.

JAMES NORMAN PRESS

Feb. 2, 1949 – Oct. 15, 2026

James Norman Press, a loving husband, brother, stepfather, grandfather and accomplished athlete, died Oct. 15, 2026, leaving a legacy of determination, passion and deep love for his family.

Born in Chicago on Feb. 2, 1949, Jim lived a vibrant, full life, balancing a successful career with extraordinary athletic achievements.

Education and Career

Jim earned a Bachelor of Science in marketing from Indiana University in 1971, followed by a Master of Public Administration in 1974.

His sharp mind and dedication led to a successful career in finance and accounting, where his expertise and integrity were widely respected.

A Lifelong Athlete

An exceptionally gifted and passionate runner, Jim achieved athletic success over many decades. In 1966, he won the Illinois state cross-country championship.

He carried that competitive spirit to Indiana University, where he ran on two Big Ten championship teams. He continued competing into adulthood, eventually becoming a U.S. masters cross-country champion.

His discipline and determination also led him to complete the grueling Ironman triathlon in Hawaii.

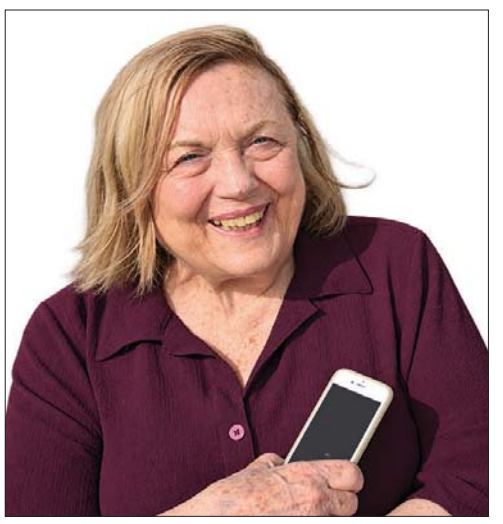
Later in life, Jim traded running trails for fairways. He became an avid golfer, and few accomplishments made him prouder than his five holes-in-one.

Family and Legacy

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Norman Ipsen Press and Eleanor Whalen Press, and his sister, Nancy Lee Murphy.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Carol Lingler Press; his brother, Jeffrey Whalen Press; his stepdaughters, Lisa Coppedge and Michelle Storm; and his four treasured grandchildren, Shelby Storm, Nicholas Storm, Chase Coppedge and Will Coppedge.

Jim's drive, warmth and enduring spirit will live on in the hearts of his family, friends and the many people whose lives he touched.



MARY MARGARET 'PEGGY' FEICHT

Mary Margaret "Peggy" Feicht, born Aug. 22, 1942, passed away Oct. 14, 2026. She was a beloved daughter, sister, aunt and friend. She was preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Marie Feicht, and her sister, Kathleen Feicht. Peggy is survived by her sister, Pamela (Ira) Scheer; nieces, Laura (Jon) Dimitrijevic and Jessica Scheer (Jason Beauregard); and great-nephews, Oliver and Everett Dimitrijevic.

Born in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, Peggy spent her first 15 years in nearby Reynoldsville. When the opportunity for a better life beckoned, her parents moved the family to Ottawa, Ohio, so they could afford to provide their children with a college education.

Peggy graduated from Ottawa Public High School in 1960 and earned a bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University. She began her career in the laboratory at St. Rita's Hospital in Lima, Ohio, before moving to Carmel, California, in 1970. She lived there for 40 years, working as a laboratory scientist at Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital until her retirement in 2010. Shortly afterward, she moved to Toledo, Ohio, to be closer to family. Because she loved her work, she returned to the laboratory and continued working as long as her health permitted.

Following her retirement, she found great joy in traveling with family, visiting Europe and the Caribbean multiple times. Peggy loved Persian cats, eclectic fabrics and iridescent decor. Sober for 35 years, she found meaning in connecting with others on the path to sobriety.

A gathering in Peggy's memory will be held from 2 to 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 24, at Westerwood, 5800 Forest Hills Blvd., Columbus, Ohio. Burial will be at noon Friday, Nov. 27, at Harman Cemetery in Gilboa, Ohio, next to her parents and sister.

In lieu of flowers, friends are welcome to honor Peggy's love of cats by contributing to their local humane society.

From previous page

neither a will nor family. Seavey, who successfully petitioned the court to administer the estate, turned the collection over to the Monterey County Historical Society, which named him Preservationist of the Year for his work.

Seavey has dedicated his professional life to the documentation and historic preservation of resources and landmarks on the Monterey Peninsula and the surrounding area. He has been recognized with a long list of honors such as the President's Award for Advocacy or Outreach from the California Preservation Foundation given earlier this year, and he is an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects, among numerous others.

As for his personal life, he said, "I got lucky and married a beautiful woman who was an artist," Seavey said of his late wife, Marie. "I have three daughters and three granddaughters. I'll never escape the civilizing influence of women," he said.

He and Marie passed on to their daughters the philosophy he lives by, borrowed from the 1958 play, "Auntie Mame." "Life is a banquet, and most poor suckers are starving to death." Seavey, for his part, enjoys the banquet — and making sure it's around for everyone to enjoy for years to come.

SYBIL-FRANCES KIMBRIG LEVIN

Sybil-Frances Kimbrig Levin passed away peacefully in her sleep on Friday, Oct. 23, 2026, surrounded by family and friends, both in person and virtually. Though her passing at 98½ was not unexpected, her indefatigable nature always made it seem that she might somehow beat the odds.



Sybil-Frances lived an awe-inspiring life, epitomizing what scientists call a "super-ager." Educated in a one-room schoolhouse, she graduated from high school at 16 and went on to attend Cornell University and Pratt Institute, ultimately earning a master's degree in nutrition from New York University. Her uncle ran for vice president of the United States, and her parents were community leaders. Education, intellectual curiosity and public service became enduring hallmarks of her family across generations.

After holding various positions with New York City and New York state, she married Dr. Norman Balfour Levin. Norman's varied and fascinating career, usually centered in Washington, D.C., took the family around the world for decades before they settled in Carmel for his work at the Defense Language Institute. A longtime Carmel resident, Sybil-Frances was well known and dearly loved by many throughout the Monterey Peninsula.

Her extraordinary life brought her into contact with Ruth Bader Ginsburg, John F. Kennedy, Henrietta Szold, Dr. Ruth Westheimer, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Ted and Joan Kennedy, President Habib Bourguiba, artist Arthur Dove and countless ambassadors and other distinguished figures. She danced with presidents and hosted dozens of government officials, yet her interests and friendships extended far beyond politics and diplomacy.

Sybil-Frances became an only child at 9 when her baby sister was tragically struck and killed by a truck. She later became a younger sibling when her parents took in a slightly older refugee from Vienna during World War II. She loved her cousins fiercely and treasured family throughout her life.

She possessed a remarkable gravitational pull: People from all walks of life confided their secrets and personal troubles to her. She listened, cared and encouraged, bringing intelligence, warmth and genuine curiosity to every encounter.

Her adventures and accomplishments were equally remarkable. She pumped gasoline, led Girl Scout and Brownie troops, hitchhiked with a prime minister's niece, built a soda shop business, traveled the world and lived in numerous countries. She planned school lunch programs in New York state, served as a museum docent on both coasts and could run circles around most people when discussing political affairs and investments. She also gave generously to dozens of charitable organizations.

On the Monterey Peninsula, Sybil-Frances was a founding member of the Monterey Bay Aquarium, worked tirelessly on the board of Hidden Valley Music Center and served as a docent at the Monterey Museum of Art. Her commitment to education, culture, the arts and community enriched the lives of many.

Above all, Sybil-Frances was an exemplary grandmother, deeply loved by all her grandchildren. Her intellect, adventurous spirit, generosity and genuine interest in others touched generations of family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances.

She is survived by her daughter, Gnarity Kimbrig Burke; son-in-law, Colman Joseph Burke; grandson, Austin Jacob Burke; granddaughter, Jasper Elizabeth Burke, and Jasper's spouse, Elisa Parskey McEntee Burke; many beloved extended family members; and a multitude of friends, both recent and longstanding.

Sybil-Frances cared for and encouraged countless people throughout her extraordinary life. Her wisdom, generosity, indomitable spirit and loving presence will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

In lieu of flowers, the family invites those wishing to honor Sybil-Frances' memory to make a donation to Hidden Valley Music Seminars in Carmel Valley.

PAT MIDDLEBROOK MARTIN

May 31, 1942 • Nov. 1, 2025



Pat, my beloved friend,

I am comforted to know that you are with the Lord Jesus!

I miss you so much, but we will see each other again someday and continue our wonderful walks together on the trails in heaven!

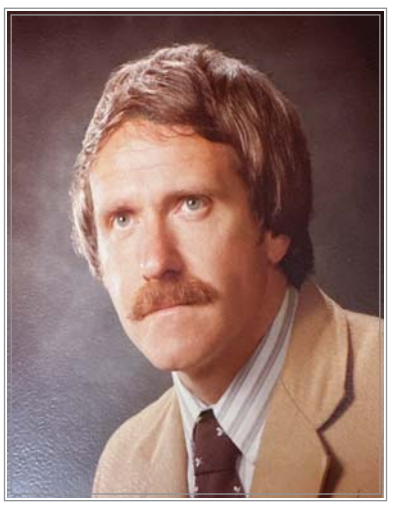
Love,
Helene

To place an obituary for your loved one, contact anne@carmelpinecone.com or (831) 274-8654

DR. GEORGE HAMILTON PENN II

April 25, 1939 ❖ Aug. 1, 2026

Dr. George Hamilton Penn II of Monterey, a beloved pediatrician and devoted father, died Aug. 1, 2026, at age 87. He leaves behind a legacy of caring for others and a family that will forever cherish his memory.



The oldest of three children, George grew up in Washington, Pennsylvania, and attended East Washington High School, where he played the trumpet and tuba, served as president of his sophomore, junior and senior classes and graduated as valedictorian. At Washington & Jefferson College, he was inducted into both the chemistry and biology honor societies and was a proud member of Delta Tau Delta. He stayed in touch with several fraternity brothers until his death.

After graduating, George attended the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University, where he won the Waldo E. Nelson Prize for outstanding work in pediatrics and edited "The Skull," the medical school's yearbook. He later joined the Navy's submarine service and attained the rank of lieutenant commander while serving aboard the USS Woodrow Wilson. He began his career in pediatrics at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Long Beach and eventually established a medical practice in Monterey, joining Drs. Bates, Branson and Black. With the Pediatric Group of Monterey and, later, Stanford Children's Hospital, he devoted 45 years to caring for families on the Monterey Peninsula, often across multiple generations.

For George, being a pediatrician meant more than diagnosing illnesses and providing treatment; it meant putting children at ease, reassuring parents and supporting families during difficult times. The walls of his exam rooms were always covered with handwritten notes of gratitude from patients of all ages. He regularly made house calls and gave patients his home phone number, answering on days off and in the middle of the night (to his family's occasional chagrin). In addition to seeing patients at his office, George served as chairman of the Department of Medicine at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and taught as a clinical assistant professor at Stanford University School of Medicine.

Above all his professional accomplishments, George prized his family and was a devoted father of five. His children have fond memories of his sense of humor, his homemade spaghetti sauce, Sierra Club camping trips, watching "Poirot" (David Suchet, always), extensive conversations about military history, and flying in the small plane he co-owned after earning his pilot's license. George always liked to go fast, whether in a plane, an MG Midget or a red Mustang.

George is survived by his children, Mary Kate Legaspi (Kenneth) of Fresno, Michael Penn (Elizabeth) of San Carlos and Amanda Penn of Monterey; grandchildren Joshua and Alex Legaspi of Fresno; sister Mary Penn of Washington, Pennsylvania, and her sons; brother-in-law Keith Burchell (Jenell) of Marina and his family; former wife Lisbeth Dermody of Carmel Valley and her family; and extended family members and dear friends who will continue to hold his memory close. He was preceded in death by his brother, James Penn, in 1976; sons Brian Penn in 2004 and Zachary Penn in 2015; and wife, Jan Penn, in 2025.

A memorial service celebrating George's life will begin at 1 p.m. Friday, Nov. 20, 2026, at The Paul Mortuary in Pacific Grove. Please come and share your memories. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Montage Health, Stanford Children's Hospital, the Leiomyosarcoma Support & Direct Research Foundation or the Spinal Cord Injury Project.

ARTIST

From page 27A

flaming skull on her courageous and devoted father's chest.

"He's very skinny, and he was in a lot of pain," she reminisced. "The lighting was bad. It was the first tattoo I ever tried — I hadn't practiced at all. It was really, really bad. And I haven't seen it since."

When Cook paints, she watches old movies — always something she's seen many times before, so she can ignore it and focus. And she sometimes talks over her shoulder to Metcalfe, who intentionally has loud music blasting through his earbuds.

Don't bug him when he's painting.

"I feel insane when I'm not painting. I feel insane when I'm painting. And I can deal with it. Feeling crazy is part of the fun," said Metcalfe, who paints one tiny part of the painting at a time until he's satisfied. Five hours in one spot isn't unusual.

"I am the most tedious person in the world," he declares without apology. "I like to take the slowest route to wherever I need to be."

'I'm a growler — I growl at people. I don't want any input.'

Do not compliment a work in progress, Metcalfe advises.

"I'm a growler — I growl at people," he said. "I don't want any input." That warning is a surprising self-portrait from the 23-year-old Monterey High School product — a "good student" who occasionally got bad grades because "I didn't do homework."

"The growler" displays an outwardly calm demeanor, smiling easily. His bohemian spirit escapes through cheek and nose piercings, shoulder-blade-length hair and amber-tinted sunglasses he wears indoors.

But his artistic path was a rebellion.

"The family support was never really there. I'd get in trouble for doing a lot of art at home," recalled Metcalfe, who descends from "a long line of correctional officers, prison workers and military people."

'I'm a storyteller'

Wilder, who was homeschooled, earned her associate degree from Monterey Peninsula College at 17 while satisfying her high school requirements. Her next stop will be UC Santa Cruz, where she'll create her own major, likely an amalgamation of art and creative writing.

"I'm a storyteller," explained Wilder, whose dad (landscape architect Barkley David Smith) fell one credit short of a college art degree. Her mom, Mollie Mae, is an acupuncturist.

"I'd like to write and illustrate my own graphic novels, and I'd love to have pages of a published graphic novel all over the walls of a gallery someday," she dreamed.

She also aspires to create a comic strip and publish it online and to write and illustrate comic books.

But storytelling, her greatest creative outlet, has been a dominant aspiration for a significant amount of time.

"I wrote every single day during the pandemic, probably 60,000 words, when I was still in middle school," she said. "And then I joined YAC."

All three cite the group as a difference-maker during their formative years — culturally, intellectually and artistically.

For Cook, it was "an escape" during her first years in Monterey, where she moved to become a teenage caregiver for a grandfather with ALS.

For Wilder, YAC provided intense, invaluable mentorship that not only enhanced her creativity and artistic skills but also educated her on the business side of art.

For Metcalfe, it was an oasis teeming with other art makers, art lovers and art appreciators.

'That's all I needed to do'

"Art has always been, and will always be, a very important part of my life," he said. "When I'm not creating, I feel like I'm going to explode. Then I make some, and realize, 'Oh … that's all I needed to do.'"

The exhibition at Pacific Grove Art Center (568 Lighthouse Ave.) will run through Dec. 10. Visit pgartcenter.org for more information.

See examples of Wilder's work on her website at iphigeniawilder.com. Visit Instagram to see art by Metcalfe @midoriyasai101. Cook also shares her portfolio on Instagram @ravenn.c.

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

Gentrain Society Lecture
at Monterey Peninsula College

Discovering MARS



Co-sponsored by OLLI at CSUMB and the Gentrain Society at MPC. Along with the four other naked-eye-visible planets - Mercury, Venus, Jupiter and Saturn - Mars has been the source of fear and fascination for thousands of years. Due to its reddish appearance - the color of war and aggression - Mars was portrayed as the "warrior planet" by Roman and Greek astrologers. Recent exploration of the red planet by telescopes, orbiters, landers and rovers has revealed a fascinating history of a rich atmosphere, warm lakes, rivers and oceans, and possibly primitive life. Barriers to human colonization of Mars are many and formidable, but only time and technology will tell if, and when, we will be able to make Mars a second home for humanity. **Milos Radakovich** came to the U.S. from Yugoslavia at the age of 10. A graduate of San Francisco State, he moved to the local area in 1971 to further his studies in marine science at Moss Landing Marine Labs and the Biological Sonar Lab at SRI. He's been a science educator for more than 50 years, and also serves as an on-board naturalist for Celebrity Cruises.

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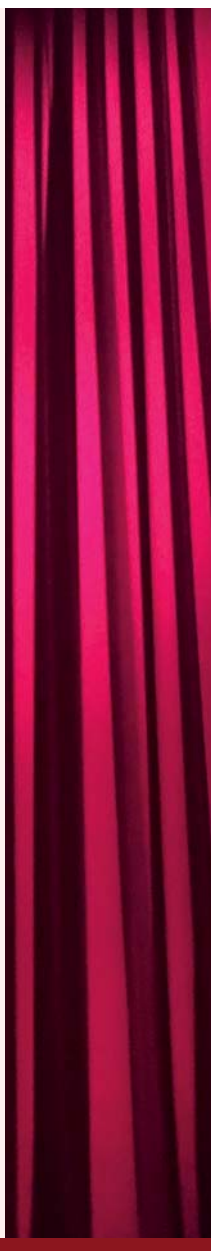
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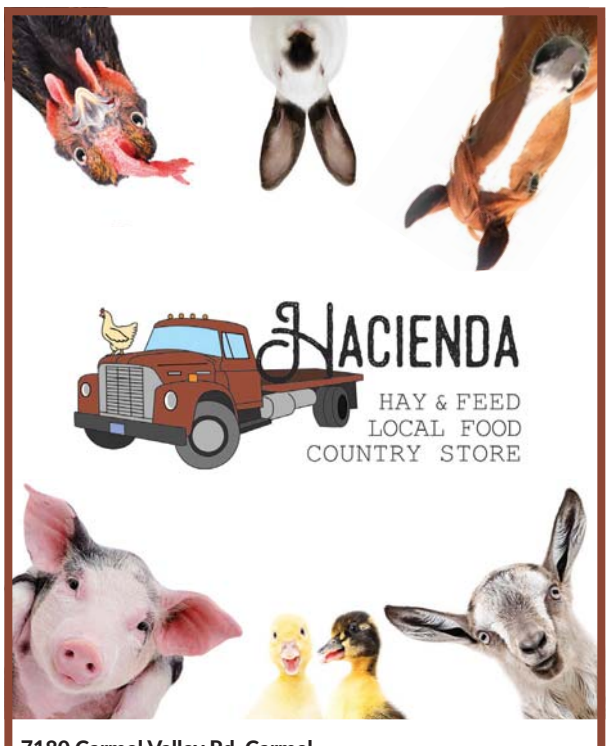


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OPINIONS

From page 28A

and assume the industry is a "golden goose." It is also easy to see small hotels that need renovation. But independent owners facing escalating labor, insurance and operating costs may have increasingly limited resources to reinvest in their properties.

Meanwhile, our competition is improving. Why wouldn't a visitor consider a beautiful new hotel in Pacific Grove, with a lower rate and easy parking, and simply drive into Carmel for the day?

We should not be smug about competition from neighboring communities. Visitors have choices. Employees have choices. And hotel owners have economic limits.

If we make operating conditions so onerous that local hotel owners decide they are better off selling, we risk replacing independently owned properties with corporate ownership that has less connection to this community. Ironically, in our determination to protect Carmel's character, we could help destroy the very thing we are trying to preserve.

The Measure M debate shouldn't simply be about whether tourists can afford a few more dollars. It should be about whether we are taking for granted the independent businesses that help define Carmel's character and assuming that visitors will always come, employees will always make the commute and local owners will always absorb one more cost.

Carmel hotels' competitive edge is not guaranteed, and policies have cumulative consequences.

Mary Crowe, *Carmel*

Hold leaders accountable

Dear Editor,

The articles, ads and letters in the last few issues of The Pine Cone advocating for and against the transient occupancy tax increase (Measure M) have been confusing, conflicting and confounding. But one thing to keep in mind about the debate: If the "facts" presented in the latest edition of The Pine Cone are accurate, then Carmel's budget has increased 64% over the past eight fiscal years (well above the rate of inflation), while hotel tax revenue has more than doubled over that same period. So the town has seen remarkably strong hotel tax receipts and increased its budget at a rate almost double the rate of core inflation over those eight years, yet it has dug itself into a budget mess that now requires — in the minds of the people at City Hall — more tax increases.

If my child repeatedly spent their allowance unwisely, then came to me asking for more and swearing up and down that this month would be different, my skepticism radar would be on high alert. When Carmel's governmental leaders ask for more money and swear it'll be used to fix failing infrastructure, my skepticism radar lights up. We have infrastructure challenges. No question. But is this the group that's really going to address them in a cost-effective, thoughtful, impactful manner? Based on recent history, my skepticism remains very high.

If Measure M passes, we need to hold our leaders accountable for transparency and meaningful results.

Chuck McKenzie, *Carmel*

A 'sensible investment'

Dear Editor,

As full-time Carmel-by-the-Sea residents, we urge our fellow residents to vote yes on Measures M and N. These measures will help maintain and improve our community while asking visitors — who make up a large share of our local economy — to contribute more toward the services and infrastructure they use.

Measure M would increase the transient occupancy tax, paid by overnight lodging guests, from 10% to 12%. That adds approximately $7 to a $350 hotel stay. Carmel's lodging tax has not increased in 20 years, and this modest adjustment would bring us in line with neighboring Monterey and Pacific Grove. Other communities popular with tourists, including Calistoga and St. Helena, charge even higher lodging tax rates.

Measure N would increase the local sales tax by 0.375 percentage points — only 19 cents on a $50 taxable purchase. It is a practical opportunity to keep more sales tax revenue in Carmel-by-the-Sea rather than allowing it to benefit another community in the county.

Together, Measures M and N are projected to generate approximately $4 million annually for Carmel-by-the-Sea. These funds can help address deferred maintenance and support improvements to our streets, sidewalks, storm drains, beaches, forests and other essential infrastructure.

Carmel-by-the-Sea is a community popular with tourists, and maintaining its beauty and infrastructure benefits everyone: residents, businesses, hotel owners and visitors. A well-maintained city protects our quality of life, strengthens our local economy and preserves the character that attracts people here.

Please join us in voting yes on Measures M and N — a sensible investment in Carmel-by-the-Sea, funded primarily by those who visit and enjoy our community.

Dylan and Tasha Witt, *Carmel*

Think of the sidewalks

Dear Editor,

Why would La Playa hotel donate $5,000 to Bobby Richards' campaign? Why have 15 hotels contributed $25,000 to convince Carmel residents not to vote for Measure M? This is more money than all three candidates running for the city council will spend on this election. The hotel owners, who don't even live in Carmel, pressured the city council for several months not to put Measure M on the ballot. Then they hired a PR firm to try to confuse Carmel residents about the facts.

Asserting that the city will lose money if Measure M passes is misguided and incorrect. The Carmel Innkeepers' own data shows that hotel occupancy has remained steady at around 70% for the past 10 years while hotel rates have nearly doubled. How can the hotel owners say that a $5 increase on a $250 hotel bill will cause visitors to stay elsewhere? The facts simply don't support it! Vote yes on Measure M. Our roads, sidewalks and city infrastructure deserve it.

Bill Karges, *Carmel*

Buder for mayor

Dear Editor,

We are pleased to write this letter in support of Hans Buder for mayor of Carmel. We are most grateful that such a talented individual is willing to devote so much time and energy to our city. He demonstrated leadership in resolving last year's electricity failure, leading the housing element workshop, examining our vulnerabilities in the event of a wildfire and focusing on our future financial health. Hans has demonstrated his commitment to Carmel. We will indeed be fortunate to have Hans as our next mayor.

Sharyn Siebert and Jeff Johnson, *Carmel*

Continues next page



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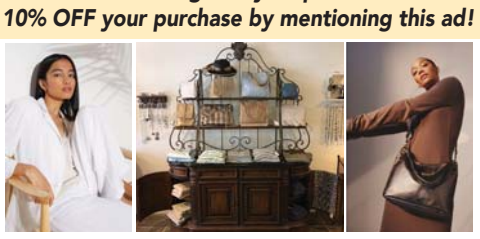


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From previous page

'Understands our community'

Dear Editor,

Hans Buder ticks all the boxes for a mayor who represents Carmel, leads meetings, understands our community and takes initiative in times of crisis and celebration. Hans deserves to be Carmel's next mayor! During a winter storm when Carmel lost power, Hans contacted PG&E, met with its representatives in the field and got answers on the spot. That's what a leader does. During his tenure on the city council, he demonstrated critical thinking and made transparent decisions that benefited Carmel. A vote for Hans Buder is a vote for Carmel's future.

Cindy Lloyd, *Carmel*

Protect Carmel with Dramov

Dear Editor,

Protecting Carmel-by-the-Sea matters. That is why we are happy to support Ali Dramov for city council. We believe effective council service calls for a consistent presence in Carmel and a firsthand understanding of daily life here, including the impact of tourism on our community. Over the past four years, we have appreciated her commitment to the position. We value the care she brings to her decisions. We want Carmel's distinctive character to endure, and we believe Ali's diligence and loyalty to the city are what we need.

Chris and Cari White, *Carmel*

Coletti for P.G. mayor

Dear Editor,

Pacific Grove voters have a real choice for their city's future in next week's election. I am supporting Luke Coletti for mayor based on his long history of achievements that have benefited the public. A pressing issue is a proposal to spend more than $10 million on a roundabout, a cost that does not include land acquisition. Coletti opposes that proposal because of inadequate funding and the existence of less intrusive alternatives to solve problems at that intersection. Those alternatives would be safer for the many schoolchildren and teenagers crossing there. The intersection is next to the high school, not far from the middle school or a nearby elementary school.

Smith supports the proposal, even though less than half the funds are available. We have seen what happens elsewhere when a town runs out of operating funds: efforts to raise taxes, elimination of city services, loss of essential employees and, in some cases, dissolution of the town itself.

Coletti spearheaded opposition to the unnecessary referendum to raise the mayor's and council members' pay in a special election this past June that cost taxpayers $63,000. The council not only refused to wait until November to avoid that expense but also hired a consultant to help pass the measure.

Also troubling about the opposition to Coletti is the involvement of a professional content creator, Quatrain, who posts on social media as just another resident without revealing her position with a marketing group. The CEO of that group describes the company's ability to combine strategy, storytelling and design for the full impact of online content. It's worrisome that our small-town election is being influenced by content creators whose agenda is not readily discernible.

Janet Gray, *Pacific Grove*

Patel for school board

Dear Editor,

I would like to express my support for Rita Patel to become a member of the Monterey County Board of Education. Here is why:

I have known Rita for many years as a friend and a trustee of CUSD. She cares about kids and wants every student to have a real chance to succeed. After 10 years on the board, Rita understands how a district really works, what helps students and what gets in the way. She will take that experience to the county and be a strong voice for our area.

Here are some key areas that our public schools and the governing MCBOE need to focus on. Rita will work to address them:

- Fair funding and less red tape. She will protect Proposition 98 school funding and cut down on state bureaucracy.
- Students who need extra support. Rita cares deeply about students in special education, alternative schools and those who don't always have support at home. She will continue to be an advocate for them.
- Better results for every student. Rita will keep working to close the achievement gap while also raising the number of students who are proficient in math, reading and writing.
- Career pathways. Rita can reimagine and expand career technical education so students have real options after high school.
- Ready for college. Rita will support students preparing for college and help them meet the rigors of university study.

As a pharmacy business owner for 20 years, she not only has a vision but can execute a plan to achieve results for students and families within the budget.

Please join me in voting for Rita Patel.

Emily Bauer, *Carmel Valley*

Surveillance cameras

Dear Editor,

Thank you for taking the time and using the ink to put before the community the Monterey County Board of Supervisors' recent wrongheaded decision on Flock cameras. Your Oct. 23 editorial was comprehensive and closed with the correct conclusion: "Control how the data is used, don't get rid of the cameras." Of course, this is right.

History is replete not only with misplaced Luddite concerns but also with mistaken fears of technology that directly put people's lives at risk. If only we could ask the French knights who faced Henry V's longbows at Agincourt. World War I pilots were denied parachutes because they were deemed unmanly. Data, too, is a defensive tool that, when marshaled correctly, has delivered unimaginable benefits. Without his famous map, London's Dr. John Snow, pushing against "systemic municipal opacity

Continues next page



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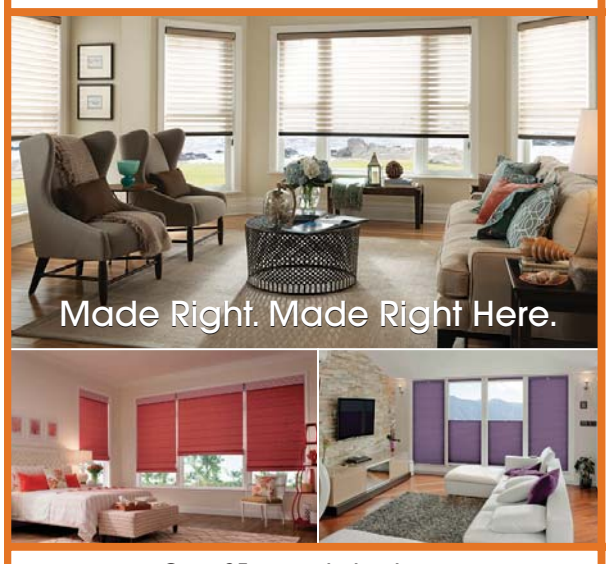
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From previous page

and severe logistical friction" in the 1850s, would have struggled to solve the mystery of waterborne cholera.

Data is our friend and a potent defensive weapon. The supervisors have thrown it away and are sleepwalking backward into history. They were told by the experts — our law enforcement personnel and the district attorney — how effective a tool this has been. Your editorial added evidentiary heft to these views. We expect our elected officials to pay attention to the opinions of the experts to make good decisions on behalf of us all. In this case, they appear to have been unable to see the bigger picture and instead have been swayed by the clamor of the uninformed.

The cellphones in our pockets track our every move and purchase with much greater precision through triangulation using cell towers. That data is hard to access. Surely it's possible to track the movement of our cars while adjusting the controls governing access to the data.

Peter Nielsen, *Pebble Beach*

School bond measure

Dear Editor,

In response to the Oct. 23 letter from the Yes on Measure I committee, I believe there is a more fundamental question taxpayers deserve to have answered: How did one of California's comparatively well-funded school districts, with declining enrollment and increasing revenue, arrive at nearly half a billion dollars in identified facilities needs?

There is also an important financial relationship worth disclosing. Campaign filings show that the Yes on Measure I committee has received thousands of dollars in contributions from architects, contractors, attorneys and other businesses, including firms that already receive substantial payments from CUSD. These companies may also be eligible to compete for work funded by a future bond. That does not establish wrongdoing, but taxpayers deserve to understand these relationships when evaluating the campaign's message.

Consider the numbers.

CUSD enrollment fell nearly 16% over the last six to seven years. During that period, annual general fund revenue increased from approximately $61.6 million to nearly $90 million.

Yet the district's facilities inventory identifies approximately $443 million in potential projects, including repairs, renovations and new construction.

Now CUSD is seeking authorization for another $250 million in bonds — little more than half of the identified needs — with estimated principal and interest payments totaling approximately $482 million.

How did we get here?

Roofs, heating systems and classrooms do not deteriorate overnight. These are predictable needs requiring preventive maintenance, responsible budgeting and long-term planning.

The Yes on Measure I letter emphasizes independent oversight and audits. Those safeguards are important, but they cannot substitute for sound financial decisions. Nor does Measure I guarantee that every project on the district's list will actually be completed.

I have been a CUSD parent since 2011. I deeply appreciate our dedicated teachers and staff, and I want every child to learn in safe, comfortable, well-maintained schools.

But supporting our schools should not mean accepting financial decisions without scrutiny, particularly when taxpayers are being asked to assume decades of additional debt.

Questioning how public money is managed is not a vote against our children or our teachers. Supporting our schools and demanding financial accountability are not opposing positions.

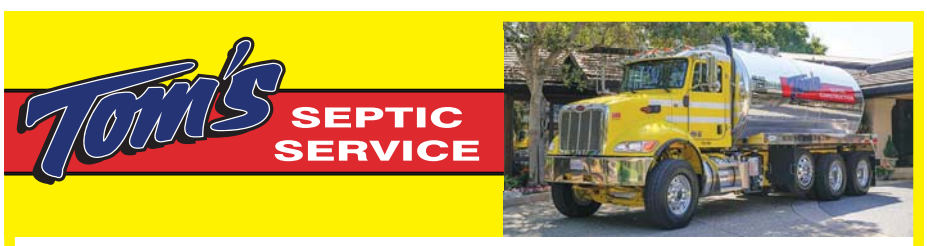
Evelyn Dincer, *Carmel*



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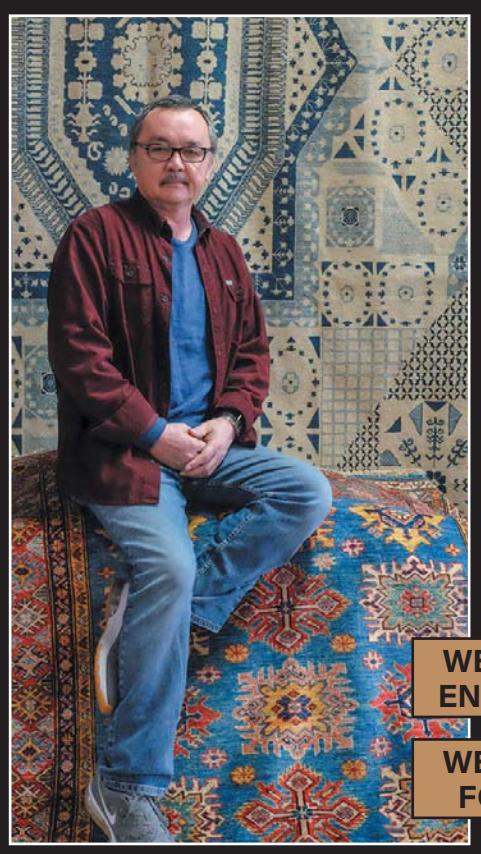
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This Week

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Lyle Lovett at Sunset, tie-dyed Celtic septet 'rocks' St. Mary's-by-the-Sea

A FOUR-TIME Grammy Award winner and his backing musicians, **Lyle Lovett and his Small Large Band** take the stage at 7 p.m. Friday at Sunset Center.

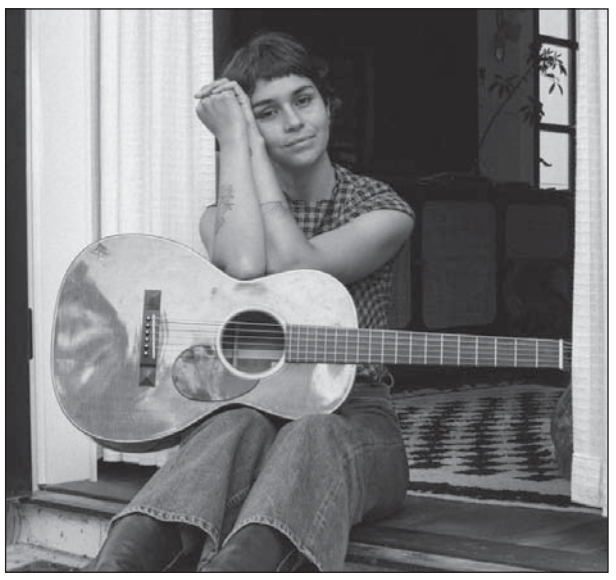
On a High Note

By CHRIS COUNTS

After bursting onto the scene in 1986 with a critically acclaimed debut album and a string of Top 40 country singles, Lovett really hit his stride in the mid-1980s, earning his first Grammy in 1990 for Best Male Country Vocal Performance and releasing two albums that climbed into the top 10 of the country charts. He last played at Sunset two years ago.

"Along with his gift for storytelling, the Texas-based musician incorporates elements of country, swing, jazz, folk, gospel and blues in a manner that defies convention and breaks down barriers," Sunset Center said. "His works, rich and eclectic, are some of the most beloved of any artist on tour today."

Tickets start at $93. Sunset Center is located at 908 San Carlos St. Call (831) 620-2048 or visit sunsetcenter.org.



Singer and guitarist Victoria Lynn performs at Folktale Winery in Carmel Valley Thursday at 4 p.m.



Grammy Award-winning singer and guitarist Lyle Lovett and his Small Large Band take the stage at Sunset Center Friday at 7 p.m.

■ Country with a Cali vibe

A native of Yuba City who now lives in Nashville, country singer and guitarist **Tyler Rich** is on tour promoting a new album, and he visits Golden State Theatre in Monterey on Thursday at 7 p.m.

Like other West Coast country artists, Rich pushes the genre beyond its limits, infusing it with pop, rock and R&B. Five years after releasing his debut album, Rich came out with a follow-up album, "Hello California," last year.

Tickets are $40. The theater is located at 417 Alvarado St. Call (831) 649-1070 or visit goldenstatetheatre.com.

Also at Golden State is a memorable 1980s act that can't use its actual name due to legal hassles. Known for its danceable mix of new wave, pop and rock, **Oingo Boingo Former Members** play Friday at 7 p.m.

Tickets start at $36.

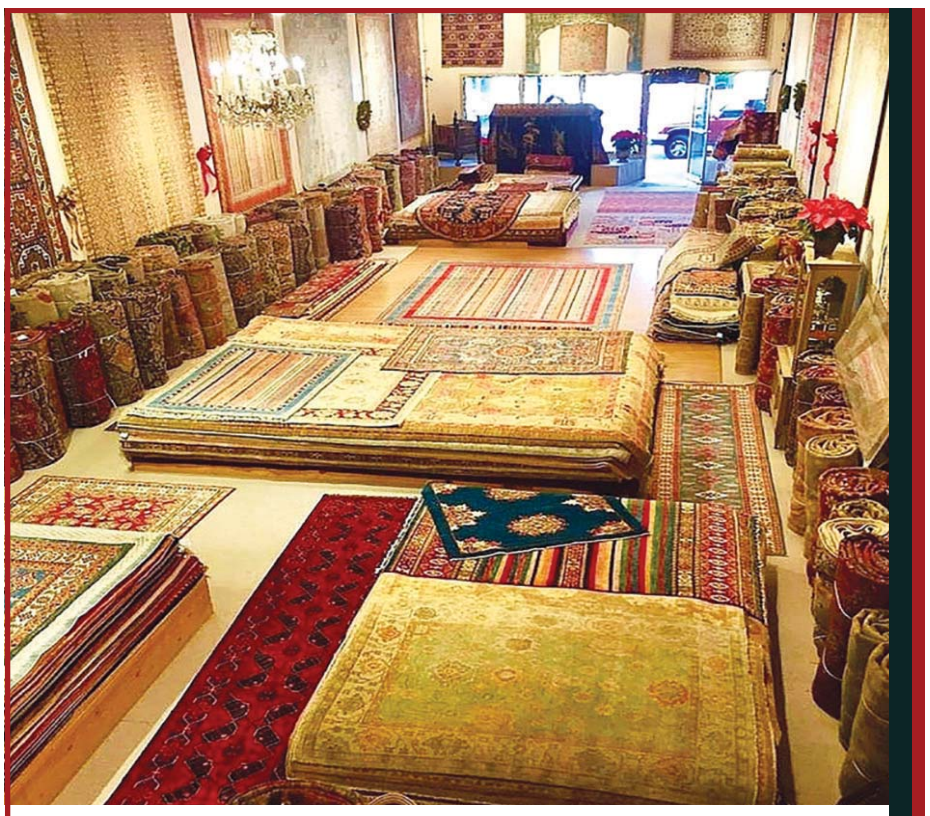
■ Waking the Dead in P.G.

Describing itself as the Bay Area's "Celtic All-Star Summer of Love party band," **Wake the Dead** plays at 3 p.m. Sunday at St. Mary's by-the-Sea in Pacific Grove.

"This hot septet combines Irish jigs and reels with the songs of the Grateful Dead and other '60s iconic bands, delivering them with unique power and joy," reads a description on its website. "Soaring vocal harmonies and daring instrumentals fuel Wake the Dead's singular groove engine, delighting Celtoids and Deadheads alike — their sound is unique, their energy extraordinary — a rare collision of worlds that leaves everybody dancing and grinning."

See **MUSIC** *page 48A*





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FOOD & WINE

Zombie otters, a wine dinner, and relentlessly approaching turkeys

AS PROMISED, this week's column contains plenty of info on the next great American eating holiday. Thanksgiving is a month away, and local restaurants are taking reservations for turkey dinners with all the trimmings — and, in some cases, lobster, oysters, wagyu beef and other luxe dishes.

Soup to Nuts

You'll find a preview of some holiday dining options, from lavish buffets to elegant multicourse dinners, with more to come next week. But first, Halloween is here, and there's an opportunity next week to spend a few days exploring the wines and flavors of Sicily without leaving downtown Carmel.

■ Halloween festivities in P.G.

Lucy's on Lighthouse will have live music from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday and welcomes trick-or-treaters and grown-ups to come by around 3 p.m. for a costume contest. Everybody's favorite stop for hot dogs at 1120 Lighthouse Ave. will also be serving "wickedly saucy dogs, devilishly delicious pumpkin desserts, and tater tots to DIE for!"

The Monarch Pub at 617 Lighthouse Ave. and Hops & Fog at 511 Lighthouse Ave. in Pacific Grove are stops on the annual Halloween Zombie Otter Pub Crawl. (Otter zombies are fatally cuddly, we suspect.) The Monarch's advertising a 6 p.m. start, with live acoustic music by Pattie Gilbert & The Wanderlust, while Hops & Fog will be ready for those fleeing undead aquatic furballs at 4:30 p.m., and its website at hopsandfog.beer says it will have more details soon.



The Portola Hotel's restaurants — Jacks Monterey and Peter B's — both have specials for Thanksgiving, and the hotel will also a host a grand buffet in its De Anza ballroom from 1 to 8 p.m.

■ Sicilian wine weekend

Stationaery restaurant is offering Sicilian Wine Weekend Nov. 5-8, with guests invited to "explore a special selection of Sicilian wines by the glass and chef Amalia's menu inspired by one of our favorite culinary traditions" during seatings from 5:30 to 9 p.m. Thursday. The dinner will feature curated pours and stories with local sommelier Alyssa Twelker.

In addition, when it's raining, takeaway bottles on Stationaery's list of "low-intervention" wines are available at a generous discount.

"The silver lining of the season: On rainy days, enjoy 40% off bottles of wine to go from the shop and settle in at home with something good to pour, power or no power," say Anthony and Alissa Carnazzo, who own the restaurant. Chef Amalia Scatena helms the kitchen.

For more information and reservations, go to thestationaery.com or call (831) 250-7183. The restaurant is located at 558 San Carlos St.



Anthony and Alissa Carnazzo, owners of Stationaery restaurant on San Carlos Street, are hosting a Sicilian Wine Weekend starting Nov. 5 with a special pairing menu on Thursday evening.

■ Pacific panoramas and turkey

There's no need to choose between turkey and seafood at Pacific's Edge Restaurant at Hyatt Carmel Highlands, where the holiday buffet will feature both — with a side of spectacular views of the Big Sur coastline.

The holiday spread planned for Nov. 26 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. includes Diestel turkey, slow-roasted prime rib with hickory and brown sugar, brown sugar-glazed ham, Ora King salmon and locally made spinach and artichoke ravioli.

Seafood lovers can pile their plates with freshly shucked oysters, lobster tails, poached prawns, crab claws, smoked salmon and ponzu-glazed ahi tuna. There will also be salads, charcuterie and an assortment of pies, tarts, cookies, macarons and freshly baked pastries.

"Thanksgiving is the one day people really slow down, and there's no better place to do it than at a table looking

Continues next page

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FOOD & WINE

From previous page

out over the ocean," said Jeff Baker, director of food and beverage. "We built this year's buffet so everyone at the table finds their favorite, from Diestel turkey and prime rib to fresh oysters and lobster tails."

The buffet costs $145 for adults and $50 for children ages 5 to 12, plus tax and a 20% gratuity. Children 4 and younger eat free. Reservations are available through OpenTable. For more information, call (831) 622-5444.

■ Celebrating at Bernardus

There are still seats available for executive chef Gus Trejo's grand buffet at Lucia Restaurant & Bar at Bernardus Lodge in Carmel Valley, with a menu that stretches from traditional holiday favorites to an elaborate seafood selection. It has sold out early for the past few years, so get your table early if Bernardus is your first choice.

The feast begins with artisanal cheeses, handcrafted cured meats, autumn harvest salads and Mariquita Farm squash bisque. Seafood offerings include Morro Bay oysters, sushi, tuna poke, ceviche and prawns, along with lobster Thermidor.

That last dish — cooked lobster meat in a creamy sauce flavored with white wine, mustard and often cognac or brandy, topped with cheese, browned under a broiler and often served in the shell — had its heyday in the 1930s through the 1960s in the United States, so if it sounded familiar, your memory's spot-on. Ironically, the decadent crustacean is named for a French play about that country's 18th-century revolution.

For the more traditional holiday appetite, there will be estate honey-brined turkey, Brandt family filet of beef, brioche stuffing and seasonal side dishes. Pies, gelato and harvest fruits will provide a sweet conclusion.

Seatings are available from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thanksgiving Day. The buffet costs $165 for adults and $75 for children 12 and younger, with youngsters 4 and younger dining free.

Bernardus is at 415 W. Carmel Valley Road. Reservations are available through OpenTable, or call (831) 658-3595.



The Caledonian restaurant in P.G.'s Kimpton Mirador hotel is having a prix fixe Thanksgiving dinner with entrée options that include turkey, halibut with Dungeness crab, Kobe beef short rib, and roasted squash with farro.

■ Gathering in Pacific Grove

The Caledonian in P.G.'s Kimpton Mirador is taking a structured approach

Continues next page

WOODY'S
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THANKSGIVING GRAND BUFFET

Nov 26 | 11:00am – 7:00pm

A grand Thanksgiving Buffet at Bernardus Lodge & Spa, composed by ***Executive Chef Gus Trejo***. Artisanal cheeses and hand crafted cured meats, autumn harvest salads and Mariquita Farms squash bisque, oysters, sushi, poke, ceviche, and prawns, Brandt family fillet of beef, estate honey brined turkey, lobster thermidor, brioche stuffing and the season's sides, with pies, gelato, and harvest fruits to finish. Seatings from 11 AM to 7 PM.

$165 per guest, $75 for guests 12 and under, children 4 and under join with our compliments.

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FOOD & WINE

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From previous page

to Thanksgiving, offering a multicourse prix fixe dinner with some imaginative alternatives to a turkey-and-stuffing plate.

The meal begins with a smoked duck confit croquette amuse-bouche accompanied by spiced cranberry-kumquat gel, followed by a first course of roasted heirloom apple and parsnip bisque and a second of persimmon carpaccio with shaved fennel, champagne-citrus vinaigrette, whipped local goat cheese and pomegranate.

Choices aplenty

For the main event, diners can choose herb-roasted Diestel turkey with sausage and mushroom stuffing, braised Kobe beef short rib, pan-roasted Pacific halibut with Dungeness crab brown butter and Meyer lemon beurre blanc or roasted delicata squash with farro, wild mushrooms, Tuscan kale and sage brown butter.

Dessert choices include pumpkin pie with bourbon-maple caramel and vanilla bean whipped crème fraîche or a Valrhona chocolate pecan tart with caramel gelato, spiced pecan brittle and smoked sea salt.

The menu will be served from noon to 7 p.m. at $95 per adult. A children's menu, including a $40 turkey plate, will be available for diners 11 and younger. Reservations can be made through OpenTable.

■ A Spanish-inspired holiday

Estéban Restaurant at the Casa Munras Garden Hotel in Monterey is planning a three-course Thanksgiving dinner with a California-Spanish accent, along with the option of ordering à la carte from a special holiday menu.

Executive chef Steven Patlan's dinner begins with focaccia from Otto's bakery in Salinas, followed by a choice of fall harvest salad with shredded Brussels sprouts, kale, feta, granola and apple vinaigrette or roasted butternut squash and apple bisque with sage brown butter.

Diestel roasted turkey will be served with garlic mashed potatoes, green beans with bacon, chestnut and vegetable

See **DINNER** *next page*



Executive chef Gus Trejo will prepare a grand Thanksgiving buffet at Bernardus Lodge. Guests can enjoy turkey with all the trimmings alongside classic lobster Thermidor, and plenty of other festive dishes.

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DINNER

From previous page

stuffing, pan gravy and cranberry relish, priced at $79 for the three-course dinner.

For something different, guests can choose pan-seared black cod with gigante beans, roasted root vegetables and crispy delicata squash or a Snake River Farms wagyu Denver steak with brown-butter parsnip purée, grilled maitake mushroom and porcini demi-glace. Both alternatives are $84 for three courses.

Dessert is a choice of pumpkin or apple pie with spiced whipped cream.

Dinner will be served from 2 to 8 p.m. Estéban is at 700 Munras Ave., and parking is complimentary for restaurant guests. Reservations are highly recommended at estebanrestaurant.com or (831) 375-0176.

■ Grateful in Monterey

The Portola Hotel at the foot of Alvarado Street is having its annual holiday buffet in the De Anza Ballroom, with local favorite pianist David Conley providing live music while guests enjoy their dinners.

While you don't have to consume your feast in any particular order — really, you can start with pie if you like — appetizers include California cheeses and cured meats, seasonal vegetable displays, tortellini salad and roasted beets with feta and Marcona almonds. Peel-and-eat shrimp will also be available.

At the carving station, guests can choose Harris Ranch prime rib with horseradish cream or free-range Diestel turkey with cranberry sauce. There will also be a sustainably sourced fish entrée with herbes de Provence.

Sides include stuffing and gravy, whipped potatoes, candied yams, roasted acorn squash with pomegranate and pumpkin seeds, and green beans with balsamic glaze and toasted almonds.

Desserts range from pecan and pumpkin pies to French butter pear crisp, mini fruit tarts, holiday cookies and seasonal fruit.

The buffet will be served from 1 to 8 p.m. Prices are $89.95 for adults, $79.95 for seniors 65 and older and $39.95 for children ages 6 to 12. Kids 5 and younger eat free. Tax and a 20% gratuity will be added.

Reservations are required. Call (831) 649-7870 or email sgarcia@portolahotel.com.

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

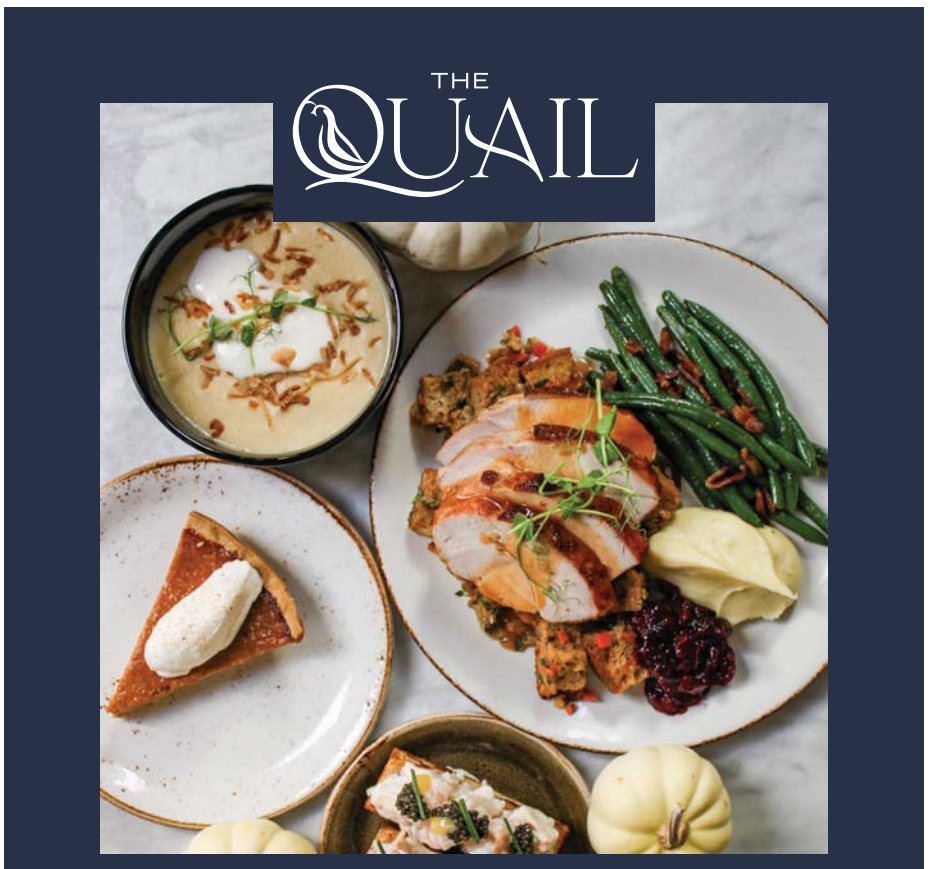
Library hosts talk on 'global change'

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

An associate professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School will present a talk, "The Forces that Move Nations: Leadership, Conflict and Global Change," Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. in Carpenter Hall at Sunset Center. The Carmel Public Library Foundation is hosting the event with Dr. Anne Clunan as part of the Community Night with the Library Lecture Series.

"Behind every major turning point in history are decisions shaped by ideas, competing interests, human judgment and the realities of an ever-changing world," the foundation explained in announcing the lecture. "Drawing on history and international affairs, this program explores how governments navigate uncertainty, respond to conflict and pursue national priorities in moments of consequence."

The event is free and open to the public, with a suggested $10 donation, and registration is required at carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org. Sunset Center is located at 908 San Carlos St., and Carpenter Hall is accessible from the Mission Street side.



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This Thanksgiving, celebrate at home with our convenient to-go options offering a thoughtfully curated holiday menu featuring elevated takes on traditional flavors.

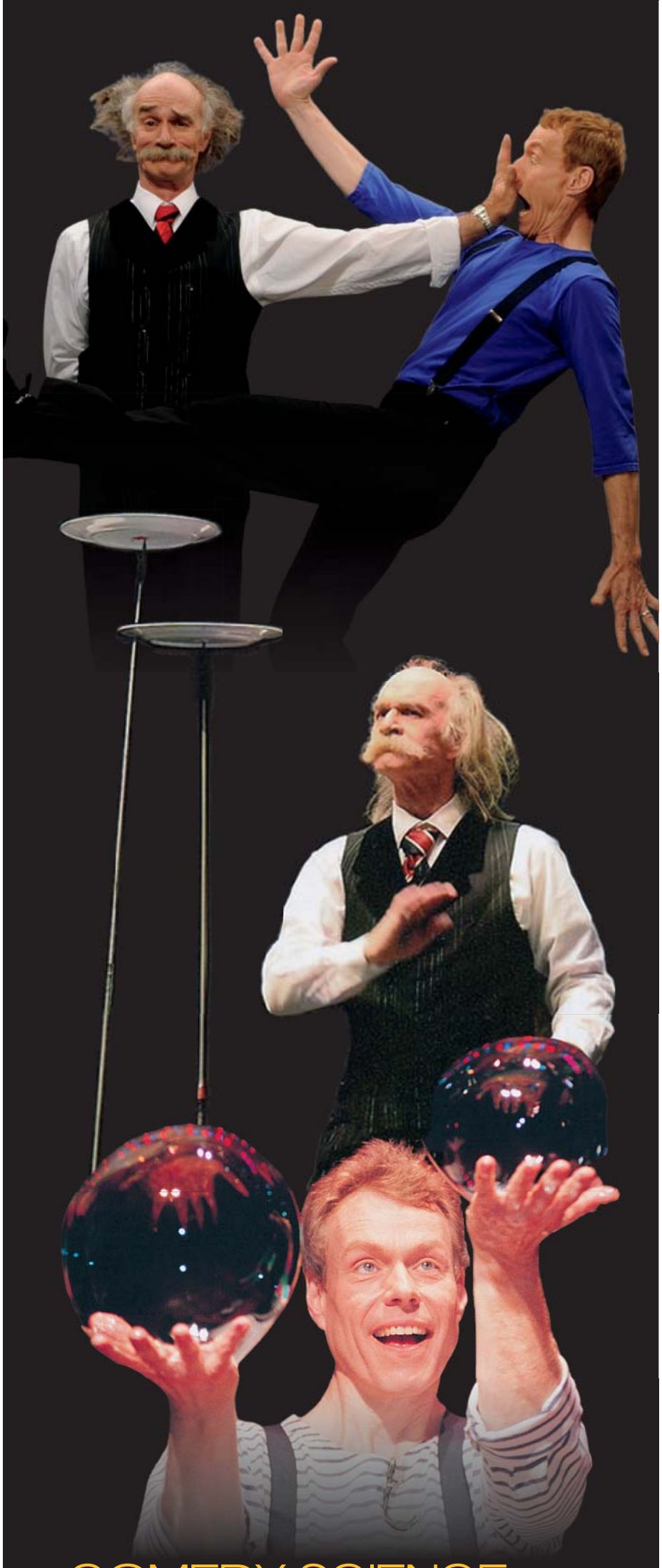
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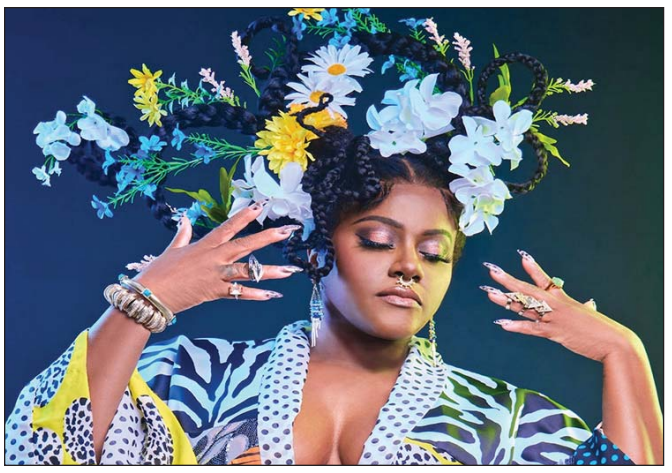
MUSIC

From page 43A

The church is located at 146 12th St. Tickets are $31 for general admission and $12 for kids. Visit celticsociety.org for more details.

■ Free early music concert

In town for two weeks to learn about medieval, Renaissance and baroque music, students from near and far present a free concert at 6 p.m. Friday at Hidden Valley Music Seminars in Carmel Valley. The concert will be offered again next Friday, Nov. 6. "We'll immerse ourselves in the music of Spain and England from the Middle Ages on, as well as music from the New World and the Netherlands," according to Hidden Valley, which is located at 104 W. Carmel Valley Road.



A reggae singer who has twice been nominated for Grammy Awards, Etana performs Friday, 8 p.m., at Deja Blue in Seaside.

Live music, Oct. 30-Nov. 5

■ Big Sur

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

Fernwood Resort — The Gnarlymen (surf rock, Saturday at 6 p.m.). 47200 Highway 1.

Nepenthe Restaurant — Scarlet plays at Nepenthe's annual Bal Masque Party (pop and rock, Saturday at 6 p.m.). 48510 Highway 1. Visit nepenthe.com for details.

■ Carmel

Barmel — singer and guitarist **Zack Freitas** (Friday at 7 p.m.). In Carmel Square at 688 San Carlos St.

Carmel Mission Inn — Open Mic Night (Wednesday at 5 p.m.). 3665 Rio Road.

Hyatt Carmel Highlands — singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (jazz, Friday at 6 p.m.), guitarist **Glenn Bell** (jazz, Saturday and Sunday at 3 p.m.), singer **Dino Vera** (jazz, R&B and dance, Saturday and Thursday at 6 p.m.). 120 Highlands Drive.

Cypress Inn — singer **Dino Vera** (jazz, R&B and dance, 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 Trio** (jazz, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 684 Lincoln St.

La Playa Carmel — The David Morwood Trio (jazz, Sunday at 5 p.m. and Tuesday at 6 p.m.) in **Bud's Bar**, 827 Camino Real.

Links Club — singer and guitarist **AC Myles** (rock and blues, Friday at 7:30 p.m.), **West Coast Cure** (pop and rock, Saturday at 7:30 p.m.). Carmel Plaza, 526 Ocean Ave.

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.



Singer and guitarist A.C. Myles plays rock and blues at the Links Club Friday at 7:30 p.m.

■ Carmel Valley

Bernardus Lodge — Andrea's Fault (jazz and pop, Saturday at noon), guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Sunday at noon). 415 W. Carmel Valley Road.

Folktale Winery — Two Rivers (pop and rock, Friday at 5 p.m.), singer **Miranda Perl** and guitarist **Adam Astrup** (jazz, Sunday at 4 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Kito Rayburn** (Monday at 4 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Victoria Lynn** (Thursday at 4 p.m.). 8940 Carmel Valley Road.

■ Monterey

Albatross Ridge — singer and guitarist **Kito Rayburn** (Friday at 6 p.m.), **The Rayburn Brothers** (Americana, Saturday at 6 p.m.). 316 Alvarado St.

Hyatt Regency Monterey — singer and guitarist **Peter Barnes Martin** (jazz, Friday at 7 p.m.), singer and guitarist

See **TUNES** *next page*



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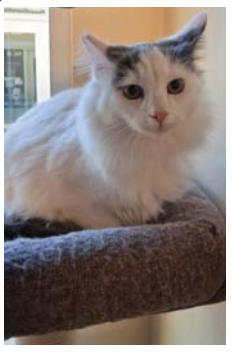
Turkey 5 years old

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Stuffing 2 years old

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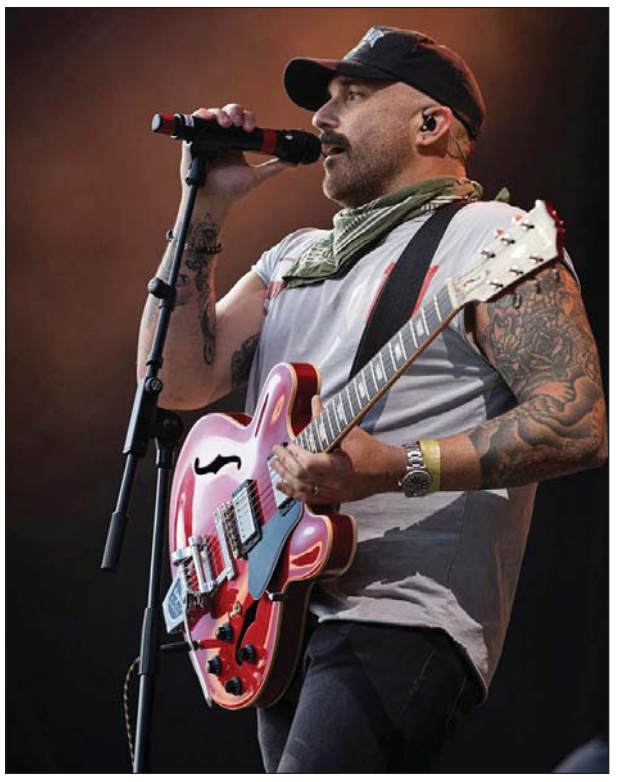
www.SPCAmc.org

TUNES

From previous page

Sabelle (Saturday at 7 p.m.). 1 Old Golf Course Road.

InterContinental The Clement Monterey — guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m.), guitarist **Terrence Farrell** (Spanish, Sunday at 9 a.m.), singer and guitarist **Dan Cortes** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). 750 Cannery Row.



Singer and guitarist Tyler Rich plays country music Thursday, 7 p.m., at Golden State Theatre in Monterey.

Midici The Neapolitan Pizza Company — singer **Akina Miyata** and guitarist **Sam Nilsson** (jazz, Sunday at 5 p.m.), singer **Miranda Perl** and guitarist **Adam Astrup** (jazz, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 467 Alvarado St.

Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa — pianist **Michael Culver** (Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and pianist **Scott Brown** (jazz and pop, Saturday at 6 p.m.), pianist **Joe Indence** (jazz, Sunday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Peter Barnes Martin** (jazz, Monday at 6 p.m.), singer and multi-instrumentalist **Tamas Marius** (jazz, Tuesday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Sabelle** (Wednesday at 6 p.m.), singer and multi-instrumentalist **Meredith McHenry** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). 400 Cannery Row.

Pearl Hour — The Zach Westfall Quartet (jazz, Sunday at 8 p.m.). 214 Lighthouse Ave.

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

Sardine Factory — singer and guitarist **David Conley** (Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. and Tuesday through Thursday at 6:30 p.m.), singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (jazz, Sunday at 6 p.m.). 701 Wave St.

Sly McFly's — Rosebud (classic rock, Friday at 9 p.m.), **The Rockafellas** (pop and rock, Saturday at 9 p.m.), **The Pacific Jack Band** (classic rock, Monday at 8:30 p.m.), **The Corona Blues Band** (Tuesday at 8:30 p.m.), **5 Star** (rock and soul, Wednesday at 8:30 p.m.), **D.C. & the Jokers** (rock and blues, Thursday at 8:30 p.m.). 700 Cannery Row.

■ Pacific Grove

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

Julia's Vegetarian Restaurant — singer and guitarist **Rags Rosenberg** (Friday at 7 p.m.), singer and guitarist

See **LIVE** *next page*

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CALENDAR

Oct. 31 – Don't miss the fun and free 8th Annual Halloween on the Wharf at Old Fisherman's Wharf from 4 to 7 p.m.! Enjoy trick-or-treating at more than 25 Wharf merchants, a costume contest with lots of cash prizes, a DJ spinning spooky music, fantastic photo opportunities with spectacular Halloween decorations and much more. www.montereywharf.com

Nov. 1 – Wake the Dead returns to Pacific Grove with a high-energy blend of **Irish jigs and reels, Grateful Dead favorites and '60s classics**. 3 p.m. Sunday at St. Mary's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church. Tickets at celticsociety.org or at the door.

Nov. 2 – Hospital Stay in Your Future? – Clay Angel, M.D., president of the **Greater Monterey Bay Medical Society**, will explain how to best navigate and advocate for yourself during a hospital stay. Event begins 2 p.m. at the Carmel Woman's Club, 907 San Carlos St., Carmel, 93921. Open to the public. $10 guests/members free. www.carmelwomansclubca.com

Nov. 5 – Carmel Public Library Foundation presents Community Night with the Library, "The Forces That Move Nations: Leadership, Conflict and Global Change," with **Dr. Anne Clunan**, associate professor or National Security Affairs, Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), 7 p.m. in Carpenter Hall, Sunset Center, Carmel. Register on our website: carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org. Questions: (831) 624-2811

Nov. 6 – A "Fall Open House at MPAF Art Gallery" event, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., at 425 Cannery Row, Monterey, See original artwork, gifts, unique cards and jewelry. Meet local artists of the **Monterey Peninsula Art Forum**. Enter a free drawing for an original painting. No purchase necessary. Free admission. All are welcome! (831) 655-1267 • www.mpaf.org

Nov. 7 – Carmel Valley Lodge's Vintage in the Valley Expo 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 8 Ford Road, Carmel Valley Village. Fifteen local vintage vendors, good trucks. Street parking only, free admission (831) 659-2261

Nov. 7 – Poetry Reading – Joseph Stroud and **Tim Hunt** will read their poetry at **Tor House** in Carmel-by-the-Sea at 7 p.m. Reception to follow. Reservations required: $15; $10 students. Limited seating. Purchase tickets at torhouse.org.

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. www.terryscarmel.com

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. www.terryscarmel.com

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

Nov. 7 – Come to the **"Shower of Love" to benefit under-resourced infants born at local hospitals**. event set 10 a.m. to noon at the Carmel Mission's MacMahon Center, 3080 Rio Road, Carmel, hosted **by the Christ Child Society of Monterey Bay**. Learn more and RSVP online on the events page at www.christchildmontereybay.org.

Nov. 7 – The Steinbeck House Best Cellar Gift Shop & Bookstore is hosting its annual Holiday Open House from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Discover new holiday gifts and merchandise, enter for a chance to win a festive gift basket, and enjoy delicious baked goods! Join us for our **Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser** from 8 to 10 a.m. before the Holiday Open House! Tickets are required. $20 for adults and $10 for children 10 and under. 132 Central Ave., Salinas, CA 93901. https://steinbeckhouse.com

Nov. 14 & 15 – Mark Your Calendar … Baum & Blume's "Lighting of the Tannenbaum" & Holiday Open House! This year's theme: "A Peaceable Kingdom" where holiday shopping … goes WILD! Enjoy live music, tasty apps, wine tasting, local artisans and a "Poetry Pop-Up"! Baum & Blume and The Carriage House, 4 El Caminito, Carmel Valley. (831) 659-0400.

Nov. 14 – Monterey Elks Lodge Holiday Craft Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 150 Mar Vista Drive in Monterey. Event features more than 30 artisan crafters, raffles, and food for purchase. Open to the public. Entry is free.

Nov. 15 – Songbridge Music Concert features local musicians in a benefit for **The Carmel Foundation**. Hosted by **Wendi Kirby Music**, the concert includes **Anne & Pete Sibley, Julie Capili, Stu Heydon** and more. Tickets available at Eventbrite.com. Stair access only.

Nov. 17 – The World Affairs Council of the Monterey Bay Area (WACMB) presents a luncheon lecture at the Monterey Marriott. Our speaker will be **Gen. (ret.) John Abizaid** whose topic is **"Tectonic Change : America's Role in the New Middle Eastern Order."** Please find event registration and information at http://www.wacmb.org

To advertise, email anne@carmelpinecone.com
$0.50 per word ($35 min. charge)
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LIVE

From previous page

Kevin Smith (Saturday at 6 p.m.), **Andrea's Fault Duo** (jazz and pop, Monday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Holysea** (Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Rick Chelew** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). 1180 Forest Ave.

Lucy's on Lighthouse — Brew's Blues (rock and blues, Saturday at 2 p.m.). 1120 Lighthouse Ave.

PG's Meetinghouse — The Al James Band (R&B and rock, Friday at 7 p.m.), singer **Lee Durley** and keyboardist **Bill Spencer** (jazz, Saturday at 11 a.m.), **The Landing Trio** (Americana, Sunday at 11 a.m.), **Open Mic** (Monday at 6 p.m., with sign-ups starting at 5:30 p.m.), **Tribe in the Sky** ("Sign up to play or simply enjoy amazing musicians jam," Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.). 599 Lighthouse Ave.

Pop & Hiss — Sweet Thursday ("Disney Dixieland swing," Thursday at 6 p.m.). 215 Forest Ave.

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

■ Pebble Beach

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

The Lodge at Pebble Beach — singer and multi-instrumentalist **Meredith McHenry** (Friday at 5 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Kip Allert** (Saturday at 5 p.m.). In the Terrace Lounge, 1700 17 Mile Drive.

■ Sand City

Courtyard by Marriott — guitarist **Glenn Bell** (jazz, Friday at 6 p.m.). 800 Morgans Way.

■ Seaside

Deja Blue — singer **Etana** (reggae and soul, Friday at 8 p.m.). 500 Broadway.

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

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GAVEL

From page 4A

to pass, leading to the head-on collision with Jackson's vehicle. The CHP Multidisciplinary Accident Investigation Team downloaded data from Knight's vehicle, which confirmed she was traveling 75 mph at the time of the crash. The speed limit at that location is 55 mph.

Sept. 25 — Reginald Leon Williams, 23, of Seaside pleaded no contest to one count of mayhem. Williams also admitted a firearm enhancement and a prior strike conviction for a shooting he committed in Seaside in March 2025.

On March 2, 2025, Williams learned of planned one-on-one fistfights among juveniles in Seaside. He told a 16-year-old fellow Crip that he would attend the event and back up the teenage fighters affiliated with Seaside's Crip gang. About 20 people attended the fights later that day at Beta Park in Seaside. After the one-on-one fights ended, a group fight began among the attendees.

Shortly after the group fight began, Williams arrived in a vehicle driven by his girlfriend. He got out and joined the fight. A few minutes later, Williams returned to the vehicle. An unknown person then cracked the rear window. Williams' girlfriend drove about 200 feet away from the fight, and Williams ordered her to stop. He got out and fired four shots at the people who remained at Beta Park.

One of the shots struck 17-year-old John Doe in the head. Doe, who had attended the fight, was 185 feet from where Williams opened fire. He was flown to Stanford, where he was hospitalized for more than a month and underwent multiple surgeries. The gunshot wound left him permanently blind in one eye.

After the shooting, Williams and his girlfriend rented a motel room in Monterey. Within 24 hours, officers identified Williams' vehicle on surveillance footage and used automated license plate reader cameras to track its route after the shooting. The car remained in the area of the hotel, and the camera captures helped officers determine Williams' location. Officers found the car at the motel, lawfully searched the room and recovered the firearm used in the Beta Park shooting.

Williams is scheduled to be sentenced to 20 years in prison. He has a prior juvenile strikes for attempted armed carjacking and prior felony convictions for attempted oral copulation of a minor and firearm possession. Seaside police Detective Hector Huizar and Monterey County District Attorney's Office investigator Daisy Gurley investigated the case.

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POLICE LOG

From page 4A

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Check fraud on Loma Alta. At least three checks were reportedly stolen, and fraudulent checks totaling approximately $19,000 to $24,000 were cashed.

Pacific Grove: Animal bite on Fountain Avenue reported by the Monterey County Health Department.

Pacific Grove: Bicycle helmet found on Pine Avenue.

Monterey: A 28-year-old man was arrested at Del Monte Avenue and Figueroa Street for driving under the influence of alcohol and driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08% or greater.

Monterey: Suspicious circumstances at Del Monte Avenue and Casa Verde Way.

Monterey: Three vehicles were towed for having registrations expired more than six months: on Clay Street at 8:55 a.m., Casanova Avenue at 9:20 a.m. and Anthony Street at 11:20 a.m.

Monterey: A subject on Hellam Avenue was placed on a 72-hour mental health evaluation.

Monterey: Electronic distribution of harassing material reported at Del Monte Avenue and Casa Verde Way.

Monterey: Missing person reported on Fremont Street.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Carmel-by-the-Sea: A 78-year-old woman was arrested for DUI and hit-and-run at Carmelo and Eighth. Witnesses reported seeing a vehicle driving erratically at Santa Lucia and Monte Verde. The vehicle collided with five parked vehicles as it traveled north on Monte Verde. Officers located the vehicle on the north side of La Playa Hotel, where it had come to rest against another vehicle. The driver had open containers in the vehicle and was reportedly at approximately twice the legal blood-alcohol limit. She was arrested for DUI.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: A 52-year-old woman was arrested at Junipero and Eighth for public intoxication and a probation violation. A reporting party said an intoxicated subject was in public and expressed concern that she might drive. Officers located the subject, who was unable to care for her safety because of her level of intoxication. She also possessed alcohol, in violation of probation terms prohibiting possession or consumption. She was released to another agency.

Pacific Grove: Report of an animal scratch on Ocean View Boulevard. No medical assistance needed.

Pacific Grove: Officers responded to the 200 block of Grand Avenue for a burglary in progress. The suspect was found squatting in a vacant building without the owner's permission. A 43-year-old woman was cited and released for lodging without the owner's consent.

See **INCIDENTS** *page 10RE*

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OCTOBER 2026

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Dolores & 9th

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
Women's Business Council at Flaherty's
9:00am – 10:00am
5th btwn San Carlos & Dolores

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
Mixer at Carmel River Inn & Suites
5:00pm – 7:00pm
No parking at venue
Take Shuttles from The Barnyard

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2
Awards of Excellence
Diamonds are Forever
6:00pm – 9:00pm
Folktale Winery

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10
Women's Business Council at Shoshin
9:00am – 10:00am
Mission btwn 5th & 6th

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16
Annual Holiday Chamber Mixer
La Playa Hotel
5:00pm – 7:00pm
Camino Real & 8th Avenue

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CARMEL Chamber of Commerce



CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA CANDIDATE FORUM
Photo by Kimberlie Guerrieri



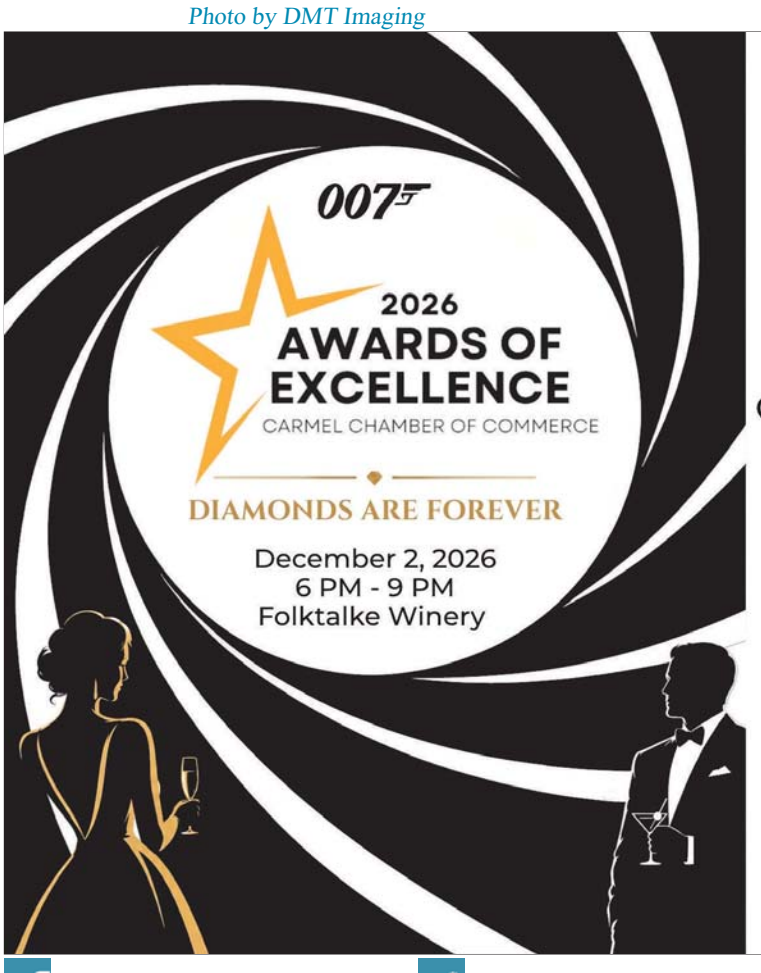
TASTE OF CARMEL FIESTA AT THE MISSION
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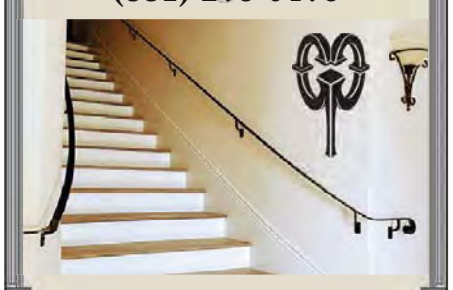
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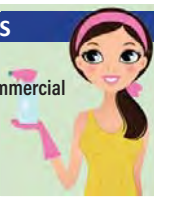
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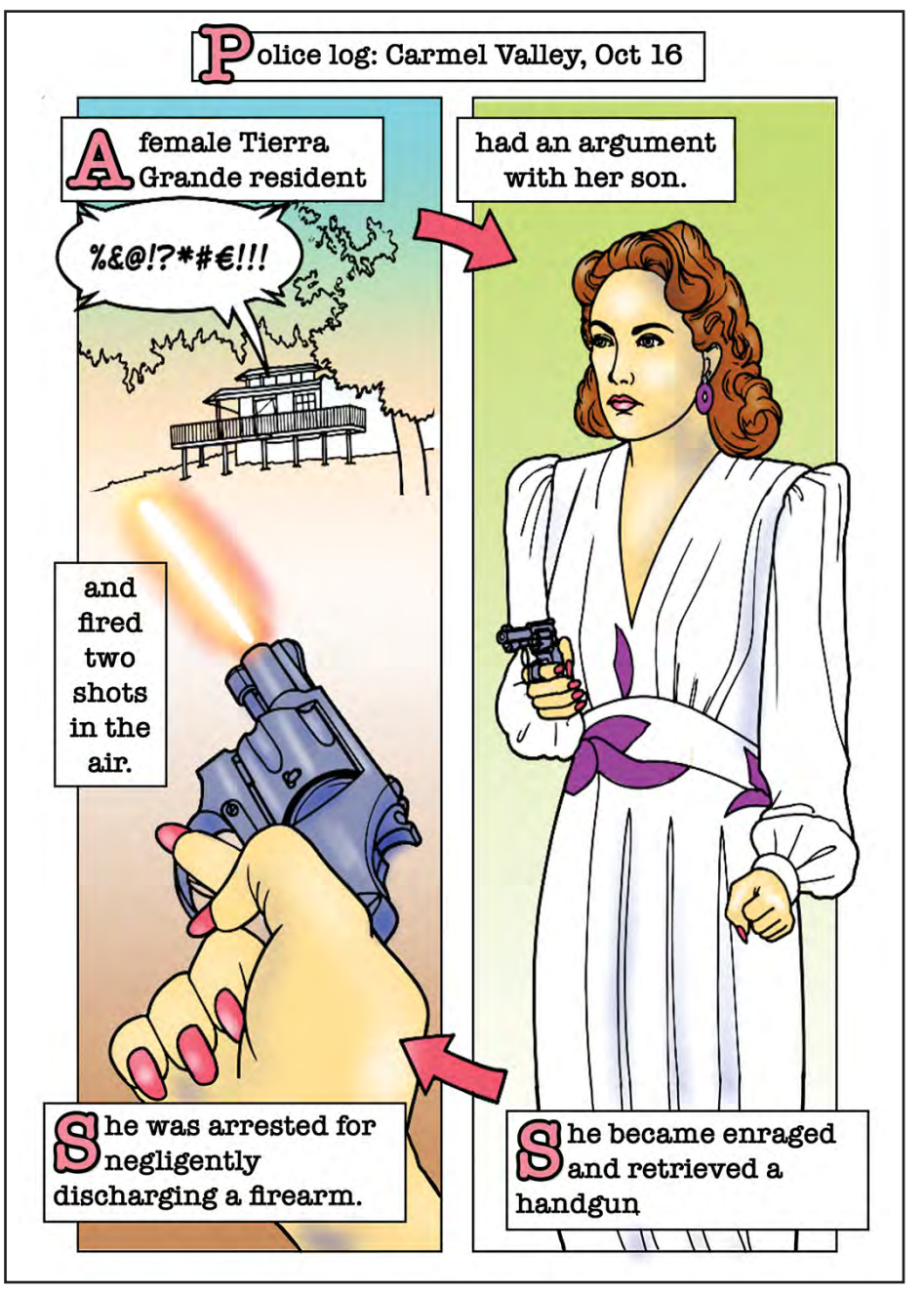


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Continues on next page



Church honors sculptor with plaque and ceremony Sunday

SEVEN DECADES after she created a striking relief depicting "Jesus and the Children" for the Church of the Wayfarer, the congregation will celebrate the installation of a plaque honoring Maria Petrie at 11:30 a.m. Sunday.

Born in Frankfurt, Germany, Petrie studied in Paris before finding success as an artist. Examples of her portrait sculptures can be found in London's National Portrait Gallery. She died in 1972.

In the late 1950s, Petrie was commissioned to make a relief sculpture for the church, whose congregation included her sister, Sophie Schuster of Carmel.

Nearly seven decades later, Petrie's great-nephew Johann Zimmern led the effort to honor the sculptor. His parents were married in the church.

"Despite Maria's distinguished artistic career, her contribution to the church has remained largely unacknowledged," Zimmern told The Pine Cone. "I recently commissioned the installation of a permanent artist acknowledgment beside her relief to ensure that her work and its history will be recognized and remembered by future generations."

Zimmern said the unveiling ceremony Sunday "offers a wonderful opportunity not only to recognize a significant work of art in one of Carmel's historic churches, but also to rediscover the story of a remarkable woman whose artistic legacy connects Frankfurt, Paris, London and Carmel-by-the-Sea."



The late sculptor Marie Petrie, who created this relief for the Church of the Wayfarer in the 1950s, will be honored with a plaque Sun-

Art Roundup

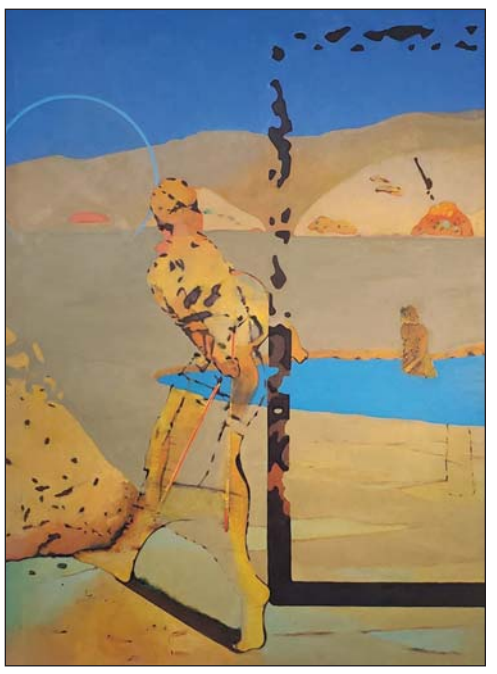
By CHRIS COUNTS

■ An evolving journey

Wave Street Studios in Monterey hosts a free public reception at 5 p.m. Friday for an exhibition of paintings, monotypes and dry pastel drawings by Monterey Peninsula artist Leonard Han.

Han created the art over the past five decades. Titled "An Ethos for the Living — What Remains, What Becomes," the show continues through Nov. 4.

"Bringing together a wide range of approaches, subjects and materials, the works reveal a rich and evolving artistic journey," according to the performing arts center, which is located at 774 Wave St. "Through expressive explorations of color, texture and space, each work carries its own presence, shaped by the physical act of making it and a contemplative view of the world. Together, they explore what we carry from the past, how it shapes the present, and what remains open to change and discovery."



Wave Street Studios in Monterey welcomes a display of art by Leonard Han Friday.

■ Free and welcoming

On the last day of a pop-up exhibit that showcases young artists mentored by a local group, Hijos del Sol Arts Productions, Carmel Modern hosts a free public reception and auction at 4 p.m. Saturday. "Join us for a special Día de los Muertos multi-sensory experience with art, wine, food and music," said the gallery, which is at 374 Sixth Ave.

The Salinas-based group "offers a free, welcoming art studio, supplies and mentorship for youth and families."

SERVICE DIRECTORY

Continues from previous page

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PUBLIC NOTICES

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261790
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
CARMEL NAILS COUTURE, 26400 Carmel Rancho Lane, Unit 31B, Carmel, CA 93923.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
STEVE N. LE, 3679 The Barnyard 31B, Carmel, CA 93922.
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/Steve N. Le
Date signed: Sept. 15, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 15, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC 1007)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261885
Filing type: NEW FILING - with CHANGE(S) from the previous filing.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
I HEART YOU CANDLES AND GIFTS, 482 Alvarado St., Monterey, CA 93940.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
SHERRY MICHELE DEVINE, 315 Lighthouse Ave., 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 Sept. 29, 2026.
S/Sherry M. Devine
Date signed: Sept. 29, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 1, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC 1009)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261874
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
CARMEL SPEECH THERAPY, 140 W. Franklin St., Suite 203, Box 151, Monterey, CA 93940.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
EMPOWER SPEECH THERAPY MONTEREY, INC., 140 W. Franklin St., Suite 203, Box 151, Monterey, CA 93940.
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a corporation.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Sept. 11, 2026.
S/Kayla Piorkowski, CEO
Date: Sept. 29, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 29, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC 1010)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261882
Filing type: NEW FILING – with CHANGE(S) from the previous filing.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
TOES ON THE GO, 26615 CARMEL CENTER PLACE, SUITE 103, CARMEL, CA 93923
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
TOES ON THE GO INC., 225 CROSSROADS BLVD. #361, CARMEL, CA 93923
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 Nov. 17, 2016.
S/Michele Kraft, President
Date: Oct. 1, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 1, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC 1011)

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
File No. 20261743
Filing type: ABANDONMENT
County of Filing: Monterey
Date of Original Filing: May 9, 2025
File No.: 20250886
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: **EMPOWER SPEECH THERAPY MONTEREY, 140 W. Franklin St., Ste. 203. #151, Monterey, CA 93940.**
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
EMPOWER SPEECH THERAPY MONTEREY, INC., 140 W. Franklin St., Ste. 203, #151, Monterey, CA 93940.
This business is conducted by a corporation.
S/Kayla Piorkowski, CEO
Sept. 29, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 29, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026. (PC1012).

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261914
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **MIND AND MOVEMENT PHYSICAL THERAPY, 520 CARMEL AVE., PACIFIC GROVE, CA 93950**
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
PRESTON KUNWAR, 520 CARMEL AVE., PACIFIC GROVE, CA 93950
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 6, 2026.
S/Preston Kunwar
Date signed: Oct. 6, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 6, 2026..
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC 1014)

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261898
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
BRAVO WHISKEY AVIATION SERVICES, 106 NACIONAL AVE, SPRECKELS, CA 93962
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ELIZABETH ANN WELLIVER, PO BOX 7463, SPRECKELS, CA 93962
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: Not Applicable.
S/Elizabeth Welliver
Date signed: Oct. 5, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 5, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC 1015)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261696
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
THE LIGHTING INSTITUTE OF MONTEREY, 5315 CARMEL VALLEY RD. #G218, CARMEL, CA 93923
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
MEREDITH NOLE, 5315 CARMEL VALLEY RD. #G218, CARMEL, CA 93923
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Aug. 26, 2026.
S/Meredith Nole
Date signed: Aug. 26, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 26, 2026..Publication Dates: Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC 1016)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261849
Filing type: NEW FILING - with CHANGE(S) from the previous filing.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
WILLIAM A. KARGES FINE ART, 6th Ave. between San Carlos and Dolores, Carmel, CA 93921.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
WILLIAM A. KARGES FINE ART, P.O. Box D-1, Carmel, CA 93921.
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a corporation.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on March 6, 1987.
S/William A. Karges, Jr., President
Date: Sept. 14, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 24, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 16, 23, 30, Nov. 6, 2026. (PC 1018)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261934
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
CASTROVILLE CAFE, 11276 Merritt St., Castroville, CA 95012.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ARMANDO MIGUEL ANGEL VENEGAS CRUZ, 11276 Merritt St., Castroville, CA 95012.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 8, 2026.
S/Armando Cruz
Date signed: Oct. 8, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 8, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 16, 23, 30. Nov. 6, 2026 (PC 1019)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261912
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
THE FINAL TWIST, 1200 Del Monte Center, Suite A, Monterey, CA 93940.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
JACQUELINE McDONALD, 724 Archer St., 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 N/A.
S/Jacqueline McDonald
Date signed: Oct. 6, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 6, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 16, 23, 30. Nov. 6, 2026 (PC 1020)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261890
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
ARBOL DE VIDA SUPLEMENTOS PARA LA SALUD, 1663 Boston St., Salinas, CA 93906.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
VERONICA CASTILLO, 1663 Boston St., 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 Sept. 2, 2026.
S/Veronica Castillo
Date signed: Oct. 2, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 2, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 16, 23, 30. Nov. 6, 2026 (PC 1021)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261936
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
MONTEREY ROBOTICS, 3078 Helena Way, Marina, CA 93933.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
MONTEREY ROBOTICS LLC, 3078 Helena Way, Marina, CA 93933.
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a limited liability company.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Jon Anderson, Manager
Date signed: Oct. 8, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 8, 2026..
Publication Dates: Oct. 16, 23, 30. Nov. 6, 2026 (PC 1022)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261926
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
Huezo Ink Creations, 255 E Bolivar St. SPC 121, Salinas, CA 93906
County of Monterey
Registrant(s):
Pablo Adolfo Gonzalez, 255 E Bolivar St. SPC 121, 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 N/A.
S/ Pablo Adolfo Gonzalez
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on [FileDate].
10/23, 10/30, 11/6, 11/13/26
CNS-4078997#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1023)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261927
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
MB AUTO RENTALS AND SALES, 1206 La Salle Ave Spc 8A, Seaside, CA 93955
County of MONTEREY
Registrant(s):
MONTEREY BAY AUTO RENTALS LLC, 351 SAN FELIPE RD STE 101 #1005, HOLLISTER, CA 95023
This business is conducted by a limited liability company
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
MONTEREY BAY AUTO RENTALS LLC
S/ Vidal Ballesteros, Managing Member
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 10/07/2026.
10/23, 10/30, 11/6, 11/13/26
CNS-4081569#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1024)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261958
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
BRITEK PARTNERS, 310 Country Club Hts, Carmel Valley, CA 93924.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
JAMES W BRIER, PO Box 969, Carmel Valley, CA 93924.
KIMBERLEY B BRIER, PO Box 969, Carmel Valley, CA 93924.
This business is conducted by a general partnership.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 1, 2026.
S/James W Brier
Date signed: Oct. 13, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 13, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 16, 23, 30, Nov. 6, 2026 (PC 1025)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261966
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
OYSTER TRAVEL, 244 Hwy 1, Carmel By The Sea, CA 93923.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
MELANIE JEWEL HIBBS, 244 Hwy 1, Carmel By The Sea, CA 93923.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 14, 2026.
S/Melanie Hibbs
Date signed: Oct. 14, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 14, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 16, 23, 30, Nov. 6, 2026 (PC 1026)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261977
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
THE JOINT MARINA, 234 RESERVATION ROAD, MARINA, CA 93933
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
FLAVORS OF MARINA INC., 234 RESERVATION ROAD, MARINA, CA 93933
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by: a corporation.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on: Aug. 1, 2026.
S/ Harkamalpreet Gill, Chief Executive Officer
Date signed: Oct. 14, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 14, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30. Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1027)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261973
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
SALTY SOUL SANCTUARY, 526 OCEAN AVE STE 304, CARMEL BY THE SEA, CA 93921
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
SALTY SOUL SANCTUARY LLC, 86 VIA VENTURA, MONTEREY, CA 93940
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 listed above on: Not Applicable.
S/ Kyle Hoff, Managing Member
Date signed: Oct. 14, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 14, 2026.Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30. Nov. 6, 13, 2026. (PC 1028)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261918
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
GROCERY OUTLET OF SALINAS, 1415 N Main Street, Salinas, CA 93906
County of MONTEREY
Registrant(s):
THE3BEEZ LLC, 1415 N Main Street, Salinas, CA 93906
This business is conducted by a limited liability company
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
THE3BEEZ LLC
S/ TRENT BLANKENSHIP, MANAGING MEMBER,
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 10/06/2026.
10/23, 10/30, 11/6, 11/13/26
CNS-4082710#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1029)

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legals@carmelpinecone.com

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261901
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
FILIPINO INDIAN SUPERMARKET, 1914 FREMONT BLVD, SEASIDE, CA 93955
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
BIBS VENTURES LLC, 1914 FREMONT ST, SEASIDE, CA 93955
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 listed above on: 10/01/2026.
S/ Salvador Ornelas, Member
Date signed: Oct. 5, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 5, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30. Nov. 6, 13, 2026. (PC 1030)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261980
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
LOVE ONES HOME CARE, 510 Paradise Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
DIEGO RODRIGUEZ GONZALEZ, P.O. Box 584, Seaside, CA 93955.
JANNET JUVENTINA RODRIGUEZ
This business is conducted by a married couple.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Jannet Rodriguez
Date signed: Oct. 15, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 15, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1031)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261894
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
SAVE DEL MESA CARMEL, 43 Del Mesa Carmel, Carmel, CA 93923.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
JAMES EDWARD ROBINSON.
CHARMIAN HILARY ROBINSON.
This business is conducted by a married couple.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 2, 2026.
S/James E. Robinson
Date signed: Oct. 2, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 2, 2026
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1032)

T.S. No.: 2026-01840 Decal No.: LAS3741 Property Address: 13424 Agua Caliente Space 213, Castroville, CA 95012 **NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE** YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A THE TERMS OF THE MOBILE HOME SECURITY AGREEMENT DATED 6/2/2022. 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. THIS NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 18037.5, the Uniform Commercial Code and 9610 of the Commercial Code please take notice that 21ST MORTGAGE CORPORATION, the secured creditor, will conduct a public sale of the following described mobile home: Registration Number(s) LAS3741, more fully described as Serial Number(s) CAHK012417109254 84A, CAHK012417109254 84B, and HUD/Insignia RAD650898, RAD650899 Manufacturer: 90004 HALLMARK SOUTHWEST CORP Model: 241710 Situs Address: 13424 Agua Caliente Space 213, Castroville, CA 95012 the property described above will be sold as is at public sale on 11/24/2026 at 10:00 AM at At the main entrance to the County Administration Building, 168 W. Alisal Street, Salinas, CA. for the property located at 13424 Agua Caliente Space 213, Castroville, CA 95012 due to a default by Angelica Clemente Castelan and Joel Magana-Morales and Yoselin Magana Clemente on a promissory note and security agreement for the purchase of the above mentioned mobilehome. Except for the warranty that this sale is authorized by law, absolutely no warranties of the sale are given. Prospective purchasers who wish to keep the mobile home in place and reside in the mobile home, must apply for and be approved for occupancy and should be familiar with California Civil Code 798.74 which gives the Park Management certain rights of prior approval over its residents. Prospective Purchasers who desire to remove the mobile home from the Park may be required to sign a lot storage agreement until the home is removed which removal must comply with all state and local permitting requirements. Prospective purchasers must present a cashier's check for the full amount of the purchase immediately at the conclusion of the sale. This sale does not include any contents of the unit and the successful bidder is responsible for the lawful disposition of all remaining contents of the unit. The general public will have access to the Mobile home Park premises for the purposes related to this sale. As the date of this, the amount of unpaid balance and other charges: $146,374.33 Due to interest, advances for taxes and /or insurance, attorney's fees and costs, you may owe more on the date of payment. For more information, please call the undersigned. Secured Party/ Foreclosing Creditor 21ST MORTGAGE CORPORATION at 800-955-0021 or Sokolof Remtulla at 888-522-6214. Please make cashier's check payable to Sokolof Remtulla Date: 10/19/26 21ST MORTGAGE CORPORATION 620 MARKET ST KNOXVILLE, TN 37902 Sale Line: (916) 939-0772 Name: Cameron Tabler Title: Legal CoordinatorNPP0496409 To: CARMEL PINE CONE, PUB: 10/30/2026

Publication dates: Oct. 30, 2026 (PC1056)

T.S. No. 145511-CA APN: 169-361-008-000 **NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE** IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 1/4/2021. 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 On 11/17/2026 at 10:00 AM, CLEAR RECON CORP, as duly appointed trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust recorded 1/7/2021 as Instrument No. 2021001163 of Official Records in the office of the County Recorder of Monterey County, State of CALIFORNIA executed by: LISA KAY FAULKNER WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK DRAWN ON A STATE OR NATIONAL BANK, A CHECK DRAWN BY A STATE OR FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, OR A CHECK DRAWN BY A STATE OR FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION, SAVINGS ASSOCIATION, OR SAVINGS BANK SPECIFIED IN SECTION 5102 OF THE FINANCIAL CODE AND AUTHORIZED TO DO BUSINESS IN THIS STATE; MAIN ENTRANCE, MONTEREY COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 168 W. ALISAL STREET, SALINAS, CA 93901 all right, title and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust in the property situated in said County and State described as: MORE ACCURATELY DESCRIBED IN SAID DEED OF TRUST. The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 25390 TIERRA GRANDE DRIVE, CARMEL, CA 93923 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be held, but without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession, condition, or encumbrances, including fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust, to pay the remaining principal sums of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligation secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is: $677,698.82 If the Trustee is unable to convey title for any reason, the successful bidder's sole and exclusive remedy shall be the return of monies paid to the Trustee, and the successful bidder shall have no further recourse. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned or its predecessor caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located. 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 (855) 313-3319 or visit this Internet website www.clearreconcorp.com, using the file number assigned to this case 145511-CA. 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: Effective January 1, 2021, 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 (855) 313-3319, or visit this internet website www.clearreconcorp.com, using the file number assigned to this case 145511-CA 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. 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. FOR SALES INFORMATION: (855) 313-3319 CLEAR RECON CORP 3333 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 225 San Diego, California 92108

Publication dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 2026 (PC1013)

PUBLIC NOTICES

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261828
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
EC LAWN AND GARDEN, 59 Martines Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
CYNTHIA DE LA ROSA ALDERETE, 59 Martines Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Not Applicable.
S/Cynthia Alderete
Date signed: Sept. 22, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 22, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1033)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261965
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
ROADRAGE WORKS, 315 Vincent Pl., Salinas, CA 93907.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
RAYMOND CHARLES ASH, 315 Vincent Pl., Salinas, CA 93907.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 14, 2026.
S/Raymond Ash
Date signed: Oct. 14, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 14, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1035)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261758
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
ESQUIVEL TAX CPA, 32 E. Alisal, Suite 206, Salinas, CA 93901.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
VICTOR ALFONSO ESQUIVEL
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 1, 2026.
S/Victor Esquivel
Date signed: Sept. 9, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 9, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1038)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261968
Filing type: NEW FILING - with CHANGE(S) from the previous filing.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
EL PRIMO WESTERN WEAR, 828 E. Alisal St., Salinas, CA 93905.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
EL PRIMO WESTERN WEAR INC., 489 Arcadia Way, Salinas, CA 93906.
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 2001.
S/Margarita Servin, Secretary
Date: Oct. 13, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 14, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1036)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20262001
Filing type: NEW FILING - with CHANGE(S) from the previous filing.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
AURORA CLEANING SERVICES, 13900 Monte Del-Oro, Space 67, Castroville, CA 95012.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
FATIMA CASTILLA BENITEZ
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on March 13, 2024.
S/Fatima Castilla Benitez
Date signed: Oct. 19, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 19, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1040)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261807
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
THE VALLEY LANDSCAPING LLC, 348 Brittlebush St., Soledad, CA 93960.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
THE VALLEY LANDSCAPING LLC, 348 Brittlebush St., Soledad, CA 93960.
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 Aug. 17, 2026.
S/Christian Guzman
Date: Sept. 17, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 17, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 1041)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20262009
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
F & V Locksmith, 333 5th St, Greenfield, CA 93927
County of MONTEREY
Registrant(s):
Florentino Velasco de Jesús, P.O. Box 1312, Greenfield, CA 93927
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/ Florentino Velasco de Jesús,
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 10/21/2026.
10/30, 11/6, 11/13, 11/20/26
CNS-4089936#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1043)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20262015
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
JHONATAN SP PAINTING, 1203 Grandhaven St., Salinas, CA 93905.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
JHONATAN SANTOS PEREZ, S.E. Beach St., PMB #119, Watsonville, CA 95076.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Sept. 29, 2026.
S/Jhonatan Santos Perez
Date signed: Oct. 21, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 21, 2026
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1044)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261987
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person is doing business as:
REVAMP CONSTRUCTION, 25680 Tierra Grande Drive, Carmel, CA 93923
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
Petr Kotala, 25680 Tierra Grande Drive, Carmel, CA 93923.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on Oct. 16, 2026.
S/ Petr Kotala
Date signed: Oct. 16, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 16, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1045)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261990
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
LAREYNAS SUPERMARKET, 10750 Merritt St., Castroville, CA 95012.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ABDASALAM ABDO SAEED, 1221 San Gabriel Ct., Watsonville, CA 95076.
RAMZEE ALGHAILI MURSHID, 15 Plum St., Watsonville, CA 95076.
This business is conducted by a general partnership.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 2, 2021.
S/Abdasalam Abdo Saeed
Date signed: Oct. 16, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 16, 2026
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1046)

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
File No. 20262025
Filing type: ABANDONMENT:
County of Filing: Monterey
Date of Original Filing: Feb. 11, 2025
File No.: 20250304
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
ALL SEASONS HEATING & COOLING, 1173 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ZACHARY BRIAN HUMASON, P.O. Box 2127, Pacific Grove, CA 93950.
This business is conducted by an individual.
S/Zachary Brian Humason
Date: Oct. 22, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 22, 2026.
Publication dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026. (PC1047)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20262027
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
ALL SEASONS HEATING & COOLING, 1173 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
JOEL G. MAGALLON, 1173 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 22, 2026.
S/Joel Magallon
Date signed: Oct. 22, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 22, 2026
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1048)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20262023
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
TINTICOS, 5200 Coe Avenue, Apt. 1173, Seaside, CA 93955.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ANDREA PEÑA PEREZ, 5200 Coe Avenue, Apt. 1173, Seaside, CA 93955.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 22, 2026.
S/Andrea Peña Perez
Date signed: Oct. 22, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 22, 2026
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1049)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261983
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
VALLEY DOGS, 924 Larkin St., Apt. 101, Salinas, CA 93907.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ELIAZ CERNA-AGUILAR.
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/Eliaz Cerna-Aguilar
Date signed: Oct. 15, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 15, 2026
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1050)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261818
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
ANGELES Y QUERUBINES DAYCARE, 38 Las Lomas Dr. #C, Royal Oaks, CA 95076.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ARACELI CARDOSO, 38 Las Lomas Dr. #C, Royal Oaks, CA 95076.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Not Applicable.
S/Araceli Cardoso
Date signed: Sept. 13, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 18, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1051)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261969
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
Cowboy Latte, 24520 Outlook Dr, Unit 29, Carmel, CA 93923,
County of Monterey
Registered Owner(s):
GOOD CLEAN FUN ENTERTAINMENT LLC, 24520 OUTLOOK DR, UNIT 29, CARMEL, CA 93923; 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/ John Strong, Managing Member
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 10/14/2026
10/30, 11/6, 11/13, 11/20/26
CNS-4090633#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1052)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261945
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
BEACH BUDDIES RC, 660 Pine Ave., Apt. 1, 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.:
BEACH BUDDIES RC LLC.
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a limited liability company.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Cameron Clarke, Managing Member
Date: Oct. 9, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 9, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1053)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20262034
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person is doing business as:
1. BUYERS REAL ESTATE
2. BUYERS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
3. BUYERS CONSTRUCTION
17040 Arriba Way, Salinas, CA 93907
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner:
JOEL MERLE DENNING, 17040 Arriba Way, Salinas, CA 93907-8811
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business names listed above: Not Applicable.
S/ Joel M. Denning
Date signed: Oct. 23, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 23, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1055)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20261960
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person is doing business as:
Mil Pétalos y Raíces, 526 #B Fremont St., Salinas, CA 93905
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner:
ISMAEL SOTO MORENO, 526 #B Fremont St., Salinas, CA 93905
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business names listed above: Oct. 13, 2026.
S/ Ismael Soto Moreno
Date signed: Oct. 13, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 13, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1058)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20262053
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
BERNABE CARPET CLEANING, 500 Windsor St., King City, CA 93930.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
LEOCADIO BERNABE ROMERO.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Oct. 27, 2026.
S/Leocadio Bernabe Romero
Date signed: Oct. 27, 2026
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Oct. 27, 2026.
Publication Dates: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 1059)

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2026



REPLACE THE BATTERIES IN YOUR SMOKE DETECTORS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC ONSITE AUCTION:

In accordance with the provisions of the California Self-Storage Facility Act (Bus. & Prof. code §21700-21716), California Commercial Code Section 2328, Section 1812.600 – 1812.609 and Section 1988 of California Civil Code, 353 of the Penal Code, and being due an unpaid storage for which OFF-ABBOTT MINI-STORAGE, 246 Abbott Street, City of Salinas, County of Monterey, State of California, is entitled to a lien as herein after described. And due notice having been given to parties known to claim an interest therein and the time specified in such notice of payment having expired notice is hereby given that these goods will be auctioned by sealed envelope bids on Friday, November 13, 2026, at 11AM. Purchases must be paid for at the time of sale in cash only. All items sold as-is, and must be removed at the time of sale. Sale subject to cancellation in the event of settlement between the owner and obligated party. Unsold contents will be disposed of after Friday, November 20, 2026.

A-10	Sandra Martinez (Home goods)
A-26	Eric Boyens (Home goods)
A-27	Eric Boyens (Home goods)
E-11	Henry Hale (Home goods)
F-8	Luis Palacios (Home goods)

Publication date: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 2026 (PC1054)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Notice is hereby given that SP032 - Storage PRO of Carmel, LLC, phone (831) 250-6062, located at 9640 Carmel Valley Rd, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA, 93923 will hold a Public Sale, to satisfy the lien of the owner. This notice is given in accordance with the provisions of Section 21700 et seq of the Business & Professions Code of the State of California. Units will be sold via online auction, at www.StorageTreasures.com. Auction will close on or after **Wednesday November 11, 2026 at 12:00 pm**. The personal goods stored therein by the following may include, but are not limited to household goods, furniture, tools, equipment, toys, boxes, clothes and misc items. Owner reserves the right to bid and the right to refuse bids. Cleanup deposit is required. Sale is subject to cancellation. The contents of the rental storage units belonging to the following persons will be sold:

7106 - Mary Hall

Publishing: October 30, 2026
The Carmel Pine Cone
Publication date: Oct. 30, 2026 (PC1034)

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

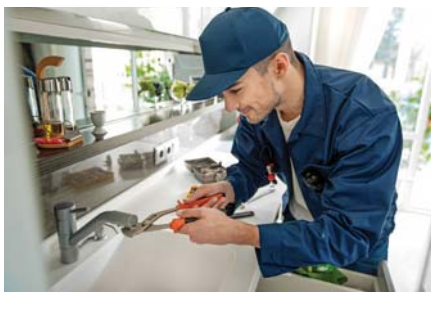
Get your business noticed in The Carmel Pine Cone SERVICE DIRECTORY

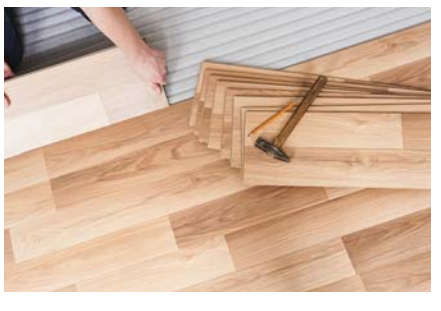
- CABINETRY
- INTERIOR DESIGN
- HOUSE CLEANING
- GARDEN • LANDSCAPE
- PAINTING
- CONSTRUCTION/REMODEL
- ROOFING
- TREE SERVICE
- CAREGIVER/HOME CARE
- MASONRY
- ELECTRICIAN
- FENCES & DECKS
- GROCERY DELIVERY
- FIREWOOD
- CARPET & FLOOR CLEANING

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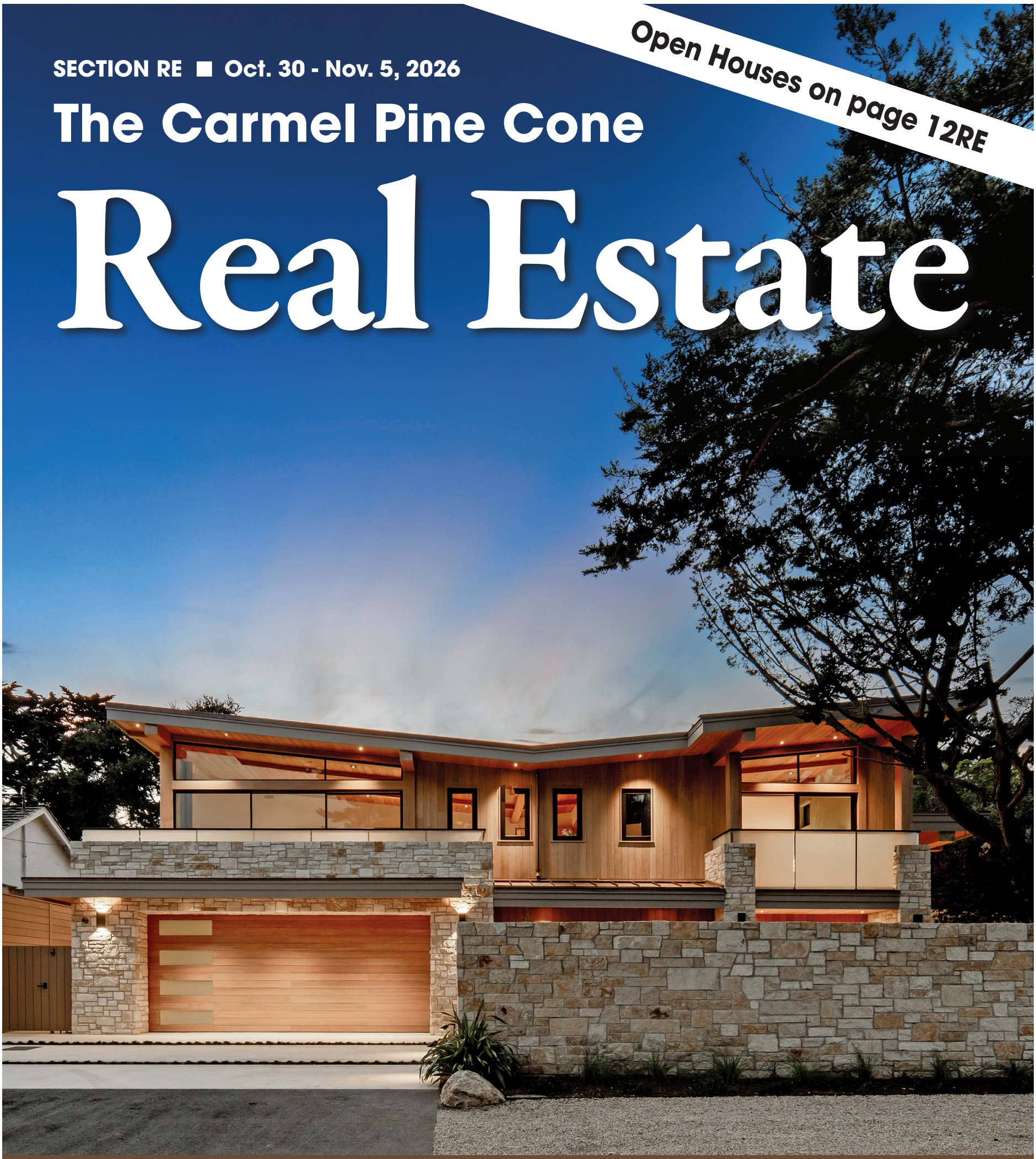
CALL. 831-661-9931 **TEXT.** 831-228-5534 **CLICK.** LexusMontereyPeninsula.com
COME ON BY. 1721 Del Monte Blvd. Seaside, CA 93955

SECTION RE ■ Oct. 30 - Nov. 5, 2026

The Carmel Pine Cone

Real Estate

Open Houses on page 12RE







■ This week's cover property, located in Carmel, is presented by Courtney Adamski of Carmel Realty Company. (See Page 2RE)

Carmel Realty Company
ESTABLISHED 1913

About the Cover

The Carmel Pine Cone

Real Estate

Oct. 30 - Nov. 5, 2026



26346 Valley View Avenue, Carmel
6 Bed, 6 Full & 1 Half Bath | 4,450 Sq. Ft.
$20,000,000 | 26346ValleyView.com

A rare offering of estate scale on sought-after Carmel Point, this newly constructed modern organic sanctuary combines exceptional craftsmanship with effortless coastal living. Set on an 8,800+ square-foot lot, the home spans over 4,400 square feet with six ensuite bedrooms and six and one-half bathrooms, offering generous space for generations to gather or to enjoy as a full-time residence. Soaring ceilings, skylights, and multiple living areas create an airy sense of openness, while walls of glass unfold to the courtyard for an extraordinary connection between indoors and out. A 600+ square-foot two-car garage with electric vehicle chargers, solar power, and battery backup complements the home's thoughtful modern amenities. In a coastal setting where new construction of this scale is exceptionally difficult to achieve, this residence offers a seldom-available combination of space, quality, and livability.

Courtney Adamski, Broker Associate
831.915.3913 | DRE#01444609
CAdamksi@CarmelRealtyCompany.com

Carmel Realty Company
Established 1913





Katherine Hudson
KATHERINE.HUDSON@THEAGENCYRE.COM
831.293.4878 | LIC. #01363054
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Real Estate Sales October 18-24

Escrows closed: 33
Total value: $50,594,000

Big Sur

Garrapatos Road — $700,000
Matthew O'Donnell and Jane Turner to Kevin Harrod and Venessa Moranda
APN: 418-051-007

Carmel Highlands

123 Fern Canyon Road — $1,430,000
Estate of Brian Wilson to Schiko Saijo
APN: 241-091-002

See **HOME SALES** *page 4RE*

3159 Stevenson Drive, Pebble Beach
All New Modern Minimalist Retreat Overlooking Spyglass
Open House Sunday 1pm-3pm



5 Beds, 5.5 Baths ◆ $8,995,000 ◆ WaterbridgePB.com



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Carmel ▪ 3 beds, 3.5 baths ▪ $3,495,000 ▪ www.568Aguajito.com



Carmel Valley ▪ 3 beds, 3 baths ▪ $2,800,000 ▪ www.224VistaVerdeCarmelValley.com



Carmel ▪ 3 beds, 2 baths ▪ $2,549,000 ▪ www.24571PortolaAve.com



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Board of Regents — Who's Who in Luxury Real Estate

HOME SALES

From page 2RE

Carmel Highlands (con't)

32680 Coast Ridge Road — $2,765,000
Nancy Fein to Margaret Thomas
APN: 243-282-003

Carmel Valley

Center Street — $1,600,000
AEG Eat LLC to Christopher and Marietta Hickey
APN: 169-131-025

Highway 68

28750 Underwood Road — $700,000



1021 Matador Road, Pebble Beach — $6,150,000

Templo Rosa de Saron Inc. to Richard Smith and Diana Surber
APN: 416-451-036

15135 Big Sky Lane — $2,249,000
Ferrini Oaks LLC to Scott and Jennifer Beery
APN: 161-013-007

Marina

3052 MacArthur Drive unit C — $438,000
The Sea Haven LLC to Joshua and Noelia Verwolf
APN: 031-295-038

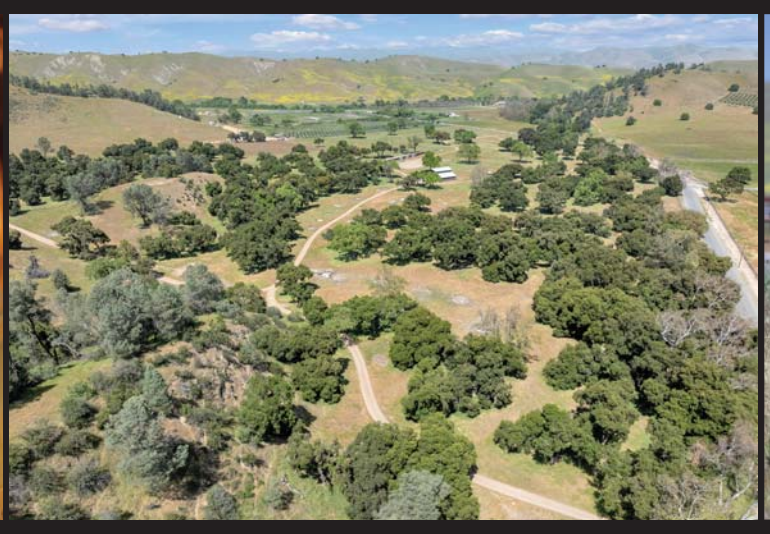
328 Parson Circle — $700,000
Steven Roberson to Alberto and Martina Tuazon
APN: 032-403-022

15050 Breckinridge Avenue — $885,000
Gary Clark and Margot Lamarr to Mark and Linda Hertzog
APN: 031-166-097

See **ESCROWS** *page 14RE*

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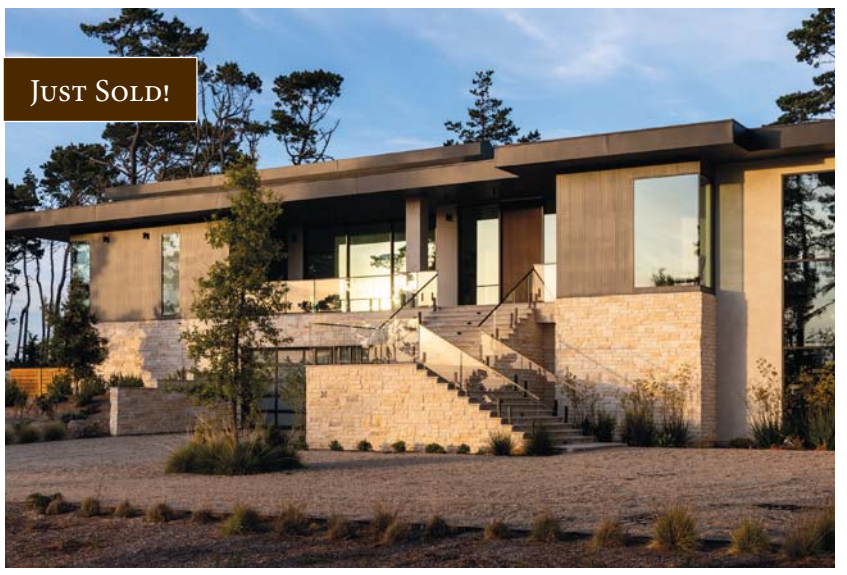
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Board of Regents
Who's Who in Luxury Real Estate

Perfection is just procrastination with potato chips and fancy clothes

Scenic Views

By JERRY GERVASE

EVERY WEEK I sit down in front of an empty page with a head full of nothing while the cursor blinks like an impatient creditor, and every week, the nothing turns out to be something. I was reminded of this state of mind when a friend asked the question I get most often, "Where do you get your ideas for columns?" My usual answer is that I don't know and don't want to find out.

Just getting started can be the hardest part. The blank screen reminds me of things I could be doing instead of staring at my computer. Suddenly, I become desperate for a snack. I open the kitchen cupboard, hoping to find an unfinished bag of potato chips — slightly stale is OK — and notice that the five shelves of spices really need to be alphabetized. Yes, distractions carry me off to Procrastination Junction, population: me. Deadlines are the last train home.

800-word dash

I can't quite put a name to the anxiety. It isn't laziness or a lack of ideas. It's the gap between the piece in my head and the first clumsy sentence I can actually produce. It's like being in an 800-word dash. The starter's gun goes off, and my first attempt is a false start. In my head, the column is a gold-medal run, with a crisp opening line, a muscular middle, and an ending that's like a lunge across the finish line. Then I type the first sentence, and it comes out like a sprinter tripping over his own shoelaces. So I delete it. Stretch. Check the weather in a city I've never visited. I tell myself I'm warming up, and I may even believe it.

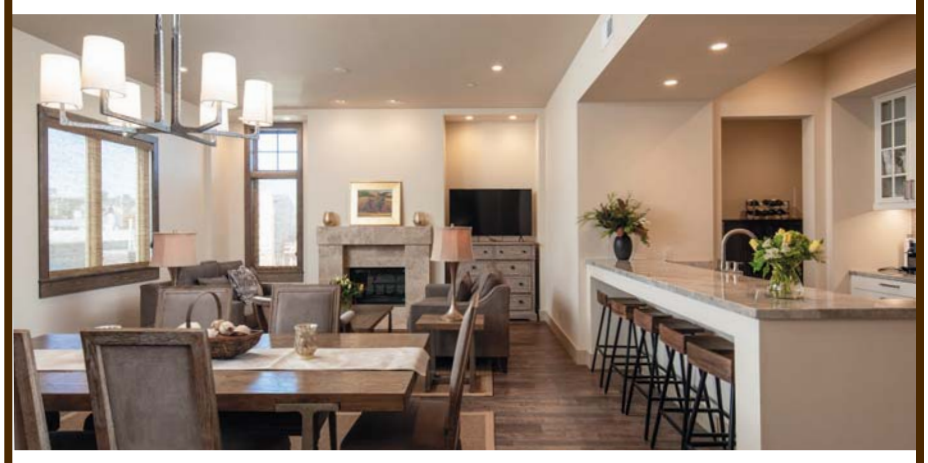
What breaks the spell? Probably something small and unglamorous, like writing a bad first sentence on purpose or writing about the blank page itself — which is what I'm doing right now.

Duck! I'm about to get philosophical, allegorical or possibly metaphorical. Take cover if you must. But the blank page isn't just mine. Everyone faces one eventually. It's the new job, where the desk is clean and nobody has told you who signs off on your timecard. It's the first morning of retirement, when the alarm clock has been silenced and 40 years of Mondays have left a hole the exact shape of a commute. It's the unsent message, the cursor blinking after "I'm sorry ..." or "I've been meaning to say ..." while you weigh a single sentence against a lifetime of possible replies. Only the stakes differ. My page has to be 800 words by Tuesday. Theirs can sit blank

See **GERVASE** *page 10RE*

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CARMEL | 9903 CLUB PLACE
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OFFERED AT $1,495,000



1 **Pr** Prep

2 **Pc** Price

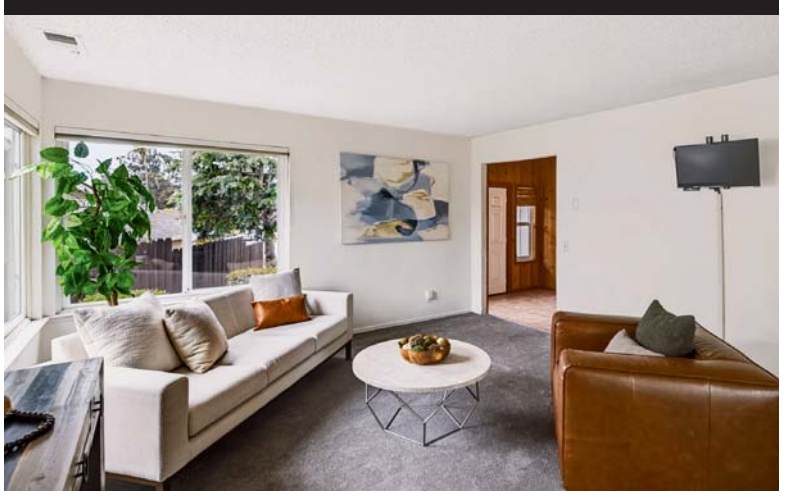
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24400sanluisavenue.com
Jeannie Fromm 831.277.3371
License# 01348162

28951 Falcon Ridge, Salinas

4 BD | 3 BA | 3,600± SQ. FT. | 4.36± ACRES LOT
$2,149,000
28951falconridge.com
Shankle Real Estate Team 831.915.2800
License# 01308343





355 & 357 Monroe Street, Monterey

5 BD | 2.5 BA | 1,942± SQ. FT. | 5,200± SQ. FT. LOT
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355-357monroestreet.com
Alexandra Armanasco 831.915.8688
License# 02082410

32 Carlton Drive, Del Rey Oaks

4 BD | 3 BA | 2,070± SQ. FT. | 8,276± SQ. FT. LOT
$1,079,500
32carltondrive.com
Annie Giammanco 831.915.1004
License# 00998517





70 Forest Ridge Road #1, Monterey

2 BD | 2.5 BA | 1,378± SQ. FT.
$950,000
70forestridgeroad-1.com
Rhonda Mohr 831.293.4935
License# 02120365

253 Hacienda Carmel, Carmel

STUDIO | 1 BA | 546± SQ. FT. | 1,410± SQ. FT. LOT
$595,000
253haciendacarmel.com
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707 Walnut Street, Pacific Grove

3 BD | 2 BA | 1,668± SQ. FT. | 5,200± SQ. FT. LOT
$1,898,000
707walnutstreet.com
Irene Reed & Nancy Comstock 650.207.1394
License# 01879122 & 01372189

2 Esquiline Road, Carmel Valley

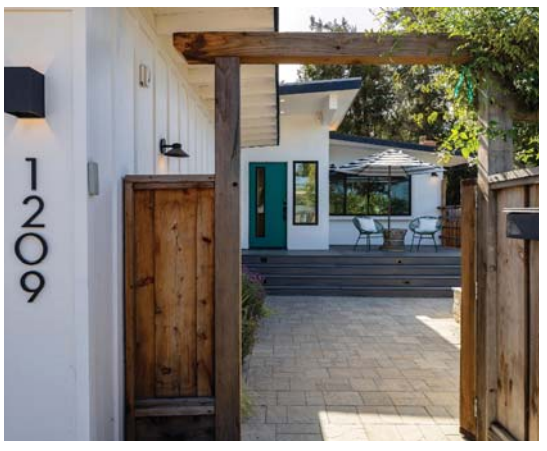
3 BD | 2 BA | 2,726± SQ. FT. | 0.36± ACRE LOT
$1,750,000
2esquilineroad.com
Laura Ciucci 831.236.8571
License# 01135238





96 Corona Way, Carmel

1 BD | 1 BA | 813± SQ. FT. | 0.49± ACRE LOT
$1,500,000
96coronaway.com
Arleen Hardenstein 831.915.8989
License# 01710953



1209 Funston Avenue, Pacific Grove

4 BD | 2 BA | 1,526± SQ. FT. | 4,500± SQ. FT. LOT
$1,433,000
1209funstonavenue.com
Velasquez Sanderson Team 831.254.3949
License# 01968946

8 Touche Pass (Lot 158), Carmel

18± ACRE LOT
$1,300,000
8touchepasslot-158.com
Keck Properties Team 831.238.8730
License# 02168140





315 Cypress Avenue, Pacific Grove

2 BD | 1 BA | 1,095± SQ. FT. | 2,700± SQ. FT. LOT
$1,279,000
315CypressAvenue.com
TJ Bristol 831.521.3131
License# 01447566



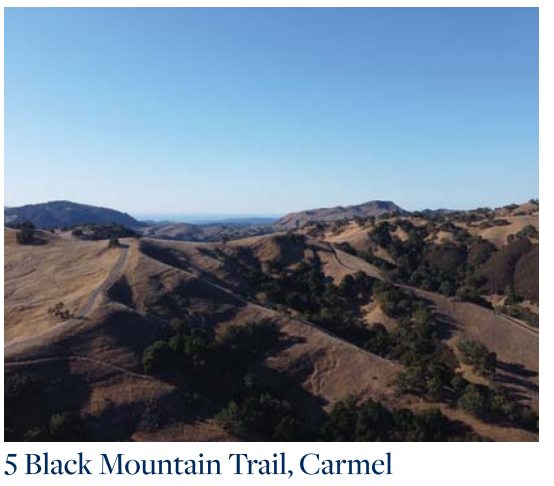
21 Pronghorn Run (Lot 119), Carmel

20.79± ACRE LOT
$1,195,000
21PronghornRunLot119.com
Keck Properties Team 831.238.8730
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203 Hacienda Carmel, Carmel

2 BD | 2 BA | 950± SQ. FT.
$725,000
203haciendacarmel.com
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5 Black Mountain Trail, Carmel

44.87± ACRE LOT
$495,000
5BlackMountainTrail247.com
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GERVASE

From page 6RE

for years, and no editor calls. But the fear is the same, and so is the way out. Write something clumsy, then write something better.

The blank page is a private struggle. Readers never see the false starts, only the finished piece. Consider Margaret Mitchell. Laid up with a broken ankle in 1926 and bored out of her mind, she began writing "Gone With the Wind" in the small Atlanta apartment she shared with her husband. She wrote most of the book over the next three years.

Somewhere in that stretch, there were surely days when she stared at a blank page, wondered what on earth she'd gotten herself into and kept typing anyway, one sentence at a time.

Sometimes, when the pages stay blank, I change the scenery. I've written "Scenic Views" in numerous coffee shops and an internet cafe in New York City, and scribbled it on the back of an envelope on the train to Gettysburg. No, wait, that was Abraham Lincoln. And once I wrote it from a hospital bed, delirious with Covid pneumonia. It turned out to be one of my best efforts. The critic in my head, I've learned, doesn't make hospital visits.

Where ideas come from

A change of venue — real or imagined — didn't hand me ideas. It took away my excuses. In each place, I was too distracted, too rushed or too sick to wait for a perfect first sentence, so I wrote an imperfect one and kept going.

Perfectionism, it turns out, is just procrastination in a better suit.

So where do ideas really come from? Not the cupboard, the cafe or the fever. They come from the clumsy first sentence. Ideas are shy. They ignore a blinking cursor but follow a moving hand.

Type badly for three sentences, and something usually knocks: a memory, a phrase, a neighbor's dog. The page was never empty, just crowded with columns I'll never write, and my job is to let one in. This week's is the one you just read. Next week, the impatient creditor returns, and I'll be ready. The spices, at least, are already alphabetized.

Contact Jerry at jerrygervase@yahoo.com.

INCIDENTS

From page 51A

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

Carmel-by-the-Sea: No calls to report.

Pacific Grove: Officers responded to the 200 block of Grand Avenue for a burglary in progress. The suspect was found squatting in a vacant building without the owner's permission. A 43-year-old woman was cited and released for lodging without the owner's consent.

Monterey: Two men, ages 21 and 22, were arrested at Del Monte Avenue and Camino El Estero for engaging in a speed contest.

Monterey: A 33-year-old man was arrested on Via Ventura for kidnapping, false imprisonment, assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury, inflicting corporal injury on a spouse, cohabitant or dating partner, child abuse without great bodily injury or death, first-degree burglary, driving under the influence of alcohol and driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08% or greater.

Monterey: A 47-year-old man was arrested on Bonifacio Place for possession of unlawful paraphernalia, possession of a controlled substance, making or passing a fictitious check with intent to defraud, and a felony warrant from another jurisdiction.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Suspicious circumstances on Ocean Avenue. Officers dispatched to a reported residential burglary. There were no signs of forced entry or missing items inside the residence. The front door was found ajar, and the doorknob was on the floor.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Attempted shoplifting at Ocean and San Carlos. A trespass advisement was issued.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: A dog found at Carmel Beach was returned to its owner.

See **CALLS** *page 13RE*











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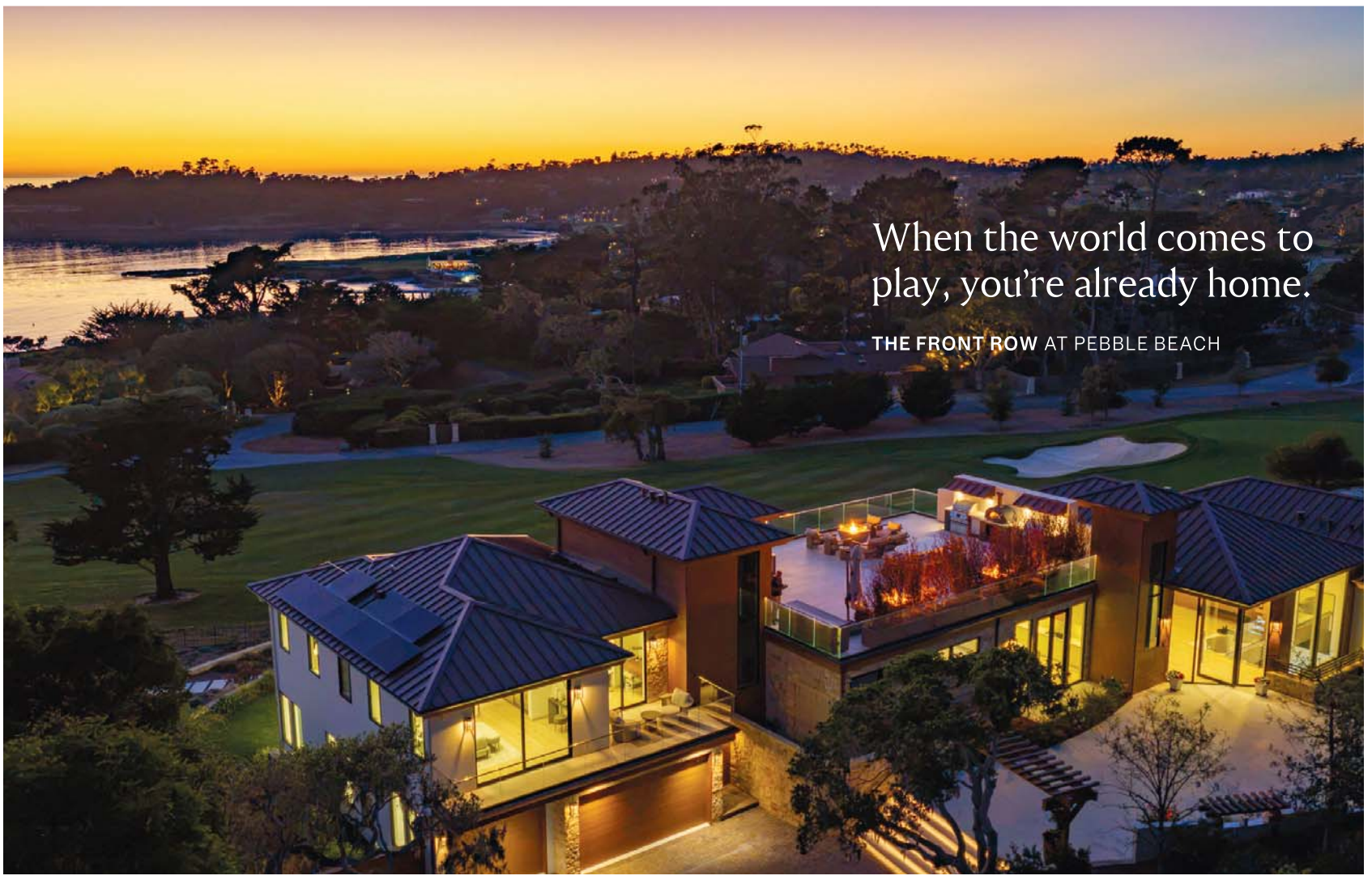
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3364 17-Mile Drive — Pebble Beach: The Front Row is new, ground-up construction on the 14th hole of Pebble Beach Golf Links. Slide back the great room's glass walls and the fairway, Stillwater Cove and the Pacific become part of the room. Upstairs, a 1,650 ft² rooftop with an outdoor kitchen and fire features gives you a front-row seat to the Pro-Am and the 2027 U.S. Open. **6 beds, 8 full and 2 half baths, 8,572 ft², 0.92 acres, $43,800,000**

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DRE Lic. #01240204, #01956633



1385 Mission Street — Carmel: Meet The Acorn, a 1940 Carmel cottage reimagined in 2024 with a mid-century soul. Set on a rare, nearly double-sized lot among the pines, it hides a few surprises: a speakeasy-style wine room, a dressing room straight out of a design magazine, and the sound of the surf just beyond. **5 beds, 3 baths, 2,667 ft², 6,697 ft² lot, $5,750,000**

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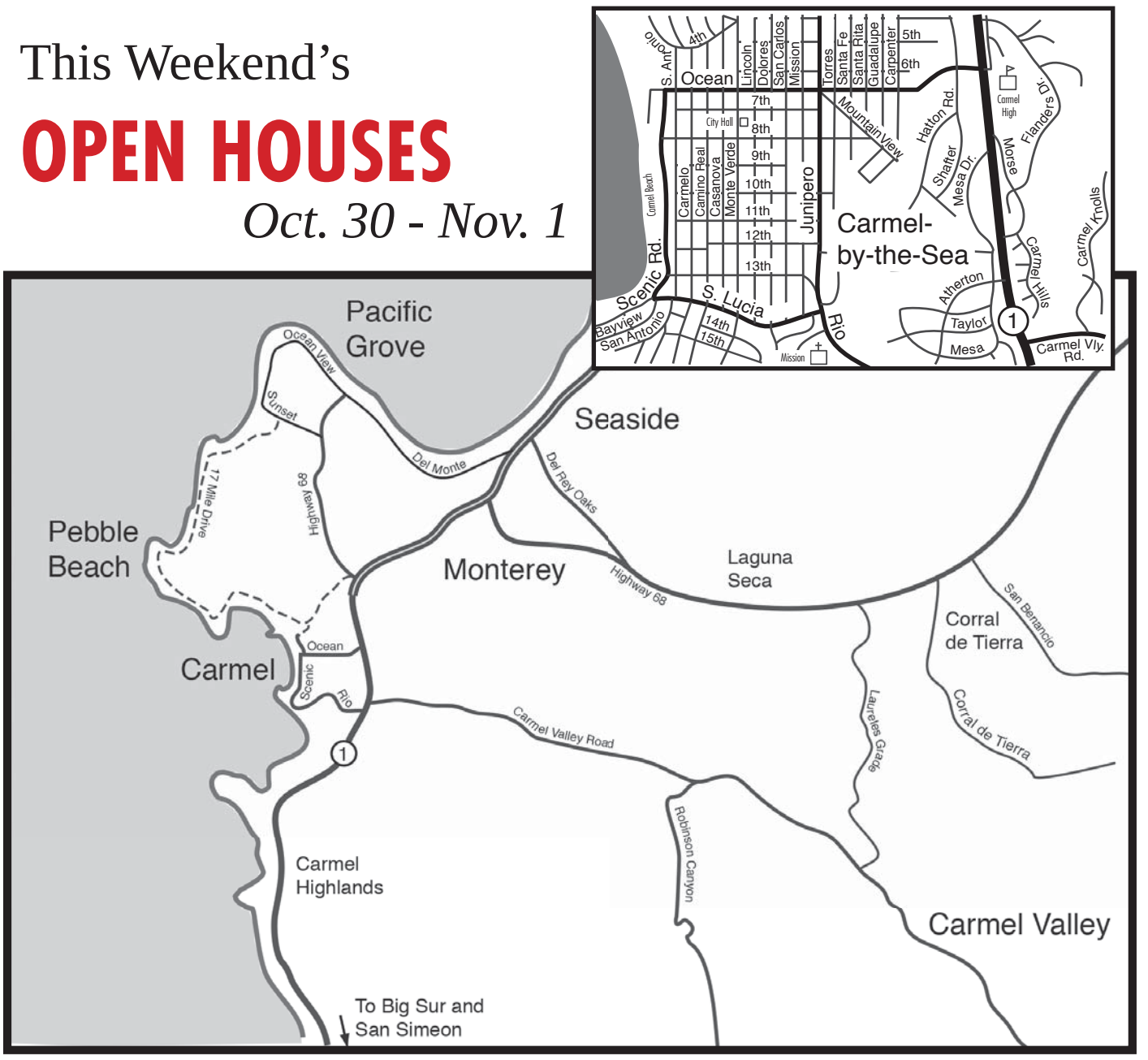
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$699,000	**2bd 1ba**	**Sa 1-3**
118 Hacienda, Unit 118		Carmel
Compass		915-9710
$725,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 12-2**
203 Hacienda Carmel		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		277-6020
$899,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Su 2-4**
20 Del Mesa Carmel		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		293-3391
$935,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa 2-4 Su 1-3**
62 Del Mesa Carmel		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		293-3391 / 620-2468
$1,050,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 12-2**
139 Del Mesa Carmel		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		293-3391 / 521-0680
$1,150,000	**2bd 2.5ba**	**Sa Su 12-2**
3850 Rio Rd 47		Carmel
David Lyng Real Estate		915-8292
$1,175,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 12-2**
137 Del Mesa Carmel		Carmel
Monterey Coast Realty		915-8153 / 236-2940
$1,285,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa 1-3 Su 12-2**
37 Del Mesa Carmel		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		620-2468 / 293-3391
$1,600,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa 1-3 Su 1-4**
26085 Carmel Hills Dr		Carmel
Keller Williams, Team Beesley		236-6876
$1,750,000	**3bd 2.5+ba**	**Sa Su 1-3**
25315 Flanders Dr		Carmel
Coldwell Banker Realty		917-3966
$1,995,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Su 12-2**
26655 Pancho Way		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		277-9250
$1,995,000	**3bd 3ba**	**Sa 1-3**
7 Mal Paso Rd		Carmel
Coldwell Banker Realty		277-0622
$2,195,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 12-3**
3601 Eastfield Rd		Carmel
The Ruiz Group, Keller Williams		241-1598
$2,549,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 11-3**
24571 Portola Avenue		Carmel
Carmel Realty		238-3100 / 594-8767
$2,895,000	**4bd 3ba**	**Su 1:30-3:30**
3540 Oak Pl		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		293-4935
$2,895,000	**3+bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 12-3**
24613 Upper Trail		Carmel
Coldwell Banker Realty		809-0159
$3,200,000	**4bd 2.5ba**	**Sa Su 1-3**
24400 S. San Luis Ave.		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		404-401-8647 / 277-3371
$3,595,000	**2bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 12-3**
7086 Valley Greens Cir		Carmel
Coldwell Banker Realty		206-0129
$3,700,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 2-5 Su 1-4**
26305 Camino Real		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		402-5877 / 333-6060
$3,995,000	**4bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 1-3 Su 2-5**
23 Mentone Road		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		238-2101 / 402-5877
$4,250,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa 1-3**
571 Monte Verde Street		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		760-5126
$4,475,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa 1-3**
5th Avenue 2NW of Lincoln		Carmel
Compass		262-7768
$4,495,000	**4bd 4ba**	**Su 11-1**
3369 Trevis Way		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		404-401-8647
$6,795,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 11-2 Su 11-5**
Carmelo 2 SW of 9th		Carmel
Sotheby's Int'l RE		238-8029 / 333-6995

CARMEL VALLEY

$1,395,000	**4bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 1-3**
25940 Colt Lane		Carmel Valley
Sotheby's Int'l RE		224-6891
$1,749,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa 12-2**
4 Paso Del Rio		Carmel Valley
Monterey Coast Realty		277-5821
$1,999,000	**4bd 4ba**	**Su 12-2**
15286 Via La Gitana		Carmel Valley
Sotheby's Int'l RE		601-4934
$2,740,000	**4bd 2.5ba**	**Su 12-2**
31499 Via Las Rosas		Carmel Valley
The Agency		293-4878
$4,350,000	**4bd 3.5ba**	**Sa Su 12-2**
25 Miramonte Rd		Carmel Valley
Coldwell Banker Realty		356-8123

DEL REY OAKS

$499,000	**1bd 1ba**	**Fr 12:30-2:30**
121 Quail Run Court		Del Rey Oaks
Sotheby's Int'l RE		917-1631
$1,079,500	**4bd 3ba**	**Sa 1-3 Su 2-4**
32 Carlton Drive		Del Rey Oaks
Sotheby's Int'l RE		277-8622 / 915-1004

LA SELVA BEACH

$1,030,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa 12-2**
101 Shell Dr 287		La Selva Beach
Sotheby's Int'l RE		227-9008

MARINA

$575,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Su 1-3**
3095 Marina Drive 49		Marina
Monterey Coast Realty		717-7959
$805,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Fr 1-3 Sa Su 1-4**
14347 Sherman Blvd		Marina
The Ruiz Group, Keller Williams		837-5437
$849,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 1-3**
3216 Vista Del Camino		Marina
Sotheby's Int'l RE		917-9886
$1,295,000	**4bd 3ba**	**Sa 10-12 Su 1-3**
2501 Ocean Bluff Avenue		Marina
Monterey Coast Realty		747-7620
$1,525,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Su 12-2**
478 McKinley Dr		Marina
Compass		915-9710
$1,089,000	**4bd 2.5ba**	**Su 12-2**
16406 Garrison Dr		Marina, East Garrison
Compass		238-2022

MOSS LANDING

$2,250,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Su 1-4**
274 Monterey Dunes Way		Moss Landing
David Lyng Real Estate		620-2271

Monterey reads The Pine Cone

MONTEREY

$545,000	**1bd 1ba**	**Sa Su 1-4**
300 Glenwood Cir 198		Monterey
Coldwell Banker Realty		594-9385
$849,000	**2bd 1ba**	**Su 1-3**
642 Cypress Street		Monterey
Sotheby's Int'l RE		277-8622
$1,100,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 1-3**
1360 Josselyn Canyon Road 43		Monterey
Monterey Coast Realty		717-7959
$1,125,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa Su 1-3**
400 Mar Vista DR 23		Monterey
Sotheby's Int'l RE		917-1605
$1,233,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa 1-3 Su 2-4**
537 Larkin Street		Monterey
Sotheby's Int'l RE		318-3808
$1,495,000	**5bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 12-2**
355 & 357 Monroe St		Monterey
Sotheby's Int'l RE		277-9250
$1,575,000	**4bd 3ba**	**Sa 1-3**
129 Littlefield Road		Monterey
Sotheby's Int'l RE		238-7559

PACIFIC GROVE

$1,100,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa 1-3**
226 Walnut Street		Pacific Grove
Sotheby's Int'l RE		402-2017
$1,195,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Fr Sa Su 1-4**
1205 Lincoln Ave		Pacific Grove
Sotheby's Int'l RE		402-2884 / 601-9038
$1,795,000	**2bd 1ba**	**Su 1-3**
963 Crest Ave		Pacific Grove
Coldwell Banker Realty		220-9817
$1,800,000	**3bd 3.5ba**	**Su 1-3**
917 Fountain Avenue		Pacific Grove
Sotheby's Int'l RE		402-2017
$1,850,000	**4bd 3ba**	**Sa 1-3 Su 12-2**
979 Syida Dr		Pacific Grove
Coldwell Banker Realty		220-9817 / 277-3914
$1,898,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Sa 12-3 Su 1-4**
707 Walnut Street		Pacific Grove
Sotheby's Int'l RE		818-0755 / 650-207-1394
$1,995,000	**5bd 4ba**	**Sa 12-2**
114 Carmel Avenue		Pacific Grove
Sotheby's Int'l RE		521-0680
$3,200,000	**4bd 3.5ba**	**Su 1-3**
413 Walnut St		Pacific Grove
Coldwell Banker Realty		596-6118

PEBBLE BEACH

$885,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Su 12-2**
21 Shepherds Knoll		Pebble Beach
Compass		236-5290
$925,000	**2bd 2ba**	**Sa 11-1**
75 Ocean Pines Lane		Pebble Beach
Monterey Coast Realty		317-6336
$1,998,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 10-2 Su 12-2**
4035 Sunset Lane		Pebble Beach
Sotheby's Int'l RE		318-3808 / 915-6391
$7,920,000	**4bd 3.5ba**	**Sa 11-1 Su 2-4**
3978 Ronda Road		Pebble Beach
Compass		236-5290
$8,275,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Sa 2-4 Su 11-1**
1651 Crespi Lane		Pebble Beach
Compass		236-5290



$8,995,000	**5bd 5.5ba**	**Su 1-3**
3159 Stevenson Drive		Pebble Beach
Carmel Realty		521-4855
$9,995,000	**5bd 6.5ba**	**Su 3-5**
21 Poppy Ln		Pebble Beach
Coldwell Banker Realty		356-8123
$11,995,000	**5bd 4ba**	**Su 1-3**
1031 The Old Drive		Pebble Beach
Carmel Realty		277-5544

SALINAS

$799,000	**4bd 2ba**	**Fr 4-6 Su 1-3**
69 Geil St		Salinas
The Ruiz Group, Keller Williams		867-1188
$1,150,000	**4bd 3ba**	**Su 12-2**
7710 Fallen Leaf Lane		Salinas
Sotheby's Int'l RE		915-0265
$1,469,000	**3bd 2.5ba**	**Sa Su 11-2**
10 Paseo Segundo		Salinas
The Ruiz Group, Keller Williams		261-6468

Monterey County reads The Pine Cone

SAND CITY

$750,000	**2bd 1ba**	**Fr 3-5**
450 Ortiz Ave		Sand City
Sotheby's Int'l RE		917-1631

SEASIDE

$639,000	**2bd 1ba**	**Fr 2-4**
1437 Vallejo St		Seaside
The Ruiz Group, Keller Williams		595-9242
$776,000	**3bd 1.5ba**	**Su 1-3**
1233 Hilby Avenue		Seaside
Monterey Coast Realty		277-5256
$1,099,000	**3bd 2ba**	**Fr 4-6 Sa 12-4**
1976 Luzern St		Seaside
The Ruiz Group, Keller Williams		595-9242
$1,349,991	**5bd 3.5ba**	**Su 10-12**
4890 Peninsula Point Drive		Seaside
Sotheby's Int'l RE		318-3808

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CALLS

From page 10RE

Pacific Grove: Possible petty theft of $360 reported near the 500 block of Congress at approximately 11:30 p.m. No suspect information available.

Pacific Grove: Abandoned vehicle on Spazier Avenue.

Pacific Grove: Vehicle marked for 72-hour parking on 19th Street.

Monterey: Criminal threats on Holman Highway.

Monterey: Petty theft on Monte Vista Drive.

Monterey: A 40-year-old man was arrested at Del Monte and Dela Vina on a misdemeanor warrant from another jurisdiction.

Monterey: Petty theft from a motor vehicle reported on Lighthouse Avenue.

Monterey: Missing person on Lighthouse Avenue.

Monterey: A 36-year-old man was arrested on Tyler Street for appropriation of lost property, driving while his license was suspended or revoked for DUI-related violations, driving under the influence of alcohol, driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08% or greater, obstructing or resisting a peace officer or emergency medical technician, and a probation violation.

Monterey: A 62-year-old man was arrested at Central Avenue and Third Street for driving under the influence of alcohol, driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08% or greater, and a felony parole violation.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Trespass admonishment at Monte Verde Street and Ninth Avenue. A subject who had previously been warned about trespassing at a property showed up unannounced. The subject was removed from the property after officers were called.

Pacific Grove: At approximately 2:20 p.m., an incident occurred near 17 Mile Drive and Sinex Avenue. The reporting party said a man threw his cane at the party's vehicle, damaging the rear passenger window. The reporting party did not want to press charges and wanted the report for informational purposes only.

Pacific Grove: An injured deer was dispatched by State Parks at 17 Mile Drive and Bayview Avenue.

Pacific Grove: A tree fell on a parked vehicle at Congress Avenue and Sunset Drive, damaging it.

Pacific Grove: A subject on Sunset Drive was placed on a 72-hour mental health evaluation hold.

Monterey: Robbery and assault with a deadly weapon reported on Lighthouse Avenue.

Monterey: A 24-year-old man was arrested at Del Monte Avenue and Casa Verde Way for disorderly conduct due to alcohol.

Monterey: Battery reported at Del Monte and Park avenues.

Monterey: A 20-year-old woman was arrested on Del Monte Avenue for reckless driving.

Monterey: Rape by force or fear reported on Glenwood Circle.

Monterey: Assault with intent to commit oral copulation and sexual penetration by force or fear reported on Sand Dunes Drive.

Monterey: A 26-year-old man was arrested on Old Golf Course Road for disorderly conduct due to alcohol.

Monterey: A subject on Cannery Row was placed on a 72-hour mental health evaluation hold.

Monterey: Noninjury accident at Wave Street and Hoffman Avenue.

Monterey: A 47-year-old woman was arrested on Old Golf Course Road at 11:40 p.m. for battery and disorderly conduct due to alcohol.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Vehicle towed at Casanova Street and 12th Avenue.

Monterey: A 46-year-old man was arrested at Fremont Street and Airport Road for child abuse without great bodily injury or death, driving under the influence of alcohol and driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08% or greater.

Pacific Grove: Questions about a municipal code notice posted earlier on Eardley. The incident was classified as an animal issue.

Pacific Grove: Vehicle on Granite Street marked for 72-hour parking.

Monterey: A 20-year-old man was arrested at Lighthouse and Reeside for driving under the influence of alcohol, driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08% or greater, and driving while under 21 with a blood-alcohol level of 0.01% or greater.

Monterey: A 31-year-old man was arrested on Dutra Street for possession of unlawful paraphernalia, felony parole violation and a felony warrant from another jurisdiction.

Monterey: Vehicle towed from Glenwood Circle after being parked for more than 72 hours.

Monterey: A 46-year-old woman was arrested on La Playa Street for a probation violation and disorderly conduct due to alcohol.

Monterey: Animal control call at Pearl and Figueroa streets.

Monterey: Grand theft of motor vehicle parts or accessories reported on Del Monte Avenue.

Monterey: Battery and causing injury to an elder or dependent adult reported on Skyline Drive.

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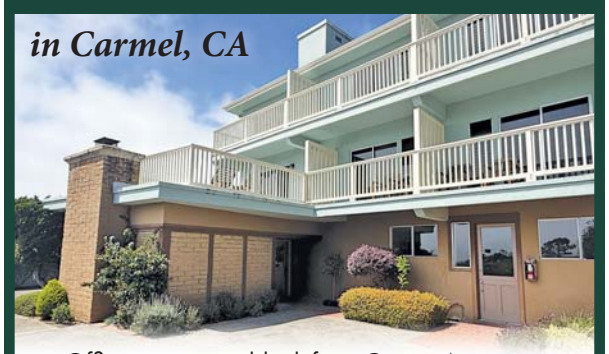
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ESCROWS

From page 4RE

Marina (con't)

3144 Lake Drive — $1,015,000
Jason and Edna Smith to Lan Rivera
APN: 033-141-034

141 10th Street — $1,193,500
Shea Homes LP to Joseph Marciano and Elizabeth Romero
APN: 031-296-023

280 Skyview Drive — $1,290,000
Jeannie Fromm to Cheryl Carter
APN: 031-258-008

Monterey

820 Casanova Avenue unit 61 — $485,000
Albert and Donna Doornik to Steven and Isabel Pierce
APN: 013-254-005

500 Glenwood Circle unit 2111 — $560,000
Robert and Darcy Hodges and Frank and Beth Trafton to Charles and Daryl Fleming
APN: 001-774-012

6 Via Ventura — $752,500
Christie Huebner and Estate of Michael Henry to Alfredo, Helen and Emilio Rodriguezz
APN: 001-463-030

839 Newton Street — $1,300,000
Pete and Ashley Ruiz to Carol Bloner
APN: 001-132-006



1105 Mescal Street, Seaside — $1,153,000



15135 Big Sky Lane, Highway 68 — $2,249,000

Pacific Grove

310 Cypress Avenue — $1,200,000
Jon and Tammy Schoonmaker to Marci Schwartz
APN: 006-307-004

166 Lighthouse Avenue — $1,690,000
Barry and Patricia Finch to Blane and Diana Franca
APN: 006-239-004

1051 Ocean View Blvd. — $6,900,000
Peridot & Sapphire LLC to Howard Slayen
APN: 006-025-001

Pebble Beach

4158 El Bosque Drive — $2,325,000
Ozra LLC to David Christman
APN: 008-071-019

1043 Broncho Road — $4,750,000
Maureen Feduniak to JNS Holdings LLC
APN: 007-271-017

1021 Matador Road — $6,150,000
Jeff and Julie Van Zanten to Matthew and Andrea Sznewajs
APN: 007-273-005

Seaside

1037 Olympic Lane — $692,000
James and Joanne Creager and Pearce Trust to Jill Rager
APN: 012-452-015

1640 Judson Street — $700,000
Manuel and Olga Herrera to Danielle Ventura
APN: 012-701-005

See **DEEDS** *page 15RE*

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

Status	Address	List Price	Sale Price	DOM
New Listing	191 Carpenter	$1,895,000	---	4
Price Decreased	1317 San Carlos	$1,599,000	---	25
Listing Decreased	Santa Rita 4 NE of 6th	$2,249,000	---	82
Pending	1383 San Antonio	$8,395,000	---	0
Pending	521 3rd	$1,599,000	---	48

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DEEDS

From page 14RE

Seaside (con't)

1816 Baker Street — $720,000
Joe and Nelda Cardoso to Armando, Christian and Alexandro Gudino and Maria Martinez
APN: 012-823-007

370 Amador Avenue — $740,000
Mark Conley and Janet Pagan to Ashraf Shoukry
APN: 011-315-005

1494 Darwin Street — $785,000
Conan and Romina Cuenca to Lindsey Saum
APN: 012-242-027

1751 Judson Street — $850,000
Herbst Homes LLC to Jennifer and Neil Seitz
APN: 012-751-018

4 Primrose Circle — $870,000
Jesse Conway and Jihye Shin to Jeffrey and Shirley Breheny
APN: 011-062-004



1051 Ocean View Blvd., Pacific Grove — $6,900,000

3 Villanova Court — $908,000
Jason Martin to Susan Bradley
APN: 012-651-015

1184 Barbara Court — $989,000
Miguela Rodas and Monica Martiren to Patricia Sand
APN: 012-413-015

1565 Mira Mar Avenue — $1,109,000
JJAC Properties LLC to David Ottaviano and Jessica Bruck



32680 Coast Ridge Road, Carmel Highlands — $2,765,000

APN: 011-042-017

1105 Mescal Street — $1,153,000
Daniel Kapsalis to Joyce Shimamoto
APN: 012-414-018

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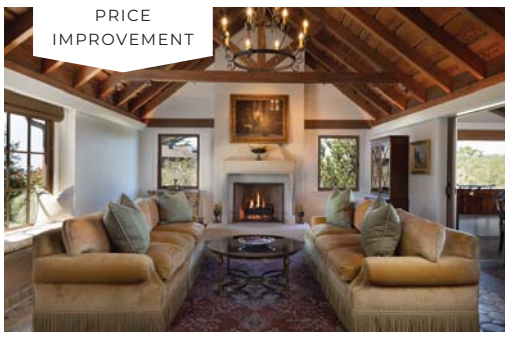


NAPA

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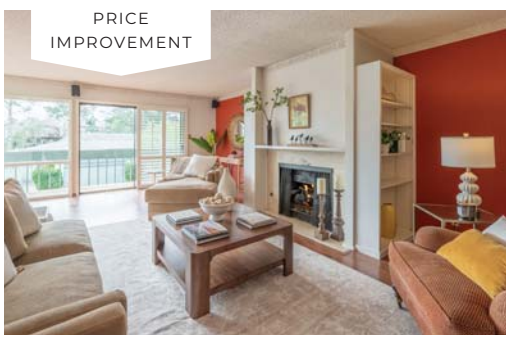


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October 30, 2026

Move over Michelin and Yelp — here come the Golden Pine Cones

TALK ABOUT an embarrassment of riches! Beautiful inns, Michelin-starred restaurants, nature walks … and that's just the beginning. No matter what you're looking for, our readers want to point you to the best this area has to offer. And they have exquisite taste.

So, let's say your best friend from college is coming for a visit next month. They tell you they'd like to have a hearty breakfast, take their dog for a romp, go wine-tasting and then have dinner and watch the sunset. You go to The Pine Cone's website, click on the icon for the Golden Pine Cones,and find all of those lickety-split.

What's that? You're a homeowner? Well, if you need an electrician, a contractor or — heaven forbid — an exterminator, we've got that covered, too. Top-notch lawyers, money managers and doctors are all here to keep your world and your health in order.

Maybe your granddaughter's getting married and she's looking for just the right spot — we have it, plus a florist, a caterer and a shop where she can find the perfect gown.

Seriously, this list is gold. Pine Cone gold. Don't take our word for it, though. Go ahead and give it a read!.

FOOD AND WINE

■ Best Neighborhood Market
■ Best Deli

Bruno's Market — *582 Junipero Ave. - (831) 624-3821, brunosmarket.com*

Owned and operated by the Sanchez family for decades, Bruno's Market at Sixth and Junipero is the quintessential corner market. Shoppers can find just what they need for a dinner party or a quick feast, fantastic (and huge) sandwiches for a day sailing on the bay or an al fresco lunch in the front yard, or provisions for a picnic at Carmel Beach. Its grocery shelves, produce, prime meats, and wine and beer selection give customers plenty of alternatives. When cooking isn't on the agenda, the deli and prepared-food offerings can take over.

The market promotes lunch specials and online ordering for pickup, a practical combination for residents with a busy day and visitors who would rather spend their time exploring than planning a meal.

There's a familiar small-town rhythm to a market that accommodates everyday needs and spontaneous cravings. Someone might come in for a single item and leave with much more. As they have many times before, readers recognized Bruno's in two categories this year, for Best Neighborhood Market and Best Deli.

■ Best Fruits and Vegetables

Farmers markets — *oldmonterey.org, montereybayfarmers.org, everyonesharvest.org, wcfma.org, ci.carmel.ca.us/farmers-market*

The colors change with the season, but the appeal is constant: fruits, vegetables, nuts and other produce offered directly to customers by growers who can answer any question about what they're taking home. The Monterey Peninsula is blessed with farmers markets almost every day of the week, from downtown Carmel and mid-Carmel Valley, to Pacific Grove, Monterey, Marina and beyond. Purveyors bring local farm produce, seafood, baked goods and beyond to the heart of these communities.

Certified organic offerings are part of the mix, and a visit can be as much about discovering what's in season as crossing ingredients off a shopping list. One week's inspiration might be greens and herbs for a simple dinner; another could be berries or tomatoes that need little more than a rinse. Buying from growers also gives customers an opportunity to learn which varieties are especially good and how to prepare unfamiliar vegetables. That's why Pine Cone readers pick their local farmers markets as the best places to find fruits and veggies year after year.

■ Best Seafood Market

Sea Harvest — *598 Foam St., Monterey, and at the Crossroads shopping center - (831) 646-0547 (Monterey), (831) 626-3626 (Crossroads), seaharvestrestaurant.com*

When planning a meal around a beautiful piece of fish or an ideal selection of shellfish, the first decision often comes before the recipe: What looks good at the fish counter today? Sea Harvest has made that question central to its business, combining fish markets with casual restaurants in Monterey and Carmel. The Monterey location on Foam Street and the Carmel location at the Crossroads shopping center serve customers looking for the perfect seafood to prepare at home or hankering for a fresh, well-prepared lunch or dinner. Connections with local fishermen are a major part of Sea Harvest's identity, and the market format makes it possible to choose seafood by what's available rather than sticking to the same shopping list every week.

The knowledgeable staff behind the counter are ready to answer questions about portions, preparation, or a substitution when a particular local catch is scarce. The restaurant side offers another route to the ocean, with familiar choices such as fish and chips, chowder, sandwiches and fish tacos. Pine Cone readers named Sea Harvest Best Seafood Market, recognizing the part of the business that puts seafood in shoppers' hands — and, eventually, on their own dinner tables.

■ Best Butcher

The Meatery — *1534 Fremont Blvd., Seaside - (831) 656-8810, themeateryseaside.com*

There's a big difference between buying a package of

See **GOLDEN** *next page*



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We're incredibly thankful to readers of The Carmel Pine Cone for recognizing our efforts at The Sardine Factory with an award for *Best Sommelier — Dave Sidener!*

At The Sardine Factory, our staff works tirelessly to provide award winning food, wine, and service that creates a dining experience that's second to none. From the front of the house to the back of the house, it's because of their dedication to excellence that we may celebrate these awards together.

To all our staff at The Sardine Factory: We're truly honored by your dedication to bringing the very best to our customers each and every day. We could not do this without you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

We love you all!

Ted Balestreri & Bert Cutino

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GOLDEN

From previous page

meat at the grocery store, and talking to someone who knows exactly where that beef, pork or lamb came from and what to do with it.

At The Meatery in Seaside, that conversation is part of the point. Chef Todd Fisher and his wife, Ada, run their family-owned butcher shop to bring restaurant-quality cuts within reach of home cooks. The case can include prime steaks, short ribs, pork chops and poultry, while house-made sausages offer another reason to stop in. Customers can ask for custom cuts or specialty orders, and the shop shares cooking ideas for anyone who isn't quite sure how to tackle the task. The Fishers emphasize relationships with farms and producers whose practices meet their standards. The Meatery also has an eatery with sandwiches and prepared foods for those who'd like the kitchen to handle lunch. But this Golden Pine Cone goes to the butcher counter, where selection, preparation and advice come together.

Whether the occasion calls for a holiday roast or a single steak for dinner, the shop makes the case for buying meat from people who really know what they're doing and what they're selling.

■ Best Bakery

Carmel Bakery — *376 Ocean Ave. - (831) 626-8885, chefpepe.com/carmel-bakery*

Some Carmel traditions can be enjoyed without a reservation. A stop at Carmel Bakery on Ocean between Dolores and Lincoln might mean an English scone, a piece of Scottish shortbread, Italian biscotti or a giant soft Bavarian pretzel. The variety reflects a bakery that has had more than a century to become part of the town's daily routine.

The Pèpe family, which also operates several Carmel restaurants, has owned the bakery since 1986. Its own history dates the business to 1899 and describes it as California's oldest bakery still operating in its original location. Owner Rich Pèpe's bakery roots precede his restaurant career, and the family's guiding phrase is, "We bake while you sleep." In addition to pastries and breads, the business serves sandwiches, soups and salads, making it a stop for savory dishes as well as sweet treats, but the Golden Pine Cone is a nod to the ovens and the generations of customers who have passed through the door.

■ Best Bread

Ad Astra Bread Co. — *479 Alvarado St., Monterey and Mid Valley Center, Carmel Valley - adastrabread.com and ateliercarmelvalley.com*

Good bread requires patience. Former pastry chef Ron Mendoza's Ad Astra Bread Co. specializes in handmade, long-fermented sourdough, allowing time to do much of the work of developing flavor and texture. The bakery has built its identity around small-batch production, so popular loaves often sell out. Its Alvarado Street shop gives customers a place to look for bread and other baked treats, while appearances at Peninsula farmers markets extend the bakery's reach beyond downtown Monterey, and its Ad Astra Atelier in Carmel Valley offers a café vibe alongside delicious baked goods.

Advance ordering is available, too, to accommodate anyone who has particular items in mind and doesn't want to leave the day's bread supply to chance. Long fermentation and careful handling are not flashy selling points, but they make a difference in the finished loaf. Consider the crust, the crumb and the flavor that can turn a simple piece of toast into something special. The bakery's name points toward the stars. Its daily work remains reassuringly grounded in flour, water, fermentation and a hot oven.

■ Best Caterer

Paradise Catering — *(831) 659-3417, paradisecater.com*

Paradise Catering has spent four decades building a business around preparing delicious, seasonal and elegant cuisine for weddings, corporate gatherings and private celebrations across the Monterey Peninsula and Big Sur. Founded in 1986 by chef Jon Kasky, the Carmel Valley company became known for seasonal California cooking and food prepared hot off the grill. Nancy Rohan helped shape the business over the years, while Gabe Villagrana brought his skills to the grill and Corine Hanamaikai managed the many moving parts of banquet service.

In 2026, Paradise entered a new chapter under owner Heidi Sebok, who says she intends to preserve its emphasis on locally sourced ingredients, woodfire cooking and welcoming hospitality. That continuity matters in catering, where timing and logistics must be as carefully managed as the menu. A celebration may take months to plan, but guests experience it in a few hours — and the kitchen, service staff and event team must make those hours feel effortless. This Golden Pine Cone recognizes a business whose job is to make their clients' experience as stress-free and perfect as possible.

■ Best Wine Store

Nielsen Bros. Market — *688 San Carlos St. - (831) 624-6441, nielsenbros.com*

A great wine cellar must offer more than walls of bottles. At Nielsen Bros. Market in downtown Carmel, the well-curated selection stretches from local California producers to wines from France, Italy and other European regions at a range of prices, giving shoppers the ability to choose an everyday dinner companion or something special for a celebration. The market says its offerings include rare bottles as well as approachable choices. That breadth is fitting for a business with deep roots in town.

Founded by Harold and Walter Nielsen in 1930 and subsequently owned and operated by dedicated locals, the market has long combined groceries and specialty foods with wine and spirits. Its present operators emphasize carefully selected products, local sourcing and the convenience of online ordering and pickup. For wine shoppers, the attraction is the chance to compare regions, grapes and styles without leaving the neighborhood. A bottle for a picnic, a gift for a host or a wine to accompany a carefully planned meal can all begin with the same stop on San Carlos north of Seventh.

■ Best Tasting Room
■ Best Monterey County Pinot Noir
■ Best Monterey County Merlot
■ My Favorite Monterey County Wine

De Tierra Vineyards — *520 Mission St. - (831) 622-9704, detierra.com*

In a cozy cottage, De Tierra Vineyards has become a go-to for locals and visitors. Readers have again chosen it as Best Tasting Room, and its pinot noir, merlot and overall favorite Monterey County wine status show the fruit and De Tierra's winemaking are holding up their end of the bargain.

The operation started in 1998 when Tom Russell, an Arizona agriculture professional, planted organic grapes in the Corral de Tierra area at the foot of Mount Toro — John Steinbeck's "pastures of heaven." Today, owners Jeff Meacham and Andrew Schoenfeld keep the focus on handcrafted wines

See **HONORED** *page 4 GPC*

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

HONORED

From page 2 GPC

that aim to capture the land itself. The portfolio runs to sparkling brut, pinot gris, riesling, chardonnay, rosé, pinot noir, merlot, petite sirah, cabernet franc and a couple of red blends, all drawn from Monterey County sites.

The tasting room itself is family- and dog-friendly, with locally sourced small bites available and live acoustic music on Sunday afternoons. Guests often mention the laid-back atmosphere and staff who know the wines without the hard sell. With four Golden Pine Cones this year, De Tierra has quietly become one of the Peninsula's most consistent reader favorites.

■ Best Monterey County Chardonnay
■ Best Monterey County Sauvignon Blanc

Bernardus Winery — *5 W. Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (800) 233-2533, bernardus.com*

Bernardus once again picked up reader votes for its whites, with this year's Best Monterey County Chardonnay and Best Monterey County Sauvignon Blanc continuing a long run of recognition for wines that began with a Dutch founder's bet on the valley's climate.

Ben Pon established the winery in 1989, choosing Carmel Valley for its west-facing slopes, warm days and cool nights. Since his death in 2019, business partner Robert van der Wallen has carried the operation forward. The wines come exclusively from Monterey County vineyards, and thanks to longtime grower relationships, the fruit is always of the highest quality. Chardonnay draws from places like the winery's Ingrid's Vineyard and Michael Griva's vineyards in Arroyo Seco, and the sauvignon blanc is made entirely from a musqué clone block at Griva known for its citrus and white-peach character. The tasting room occupies a converted bank building in Carmel Valley Village, with a sunny patio and a private room for dinners. Reservations are encouraged.

■ Best Monterey County Rosé

Dawn's Dream Winery — *697 San Carlos St. - (831) 659-2649, dawnsdreamwinery.com*

Dawn Galante's rosé is a longtime reader favorite, and this year's award adds another notch for a wine that pairs approachable style with a deliberate effort to support causes for women and children. Galante, born in Michigan and a California resident since 1985, launched the label in 2011 after years helping run Galante Vineyards alongside her husband, Jack. She focuses on pinot noir, chardonnay and rosé from Monterey County, Carmel Valley and Santa Lucia Highlands fruit, with some lots from farther afield. The dry rosé is often described as showing wild strawberry, rose petal and citrus zest notes with bright acidity. The tasting room sits in a courtyard off San Carlos and Seventh. Galante has built the business so that a portion of activity supports nonprofits, and visitors sometimes encounter donation opportunities tied to the year's chosen charity.

■ Best Monterey County Cabernet Sauvignon

Galante Vineyards — *645 Dolores St. - (831) 624-3800, galantevineyards.com*

Speaking of Jack Galante, his cabernet sauvignon once more earned the reader nod as the best around. The wine carries a family history that stretches back to the founding of Carmel itself. Galante's great-grandfather, James Frank Devendorf, is credited as a cofounder of Carmel-by-the-Sea in 1900. In 1969, the next generation bought a 700-acre cattle ranch in Carmel Valley, with the first cabernet vines planted in 1983. Jack opened the winery in 1994 and the Carmel tasting room — then the first in town — in 2004. The original ranch sold in 2020, but he continues to source from those historic vines and other California sites. The wines lean bold, with a Western aesthetic that shows up in the leather-tooled labels. The tasting room on Dolores Street keeps a cowboy-ranch flavor while pouring the range of cabernets that readers continue to favor.

■ Best Place for a Beer

Alvarado Street Brewery — *426 Alvarado St., Monterey and in the Carmel Plaza, with an additional location in Salinas - (831) 655-2337, asb.beer*

Alvarado Street Brewery has again been named Best Place for a Beer, a result that fits an operation that started as a neighborhood brewpub and has grown into a powerhouse across Monterey County and beyond. The Hill family opened the original location on Alvarado Street in downtown Monterey in 2014. They now run several breweries — a 10-barrel system in Monterey, a five-barrel R&D setup in Carmel-by-the-Sea and a larger production facility in Salinas — and recently got to work on a new brewery in Castroville. ASB's efforts

See **BELOVED** *page 6 GPC*







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BELOVED

From page 4 GPC

consistently earn honors, including Brewery of the Year in the 15,000-plus barrel category at this year's U.S. Open Beer Championship, along with earlier medals at the Great American Beer Festival and World Beer Cup.

The range of available brews covers hop-forward IPAs, crisp lagers (including favorite Monterey Beer) and experimental styles. Kitchens at the restaurants cook mostly from scratch with local ingredients, aiming for flavors that stand up to the beer, and each location has a unique menu. Whether you're at the original Monterey pub, the Carmel bistro in Carmel Plaza or the taproom on South Main Street in Salinas, the combination of house beer and approachable food keeps drawing the vote.

■ Best Cocktails
■ Best Happy Hour
■ Best Pizza

Vesuvio — *543 Sixth Ave. - (831) 625-1766, chefpepe.com/restaurants/vesuvio/*

Vesuvio's three Golden Pine Cones reflect the Pèpe family's knack for making an Italian restaurant a gathering place. Named for the volcano overlooking Naples, the restaurant opposite Devendorf Park traces its cooking traditions from Naples through Hoboken, N.J., to Carmel. Its Neapolitan-style pies emerge from a wood-burning oven, sharing the menu with house-made pasta, eggplant Parmesan and other Southern Italian dishes that draw on seasonal California produce.

Christian Pèpe — who was also chosen as Best Bartender by Pine Cone readers this year — has shaped the bar program to feature house-infused spirits and creations incorporating products from the Doc Pèpe's Lab distillery, along with several barrel-aged classic cocktails. Among the house specialties are the Dirty Doc 2.0 (Doc's vodka, house olive-pickle-pepperoncini brine, rosemary olive oil and blue cheese olives) and The Drop, with Pèpecello limoncello, citrus vodka, raspberry shrub and lemon.

Happy Hour features drink specials and deals on food at the downstairs bar and in the upstairs rooftop lounge, where fire pits and comfortable lounge furniture offer more reasons to linger. Diners can choose a relaxed meal downstairs or head up for drinks with a view. With its pizza oven, the cocktail list and the social atmosphere, Vesuvio gives readers at least three reasons to return.

■ Best Family Restaurant

Sur — *The Barnyard shopping center - (831) 620-5456, surcarmel.com*

Sur, which was bought by Dudley Ashley and Crystal Andino from founders Bill and Teresa Lee in 2021, has once more been chosen Best Family Restaurant, a title that matches its mix of approachable food, lively outdoor space and welcoming atmosphere for kids and dogs, alike.

Located in what was once the beloved Thunderbird Bookstore before it was converted to a succession of restaurants, Sur offers a spacious heated patio where families can settle in. The menu still reflects Lee's love of Asian and island-inspired cuisine while offering classic dishes as well. Its famous cheese bread with white cheddar and Parmesan remains a popular pick, along with bacon cheeseburgers, fried chicken and waffles, seafood linguine, tacos and steaks. Desserts include the theatrical Arctic Bonbons served over dry ice.

Dogs are welcome on the patio and can order from their own menu — with a human's help, of course. Staff have a reputation for being attentive without hovering, and the overall vibe stays lively but comfortable for mixed-age groups. With free parking at The Barnyard shopping center and a menu that covers everyday cravings and celebratory meals, Sur continues to draw the family vote.

■ Best French Restaurant

L'Escargot — *429 Mission St. - (831) 620-1942, escargot-carmel.com*

In a quiet residential stretch of Mission Street, L'Escargot has held its place as a local favorite since 1958, when Yvan Nopert, his mother and his brother transformed the former Paris Cafe into a country French restaurant. Chef-owner Kerry Loutas continues that tradition, drawing on seasonal specials and a menu inspired by rural French cooking. Diners find classics such as escargots in garlic butter, frogs' legs Provençal and a duck-and-pork pâté, alongside dishes that shift with the availability of Monterey Bay seafood and produce from nearby farms in the Salinas Valley.

The setting is intimate rather than showy, and it's warm with history. The service is personal and professional. Private dining is available in a room that seats as many as 24, with custom menus prepared by the chef, and outdoor seating is offered as well. L'Escargot is Carmel's longest-running restaurant, offering a neighborhood alternative to the more tourist-oriented spots downtown.

■ Best Chinese Restaurant

Tommy's Wok — *639 Mission St. - (831) 624-8518, tommyswokcarmel.com*

Tucked into Redwood Court off Mission Street, Tommy's Wok has served Szechuan, Hunan and Mandarin dishes for years under chef Tommy Mao. The large menu mixes regional Chinese preparations with familiar Chinese-American standards, and house-made pot stickers remain a signature. Everything is prepared without MSG, using fresh produce and cold-pressed oils.

Popular orders include hot and sour soup, orange chicken, and a variety of chow mein and combination plates, with solid vegetarian options as well. The space is modest and the prices are among the more approachable in Carmel, which helps explain the steady local following. It's very popular for takeout, and the restaurant draws residents and visitors looking for reliable, flavorful Chinese food in a town better known for higher-end European fare. Family-run since its early days, it continues to attract repeat diners who value its consistency and value.

■ Best Indian Restaurant

Namaste India Bistro — *534 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey - (831) 641-0130, namasteibmonterey.com*

"Savor the true essence of Indian Cuisine," says Namaste's website. For those who believe variety is the spice of life, Namaste offers plenty of both. From fragrant curries and sizzling tandoori specialties to fluffy naan and flavorful vegetarian dishes, the restaurant brings the rich culinary traditions of India to the Monterey Peninsula. And vegetarians can expect a wide variety of dishes to choose from, too.

The daily lunch buffet looks like a culinary painter's palette, with saucy reds and oranges and deep green vegetables. Its sheer abundance is enough to stir up an appetite, and it gives diners a chance to sample a little of everything. The extensive dinner menu includes such favorites as butter chicken, lamb rogan josh, and palak paneer, all to be served with warm

See **FAVORITE** *page 8 GPC*



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FAVORITE

From page 6 GPC

hospitality and enjoyed amid a décor that features traditional cultural elements.

■ Best Italian Restaurant

Little Napoli — *696 Dolores St. - (831) 626-6335, chefpepe.com*

Little Napoli has been part of the Carmel dining scene since 1994, when the Pèpe family opened it as a home for recipes carried from Naples and from earlier years in New Jersey. Rich Pèpe and his sons oversee a menu that includes house-made pastas, the signature "1944" lasagna, and dishes such as cioppino that have appeared on national television. The Hobo Stew (beef short rib, potato, carrot, celery, gnocchi and black pepper broth) is "rooted in the cooking of Italian day workers near Hoboken, N.J., during the Great Depression."

The restaurant occupies space in the historic El Paseo building, with an indoor dining room and a pet-friendly outdoor courtyard. Bar Napoli next door offers Happy Hour and a full cocktail program. Guests are asked to remove hats, and the atmosphere is lively and familial. The Pèpe group also operates Vesuvio and Carmel Bakery, and Little Napoli has earned repeated reader recognition for its generous portions and consistent Italian-American cooking made from family recipes.

■ Best Japanese/Sushi Restaurant

Akaoni — *579 Mission St. - (831) 620-1516*

Owned by Shinichi Yamada, Akaoni quietly operates as a small, no-frills sushi restaurant with limited seats and hours, focused on carefully prepared nigiri, sashimi, rolls and a few warm dishes. Local spot prawns from a tank behind the sushi bar and house-made tofu are among the items diners seek out, and the chef will take over decision-making for some lucky guests who prefer to leave the selections to him.

The Michelin Guide has taken note of the restaurant for its pristine fish and restrained style, describing it as one of the region's more rewarding sushi experiences despite the challenge of securing one of the few tables.

Vegetable tempura provides a cooked option, and the overall approach stays traditional rather than contemporary. With a tiny staff and a quiet atmosphere, Akaoni draws diners who prioritize quality ingredients over elaborate presentation or extensive seating.

■ Best Mediterranean Restaurant

Dametra Café — *356 Ocean Ave. - (831) 622-7766, dametracafe.com*

Dametra Café, whose name combines Damascus and Petra, was founded by friends Faisal Nimri and Bashar Alsneeh many years ago and has become known for a lively Mediterranean menu that draws on Greek, Lebanese and other Middle Eastern cuisines. Lamb shank, shish kebab, hummus, and combination platters sit alongside pastas and sandwiches, and the small kitchen emphasizes fresh, locally purchased ingredients.

Music is a regular part of the evening, and spontaneous singing or dancing is not uncommon. The restaurant, of which Alsneeh became the sole owner in 2024, occupies a corner spot at Ocean and Lincoln and has expanded its presence with related concepts elsewhere on the Peninsula.

Readers continue to favor it for the combination of flavorful food, generous hospitality, and an atmosphere that feels more like a gathering place than a formal dining room. The emphasis on shared plates and convivial energy has kept it a steady favorite.

■ Best Thai Restaurant

Pacific Thai Cuisine — *663 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove - (831) 646-8424, pacificthaicuisineca.com*

Pacific Thai Cuisine has operated since 2008 as a family-run restaurant serving classic Thai dishes alongside a few house specialties. Green and red curries, pad Thai, drunken noodles and lettuce wraps are reliable favorites, and the kitchen also prepares items such as pineapple salmon curry and Thai-style calamari. The space is casual and compact, with an emphasis on fresh ingredients and the familiar balance of sweet, sour, salty and spicy flavors.

Takeout has long been very popular, and the restaurant offers a selection of Thai beers and wines. In a town better known for Victorian architecture and quiet streets, Pacific Thai provides a reliable source of regional Thai cooking that has earned repeated reader support and is particularly popular with locals for its consistent execution of traditional preparations and use of fresh ingredients.

■ Best Mexican Restaurant

Cultura — *575 Dolores St. - (831) 250-7005, culturacarmel.com*

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, Cultura focuses on the cuisine and culture of Oaxaca, with a menu of dishes prepared from scratch and ingredients sourced locally and from small producers in Mexico. Pork mole, enchiladas, queso fundido and other dishes and various tacos sit alongside a mezcal library that highlights the region's distilled agave spirits. The restaurant occupies space in the Su Vecino Courtyard off Dolores Street, with indoor seating and outdoor tables near fire pits.

Managing partner Sarah Kabat-Marcy and husband Michael Marcy have often described their goals as creating a place that feels distinct from standard American Mexican restaurants while honoring the traditions of the beloved southern Mexican state that inspired it. The Michelin Guide has recognized Cultura for its Oaxacan-inspired plates and approachable setting, and it continues to draw diners seeking more regional specificity than is typical here.

■ Best Restaurant for Seafood
■ Best Restaurant for Steak
■ Best Place to Take Clients
■ Most Romantic Restaurant
■ Best Chef — Michael Chang
■ Best Restaurant Service
■ Best Restaurant in Carmel
■ Best Restaurant for a Special Occasion

Foray — *478 San Carlos St. - (831) 250-6100, forayrestaurant.com*

Foray's record-setting wins in eight Golden Pine Cone categories honor the cuisine, the atmosphere and the entire dining experience created by co-founders chef Michael Chang — who took the title of Best Chef again this year — and his wife, sommelier Caroline Singer.

The couple opened Foray in late 2022 after hosting intimate dinners that helped develop the concept and raised

See **SUPREME** *page 12 GPC*



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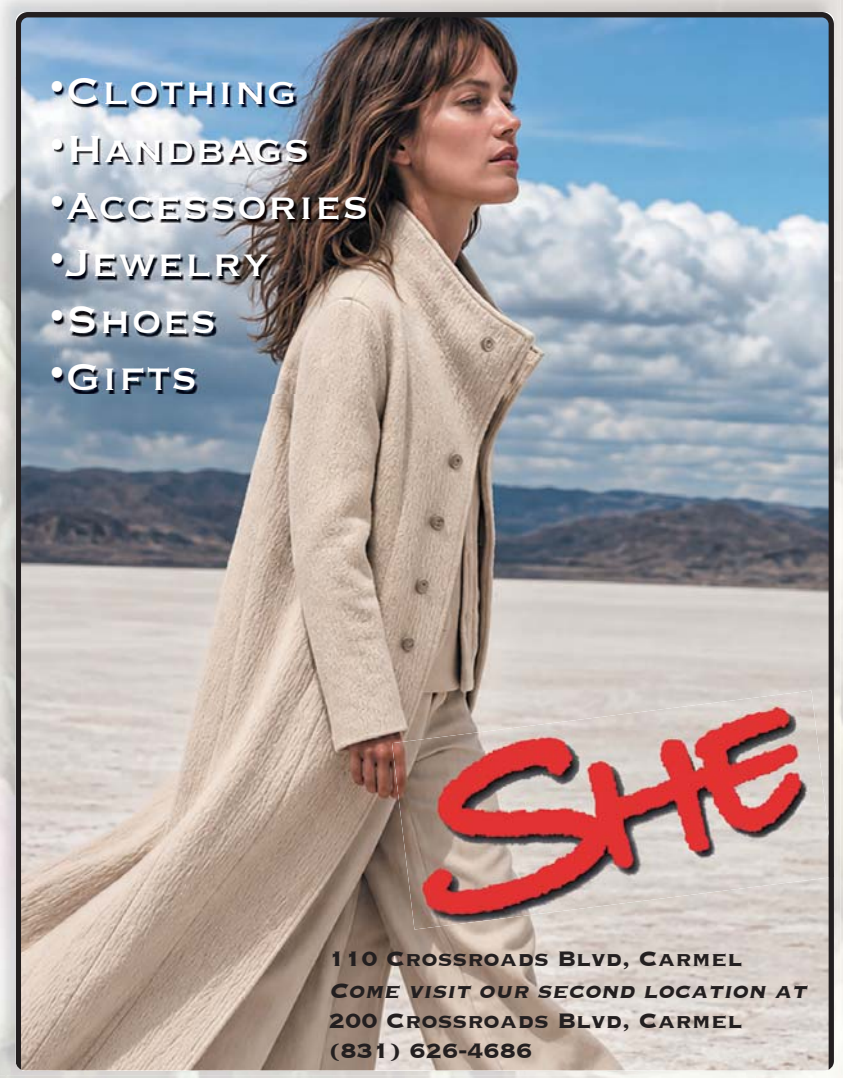
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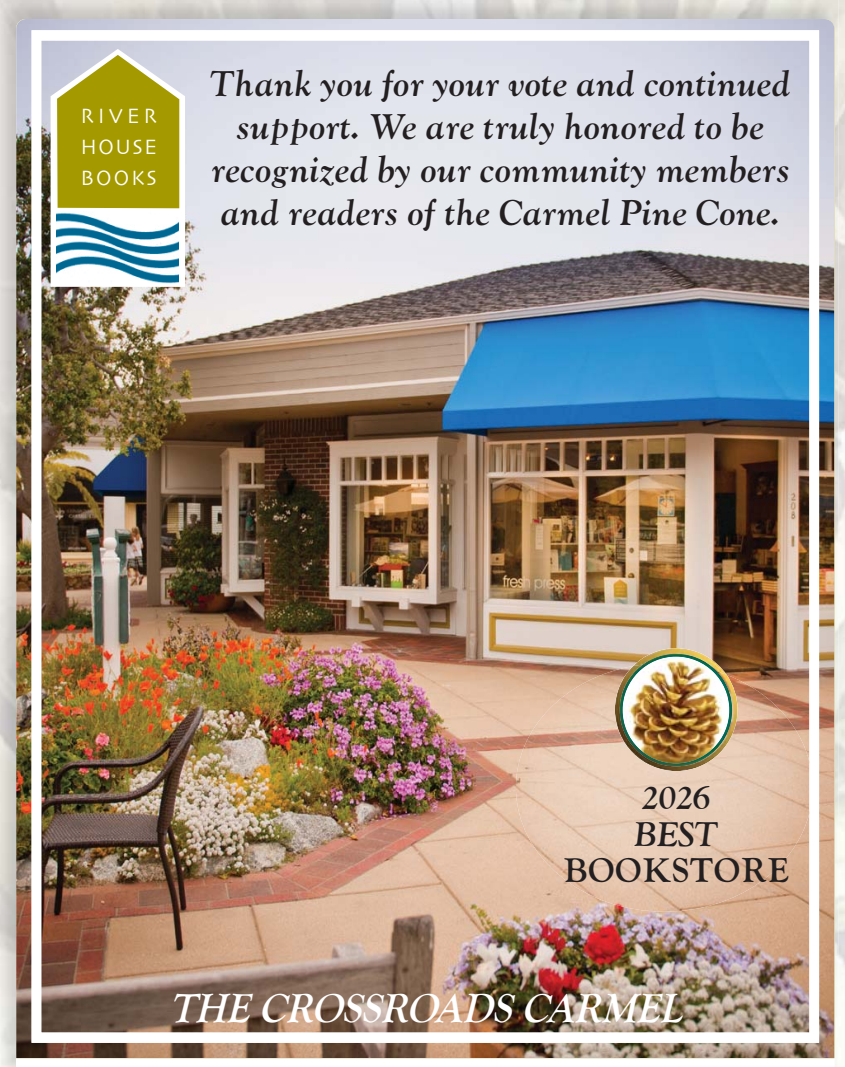
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GOLDEN PINE CONES

SUPREME

From page 8 GPC

money for local nonprofits. The kitchen centers on Monterey Bay seafood, dry-aged meats and seasonal ingredients, some foraged by Chang, Singer and their truffle dog, Falco. Spot prawns and house-aged salmon can appear alongside dry-aged beef, including American wagyu, on the chef's tasting menu and a three-course prix fixe offered each evening. Small bites like caviar, steak tartare and crudo are available, too.

Reclaimed Monterey cypress, local abalone shells and gyotaku artwork connect the dining room to the coast. The restaurant also emphasizes sustainability, with composting, ocean-friendly certifications and West Coast sourcing, and has a private room perfect for gatherings, whether celebratory or business-oriented. Its awards recognize the ingredients and the attention that turns every dining experience into an occasion.

■ Best Restaurant for Vegetarians

Julia's Vegetarian Restaurant — *1180 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove - (831) 656-9533, juliasveg.com*

Julia's has been a familiar name in the Golden Pine Cones for years, and readers selected it again this year as their favorite restaurant for vegetarians. At this spot in the back corner of the shopping center next door to Trader Joe's, vegetarian cooking is the main event, not an alternative jammed in beneath a long list of meat dishes. The Pacific Grove restaurant has built its identity around plant-based meals, with a menu that gives diners a reason to look beyond the familiar salad-and-side-dish routine.

Breakfast is part of the operation, too, along with lunch and dinner, and vegan alternatives to eggs make huevos rancheros and chilaquiles — among others — accessible to all. That broad array gives vegetarians a place to gather throughout the day, and the delicious food means meat-eaters aren't "settling." In fact, the online menu does not mention tofu once, but offers a selection of pizzas, main-dish salads with hearty grains, curries, faux orange chicken, and Mexican-inspired dishes like tamale pie with a spicy poblano red sauce. Check the website for foraging classes and live entertainment.

■ Best Salad

Lalla Grill — *Del Monte Center, Monterey - (831) 324-4632, lallagrill.com*

A salad can be a light accompaniment, but at Lalla Grill it can also be the whole point of lunch. The restaurant — a stone's throw from the movie theater — gives greens plenty of company, tossing them with fruit, nuts, cheeses, main-dish size portions of protein and house-made dressings. Bright colors and bold, contrasting flavors with a variety of textures and fresh ingredients ensure that the plates are anything but dull.

The beet salad era isn't over — check out Lalla's combo, with greens, roasted beet, anjou pear, gorgonzola and candied pecans, tossed in a house-made mango dressing. The popular pistachio-crusted chicken salad tops Salinas Valley organic greens with roasted onion, tart Granny Smith apple, dried cranberries and goat cheese. There's also a barbecue chicken salad with black beans, corn, tortilla chips and avocado, and, with influences from a different part of the world, ahi tuna gets a nicoise treatment with roasted potatoes, poached egg and the twist of a raspberry vinaigrette. Diners can add grilled portobello mushrooms, shrimp, steak and salmon to salads, too. Lalla's menu ranges well beyond salads, but our readers put the meal-sized servings front and center this year. Whether you want a lighter plate or a substantial meal with enough ingredients to keep every forkful interesting, the salad menu offers several ways to go.

■ Best BBQ

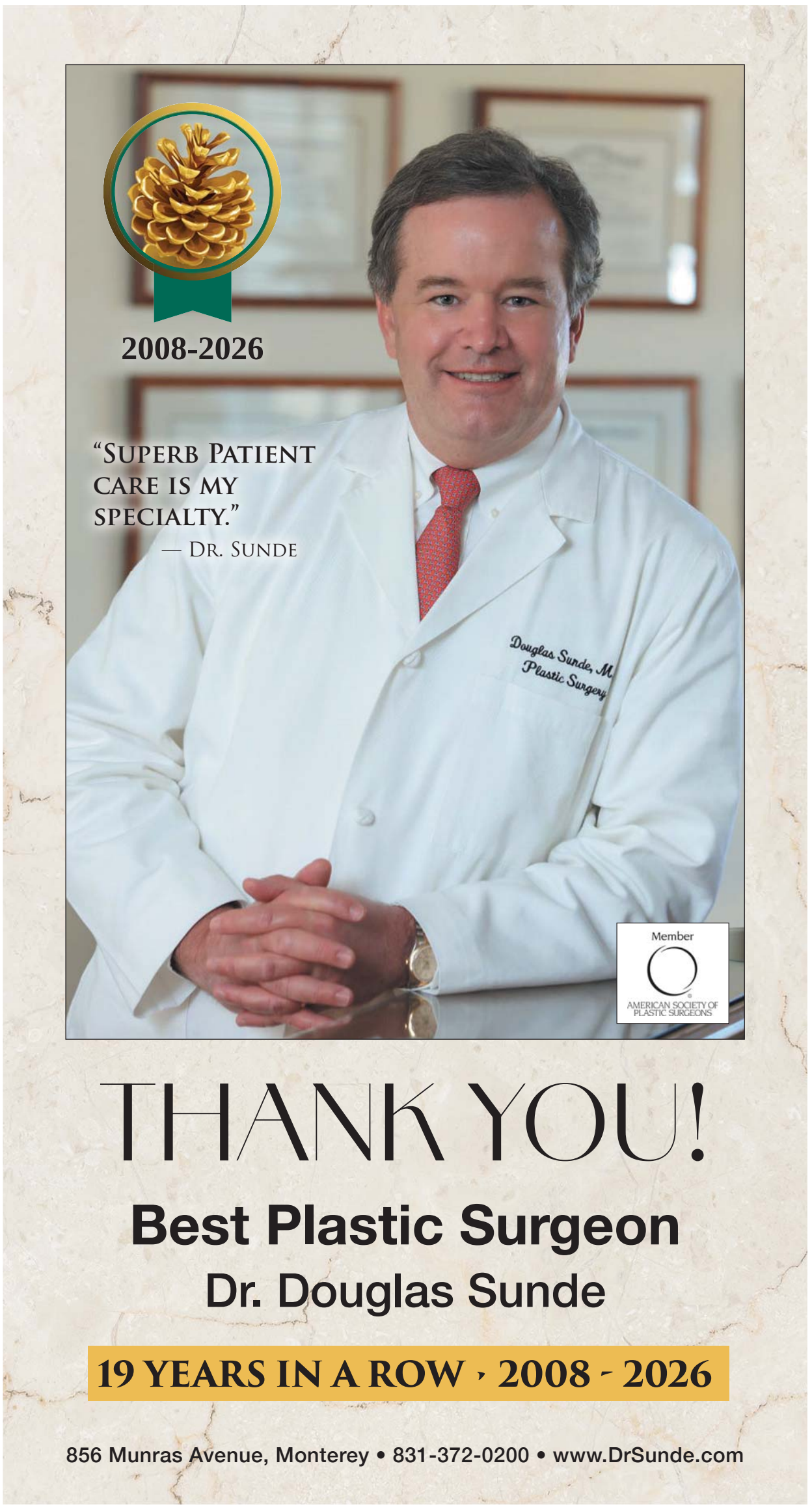
The Crossroads BBQ — *Crossroads shopping center - (831) 250-7616, thecrossroadsbbq.com*

Barbecue rewards patience. The Crossroads BBQ builds its menu around the idea that smoke, fire and time can do more for meat than a complicated sauce ever could. It serves the kind of food that invites diners to settle in with friends rather than hurry through a meal. The family-owned eatery comes with family recipes from a clan that's been smoking meat and winning awards for years.

It isn't fancy — metal trays, paper napkins, self-serve soda fountain — the better to spotlight tender brisket, juicy pork, flavorful tri-tip and delicious chicken. Add classic sides such as potato salad, baked beans, macaroni and cheese and coleslaw that might evoke memories of family picnics. The meats can be served on sandwiches and salads, too. There's a great selection of beer, and if you can, leave room for dessert — the homemade berry cobbler is exceptional.

The restaurant also offers catering and bulk takeout, as well as a private dining room for special occasions. If you can order one in time, the smoked turkeys make for a memorable Thanksgiving. The restaurant's emphasis on gathering

Continues next page




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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

is fitting. Barbecue is food made for sharing, whether the occasion is a family meal, a celebration or simply a craving for something from the smoker.

■ Best Fish & Chips

Brophy's Tavern — *368 San Carlos St. - (831) 586-5566, brophystavern.com*

A plate of fish and chips sounds simple enough: fish, batter, potatoes and hot oil. Getting all the elements right at the same time is another matter. Brophy's Tavern seems to have it dialed in, though. The tavern combines the atmosphere of a neighborhood gathering place with that of a sports bar. Seven large-screen televisions make it a great place to catch a game, while the food menu ranges from wings and a giant pretzel to filet mignon sliders, salads and other substantial pub fare. Its drink list includes draft beer and cocktails.

But for fish-and-chips devotees, the struggle to find the best is real. The fresh halibut at Brophy's is prepared so that the crust doesn't shatter or disintegrate at first bite. Golden brown batter surrounds the tender fish. Everything is properly seasoned straight out of the fryer, and the same temperature — searingly hot — when it hits the table. Except the cole slaw, of course. Brophy's has won this category before, so the 2026 vote is a well-earned return engagement.

■ Best Place to Get Ice Cream

Revival Ice Cream — *463 Alvarado St., Monterey - (831) 747-2113, revivalicecream.com*

Revival Ice Cream takes the familiar pleasure of a scoop and gives it a decidedly Monterey twist. Its eucalyptus mint chip uses local eucalyptus and fresh mint steeped in the ice cream base before chunks of chocolate are added. The signature Bee's Knees combines honey and a honeycomb-style candy, a flavor that also turns up in the shop's ice cream cakes. Revival makes its ice cream in small batches, emphasizing locally sourced ingredients and organic bases prepared from scratch. Customers who avoid dairy have choices, too, including vegan sorbets such as cold brew coffee, passion fruit-mango, and pistachio.

Even on a foggy day, it's not uncommon to see people strolling out of the Alvarado Street store with loaded cones. There are scoops as small as 3 ounces in dishes, pints, ice cream sandwiches and cakes, and the shop offers nationwide shipping for selected products. There are even gluten-free, dairy-free waffle cones. For locals, a reusable pint container garners a discount on a refill, while a birthday promotion offers a free scoop on the customer's special day. Those details reflect the business's stated interest in reducing waste and building a community around its frozen treats. Think of it as a place where nostalgia, inventiveness and eco-awareness can happily share a cone.

■ Best Sandwich or Burger

r.g. Burgers — *Crossroads shopping center - (831) 626-8054, rgburgers.com*

At this spot, the word "burger" doesn't necessarily mean beef. The restaurant also lists turkey, bison and chicken among its choices, giving diners several ways to approach the classic sandwich. Char-grilled burger flavor is part of the appeal, but the menu extends to hot dogs, other sandwiches, salads and soups. A burger can be a straightforward affair or a complex concoction like the Hawaiian with pineapple and barbecue sauce, the California with avocado and Monterey jack cheese, or a burger topped with pastrami and Swiss. Vegetarians can get their

Continues next page

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

favorite combo with a falafel patty. This category is all about what's between the bread, but it's worth mentioning that there are more than 15 flavors of milkshakes, and they make good old-fashioned ice cream floats.

It's pretty kid-friendly, too. Sometimes the answer to "Where should we eat?" is simply a place with enough options to satisfy everybody.

■ Best Breakfast

From Scratch — *The Barnyard shopping center - (831) 625-2448, fromscratchrestaurant.com*

Breakfast has its own rituals, and From Scratch has made a business of giving diners time to enjoy them. Located on the lower level of The Barnyard shopping center, the restaurant serves breakfast throughout the day — helpful if you're not really a morning person. Its name makes a promise about its approach to food, and its casual setting suits diners who want to sit down for a proper breakfast. "Proper," by the way, apparently includes portions large enough to fuel a day of whaling — or whale-watching.

Tables are seated on a first-come, first-served basis, and you'll often see people patiently waiting in line on the weekend and discussing the platters of food as they go by. "Was that a fluffy biscuit under savory gravy? Wait, did you see the size of those pancakes? Is that real corned beef hash?" Yes, yes and yes. The granola is so popular you can get it in bags to go, and there are plenty of other possibilities. The coffee is excellent.

Wash it down with the house bloody mary, made with jalapeno wasabi vodka and the bartender's special blend of ingredients, or have a mimosa with orange, guava or mango juice.

■ Best Coffee
■ Best Coffeehouse

Carmel Valley Coffee Roasting Co. — *336 Ocean Ave. and the Crossroads and Barnyard shopping centers - (831) 626-2913, carmelcoffeeroasters.com*

Carmel Valley Coffee Roasting Co. has taken both sides of the counter by storm this year with its beautifully roasted beans and pleasant places to enjoy sipping the finished drink. Founded in 1994, the family-run company emphasizes certified organic, fair trade coffee roasted in small batches. Its lineup includes Foglifter, a dark roast, and Eastwood, a medium roast named for a former Carmel-by-the-Sea mayor, along with other blends and single-origin offerings. Customers can buy beans for home brewing, and the company ships coffee directly to consumers.

For those who prefer someone else to make the cup, its coffeehouses offer places to linger. The location in Carmel-by-the-Sea has indoor and sidewalk seating, while the locations at The Barnyard and Crossroads shopping centers have indoor seating and an outdoor patio. Whether you're in the mood to chat, peruse the latest issue of The Pine Cone, or sit and doomscroll in public, you can't beat the combination of great coffee and a convivial spot to sip it.

■ Best Desserts

Pâtisserie Boissiere — *In Carmel Plaza shopping center, 526 Ocean Ave. - (831) 624-5008, patisserieboissiere.com*

There's a certain pleasure in going to a restaurant that starts you thinking about dessert before you've even been seated. At Pâtisserie Boissiere, sweets are not an afterthought to the French and European menu — they're part of the restaurant's identity, right down to its name. The establishment has long been known for its pastries and desserts, even as its kitchen serves savory dishes for lunch and dinner. The charming dining room offers a traditional European atmosphere, and the business says some members of its staff have worked there for more than 20 years.

The dessert case is right by the door, providing an incentive to save room for a piece of apple tart, a helping of chocolate mousse cake, an apricot bar — so many choices. They even make something as ordinary as carrot cake or banana bread something special. And yes, there are croissants, brioche and traditional Paris-Brest, the elegant pastry-and-praline cream created to commemorate a bicycle race.

■ Best Special Occasion Cake

Layers — *9 Soledad Drive, Monterey - (831) 655-1544, layerscake.com*

A celebration can begin with a cake, and at Layers the possibilities range from a classic birthday centerpiece to a wedding confection built around a couple's own design. The Monterey bakery has been in the business of marking occasions since 1989, when Antonio and Hazel Nuovo started it in a small kitchen on Lighthouse Avenue. It moved to Soledad Drive in 2007, and the family business now spans three generations. It offers familiar favorites with distinctly different personalities: Death by Chocolate, lemon butter, red velvet, carrot cake and a princess cake, among others.

For a wedding, customers can discuss decorations and

Continues next page







GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

serving sizes with a coordinator to make sure the big day has a particularly sweet finish.

Sheet cakes are available for larger gatherings. The choice doesn't have to be elaborate, and cake picked up for an impromptu gathering can be just as welcome as a carefully planned creation.

Layers also makes cupcakes, cookies and other sweets, so a dessert table need not depend on a single showpiece. Custom designs require coordination and pricing depends on their complexity, making advance planning worthwhile for especially ambitious orders.

■ Best Wine List

Grasing's — *483 Sixth Ave. - (831) 624-6562, grasings.com*

A wine list can be anything from an afterthought to a destination in its own right. At Grasing's, it's emphatically the latter. The Carmel restaurant's collection numbers more than 3,000 selections from around the world, stored in two temperature-regulated cellars. Wine Spectator has recognized the program with its Grand Award, including in 2026. The collection is notable not only for its breadth but for deep selections from particular producers and vintages, giving enthusiasts the opportunity to explore a favorite wine across years.

Chef and co-owner Kurt Grasing founded the restaurant in the late 1990s, and although the food program has steakhouse roots, the dining experience also draws on seafood and produce from the surrounding region. A meal might be an opportunity to discover an unfamiliar Italian wine or to find a California bottle for a special celebration.

The restaurant's bar and dining spaces allow for different sorts of visits, but this award belongs to a cellar assembled with unusual range and attention. Even a diner who arrives with a favorite grape in mind may find a new direction to explore.

■ Best Sommelier

Dave Sidener, The Sardine Factory — *701 Wave St., Monterey - (831) 373-3775, sardinefactory.com*

The Sardine Factory's wine program has long been part of the restaurant's identity, and this year, Pine Cone readers singled out Dave Sidener for Best Sommelier. The restaurant, opened in 1968 and still owned by Bert Cutino and Ted Balestreri, has spent decades building a reputation for food, hospitality and wine.

Its cellar has a distinguished history: Fred Dame worked there before becoming one of this country's pioneering master sommeliers. That history provides context for Sidener's award, but the recognition this year belongs to Sidener himself. A sommelier's job involves far more than memorizing labels or recommending an expensive bottle. The work calls for understanding what guests enjoy, matching wines to food, navigating different budgets and making a potentially intimidating list approachable. The best recommendation may be a familiar varietal from an unexpected producer or a bottle that complements several courses at once. This Golden Pine Cone recognizes the human element of a restaurant's wine service: someone who helps translate a substantial cellar into a good evening at the table.

■ Best Brunch
■ Best Outdoor Dining

Mission Ranch — *26270 Dolores St. - (831) 625-9040, missionranchcarmel.com*

The view from Mission Ranch is one of those "more than the sum of its parts" affairs — a composition seemingly out of a bucolic painting, with sheep grazing in a meadow, the Santa Lucia Mountains beyond and the coast in the distance. The setting is a strong draw

See **PRIMO** *page 18 GPC*

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PRIMO

From page 15 GPC

for the outdoor-dining crowd, and it has a lovely classic Sunday brunch. Diners can make a morning of it, enjoying food while watching the light change over the meadow.

The ranch's story adds another layer to the experience. Once a dairy farm, it was preserved and restored by former Carmel Mayor Clint Eastwood after a proposed condominium development threatened the site. The historic ranch now includes an inn and restaurant, but the open landscape remains the feature that makes it immediately recognizable. Outdoor seating makes it feel close at hand, while the indoor dining room offers its own vantage points. For brunch or dinner, however, the most distinctive companion to the meal may be the scene beyond the windows — a pastoral landscape just minutes from downtown Carmel.

■ Best New Restaurant (opened in last 12 months)

Gromada Carmel Valley — *6 Pilot Rd., Carmel Valley - (831) 238-0946, gromadacarmelvalley.com*

Gromada opened as Gather Aug. 6 in the former Roux space on Pilot Road, bringing a new family-run restaurant to Carmel Valley Village. (The change to Gromada came after some confusion with another California restaurant.) Chef Matthew Zimny leads the kitchen, with his sister Heather, a certified sommelier, overseeing the front of house. Zimny's wife, Michelle, also helps run the operation. The siblings grew up in Hamtramck, Michigan, a community with strong Polish traditions, and that helps explain the restaurant's culinary direction.

The menu combines Polish influences with Japanese ideas and regional ingredients. Zimny's experience includes kitchens in Chicago and Alaska, along with several Monterey Peninsula restaurants. The family developed its own concept, drawing on their varied backgrounds. The result is an unusually personal addition to the valley's dining scene. Its Best New Restaurant award comes just two months after opening, an early welcome from Golden Pine Cone voters.

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

■ Most Dog-Friendly Restaurant
■ Best Hotel (tie)
■ Most Dog-Friendly Hotel
■ Best Place to Relax and Listen to Music

Cypress Inn / Terry's Restaurant + Lounge — *684 Lincoln St. - (831) 624-3871, cypress-inn.com*

The Cypress Inn and its Terry's Restaurant + Lounge earned four reader honors this year. The inn's long association with actress and animal advocate Doris Day explains why dogs are part of the welcome rather than an exception. In fact, the restaurant recently celebrated a return to its popular Yappy Hour from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday through Wednesday. It includes drink specials as well as $2 off the Canine Delights menu, which offers the Strutz Special with a ground beef patty, rice and carrots, and the Hearty Hyden with chicken breast, rice and carrots.

Terry's — named for Day's late son, Terry Melcher — offers coastal cuisine, cocktails and a pet-friendly garden patio. Live performances — including jazz, singers and acoustic acts — make the lounge a place to linger even for visitors who aren't spending the night. An old-school glamorous Hollywood atmosphere pervades the property.

For overnight guests, accommodations range from standard rooms to suites, some with fireplaces, verandas or balconies. The hotel advertises pet-friendly amenities including bowls, blankets and a place to rinse sandy paws. With dining, music and comfortable lodging in one location, Cypress Inn gives people and their four-legged companions several reasons to stay.

■ Best Hotel (tie)

La Playa Hotel — *827 Camino Real - (831) 293-6100, laplayahotel.com*

Located a short stroll from the beach and the heart of downtown Carmel, La Playa Hotel is an historic Carmel landmark with a fresh look following a major renovation — a $20 million remodel in 2023 that transformed its 75 guest rooms, public spaces and event venues. The property was built in 1905 as a gift from an artist to his wife, and it has been welcoming guests since 1915, when it was a boarding house. Its gardens, period architecture and ocean views continue to bring visitors back.

Rooms and suites offer different ways to enjoy the property, including ocean-view and garden-oriented accommodations. Guests can also spend time around the outdoor pool, in the gardens or on the Pacific Terrace. La Playa's appeal lies partly in the contrast between its long history and the modern amenities introduced during the renovation. It's a hotel with a gracious past, but carefully updated for the 21st century.

■ Best Bartender

Christian Pèpe — *Vesuvio, 543 Sixth Ave. - (831) 625-1766, chefpepe.com/restaurants/vesuvio*

A bartender's contribution can shape an evening as surely as the kitchen's cooking: listening to what a guest wants, balancing ingredients and keeping service moving while making a crowded room feel welcoming. The Pèpe family's Carmel restaurant history includes Vesuvio, where Christian was reportedly part of the opening team alongside GianAntonio Pèpe.

The family's restaurants have long emphasized Italian food and lively bar settings, including Vesuvio's downstairs bar and rooftop Star Bar. In that environment, a mixologist needs to serve guests who may be ordering a familiar classic, trying a house cocktail or simply stopping by to catch up with friends, and our readers believe strongly that Pèpe is more than up to the task.

■ Best Restaurant in Big Sur

Nepenthe — *48510 Highway 1, Big Sur - (831) 667-2345, nepenthe.com*

Some restaurants are inseparable from their setting. Nepenthe, perched above Highway 1 in Big Sur, has an expansive coastal outlook that is as memorable as the trip to reach it. The Pacific Ocean and coastline unfold below, offering the sort of panorama that encourages diners to linger. The restaurant is a familiar landmark for travelers making their way along the Big Sur coast, with full-service dining and a long-established place in the region's visitor experience. Its menu and terrace give guests a chance to turn a scenic drive into a meal rather than merely a roadside stop.

The property also includes Café Kevah — an expansive outdoor deck with simple but well-prepared breakfast and lunch offerings — and the Phoenix Shop, a great place to find

See **GREATEST** *page 20 GPC*

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

GREATEST

From page 18 GPC

unusual gifts made by local artisans.

Nepenthe's restaurant stands on its own, however, and its Ambrosiaburger has become famous in its own right. The view may bring people up the driveway for the first time, but a successful restaurant must also offer a comfortable place to gather around a table. Its dinner offerings, like diver scallops with polenta cakes, and the Nepenthe steak, an 8-ounce filet mignon, served with cabernet demi-glace, a walnut-crusted Point Reyes blue cheese crouton, portabella mushroom and garlic mashed potatoes, are complemented by an exceptional wine list. In a landscape famous for dramatic vistas, Nepenthe has made dining with the view a tradition of its own.

■ Best Restaurant in Carmel Valley

Cafe Rustica — *10 Del Fino Place, Carmel Valley - (831) 659-4444, caferusticacv.com*

Café Rustica makes a persuasive case for slowing down in Carmel Valley Village. Its name suggests an unpretentious approach to dining, and its menu draws on European country cooking in a setting suited to lingering over a meal. Diners will find dishes influenced by French and Italian traditions, including starters such as marinated olives, country soup and escargots, alongside heartier choices. Menu details change, so the attraction is less a single dish than a familiar combination of comfort and craft.

The restaurant occupies a convenient spot on Del Fino Place, within reach of the village's numerous wine-tasting rooms and delightful shops. It's a place to finish an afternoon exploring the valley or to meet friends for dinner without leaving the village. In an area with an ever-changing array of places to eat, it's a familiar establishment whose appeal is grounded in its food and welcoming village setting.

■ Best Restaurant in Pebble Beach

Roy's — *The Inn at Spanish Bay, 2700 17-Mile Drive, Pebble Beach - (888) 990-1723, pebblebeach.com*

"Best in Pebble Beach" is quite a compliment. Del Monte Forest is not exactly bristling with eateries, and the compe-

See **FINEST** *page 22 GPC*

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

FINEST

From page 20 GPC

tition is pretty fierce. At Roy's, the view takes in the Pacific Ocean and the fairways of The Links at Spanish Bay, but the cooking takes its cues from a much wider world.

The restaurant at The Inn at Spanish Bay serves Hawaiian-fusion cuisine inspired by chef Roy Yamaguchi, whose first namesake restaurant opened in Honolulu in 1988. Seafood has a starring role, with such dishes as misoyaki butterfish and crab-crusted scallops illustrating the kitchen's appetite for bold flavors.

The menu also makes room for meat dishes, including rack of lamb and beef short ribs, as well as sushi. Chef de cuisine Pablo Mellin brings his own interest in Asian cooking to the restaurant's mix of traditions. The setting is distinctly Pebble Beach: sweeping views of the water and golf course, with a dining room that can accommodate both a celebratory evening and a casual resort meal. Roy's offers a different culinary accent from the Peninsula's many California-coastal restaurants, pairing island influences with the dramatic scenery of Spanish Bay.

■ Best Restaurant in Pacific Grove

Passionfish — *701 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove - (831) 655-3311. passionfish.net*

Passionfish has made seafood the centerpiece of its Pacific Grove identity, but part of the restaurant's appeal isn't immediately apparent on the plate. Its approach emphasizes thoughtfully sourced ingredients and the relationship between dining and the ocean. Located on Lighthouse Avenue just a few blocks from Lovers Point, the restaurant offers diners an intimate setting. Fish and shellfish are central to the concept, while the kitchen's preparations reflect a willingness to put fresh ingredients ahead of unnecessary fuss.

Guests also appreciate the outstanding wine program, offering the opportunity to find a pairing that complements rather than overwhelms a meal. Visitors who spend the afternoon exploring the coast can continue that connection at the table. For readers choosing a restaurant in Pacific Grove, Passionfish represents a combination of seafood, wine and a clear sense of place.

Continues next page

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

■ Best Restaurant in Monterey

Cella — *525 Polk St., Monterey - (831) 920-1046, cellarestaurant.com*

There's a lot of history around Cella, but its dining experience is firmly rooted in the present. It occupies space at the Cooper-Molera Adobe in downtown Monterey, where historic surroundings meet contemporary design. Inside, long banquettes, locally crafted woodwork, and art by landscape designer Bernard Trainor contribute to a room that is polished without feeling remote. Outside, a heated pergola looks toward citrus and peppercorn trees, with passionfruit vines adding greenery to the scene.

Meals can begin with Alta Bakery bread, freshly baked next door and served with cultured butter and optional anchovies. Chef Tyler Eaves' menu might include a twist on dolmas — stuffed Greek treats wrapped in rainbow chard instead of grape leaves — or beautifully plated Monterey Bay halibut crudo. The bar program has been celebrated by locals for some time for its creative cocktails.

The property also includes a garden space for private gatherings and a dining room suited to everything from a small dinner to a larger reception. Locals and out-of-towners can enjoy a meal in a downtown landmark that doesn't ask guests to treat the surroundings as a museum. The result is a Monterey restaurant whose architecture, courtyard and sense of hospitality are as much a part of the evening as the food.

■ Best Restaurant in Seaside

Maligne — *600 Broadway, Seaside - (831) 920-2103, restaurantmaligne.com*

Maligne's name suggests cleverness, and the Seaside restaurant has built a reputation for making familiar dishes feel fresh. Within the walls of a decidedly nondescript storefront, chef Klaus Georis — of the Carmel restaurateur and vintner family known for superb food and wine sensibilities — draws from Italian-American and French traditions while imparting a distinctly Californian sensibility. Everything is served in an easygoing room with a loft-like atmosphere and a menu that can feature traditional favorites like beef carpaccio and sweetbread pot pie alongside a double cheeseburger and fries.

Local ingredients are a key part of that approach, lending new character to dishes that might otherwise seem predictable. Maligne offers a useful reminder that inventive dining doesn't always mean unfamiliar ingredients or elaborate explanations. Sometimes it means a chef knows precisely how to make a recognizable dish memorable. Its presence on Broadway adds another destination to Seaside's growing range of places to sit down for a carefully prepared dinner.

RECREATION AND THE ARTS

■ Best Local Artist

Nicole Cromwell, Nicole Cromwell Gallery — *575 Dolores St. - (831) 200-1836, nicolecromwellart.com*

Before Nicole Cromwell devoted herself to painting full time, she spent 25 years working as a critical care nurse — an experience that continues to influence her art. Cromwell explores how color, space and atmosphere can affect the way people feel. Her artist-owned gallery in Carmel's Su Vecino Courtyard features original acrylic paintings, particularly contemporary seascapes and expressive abstract florals. Some evoke the coastline without attempting to reproduce it literally, while others draw attention to shape, movement and the interplay of color.

The work is intended to leave room for a viewer's interpretation. Cromwell has lived on the Monterey Peninsula for nearly three decades, and the region's light and natural surroundings continue to shape her creative journey.

■ Best Local Photographer

Michael Troutman, DMT Imaging — *(831) 596-7569, dmtimaging.com*

Whether he is capturing the action during a fight against a wildfire down in Big Sur or documenting the creativity expressed at the annual Burning Man celebration in Black Rock City, Nev., Michael Troutman of DMT Imaging adds a human touch to any subject he points his camera at. Through DMT Imaging, Michael offers photography services for news events, weddings, business meetings, corporate conferences, sporting events, portraits, product promotion, advertising, marketing campaigns, private receptions and special life events. With more than three decades of experience, he's a familiar face at local gatherings. Among the many honors he has received, Troutman was presented with the Robert C. Littlefield Lifetime Achievement Award by the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce. It's given annually to a resident who embodies an overall love of the Monterey Peninsula, has

Continues next page



Voted Best *Art Gallery*

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

had a positive impact on the business community, and has demonstrated community leadership.

■ Best Photo Gallery

Center for Photographic Art — *Sunset Center, 908 San Carlos St. - (831) 625-5181, photography.org*

With a growing membership, a busy schedule of exhibits, workshops, talks and receptions, and a welcoming space next to Sunset Center, the Center for Photographic Art is a refuge for anyone who loves fine art photography.

The center's roots date to 1967 when Ansel Adams and others formed the Friends of Photography. Founded in 1988, the center celebrates the history of photography by exploring early processes through exhibits and honoring pioneering photographers like Adams, who will be the subject of a show opening in February 2027. The center also aims to shape the future of the medium by showcasing contemporary photographers and providing space for them to display their images.

Besides the many events that pack its busy schedule, the center organizes the annual Photo Carmel Festival, with the next one set to start April 27. For a town with a deep heritage of photographic art, the Center for Photographic Art provides a place where the medium remains vital, alive and evolving.

■ Best Sculpture Gallery

Richard MacDonald / Dawson Cole Fine Art *— 353 Sixth Ave. - (831) 624-8200, dawsoncolefineart.com*

Famous for capturing the beauty, strength and grace of the human form in motion, figurative sculptor Richard MacDonald has been displaying his work at Dawson Cole Fine Art since 1993.

A leading advocate of the neo-figurative movement, MacDonald has created a number of high-profile public monuments and commissions, including a 26-foot bronze sculpture, "The Flair," that was installed at Georgia International Plaza in Atlanta for the 1996 Olympic Games, and a 15-foot-tall bronze sculpture, "Momentum," that was installed in 2000 at what was then The Peter Hay golf course in Pebble Beach to mark the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Open.

Working out of a 25,000-square-foot studio in Monterey, MacDonald seeks to capture "the beauty of the human body and the spirit that drives it."

■ Best Art Gallery

Carmel Art Association — *555 Dolores St. - (831) 624-6176, carmelart.org*

Offering local artists a place to hang or display their creations since 1927, Carmel Art Association is not only one of the most enduring galleries in the region, but it can easily be described as the creative heartbeat of the town.

In its early days, it displayed work by artists who would one day be recognized among California's finest, including Armin Hansen, Mary DeNeale Morgan, Francis McComas and E. Charlton Fortune. In all, 550 artists have been part of the group over the past century.

Today, the gallery features monthly exhibits, showcasing painters, sculptors, printmakers and mixed media artists who are among its 79 members. It also serves as a space for talks, demonstrations, youth shows and fundraisers. It's operated by its many member-artists, some of whom serve on its nonprofit board of directors.

■ Best Performing Arts Company or Group

Pacific Repertory Theatre — *Golden Bough Playhouse, 851 Monte Verde St. - (831) 622-0100, pacrep.org*

Making live theater a big part of Carmel's vibrant cultural scene, Pacific Repertory Theatre presents plays and musicals that bring together actors, designers, technicians and audiences. PacRep also fosters the next generation of stage talent by offering youngsters performing arts training through its Peppy Garner & Darnell Whitt School of Dramatic Arts.

Utilizing two unique stages at the Forest Theater and the Golden Bough Playhouse, the theater company offers a packed schedule of events for the 2026-27 season, including the musicals "Come from Away" (Nov. 19 through Dec. 20 at the Golden Bough) and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" (Nov. 28-Dec. 20 at the Forest Theater) and the tribute concert, "The Beat Goes On" (Jan. 1-10 at the Golden Bough).

■ Best Concert Venue

Sunset Center — *908 San Carlos St. - (831) 620-2048, sunsetcenter.org*

Formerly a school, Sunset Center was transformed into a state-of-the-art performing arts venue that attracts world-class talent. It hosts a broad range of music and theatrical events — this season's schedule includes performances by jazz trumpeter Chris Botti, gospel singer Mavis Staples, the Martha Graham Dance Company and many others.

The theater's convenient location on San Carlos Street puts it within walking distance of downtown restaurants and galleries, allowing a performance to become part of a larger night out. Sunset Center also hosts art exhibits in its Marjorie Evans Gallery and promotes arts education in schools through its Classroom Connection program.

■ Best Local Music Group (classical)

Monterey Symphony — *697 San Carlos St. - (831) 646-8511, montereysymphony.org*

Featuring the only fully professional symphony orchestra in the region — and led by music director and conductor Jayce Ogren — the Carmel-based Monterey Symphony is dedicated to fostering an appreciation for classical music's rich past, while striving to keep it fresh and vibrant in the 21st century. This season's schedule features seven concerts at Sunset Center and the outside Forest Theater that not only celebrate classical music's most important and enduring compositions but showcase the symphony's many gifted musicians and an array of world-class singers and instrumentalists.

■ Best Local Music Group (rock, jazz and pop)

Bubba Pickens Band — *bubbapickens.com*

A seven-piece ensemble, Bubba Pickens was founded in 2018 by three local teachers and a friend. Another teacher and two students later joined the band, expanding its sound with "richer harmonies, new textures, and an extra dose of joy." The band serves up an irresistible mix of "bluegrass classics, original songs and reimagined rock hits," delivering "a full, toe-tapping sound with harmonies that move both soul and feet."

They don't perform too often, but when they do — at venues like the Trailside Cafe, the Big Sur River Inn and Earthbound Farms — they attract a devoted local following.

Continues next page

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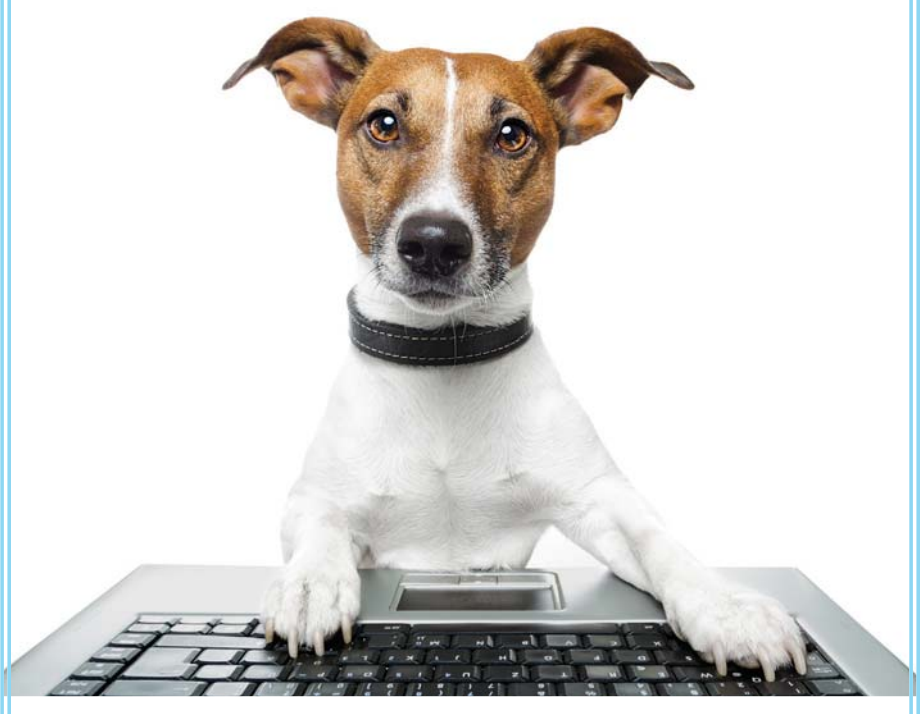
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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

■ Best Place to Take Visitors
■ My Favorite Park

Point Lobos State Natural Reserve — *Highway 1, 3 miles south of Carmel - (831) 624-4909, parks.ca.gov*

There's no shortage of scenery on the Monterey Peninsula, but Point Lobos has a way of making even longtime residents stop and look. The state natural reserve brings together wind-shaped Monterey cypresses, rocky headlands, sheltered coves and water that can turn startling shades of blue and green.

Its trails provide very different views within a relatively compact coastal landscape. Visitors can explore the shoreline around Sea Lion Point, watch for marine life offshore or follow paths through pine woods toward the coves. The North Shore Trail is more rugged than its postcard views might suggest, with rocky footing, roots and stairs. Point Lobos is also an important protected marine habitat popular with divers, not simply a scenic overlook. Comfortable shoes, a little patience and time to linger are worth bringing along.

■ Best Family-Friendly Activity

Monterey Bay Aquarium — *886 Cannery Row, Monterey - (831) 648-4800, montereybayaquarium.org*

A trip to Monterey Bay Aquarium can start with a sea otter and end with an entirely new appreciation for the ocean. The nonprofit institution occupies a spectacular waterfront site on Cannery Row, where its galleries bring visitors face to face with animals and habitats found in Monterey Bay and far beyond it.

The towering Kelp Forest exhibit puts fish, sharks and swaying fronds of kelp in a setting that reflects the nearby coastline. The Open Sea gallery offers a different perspective, with large windows that open into a world of enormous fast-moving swimmers. Elsewhere, visitors can watch jellies drift, examine rocky-shore life and encounter the extraordinary adaptations of a giant Pacific octopus.

The aquarium's Into the Deep exhibit explores animals living far below the sunlit surface. Behind the exhibits is the aquarium's broader mission of ocean conservation, including work to protect marine ecosystems and wildlife. It's a day out with a purpose that reaches well beyond the tanks.

■ Best Local Festival

Monterey Jazz Festival — *Monterey County Fairgrounds, Monterey - (888) 248-6499, montereyjazz.org*

For three days each September, the Monterey County Fairgrounds becomes a place where you can watch a jazz legend perform next to a gifted local student-musician playing in front of a big crowd for the first time. One of the Monterey Peninsula's most important annual cultural events, the Monterey Jazz Festival just celebrated its 69th year with performances by trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, keyboardist Herbie Hancock, bassist Ron Carter and many other luminaries.

The longest-running jazz festival in the world since its inception in 1958, the three-day extravaganza celebrates "iconic jazz masters and emerging artists." The festival offers live jazz on five stages, along with a bustling marketplace of food vendors and artisans.

Continues next page

Everybody reads The Pine Cone





GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

■ Best Faith-Community Sponsored Event

Jewish Food Festival — *Congregation Beth Israel, 5716 Carmel Valley Road - (831) 624-2015, jewishfoodfestivalcarmel.org*

One of the Monterey Peninsula's most distinctive food events, the annual Jewish Food Festival at Congregation Beth Israel serves not only as an introduction to a tasty and varied cuisine, but a welcoming opportunity to learn more about Jewish culture.

The festival's menu features delicious dishes — like latkes, babka, blintzes, kugel and rugelach — that have roots in Jewish communities around the world.

Preparation is a community effort, with volunteers gathering for baking and food-preparation shifts well before festival day. The festival traces its beginnings to 1988, when about 100 volunteers helped stage the first foodie event in the congregation's parking lot.

■ Best Place to Watch the Sunset
■ Best Place to Walk Your Dog
■ Best Beach
■ Best Place to Get Married (non-church)

Carmel Beach — *Foot of Ocean Ave. and along Scenic Road - ci.carmel.ca.us*

There is nothing more quintessentially Carmel than a sunrise or sunset stroll along white sands of the town's famous beach. It's an idyllic setting, not only for people who want to get their toes wet, but also for dogs, who can run free on the edge of the surf — although leashes are required on the pathway above the beach. It's a lovely place to watch the sunset, as the sky turns shades of pink, yellow, orange and then shocking crimson and purple.

At the very end — if you're very lucky — you can see the famous "green flash" as the sun slips below the horizon. No wonder Carmel Beach is a popular place for people to get married — so popular that couples should check out current city requirements before making plans.

■ Best Place to Read The Pine Cone

At home — *carmelpinecone.com*

For many readers, the perfect start to a weekend includes a comfortable chair, a cup of coffee and the latest edition of The Carmel Pine Cone. This year's winner for best place to read our newspaper isn't a café, park bench or scenic overlook. It's inside the comfort of your own home.

Some readers will settle in at the kitchen table, while others will stretch out on a sofa or carry the paper to the patio when the weather cooperates. A particularly good reading spot may come with a snoozing dog or cat.

Regardless of where you read The Pine Cone, the Friday morning ritual is a great way to stay informed and up-to-date on the news and events that shape the Monterey Peninsula and make it such a special place.

■ Best Hiking Trail

Garland Ranch Regional Park — *700 W. Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 659-6065, mprpd.org*

Garland Ranch Regional Park's varied terrain makes it a favorite of hikers, with trails that pass through willow-lined streambanks, sycamore groves, oak woodlands and chaparral, and elevations rising from roughly 200 to 2,000 feet. The Garzas Creek Trail provides a quieter, shaded route toward a side canyon with redwoods. Other paths climb into open country where the views become part of the reward for the effort.

The Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District, which manages the property, offers downloadable self-guided hikes with maps, distances and elevation information. Other options include the Buckeye Nature Trail, Garzas Canyon and Snively's Ridge, so walkers can choose an outing suited to their time and energy.

In spring, the Lupine Loop — a relatively short, flat trail — lives up to its name as the blue wildflowers and other spring blossoms dot the landscape. Garland Ranch also preserves traces of Carmel Valley history, including indigenous habitation sites and remnants of earlier ranching and homesteading.

The park was the district's first land acquisition, purchased in 1975 from William Garland II. Whether the goal is a vigorous climb, birdwatching or a gentle walk, there's plenty of ground to explore.

■ Best Fitness/Health Center

Carmel Valley Athletic Club — *27300 Rancho San Carlos Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 624-2737, cvaclife.com*

Carmel Valley Athletic Club treats fitness as something that can be challenging, restorative and sociable, rather than a chore to squeeze into the day. Its offerings include swimming, tennis, pickleball, Pilates and group fitness classes, all offered in a setting designed to make staying active part of a larger routine. Founded in 1968, the club combines a two-story fitness center with a heated 25-yard pool, tennis courts and dedicated pickleball courts.

Members can also take advantage of personal training and a schedule of classes that ranges across different interests and levels of experience. Families have options of their own, including a Kids' Club, summer day camps and organized activities. The club's social side is part of the attraction: sports gatherings, seasonal events and casual conversations around the café give members reasons to stay after a workout.

■ Best Yoga Studio

Salty Soul Sanctuary — *Carmel Plaza, 526 Ocean Ave. - (831) 877-0042, saltysoulsanctuary.com*

A yoga practice can be athletic, meditative or anywhere in between. Salty Soul Sanctuary takes this to heart, offering a diverse range of classes, workshops and events, accommodating every level of experience. Owned and operated by Amanda and Kyle Hoff, the serenely decorated studio reimagines the former Seaside Yoga Sanctuary.

Amanda, an instructor as well as co-owner, began studying Bikram yoga before being drawn toward the more expressive movement of Vinyasa. The studio offers classes in Vinyasa, ashtanga, and hatha, as well as customized private and group sessions. With a focus on proper alignment, Salty Soul Sanctuary creates a warm, welcoming space — whether you are deepening a lifelong practice or stepping onto the mat for the first time.

■ Best Golf Course

Pacific Grove Golf Links — *77 Asilomar Blvd., Pacific Grove - (831) 648-5775, playpacificgrove.com*

The front nine at Pacific Grove Golf Links rolls through a

See **AWESOME** *page 28 GPC*



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AWESOME

From page 26 GPC

landscape of pines and cypresses, while the back nine opens toward the ocean, where the coastal breeze and sweeping views of Monterey Bay help define the game. The municipal course's character is rooted in its history. Former U.S. Amateur champion H. Chandler Egan designed the original nine holes, which opened for play in 1932.

His efforts brought traditional golf architecture to a stretch of the Peninsula that was already well known for its scenery. Today the 18-hole course blends tree-lined fairways with a more exposed, links-like finish. It's often described as an affordable and accessible alternative to some of the Monterey Peninsula's more famous golf destinations.

■ Best Museum

Monterey Museum of Art — *559 Pacific St., Monterey - (831) 372-5477, montereyart.org*

Located across Pacific Street from historic Colton Hall, Monterey Museum of Art hosts a busy slate of exhibits and events celebrating painting, sculpture, photography and mixed media art, with a particular focus on showcasing historic and contemporary California artists.

The museum's collection features more than 14,000 works dating to the late 19th century, and includes pieces by notable artists like Armin Hansen, William Ritschel, M. Evelyn McCormick and E. Charlton Fortune.

More than just a place to view art, the museum offers visitors an opportunity to explore their own creativity by participating in a variety of art workshops. The museum has a second site at the nearby La Mirada estate, which is used for special events.

■ Best Library

Harrison Memorial Library — *325 Ocean Ave. - (831) 624-4629, ci.carmel.ca.us*

In a town that's long attracted artists and authors, Robinson Jeffers' stone house still stands and you can find a spot that once hosted Robert Louis Stevenson just a few miles north in Monterey.

It's unsurprising to find a thriving population of reading enthusiasts here, and Harrison Memorial Library is the perfect place to find your next good book. Readers can browse, ask questions and discover resources that extend well beyond the shelves.

While Harrison Memorial library opened in 1928, library service in town dates to 1906, when the very first residents were moving in. Besides offering locals and visitors a quiet and comfortable place to read a book, magazine or newspaper, the library is a gathering place for programs and events for all ages. A separate Park Branch, which opened in 1989 on Mission Street at Sixth Avenue, houses a children's library and local history resources.

■ Best Inn/B&B

Carmel Garden Inn — *589 Fourth Ave. - (831) 624-6926, carmelgardeninn.com*

The Carmel Garden Inn's name offers a clue to its appeal — this is a small pet-friendly property where the garden setting is part of the experience. The inn has 10 guest rooms with wood-burning fireplaces. Five are mini-suites with private patios, king beds and kitchenettes, giving guests room to settle in for more than a quick overnight stay.

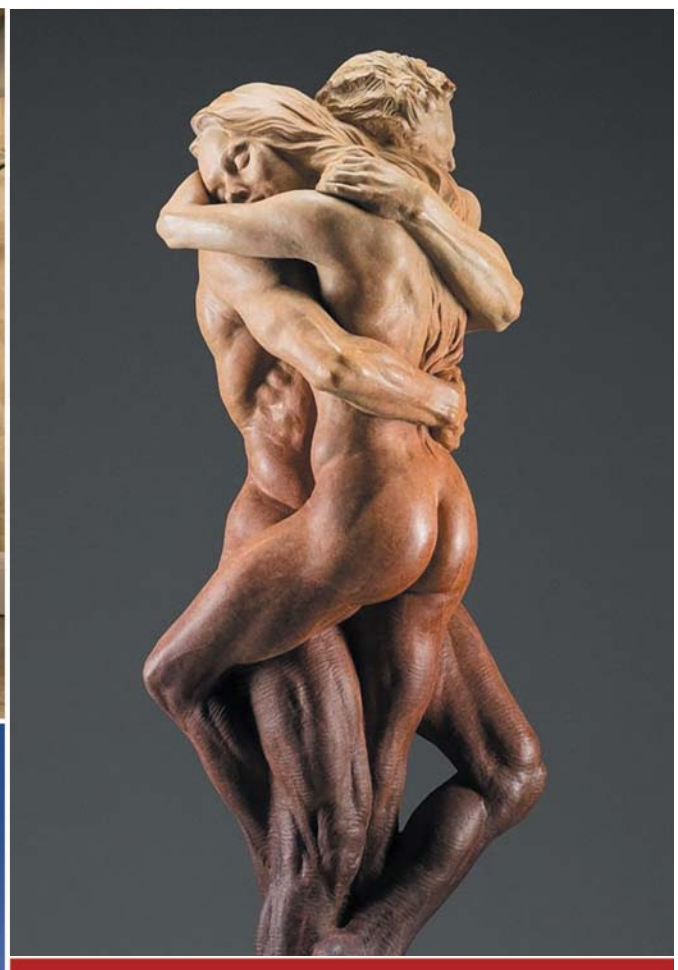
Breakfast is another part of the inn's identity — its menu features favorites like homemade granola, fresh local coffee, scones and more.

The property provides off-street parking, and its location puts visitors within walking distance of the village's shops and restaurants as well as Carmel Beach. For travelers who prefer an intimate property over a large hotel, the inn offers a different kind of Carmel stay.

Continues next page

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

RETAIL

■ Best Florist

Fleurs du Soleil — *598 Fremont St., Monterey - (831) 656-0455, fleursdusoleil.com*

Whether you're looking to decorate for a wedding, woo a new love, or just spruce up the dining room table, Fleurs du Soleil is ready to help. From the time you step through the door, you're enveloped in pleasant smells of damp earth and sweet flowers. Designers work tirelessly to bring beauty to the smallest arrangements but don't shrink from making a brilliant statement in a large foyer.

A lifestyle shop in the same location offers an array of items suitable for gifting, including home decor, tableware, candles, vases, books, wood and stone pieces. You don't have to shop for someone else, of course. As Miley Cyrus once said, you can buy yourself flowers.

■ Best Furniture Shop

Mum's Place — *246 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove - (831) 372-6250, mumsfurniture.com*

Remember when furniture was worth keeping? When someone delivered it to your house and put it together for you? When you didn't know what an Allen wrench was?

The folks at Mum's Place do. They've been in the furniture business for 40 years, and they've developed a keen sense of what works, what lasts and what will fit someone's lifestyle. With a beautifully appointed showroom and a wide selection of furnishings for every room, you can put together an interior decorator's fantasy. Choose a sofa and the upholstery. Bring a picture of your dining room to show a salesperson where the new table's going to go, and they'll help you pick out just the right item for years of holiday dinners.

"Quality" doesn't just describe the exceptional furniture — it includes the people who work with it.

■ Best Golf Shop

Pebble Beach Pro Shop — *1700 17 Mile Drive, Pebble Beach - (831) 622-8723, pebblebeach.com*

Pebble Beach Golf Links is known the world over for its championship pedigree and breathtaking views, and while these attributes draw amateurs and pros alike, the friendly staff really take care of players of all levels. For many, it's a once-in-a-lifetime round, and the folks who help you gear up know that.

Each morning, the team is up with the sun and there around the clock until well after the final group has finished. Whether it's souvenir golf balls to remember a once-in-a-lifetime round, an extra layer against the morning fog or a few calming words of encouragement before guests approach the 1st Tee, the Pebble Beach pro shop staff delivers the same world-class standard as the course itself.

In 2027, the U.S. Open returns to the course, and Pebble Beach already has plenty of merchandise to commemorate the occasion. You may not end up driving like Jordan Spieth, but you'll look and feel your best as you play a round in paradise.

■ Best Hardware Store

Ace Hardware — *The Crossroads shopping center with one additional location at Mid Valley and two in Pacific Grove - (831) 293-8050, acehardware.com*

A loose hinge or a leaky faucet can turn a quick errand into a hunt for a surprisingly specific part. That's where a neighborhood hardware store earns its keep.

Departments include hand and power tools, electrical and plumbing supplies, paint, cleaning products, lawn and garden merchandise and housewares. Customers can pick up the essentials for a small fix or start gathering materials for a larger job. The store also carries automotive items and products for patios and outdoor living. If you need duplicate keys, they can make them.

Ace is a national cooperative, but its member stores are independently owned. The

Continues next page



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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

Carmel location describes itself as a family business with local roots dating to 1964, and the emphasis is on practical advice as well as merchandise. For shoppers who know exactly what they need, the goal is to find it. For those arriving with a broken piece of something important and a vague description of the problem, knowledgeable assistance may be the more valuable item.

Either way, hardware shopping is often about solving a problem before it becomes a bigger one.

■ Best Housewares Store

Shoshin — *597 San Carlos St. - (831) 877-6300, studioshoshin.com*

A home can be furnished without feeling finished, and expressing yourself through just the right accents and materials is the best way to fix that. Shoshin, a Carmel shop and colorful interior design studio, concentrates on details that give rooms their character: linens, tabletop pieces, decorative accessories, art and furnishings chosen with an eye toward how people actually live.

Interior designer Alexis Smith opened the retail shop in 2022. Its name comes from a Zen concept often translated as "beginner's mind," an invitation to approach familiar things with curiosity. That spirit suits a store where a shopper might come in for something small and leave with a new idea for an entire room.

The selection includes items for setting a table, layering textures and adding a finishing touch to a shelf or sitting area.

Whether the purchase is a practical household item or a decorative piece that simply catches the eye, Shoshin encourages customers to think of home as something continually evolving — not a project that has to be completed all at once.

■ Best Pet Store (tie)

Stone's Pet Shop — *1122 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove, and in Carmel Valley - (831) 375-4471, stonespetshop.com*

Stone's Pet Shop has been helping Peninsula residents care for their animals since 1957, when it was founded by Pacific Grove teachers Don and Nancy Stone. Nearly seven decades later, it has two retail locations and a self-service pet wash — evidence that caring for your fur babies involves a good deal more than filling a food bowl.

Stone's carries pet supplies and offers resources to help owners find local animal services. Its website includes directories of veterinarians, trainers, boarding facilities and pet sitters. Attentive employees are happy to offer advice, too.

At the self-service wash, dog owners can use raised tubs, shampoo, towels, dryers and grooming tables without turning their own bathrooms into splash zones. The shop supplies the equipment and takes care of the cleanup, a welcome arrangement for anyone whose dog considers bath time a sporting event.

Diggidy Dog — *325 Ocean Ave. - (831) 625-1585, diggidydog.com*

In a town where dogs accompany their people to beaches, shops and outdoor tables, Diggidy Dog fits right in. The Carmel boutique caters to four-legged visitors and residents with treats, toys, clothing and the sort of accessories that can turn an ordinary walk into a fashion outing. After all, one's companions' sartorial choices are important, too.

The shop emphasizes natural, nutrient-rich treats, pet-safe toys and apparel chosen for both usefulness and appearance. "From our selection of all-natural, nutrient-rich treats to our hand-selected, pet-safe toys and unique apparel made for form, function and fashion, our boutique has everything you need to keep your four-legged friend happy and healthy and out on the town in style," its website says.

The selection isn't entirely about indulgence. Diggidy Dog also stocks practical supplies for travelers in need.

The store has been a Carmel fixture for two decades, and its website offers suggestions for pet-friendly accommodations, restaurants and local activities. For an out-of-town dog, that information might be almost as useful as a fresh toy. For the dog's person, it can make the visit considerably easier.

■ Best Garden Shop (tie)

Griggs Nursery — *9220 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 626-0680, griggsnursery.com*

Gardening can start with one plant and spread like oxalis on Miracle-Gro. At Griggs Nursery on Carmel Valley Road, that single purchase can lead to a much bigger project, thanks to an assortment that includes trees, shrubs, flowers, houseplants, pottery and outdoor furnishings.

Ken Griggs and his wife, Catherine, have owned the nursery since 2006. The business grows and selects many of its own plants and stresses advice suited to the Monterey Peninsula's own challenges — from clay soil and hungry deer to dry conditions and varying amounts of sun. Shoppers can look for something suited to a small patio, a large landscape or a bright corner indoors.

"It is by far the best nursery I have ever been to, ever," one of Griggs' many satisfied reviewers wrote. "Its owner has a great attitude about his plant buying, he looks for the best, and it shows!"

The garden shop also carries fountains, benches, planters and sculpture. You can get local delivery, special orders and help with potting plants or assembling outdoor pieces. That can be useful when the perfect container turns out to be heavier than expected, or a fountain arrives in more pieces than a customer wants to tackle alone.

Griggs serves home gardeners and landscape professionals. For beginners, the staff can help narrow the choices. For experienced gardeners, the variety offers an excuse to make room for just one more plant.

Valley Hills Nursery — *7440 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 624-3482, vhnursery.com*

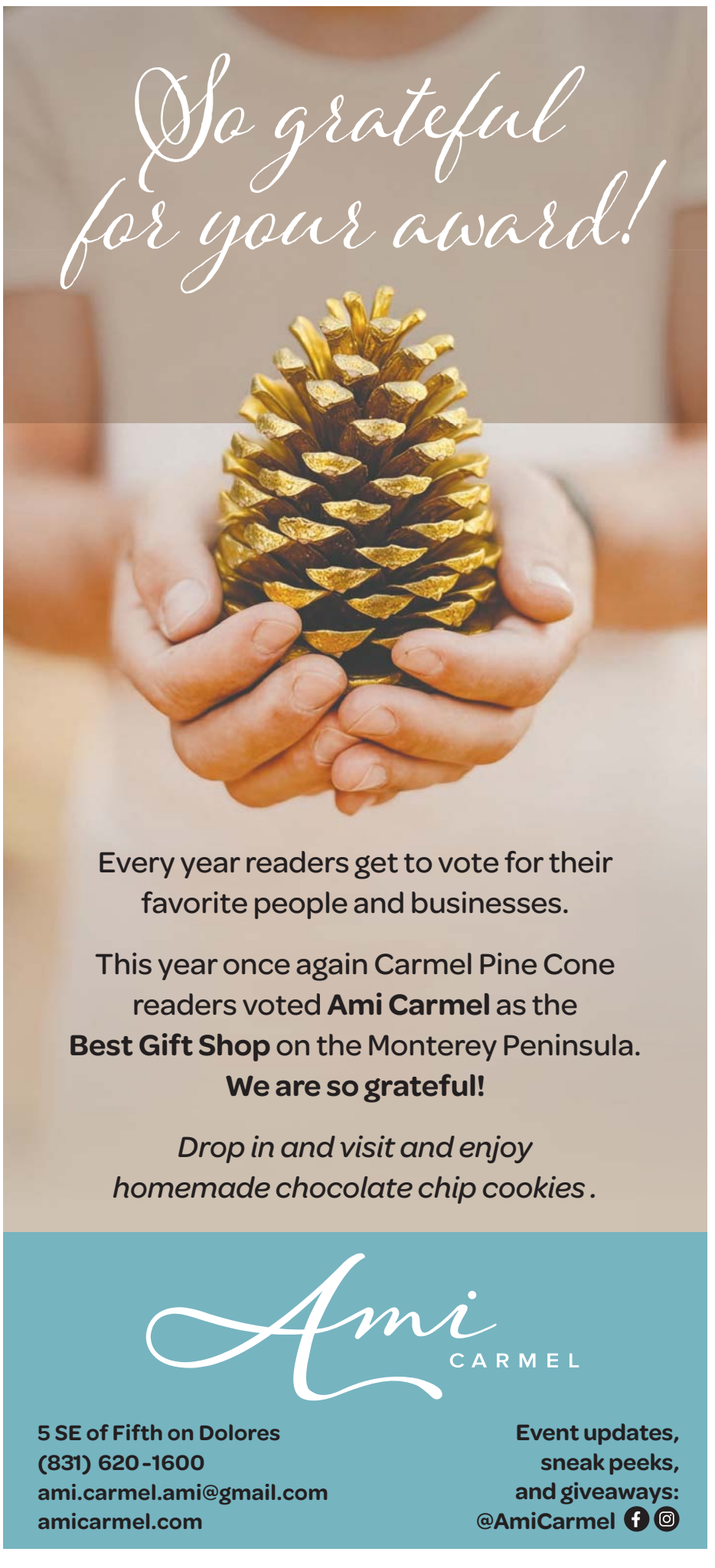
Not every garden needs another rosebush. Sometimes the missing ingredient is a collector's specimen or the right combination of plants for a shady corner. Valley Hills Nursery on Carmel Valley Road offers those possibilities along with more familiar greenery and the tools to care for them.

The nursery carries indoor plants, trees, shrubs, seasonal color, aquatic plants for the koi pond, and soils, fertilizers and garden supplies. Customers can bring photographs of problem areas to get advice.

The business also offers consultations and landscaping services, including irrigation, hardscaping, maintenance and edible gar-

Continues next page

"The Pine Cone. Not the only great paper.
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— unsolicited reader comment





GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

dens, with an emphasis on selecting plants that suit the site.

Having a party? You can even rent plants for the event. Whether the goal is to create an outdoor gathering space, raise food at home or keep an indoor plant thriving, the nursery provides both materials and guidance.

A garden, after all, rarely stays exactly as its owner first imagined.

■ Best Place to Buy Athletic Wear

The Treadmill — *The Crossroads shopping center - (831) 624-4112, thetreadmill.com*

Running shoes are not one-size-fits-all, even when the number on the box is right. At The Treadmill, the emphasis is on finding footwear that works with an individual's feet and the way they move.

And it's wonderful to get help from people who know that jogging around the Lupine Loop at Garland Regional Park is a different kind of challenge than, say, climbing the steep hill to Inspiration Point in Palo Corona.

The specialty store offers personalized fittings for runners, walkers and hikers. Staff members consider foot shape and biomechanics before suggesting shoes, recognizing that comfort and support depend on more than color or brand. Also, feet can change over time, so a style that worked years ago may not remain the best choice.

Athletic clothing and equipment complement the footwear selection, making the store a destination for people preparing for a race, getting serious about daily walks or replacing gear that's seen too many miles.

■ Best Pharmacy

Carmel Drug Store — *435 Ocean Ave. - (831) 624-3819, carmeldrugstorerx.com*

Carmel Drug Store has been part of life in Carmel-by-the-Sea since 1905, combining prescription services with the practical assortment of a neighborhood drugstore.

The family-owned business fills prescriptions and carries over-the-counter medications, first-aid products, vitamins, personal-care items and travel essentials.

Its services include prescription delivery, curbside pickup, help with prior authorizations and more.

The store's location on Ocean Avenue serves residents and visitors alike. Someone who needs a prescription refill may also be looking for sunscreen, a forgotten toiletry or a basic first-aid supply.

For customers juggling several medications, or simply trying to understand a new prescription, the opportunity to ask questions is as important as the products on the shelves. The hometown service they find at this spot is just what the doctor ordered.

■ Best Children's Clothing Store/Boutique
■ Best New Business

Rosebuds Kids Co. — *535 Foam St., Monterey - (831) 884-5345, rosebudsmonterey.com*

Owner Greta Grimm said she started this children's cloth-

See **PREMIER** *page 33 GPC*



2026

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

The Golden Pine Cones

October 30, 2026

PREMIER

From page 31 GPC

ing resale boutique because as a mom, she knows how quickly kids outgrow their clothes — "sometimes before the tags even come off."

"At Rosebuds Kids Co., every piece is thoughtfully curated with growing families in mind," Grimm explains on the shop's website. "From baby basics to big-kid favorites, we carry gently loved clothing, shoes, and accessories that are ready for their next adventure."

The shop makes it easy for customers to pass along what their little ones have outgrown by offering cash or store credit for items, including baby and kids clothing — newborn to size 10/12 — shoes, maternity and nursing clothing, accessories, including hats, bows and backpacks, toys, games and books, and other items.

"I started Rosebuds because I believe families deserve a better way to shop for stylish, affordable kids' clothing, without sacrificing quality, sustainability, or charm," Grimm said.

"We are ready to go at any time," the shop says.

An Atlanta resident wrote in a glowing online review that Khaki's of Carmel is the best men's store he's been to.

"Fantastic variety of all things cool for men," he said. "The best part — the bespoke options and highly informed staff."

■ Best Men's Clothing Store

Khaki's — *Carmel Plaza, 526 Ocean Ave. - (831) 625-8106, khakisofcarmel.com*

A man's wardrobe may begin with a good pair of trousers, but it certainly doesn't end there. Khaki's of Carmel brings together tailored clothing, casual pieces, and shoes and accessories for customers who want to build a wardrobe rather than simply pick up an item on a list.

The shop's emphasis is on clothing that can move between occasions, from an ordinary afternoon stroll along Scenic to a gala at Sunset Center. For customers who are uncertain about fit, fabric or how to coordinate a jacket and trousers, the appeal of a specialty menswear store is the chance to compare pieces and ask questions. And Khaki's invites its customers to make an appointment with its stylist, which can be done online or in person.

■ Best Men's Shoe Store

Hedi's — *485 Ocean Ave., The Barnyard shopping center and Del Monte Center – (831) 624-5880, hedi.com*

Shoe shopping can be a matter of finding the right fit as much as the right look. Hedi's is a recurring favorite in a town that's proud of its walkability. Haydar "Hedi" Movahedi's goal has always been to make sure customers feel just as good as they look as they stroll along the coast or enjoy brunch at the Mission Ranch. He opened his first Carmel shoe store more than 30 years ago.

A pair of shoes must meet several demands — appearance, comfort and suitability for the places its owner plans to go. Hedi's sells shoes that tick all those boxes. While Hedi's won the men's shoe store category, women also praise the shop for its selection and customer service.

■ Best Women's Clothing Boutique
■ Best Resale/Consignment Shop
■ Best Women's Accessories
■ Best Place to Buy Designer Clothes
■ Best Vintage Clothing Store

Foxy Couture — *517 San Carlos St. - (831) 625-9995, foxycouturecarmel.com*

Five awards, one very distinctive approach to fashion: Foxy Couture specializes in designer and vintage resale, making the search for a remarkable piece feel more like a treasure hunt than an ordinary shopping trip. Founded in 2012, the family-owned Carmel business sells carefully selected clothing, handbags, jewelry, shoes and accessories, including pieces with histories that reach beyond the current fashion season. Its inventory combines consigned merchandise with items the store buys for its own collection.

Authentication matters in a shop dealing with luxury labels, and the business says it uses trained staff and high-tech verification for designer handbags. Consignors can contact the store to discuss pieces they hope to sell. Whether you're buying or selling, giving cherished items a second life is good for the wallet and the environment, especially around here, where discerning shoppers choose high-quality items designed to last. Foxy Couture's emphasis is on giving well-made clothes another chapter.

■ Best Women's Shoe Store

Lloyd's — *416 Ocean Ave. - (831) 625-1382, lloydsshoes.com*

Lloyd's Shoes has been a family-owned Carmel business since 1975, a long run in a retail category where trends can change as quickly as the seasons. Its specialty is women's footwear, with handbags and accessories rounding out the selection. The store describes its buying approach as a balance of value, function, style and comfort, rather than a single fashion formula.

Its team looks for merchandise at trade shows and through relationships with manufacturers, including sought-after Italian shoemakers. That range matters when one customer wants comfortable shoes for walking and another is shopping for an occasion. The business's website offers a tempting array of boots, new arrivals and featured designers. After half a century, its central task remains deceptively simple — helping a customer find a pair that feels as good as it looks.

■ Best Jewelry Store

Devine & Co. — *373 Sixth Ave. - (831) 200-8100, devine-jeweler.com*

Devine & Co. takes a different approach to jewelry shop-

Continues next page



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2026

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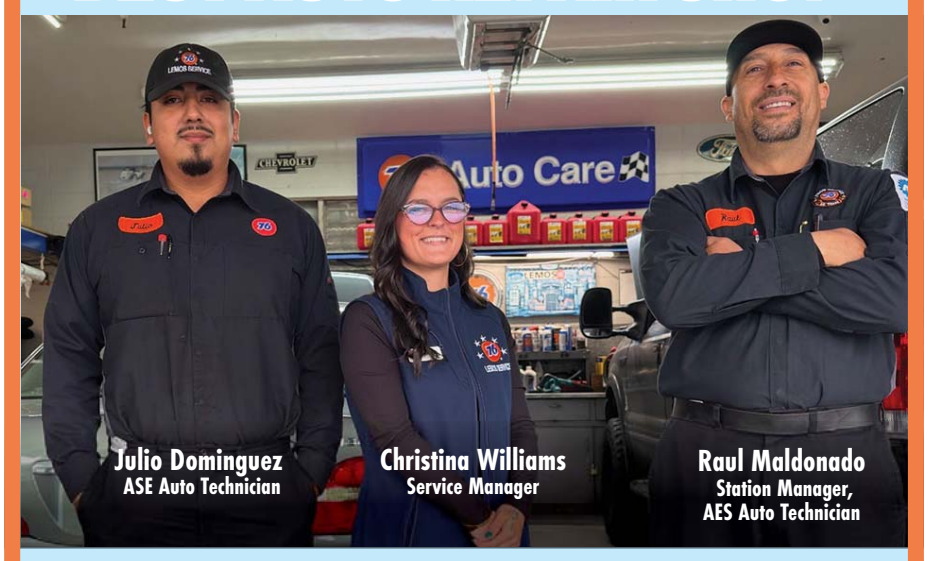
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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

ping. Rather than relying on a busy sales floor, this company works by appointment. Owner Shelly M. Devine, a GIA Graduate Gemologist and Certified Master Appraiser, has more than 20 years of experience in the jewelry industry.

The business offers custom jewelry design, estate jewelry consultations, diamond services, certified appraisals and gold buying. That range serves customers at several different moments, from choosing or designing a meaningful gift of today, to understanding the value of a piece that has been in the family for years.

Appraisals and estate consultations call for personal conversations, and the private setting gives customers room to discuss the details.

Devine's appointment-based approach gives each client a transparent, highly personal experience rooted in education, trust, and expert guidance.

Customers can call or text to arrange a visit. In a town where display cases and sparkling windows are easy to find, Devine & Co. puts the conversation at the center of the experience.

■ Best Shopping Center

The Crossroads — *243 Crossroads Blvd. – (831) 625-4106, thecrossroadscarmel.com*

The Crossroads shopping center makes it possible to accomplish a surprising number of errands without moving the car. Its mix of tenants includes an independent bookstore next to a locally owned coffee shop, a large grocery store, hardware store, beauty salons, wine-tasting, fresh fish, a place to ship packages, and a handful of Golden Pine Cone winners all in one spot. The variety is part of its appeal.

A customer can arrive for a practical purchase and find a gift or a new place to eat along the way. Individual storefronts and offerings can change, but the underlying idea is consistent — bringing everyday needs and more leisurely browsing together in one place.

■ Best Antique Shop

Wittpenn's Antiques — *727 San Carlos St. - (831) 624-1336, wittpennsantiques.com*

Wittpenn's Antiques offers the pleasure of serendipity. Its eclectic inventory ranges from antique pottery, silver and vintage toys to early California art and musical instruments. Its website highlights guitars and mandolins as well as pottery from makers such as Roseville, Rookwood, Fulper and McCoy. Those specialties give collectors several reasons to linger, but the appeal isn't limited to experts.

A shopper might come in for a decorative object and become absorbed by the story of an old instrument or a decades-old piece of pottery. And there's nothing quite like coming across an item that sparks an unexpected memory.

Wittpenn's is a reminder that shopping for something old can produce a genuinely new discovery.

■ Best Bookstore

River House Books — *The Crossroads shopping center - (831) 626-2665, riverhousebookscarmel.com*

We still love books around here, and thank goodness River House Books in the Crossroads shopping center is ready to supply readers' needs. Its shelves range from fiction and nonfiction to children's books, science, history, travel and subjects closely tied to Monterey Peninsula interests, including architecture, art, gardening, photography and wine.

The staff is truly the heart of the store —

See **WONDERFUL** *page 36 GPC*

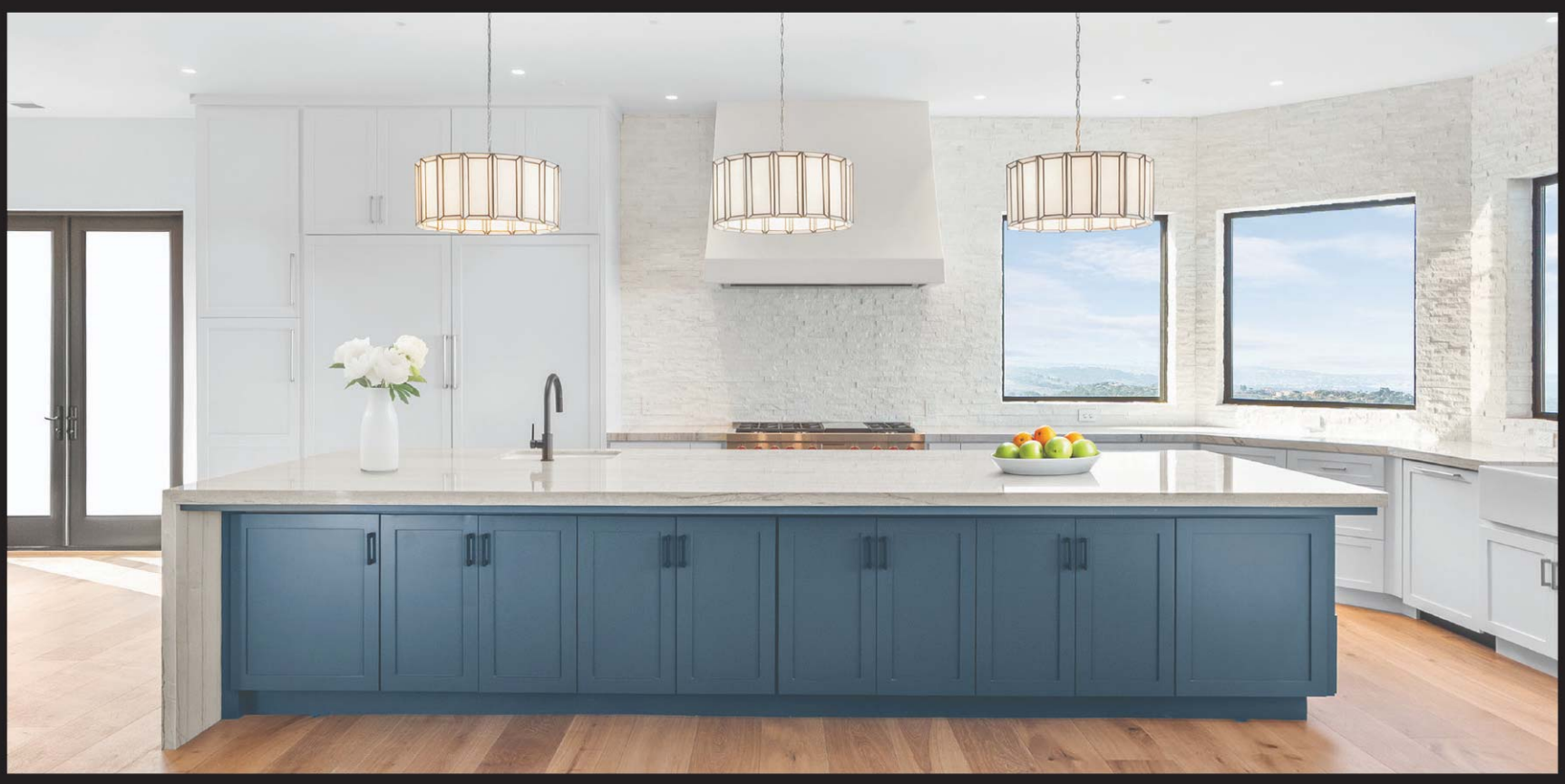


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VOTED BEST:
GENERAL
CONTRACTOR
GOLDEN PINE CONE
AWARD

2026

LIC# 1035338

WONDERFUL

From page 34 GPC

they're knowledgeable and always ready with a fresh recommendation. River House Books also offers special orders, shipping and gift wrapping.

The store's independent identity is part of its character: the inventory reflects decisions made by booksellers rather than a bland national assortment.

In addition, the shop supports local authors by hosting book signings and highlighting their works on the shelves. For readers, the reward may be the book they didn't know they were looking for.

■ Best Bike Shop

Mad Dogs & Englishmen — *496 Ocean Ave., Carmel, and 400 Cannery Row, Monterey - (831) 709-0007, maddogsandenglishmen.com*

Not every bike shop keeps dog-friendly sidecars in its offerings. Then again, not every town takes dogs-as-sidekicks quite so seriously. Mad Dogs & Englishmen does, along with conventional and electric bicycles, cycling apparel, helmets and accessories. Its Carmel flagship also offers rentals, guided rides, bicycle repairs and a coffee bar, while the location in the Monterey Plaza Hotel provides another starting point for exploring the coastline. Customers can shop for a new bicycle, arrange a tune-up or try a rental before deciding what suits them.

Mad Dogs & Englishmen emphasizes carefully chosen equipment and experiences. That makes it a great resource for serious cyclists, vacationers and families who want to explore the area at a different pace. In a place where scenery is a major attraction, two wheels offer a particularly charming way to take it in.

■ Best Car Dealer (tie)

Porsche Monterey — *1781 Del Monte Blvd., Seaside - (831) 920-0744, porschemonterey.com*

For some buyers, choosing a car is about much more than transportation. You say the name — Porsche — and you can practically hear the engine rev. Porsche Monterey represents a marque associated with performance engineering, distinctive design and an unusually strong following among driving enthusiasts.

The dealership serves shoppers interested in new vehicles — including, perhaps, the 2026 Macan Electric 4 or the 2026 Taycan — as well as those exploring pre-owned options and ongoing maintenance and service. Monterey's proximity to famous roads and automotive events gives the brand a natural local audience, but the practical work of helping customers select and maintain a vehicle remains central. The dealership shares this year's Best Car Dealer award with BMW of Monterey.

BMW of Monterey — *1 Geary Plaza, Seaside - (831) 920-0743, bmwmonterey.com*

BMW of Monterey shares this year's Best Car Dealer award, giving readers two winners in a category that encompasses everything from a first showroom visit to years of exceptional service. The longtime local fixture represents a German brand known for performance-oriented sports cars and sedans, sport utility vehicles and technology-rich interiors.

"You'll find a relaxed atmosphere and helpful team when you visit our showroom, so come by today or give us a call to learn more," the business says on its website.

Service and maintenance are another important part of the relationship after a car leaves the showroom. BMW of Monterey operates in a county where driving can mean hitting the farmers market one day and hugging the curves in Cachagua the next. Those varying uses make queries about comfort, handling and practicality especially relevant. The staff at the Seaside dealership is ready to help with all those questions.

■ Best Gas Station
■ Best Auto Repair Shop

Lemos 76 — *544 Carmel Rancho Blvd. - (831) 624-2925, lemos76service.com*

Lemos 76, just off of Carmel Valley Road, has two very different ways to help a driver: filling the tank and keeping the vehicle in working order. Unassuming though it is, our readers think it does a bang-up job. Locally owned since 1961, it offers full- and self-service fueling. Its repair shop handles maintenance and repairs, including oil changes, belt work and smog testing. Lemos 76 works on vehicles across manufacturers, models and years. There's also a snack shop, a reminder that a fuel stop can be about the driver as well as the car. More than six decades after opening and multiple Golden Pine Cones, Lemos combines the quick task of refueling with the more involved work of diagnosing and repairing problems. For motorists, having both services in one familiar place is a practical advantage.

■ Best Car Wash

Swift Car Wash — *26265 Carmel Rancho Blvd. - (831) 622-7060, swiftcw.com*

A clean car can be a small pleasure, especially after a stretch of coastal fog, road dust or muddy weather. Swift Car Wash on Carmel Rancho Boulevard offers several levels of automated washing, allowing drivers to choose from a range of options. And if you've ever been disappointed by a lame coin-op service-station vacuum, Swift's will really wow you. There are options for a single wash or an unlimited monthly membership. The approach is straightforward. Let customers select a level of service and get back on the road with less of the dirt they arrived with. Sometimes the appeal of a car wash is simply the convenience — and water savings — of not doing the job in the driveway.

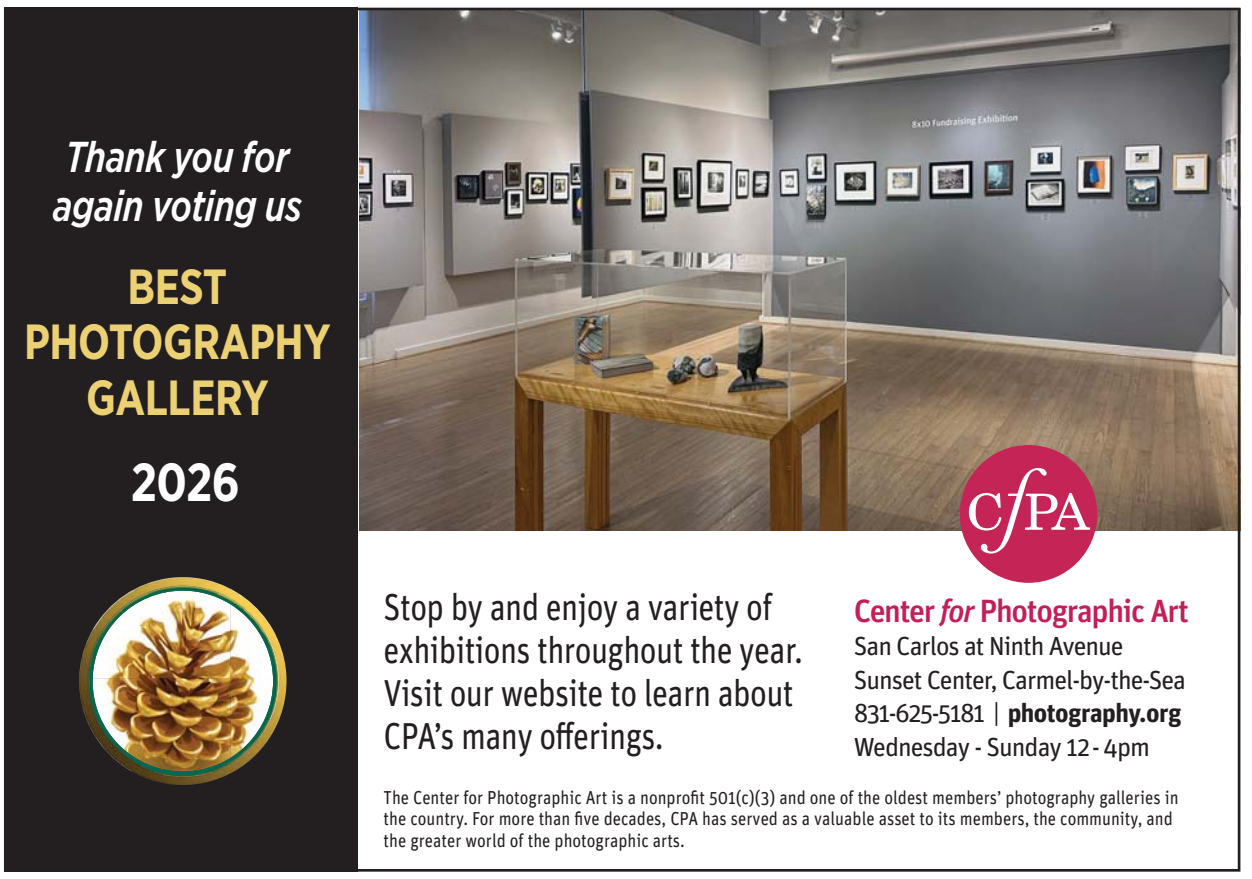
■ Best Place for Brides to Shop

Epiphany Bridal Boutique — *539 Mission St. - (831) 626-7700, epiphanyboutique.com*

Purchasing a wedding dress can be fun or fraught, and the difference depends in large part on the people helping the bride-to-be. Taking into account the person wearing it, the setting of the ceremony and a day that may have been imagined for years, Epiphany's staff provides professional advice.

A dedicated bridal business can help a customer think through those questions in one place. Epiphany said that its experienced team of bridal stylists are available to make their clients' wedding dreams come true — and that includes

See **FOREMOST** *page 38 GPC*



Thank you for again voting us

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY

2026

Stop by and enjoy a variety of exhibitions throughout the year. Visit our website to learn about CPA's many offerings.

Center *for* Photographic Art
San Carlos at Ninth Avenue
Sunset Center, Carmel-by-the-Sea
831-625-5181 | **photography.org**
Wednesday - Sunday 12 - 4pm

The Center for Photographic Art is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) and one of the oldest members' photography galleries in the country. For more than five decades, CPA has served as a valuable asset to its members, the community, and the greater world of the photographic arts.



2026 GOLDEN PINE CONE AWARD WINNER

BEST REAL ESTATE RENTAL COMPANY

We're honored to receive this recognition and grateful for your continued support! Thank you, Carmel Pine Cone readers! To everyone who voted, stayed with us, or trusted us with their home, thank you for being part of the Sanctuary community.

We're proud to call the Monterey Peninsula our home and look forward to creating more memorable stays for years to come.

Beautiful homes. Thoughtful hospitality. A local team that cares.

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FOREMOST

From page 36 GPC

plus-sized brides, too. “We work with you to find a gown that not only makes you feel beautiful on your wedding but also create an experience that you will remember for a lifetime,” Epiphany says on its website.

■ Best Gift Shop

Ami Carmel — *536 Dolores St. - (831) 620-1600, amicarmel.com*

Ami means ‘friend’ in French, and the name gives a good indication of what founder Annee Martin hopes customers experience at her Carmel gift shop. The selection includes clothing, jewelry, accessories, tabletop pieces, art and home décor, giving shoppers several ways to find something personal to share with a friend. Martin’s background includes hospitality, design and other creative businesses, and the shop’s presentation reflects that range of interests. She also emphasizes community connections and events. The shop’s website invites visitors to browse online as well as in the store, where even a quick look for a gift may become a longer exploration of objects for the home or wardrobe. Ami Carmel describes its mission in terms of giving and connection. Those ideas can sound abstract until they take the form of a thoughtfully chosen present — or a small item bought simply because it will make someone smile. And if you’re lucky, there will be a freshly baked chocolate chip cookie waiting just for you.

■ Best Candy Shop

Lula’s — *The Crossroads shopping center and 2 Harris Court, Monterey - (831) 626-3327, lulaschocolates.com*

A repeat Golden Pine Cones winner, Lula’s Chocolates offers a sweet reminder that a locally made gift doesn’t have to be complicated. Owner Scott Lund learned the art of candy-making from his grandmother, Lula, who spent decades producing handmade chocolates. After Lund’s own treats were a hit at events surrounding the 2002 Winter Olympics, he decided to turn the family recipes into a business, moving to the Monterey Peninsula and launching Lula’s Chocolates in 2006. Today, the company continues to make small-batch, hand-dipped confections using Lula’s recipes, selling them through its shops — where you might be able to snag a sample — other retailers and online. Customers can choose something to share, assemble a gift or find a treat for themselves. Lula’s keeps the central idea simple: Make something appealing, package it for giving and leave room for the occasional impulse purchase.

■ Best Carpet and Flooring Store

Carpets & Floors — *471 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey - (831) 372-2300, carpetsandfloorsmonterey.com*

A floor represents a decision that will literally remain underfoot for years. Carpets & Floors on Lighthouse Avenue — which says it offers the largest selection of flooring in Monterey County — helps customers compare materials, textures and finishes that can change the character of a room. The Monterey shop’s offerings include carpet, hardwood, luxury vinyl, cork, custom area rugs and stair runners. Each material presents a different balance of appearance, maintenance and durability, especially in homes where children, pets and outdoor activity are part of daily life. Carpets & Floors also offers design assistance and installation, so the conversation can extend from a sample in the showroom to the finished surface at home. Its website includes a room visualizer intended to help customers imagine how a floor covering might look in a particular setting, because a swatch doesn’t usually cut it. Whether the project involves a single room or an entire house, Carpets & Floors’ specialty is helping customers find a surface that suits the space and the people using it.

SERVICES AND HEALTHCARE

■ Best Place to Work
■ Best Real Estate Company

Carmel Realty Company — *696 Dolores St. - (831) 622-1000, carmelrealtycompany.com*

Carmel Realty’s awards this year see the business from different sides, one through the people who work there and the other through its service to clients. If you talk to the realtors at Carmel Realty, you quickly realize that they love working as a team in this 100-plus-year-old family-owned and operated business. Working in high-end real estate can involve more than showing a house. Transactions may require knowledge of unusual properties, local regulations and the expectations of buyers and sellers.

Carmel Realty’s folks do all that and more. They know the area and its history, and they don’t just sell a home — they can tell you where to find a good housekeeper, landscaper and, usually, a nice pedicure besides. Its website features residential sales, vacation rentals and long-term rentals, giving the company several points of contact with the local housing market.

■ Best Place to Volunteer
■ My Favorite Non-Profit

SPCA Monterey County — *1002 Monterey-Salinas Highway - (831) 373-2631, spcamc.org*

Is there anything more fun than working with puppies and kittens? SPCA Monterey County gives animal lovers plenty of ways to help, and readers recognized its contributions to the community. The organization’s work extends beyond dogs and cats to horses, rabbits, goats, birds and wildlife in need of rehabilitation.

At its Monterey-Salinas Highway campus, the SPCA offers adoptions, veterinary services, training classes and animal-welfare programs. Its wildlife team cares for a wide variety of injured or orphaned creatures, with the goal of returning those that can recover to their natural habitats. Preventive services include spay and neuter procedures, vaccinations and microchipping.

Volunteers can help at the adoption center, in the barn or benefit shop, with outreach and special events, and in programs supporting shelter animals. Some foster animals, while others contribute to wildlife rehabilitation or clinic work. Whether someone can offer time, a donation or a home, the SPCA provides ways to support animals across Monterey County.

■ Best Place to Get Married

Carmel Mission — *3080 Rio Road - (831) 624-1271, carmelmission.org*

For couples planning a Catholic wedding, Carmel Mission offers a setting with centuries of history and a continuing religious purpose. Ceremonies can take place in the basilica, with its stone floors worn smooth by decades of hopeful brides, or the smaller Blessed Sacrament chapel. The gardens and

Continues next page

GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

courtyard, with a lovely central fountain, add to the picturesque setting.

Since it's a popular place to wed, the staff there has the staging of weddings down to a science, often moving more than one party through — without undue haste, of course — in a day. However, the basilica is an active parish church, not simply a picturesque venue, and its wedding guidelines reflect that distinction.

Couples considering the mission should consult its current guidelines early, since religious requirements and scheduling are part of the planning process. The Golden Pine Cone recognizes a place where the beauty of the surroundings and the significance of the occasion are closely connected.

■ Best Retirement Community

Carmel Valley Manor — *8545 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 624-1281, cvmanor.com*

Carmel Valley Manor has been part of the valley since 1963, when it was established by a nonprofit organization to provide retirement living. On its 28 acres you can find residential options and different levels of support, from independent to assisted living and skilled nursing services, along with a calendar of activities designed to keep residents engaged. And they seem quite happy with the arrangement. The complex underwent a major renovation in the early 2020s, and the results are beautiful — particularly the dining room and the art installations.

Activities range from fitness and aquatics to art, books and outings. The grounds and gardens are stunning, to be sure. The community remains connected while residents' needs change.

The facility is governed by a local volunteer board, with residents represented through a residents' council. Choosing a retirement community involves financial, medical and personal considerations, so prospective residents should consider their options carefully. The award recognizes a place where the daily experience of living — not simply the availability of a residence — is part of the appeal.

■ Best Electrician

Cate Electric — *(831) 624-5361, cateelectrical.com*

Electrical work is usually invisible when it is done well, and people take it so for granted that even when power goes out, they still absent-mindedly flip switches while going from room to room. Since 1960, Cate Electric has been keeping homes and businesses up and running. To win Best Electrician, a business has to perform everyday repairs and be able to complete more involved projects, including commercial work. Homeowners may call an electrician for a faulty circuit, an upgrade, new lighting or work associated with a renovation.

Each job requires attention to safety and the applicable electrical code. The practical value of a skilled electrician is easy to appreciate: Reliable power is one of the foundations of a comfortable, functioning building, and our readers believe Cate is the company to ensure it's always there for you.

■ Best Plumber

After Hour Plumbing & Drain — *5 Harris Court, Monterey – (831) 717-7329, afterhourplumbingmontereyca.com*

A plumbing problem rarely announces itself at a convenient moment. After Hour Plumbing & Drain serves Monterey and surrounding communities with repairs and services ranging from leak detection to drain cleaning and water-heater work. Its website also emphasizes trenchless sewer technology and hydro jetting, approaches that can be useful when a problem lies beyond the visible pipes in a home. Emergency service is part of the business's offering, because a broken line or overflowing fixture can't always wait.

For property owners, plumbing decisions can involve more than stopping a leak. Identifying the cause, understanding the condition of existing lines and choosing a durable repair all matter. After Hour Plumbing & Drain's services cover that range, from immediate problems to more extensive sewer work.

For plumbing issues, the best outcome is often a system that quietly returns to normal, and our readers say After Hour can pull it off.

■ Best Architect

Samuel Pitnick — *(831) 241-1895, samuelpitnick.com*

Samuel Pitnick's architectural work is rooted in the Monterey Peninsula, where he grew up and where his firm now concentrates on custom residential design.

A graduate of the University of Southern California with a Bachelor of Architecture degree, Pitnick has practiced since 2010 and established his own company in 2017. If you check out his web page, you can see his work's appeal.

His experience includes residential and other building types, and the firm emphasizes homes shaped by their owners

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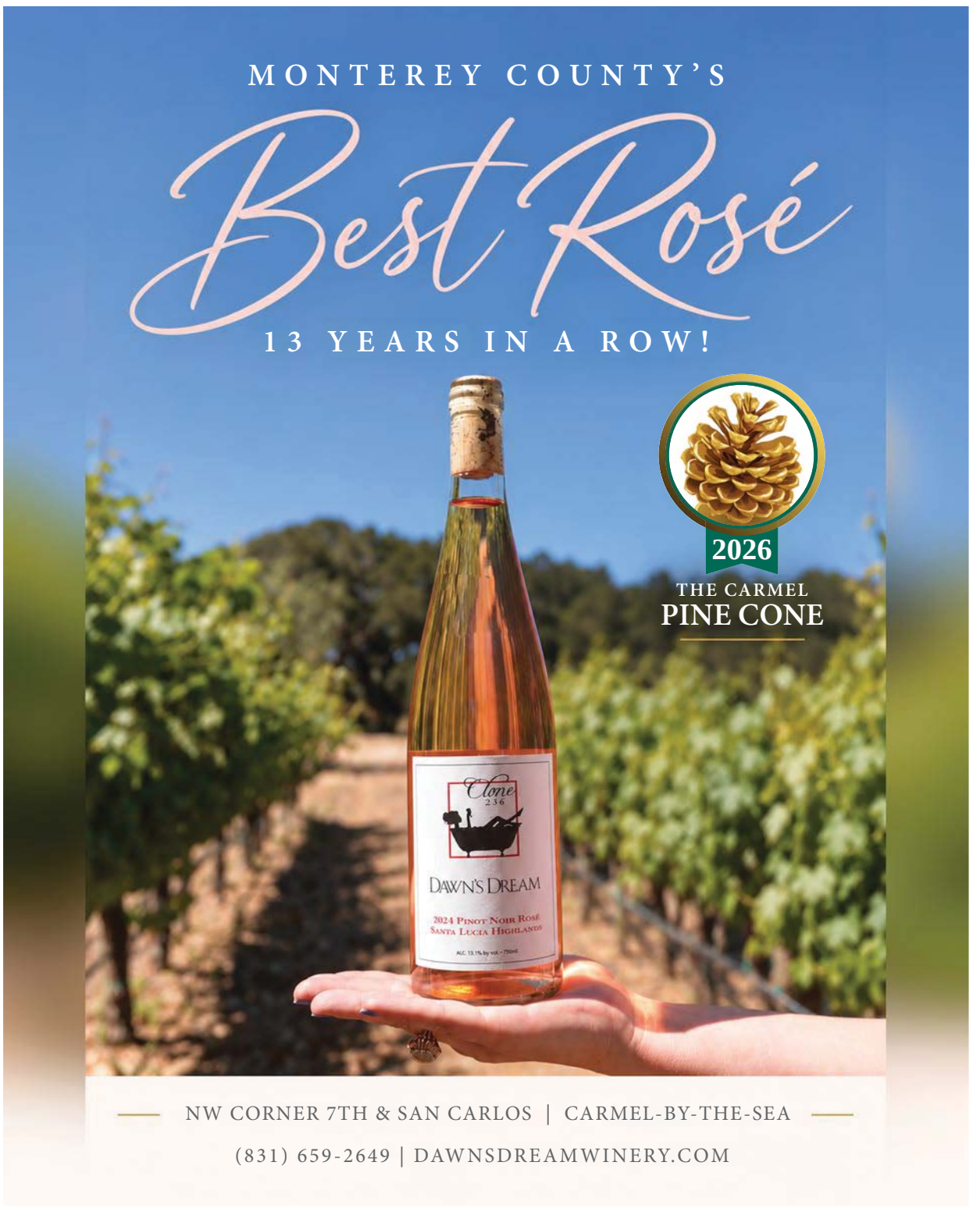
SAMUEL PITNICK ARCHITECTS

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Thank You Pine Cone readers for voting Samuel Pitnick Architects the best on the Monterey Peninsula! Looking forward to another year of great projects and wonderful clients!

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

and their sites.

The practice assists clients from early design through permitting and the selection of a builder.

Pitnick's website describes sustainability and environmental responsibility as important considerations, particularly the relationship between a building and the landscape around it.

That concern is especially relevant on a coastline where views, terrain and established neighborhoods can place demanding, and even competing, constraints on a design. A successful house must meet practical needs while feeling at home in its setting.

Pitnick's work approaches those questions as part of a single architectural problem.

■ Best Engineer

Monterey Peninsula Engineering — *192 Healy Ave., Marina - (831) 384-4081, mpe2000.info*

Monterey Peninsula Engineering works on the infrastructure that makes development and everyday life possible. Founded in 1980 as a small family firm, the Marina-based company has grown into an engineering contractor whose projects include grading, excavation, underground pipelines, paving, subdivisions and steel buildings. Its customers range from homeowners and developers to utilities and public agencies.

That variety means the work can take place beneath a street, across a large site or around the foundations of a new project. The company says it maintains its own equipment fleet and employs local workers. Its website also highlights water-treatment and community infrastructure projects, examples of work that may be largely out of sight once completed but remains essential for years.

The award for Best Engineer recognizes a business involved in the less glamorous but indispensable steps of building and maintaining a community. Before a finished structure can be admired, someone has to make the ground and the systems beneath it ready.

■ Best Interior Design Business
■ Best Staging Company

Sea Blush Studios — *787 San Carlos St. - (831) 238-7598, seablushstudios.com*

Interior design and home staging are deceptively similar. Both involve the way a room looks and feels, but they serve different purposes. Interior design starts with the people who will live or work in a space. It's personal and the designers get to know them.

Staging prepares a property to appeal to prospective buyers, each of whom might have a different vision of how the inside of their dream home looks. The trick is to make it attractive, but in a neutral way.

Sea Blush's Carmel-based studio offers both. Founded in April 2022, the business takes its name from a hardy regional wildflower. Its staging services range from consultations and do-it-yourself guidance to partial and full staging, with attention to furniture, accessories and the presentation of a home before it goes on the market. Interior design work includes residential and commercial spaces, with an emphasis on a relaxed coastal sensibility.

Our readers recognize the company's eye for rooms at two moments: when someone is making a home their own and when a seller is preparing to introduce that home to someone else.

■ Best Home Technology

Axiom — *501 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey - (831) 645-9900, axiomhometech.com*

A home can be filled with technology without feeling especially smart. Axiom Home Tech specializes in making lighting, window shades, audio and video systems work together more smoothly. The Monterey company designs and installs automated lighting, motorized shades, home theaters

Continues next page





GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

and distributed audio systems that allow music or other sound to be controlled across rooms by someone without a Ph.D. in electrical and computer science.

Its website describes work for residential and commercial clients, including new construction, renovations and upgrades. Axiom has been involved in custom home integration on the Peninsula for nearly 25 years.

The practical challenge is not simply selecting devices — it's designing a system that fits the building and the people using it. Lighting, concealed speakers and convenient controls can change how a room functions without making the technology the most visible feature. When a system works as intended, the result should be less time managing devices and more time enjoying the space.

■ Best Roofing Company

Scudder Roofing — *3342 Paul Davis Drive, Marina - (831) 373-7212, scudderroofing.com*

Peter Scudder's family business has come a long way since 1982. He and his family know that a roof has to do two jobs: protect a building and contribute to its appearance. Scudder Roofing has worked on both sides of that equation serving residential and commercial customers across the Monterey Bay region.

Services include new roofs, replacements, repairs, waterproofing, gutters, maintenance, and the company also works with solar installations. Materials range from cedar shingles and tile to metal systems, each with different visual and practical characteristics. Coastal weather makes roofing decisions especially important, since wind, moisture and salt air can expose weaknesses over time. And of course, being fire-safe and not annoying the neighbors are also on the list.

The company's showroom allows customers to compare materials and see examples of roofing systems. Its related solar business addresses another aspect of what goes on above a building.

The company is based in Marina and serves a wider area including Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties. For property owners, the question isn't simply which roof looks best on installation day, but which system is appropriate for the building and can be maintained over time.

■ Best General Contractor

Kasavan Construction — *(831) 794-2633, kasavanconstruction.com*

A major home project begins with ideas, but it succeeds or fails in the details of construction. Kasavan Construction specializes in custom homes and renovations on the Monterey Peninsula, working with clients and design teams to turn plans into finished spaces. Owner David Kasavan founded the company in 2018.

A third-generation Monterey County native, he grew up with an understanding of building through his family's connections to architecture and construction.

Local experience is key to success when navigating local approvals from cities and the county.

The company describes a process that starts by clarifying the scope, budget and schedule before work begins. It then coordinates the project with an emphasis on communication and consistency.

Those steps are especially important in custom residential work, where existing conditions, site constraints and personal preferences can make each job different. Kasavan's projects include new construction and substantial renovations in Carmel and surrounding communities.

The readers' award for Best General Contractor recognizes a business whose work is not limited to one specialty, but to coordinating many moving parts into a completed home.

■ Best Painting Company

Cypress Painting — *224 Reindollar, Marina - (831) 624-9018, cpdpros.com*

The views around here are beautiful, but you have to come indoors sooner or later. Paint can refresh a room, but on a building's exterior it also helps protect surfaces exposed to weather. Cypress Painting & Decorating has served the Monterey Peninsula since 1983, handling residential and commercial work, interior and exterior painting, restoration and specialty finishes.

Work ranges from the proper restoration of a Victorian home in Pacific Grove, to a library remodel, cabinet refinishing and work involving epoxy floors. Each calls for different kinds of preparation and materials, from preserving the character of an older structure to creating a durable finish in a work space.

In a region with older houses, damp winters and a wide range of architectural styles, the condition of the surface beneath the paint matters as much as the color of the final coat. Cypress Painting's range of services reflects that distinction. A beautiful visible result depends heavily on careful work that may disappear beneath the finish.

Continues next page

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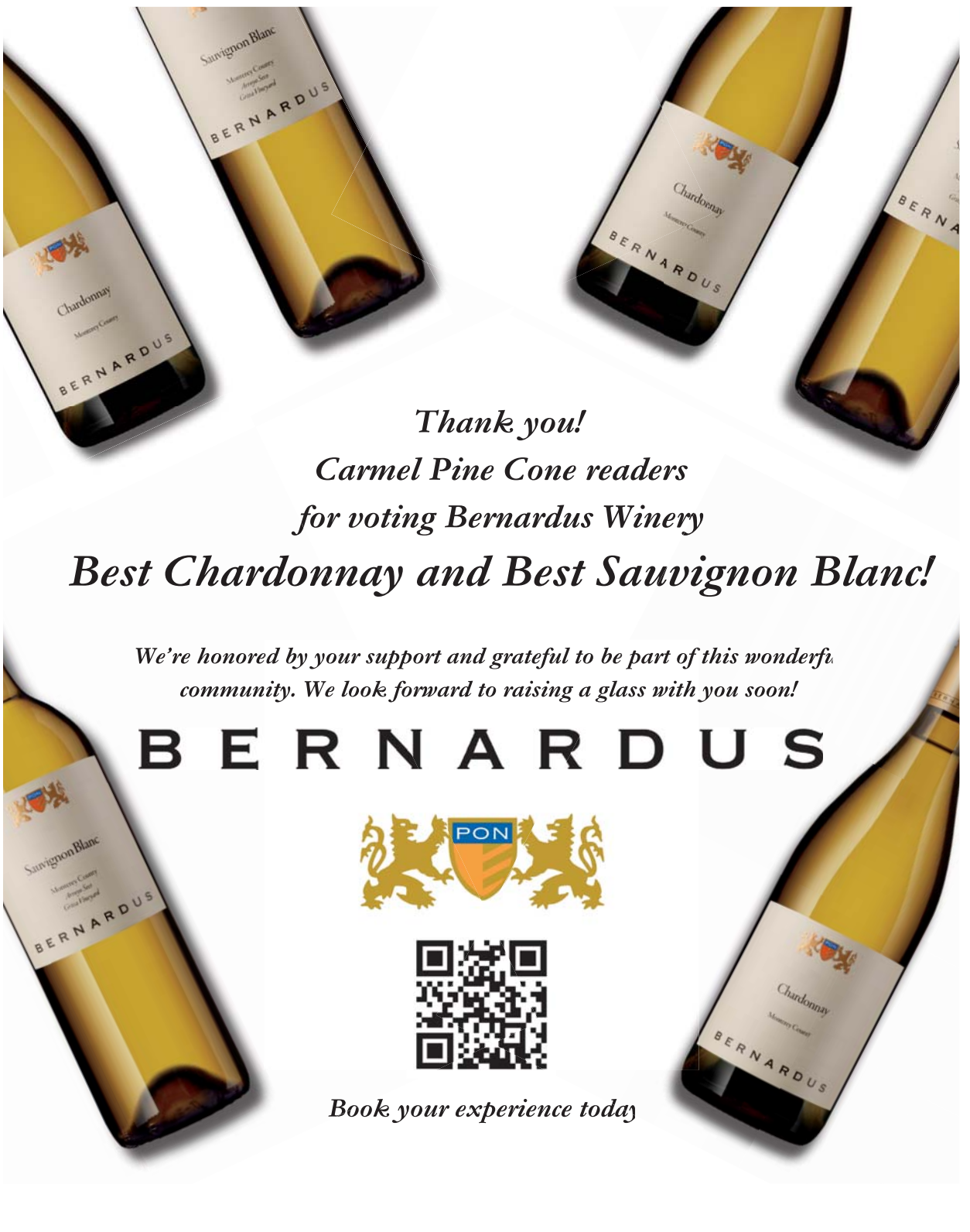


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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

■ Best Landscaper-Gardening Service

PM Landscaping — *2611 Garden Road, Monterey - (831) 324-0637, pmlandscapingmonterey.com*

A landscape on the Monterey Peninsula — where there are more microclimates than you can shake a thermometer at — must contend with more than a homeowner's desire to have hydrangeas or geraniums. Sun exposure, wind, soil, irrigation and the amount of maintenance required can all shape the result.

PM's Golden Pine Cone recognizes its work beautifying properties, and when the dread words, "El Nino" occur in the forecast, it's good to know the company also helps with storm cleanup. A successful garden may need seasonal attention, pruning and adjustments as plants mature. Even a well-planned landscape changes from year to year, and you want competent professionals to make sure it's evolving harmoniously, not taking over your neighbor's property.

■ Best Tree Service

Tope's Tree Service — *26700 Rancho San Carlos Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 373-7765, topestreeservice.com*

Trees generate a lot of strong emotions around here. In some places, they have the right of way, your BMW be darned. In others, they spark conflict with PG&E's desires for safety. But no one can argue that they're part of the Peninsula's character, and caring for them can require more than a ladder and a pruning saw. Tope's Tree Service serves Carmel and communities throughout Monterey County, providing professional tree work for properties where safety, appearance and the health of established trees all matter.

Tree work can involve assessing branches near buildings, addressing storm damage or planning maintenance around older specimens, not to mention occasional aerobatics with a chainsaw. Other specialties include stump removal, checking on the health of your tall green friends, and improving fire safety. Our readers think that the Tope family is the answer to "who you gonna call?" for all of them.

■ Best Pest Inspection (tie)

Casner Exterminating — *11025 Commercial Parkway, Castroville - (800) 655-4044, casnerexterminating.com*

Nothing makes a homeowner — or potential buyer — quite as nervous as witnessing a termite swarm that's too close for comfort. Pest inspection is an important part of understanding a property, particularly when a home changes hands. Inspectors look for signs of wood-destroying organisms and conditions that may lead to damage, providing information that can affect repair plans and a buyer's decisions. Casner shares this year's Best Pest Inspection award with Ailing House.

Perhaps best known for their unusual "electro-gun" method of pest control, Casner also does work with tree infestations, rodent control and more.

Ailing House — *(831) 624-8211, ailinghouse.com*

Ailing House Pest Management combines pest-control services with inspections that can help property owners understand what may be happening out of sight. The Carmel-based, family-operated company provides inspections for wood-destroying organisms, including termites, along with services addressing rodents and other pests.

Inspection reports are especially important during a property sale, when buyers and sellers need information about conditions that may require treatment or repair. In a field where detailed observations and clear explanations can make a substantial difference to a homeowner's next decision, isn't it nice to know that our readers have found not just one, but two superlative alternatives?

■ Best Real Estate Rental Company

Sanctuary Vacation Rentals — *789 Mission St. - (831) 233-6340, sanctuaryvacationrentals.com*

Seasoned travelers know that if you really want to appreciate a city or region, it's best to live like a local. Sanctuary Vacation Rentals offers homes in communities including Carmel, Pacific Grove, Monterey, Pebble Beach and Carmel Valley, with options ranging from shorter stays to monthly and longer-term rentals. Having a whole house with a kitchen means out-of-towners can enjoy restaurants or shop our farmers markets and local fishmongers and make their own gourmet dinners.

Sanctuary's website allows guests to browse by community and by features such as ocean views or pet-friendly accommodations. That approach is useful for travelers whose needs don't fit a conventional hotel room, whether they are arriving with family, planning an extended visit or looking for a kitchen and more living space.

For property owners, rental management involves another set of concerns, including the presentation and care of a home. Sanctuary's Golden Pine Cone recognizes its role in connecting visitors with properties and helping owners navigate the rental market.

See **FABULOUS** *page 44 GPC*


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Monterey Chiropractic Group

BEST CHIROPRACTOR

ON THE MONTEREY PENINSULA



Dr's Brian Rector and Madison Ferrante

To the readers of The Carmel Pine Cone—thank you for this wonderful honor. Your votes mean so much, but your trust means even more. I am grateful for the opportunity to care for you, your families, and this community.

On behalf of our entire team at Monterey Chiropractic Group, thank you for your confidence, your referrals, and for making us part of your lives. We look forward to helping you move better, feel better, and enjoy more of what you love.

With gratitude, Dr. Brian Rector & the Monterey Chiropractic Group Team

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GOLDEN

FABULOUS

From page 42 GPC

■ Best Real Estate Lender

Chad Hawker / Synergy One — *688 San Carlos St. - (831) 521-9378, s1l.com/loanofficer/chadhawker*

A home purchase involves two negotiations: the price of the property and the financing that makes the purchase possible. Chad Hawker of Synergy is the person Pine Cone readers turn to when they need a mortgage professional who can explain loan options, help a borrower assemble documentation and coordinate with other parties as a transaction moves toward closing.

Those steps can be particularly important in a market with unusual properties and substantial differences in purchase price.

Hawker is professional, patient and genial, and he excels at explaining the intricacies of mortgages. In a field where communication and attention to deadlines can matter as much as the numbers on a loan estimate, he and his team are people you want in your corner.

■ Best Personal Bank

Chase — *463 Sixth Ave., 26378 Carmel Rancho Lane, and other Peninsula branches - (831) 624-8224, chase.com*

Chase serves personal banking customers through a network that combines local branches with digital services. Customers can use the bank for everyday accounts and other financial needs, with ATMs and online or mobile access supplementing in-person contact. With a wide variety of services — checking, savings, credit cards, auto loans, home loans, just for starters — Chase seems determined to be a one-stop shop. For some people, a branch is most useful when opening an account or discussing a complicated transaction, but for others, the ability to manage routine banking from a phone is the central convenience.

The bank's website provides a branch locator and lists services available at individual locations.

■ Best Business Bank

Monterey County Bank — *601 Munras Ave., Monterey, and additional Peninsula and Salinas branches - (831) 649-4600, montereycountybank.com*

With a strong emphasis on helping locals for 49 years, Monterey County Bank emphasizes its relationships, particularly with businesses that need more than a place to deposit checks.

The bank offers business and personal accounts, online banking and services such as ACH payments, remote deposit capture, assistance with Small Business Administration loans, and tools intended to help businesses monitor transactions.

For a business owner, banking can involve payroll, incoming payments, cash management and financing decisions, so access to knowledgeable staff is an important part of the service. MCB also provides information about security and fraud prevention, subjects that matter to companies handling frequent transactions.

This year's award for Best Business Bank recognizes the institution's paramount role in the local commercial community.

■ Best Investment House/Advisor

Melanie Pitnick — *Merrill Lynch, 200 E. Franklin St., Monterey – (831) 264-9172*

Investment advice is most useful when it begins with a person's goals rather than a particular financial product. Melanie Pitnick

Continues next page

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

is the readers' choice for Best Investment House/Advisor, an award recognizing an individual in a field that involves long-term planning and changing financial circumstances.

Investors may seek help with retirement, asset allocation, risk tolerance or questions that arise after a major life event. Those subjects require careful discussion of time horizons and the amount of uncertainty a client is prepared to accept.

It's not easy to impress clients in a sophisticated local market, but our readers obviously think Melanie Pitnick has done a great job.

■ Best Accountant

Finn & Cohen — *425 Pacific St., Monterey - (831) 375-5166, fc-cpa.com*

Taxes may be the most visible part of an accountant's work, but their clients usually don't stop needing them on April 16. Finn & Cohen in downtown Monterey is there for individuals and businesses.

The firm's website describes personalized guidance on financial and business matters and offers practical resources such as tax forms, publications and calculators.

Those services are all terrific, but it's even more meaningful when clients can get professional assistance and answers tailored to their needs.

A small business may need support with accounting decisions, while an individual may be planning for a major financial change and trying to understand tax obligations. In a profession where rules and deadlines change, the value of a trusted accountant often lies in translating complicated requirements into manageable steps.

Pine Cone readers selected Finn & Cohen to help them translate numbers and legal terms into understandable, actionable concepts.

■ Best Veterinarian

Heart Dominguez — *Romie Lane Pet Hospital, 755 East Romie Lane, Salinas – (831) 424-0863*

The Monterey Peninsula is home to more than its share of pampered pets. Heck, folks who live in Carmel are so used to seeing water dishes for their dogs on every block that they probably don't even notice them anymore.

And local pooches know which businesses keep bowls of treats on the counter, too. Veterinary care involves everything from routine prevention to difficult decisions when an animal is ill, and clear, compassionate communication is an essential part of that work.

Knowing how valued local critters are, Dr. Dominguez brings a range of medical and surgical interests to veterinary care. A graduate of the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, he has a particular interest in and fondness for brachycephalic dog breeds, such as bulldogs and pugs, whose distinctive anatomy can create special health considerations. He took over Romie Lane Pet Hospital in May 2026, after a year at the Animal Hospital in Mid Valley, but loyal clients in these parts clearly still think of him as their hometown vet.

■ Best Pet Boarding

Casa de Amigos — *715 Foam St., Monterey - (831) 373-0482, casadeamigosanimalhotel.com*

Not every place is as accommodating as, say, the Cypress Inn when it comes to welcoming pets, so when your best friends can't come along on a trip, finding a suitable place for them to stay becomes an important part of the travel plan. Casa de Amigos Animal Hotel on Foam Street in Monterey offers

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From previous page

overnight boarding for dogs and cats, with individual attention.

Boarding includes meals, and owners may bring their animals' usual food in sealed containers. Casa de Amigos also describes outdoor play and relief areas where dogs can take turns during the day. For owners, the details matter: a familiar diet, a comfortable sleeping arrangement and opportunities for activity can help make an absence easier. The facility's staff encourage prospective customers to ask about current rates and visit to see the facility.

The votes are in, and our readers think Casa de Amigos lets you enjoy your trip in peace, knowing your pet is in good hands.

■ Best Pet Care

Suds n Scissors —
Crossroads shopping center - (831) 624-4697, sudsandscissorsinc.com

Since we've just spent several paragraphs emphasizing how important pets are to their people around here, it's not surprising that locals want their little buddies to look their best, too.

A grooming appointment can involve considerably more than a shampoo and a trim. Suds n Scissors at the Crossroads shopping center provides grooming services for dogs and (bless their hearts) cats, including bathing, clipping, nail care and other coat and hygiene treatments. The business also offers specialty products and services intended to help young pets become accustomed to grooming.

Owner Todd Harris lays claim to an extensive background in animal care and professional dog handling.

That experience is relevant in a salon where animals may arrive with different temperaments, coat types and comfort levels. The shop's history stretches back decades, making it a familiar name for Peninsula pet owners. Its work combines appearance with an animal's everyday comfort and cleanliness. A tidy coat may be the most visible result, but careful handling and attention throughout the appointment are equally important to the experience.

■ Best Auto Body Shop

Gene's Import Auto Body —
531 Shasta St., Sand City - (831) 899-0343, genesimportautobody.com

You don't have to have a car that could do laps at Laguna Seca or sit proudly on the lawn of the Concours d'Elegance to know that a dented bumper can conceal a surprisingly complicated repair.

Modern cars tuck sensors and cameras into places that once needed little more than straightening and paint, and Gene's Import Auto Body has built its services around that changing landscape.

The family-owned Sand City shop handles collision damage, frame repairs, paint chips and dents, along with restoration work on classic and special-interest cars. Its equipment includes computerized frame-measuring and color-matching systems. The shop also lists calibration of driver-assistance systems among its services — an increasingly important part of putting a vehicle back together.

Despite the "Import" in its name, Gene's works on domestic vehicles, too. The business emphasizes following manufacturers' repair procedures and explains its approach to original-equipment parts on its website. There's also the paperwork. Gene's offers free estimates and says its staff will explain the repair plan and work with your insurance company. For drivers sorting out damage, deductibles and transportation, having someone who can make sense of the process is part of the service.

Continues next page



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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

■ Best Dry Cleaners

Vapor Sudden Service Cleaners — *1193 10th St., Monterey - (831) 375-5221, vaporcleanersmonterey.com*

The stain you can see isn't always the whole problem. Vapor Sudden Service Cleaners pays particular attention to wedding gowns, whose spills may dry clear but leave trouble behind. Its cleaning process includes a step intended to remove those less-obvious residues before a dress goes into storage.

That's one specialty in a business that handles everyday shirts as well as garments requiring more elaborate care. Clothes are inspected before cleaning, sorted for dry cleaning, wet cleaning or hand cleaning, then pressed, finished and inspected again. Leather and suede services extend to restoration, repairs and replacement of linings.

Vapor also does on-site alterations, including hems, cuffs, buttons and other repairs, along with tailoring for a better fit. Free pickup and delivery are available around the Monterey Peninsula.

The business' environmental approach includes GreenEarth cleaning, which uses a liquid silicone solvent, and some practical housekeeping. Garment bags made from recycled material can be returned for recycling, as can hangers. Get your tux freshened up, and make sure that sequined evening gown is ready for those galas — or just keep your favorite leather jacket looking good.

■ Best Travel Agent

Paula Arnold, Carmel Monterey Travel — *2511 Garden Road, Monterey - (831) 649-4292, carmelmontereytravel.com*

Sure, you could try to do it all by yourself online, but let's face it — choosing a destination is the fun part. Matching flights, hotels and activities to the people making the trip takes a different kind of enthusiasm — and that's where Pine Cone readers' choice for Best Travel Agent, Paula Arnold, comes in.

Arnold is associated with Carmel Monterey Travel, the independent, family-owned agency that handles both leisure and business travel. The company's approach starts with the traveler's budget and interests, whether the plan calls for a

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From previous page

cruise, a land vacation or a hotel stay. Its Signature Travel Network affiliation provides access to destination expertise and additional benefits at participating properties.

The agency lists private villas, city apartments and private-island stays among the accommodations it can arrange, along with activities tailored to individual clients. You don't have to sort every option yourself.

Personal service also matters after the reservations are made. The agency says its advisors remain available by phone, email or in person and help resolve problems when a trip doesn't go as planned. After all, it's great to visit Machu Picchu, but you don't want to stay there indefinitely. An itinerary may look straightforward on paper, but having a person to turn to when the pieces stop fitting can make all the difference.

■ Best Hair Salon

Oya Salon — *201 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey - (831) 656-0570, oyasalon.com*

A salon appointment can be a practical errand or the beginning of a completely different look. At Oya, the work also draws on founder Brian Bode's background in fashion, product development and educating other hair professionals.

He comes on the business naturally — his aunt, Geri Cusenza, is one of the founders of Sebastian Professional, a name anyone who's spent more than five minutes in a salon knows well. In an interview, Bode talked about playing with Hot Wheels at Sebastian when he was 5.

His career has included styling for New York Fashion Week and working with professional hair-care brands, experience that helps explain the salon's interest in the creative side of its trade. Oya's website shows off a variety of cuts, color and styling alongside images from fashion and industry events.

The salon's fans have added a Golden Pine Cone to the honors accorded the business that's approaching three decades on Lighthouse Avenue. Pricing and booking are available through Oya's website.

■ Best Skin Care

Shelley Bennett Skincare — *588 Houston St., Monterey - (831) 324-4611, shelleyskin.com*

Shelley Bennett's esthetic wisdom has grown from her own experiences with troubled skin. Dealing with acne and pigmentation issues as a teenager, the process of searching for solutions gradually piqued an interest in helping other people work through their own concerns.

She's a familiar face at The Spa at Pebble Beach, where she began working in 2000. Before that, there was the Four Seasons Beverly Wilshire, Le Merigot Hotel and Spa in Santa Monica, training at Hotel George V in Paris, as well as opening the facial room at the Jurlique Wellness Spa on Montana Avenue in Santa Monica.

At her Monterey business, Bennett combines considerable experience with a custom approach for every new face. In a calm, no-judgment setting, Bennett levels up a relaxing facial with her clinical knowledge. Continuing education and industry conferences are essential aspects of her work.

The appointment is only the beginning, since her Shelley Bennett Skincare line — available through her online store — offers products for home use to sustain and enhance skin health between visits.

■ Best Nail Salon

Tina Nails — *709A Lighthouse Ave., P.G. - (831) 372-1334, tinanailspg.com*

A fresh manicure can be as understated as

Continues next page



GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

a color change or as elaborate as a tiny work of art. Tina Nails Pacific Grove offers both, with a service menu that includes over-the-top pampering as well as details only you might notice (and appreciate).

The Lighthouse Avenue salon provides men's and women's spa manicures and pedicures, with add-ons including gel polish, acrylic sets, and French tips. Its special menu includes sea-salt scrubs, hydrating foot and hand masks, cooling gel and paraffin treatments.

There are practical stops on the menu, too: repairing a nail, shortening a set, removing nails or changing polish on hands or feet. If you're primping for a special occasion or want something more individual than a single shade, Tina and her detail-oriented staff bring a fine hand to nail art, too. (There's even a kids' mani and pedi.)

The salon's posted schedule runs seven days a week, with shorter hours on Sundays, and its website provides an online booking link — though, as if by magic, a call always seems to turn up same-day appointments.

■ Best Spa

Refuge — *27300 Rancho San Carlos Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 620-7360, refuge.com*

An important note: This year's Best Spa winner is taking a break of its own. Refuge's website announces a scheduled closure through Oct. 31 for maintenance and facility improvements, with a planned Nov. 1 reopening. November reservations will be released once that date is confirmed.

At Refuge, quiet is part of the treatment. The outdoor spa's silence policy makes room for a kind of relaxation that doesn't involve conversation, notifications or the next item on a to-do list.

Its thermal cycle moves guests through heat, cold and rest. The warm-up options include a cedar sauna with a Himalayan salt wall, eucalyptus-infused steam rooms and hot or warm pools with waterfalls. Plunge pools supply the cool-down, followed by a pause in a comfy recliner or Adirondack chair — with fire pits available when the occasional fog bank creeps into Carmel Valley.

Guests can repeat the sequence, spend additional time in the pools or arrange a Swedish or deep-tissue massage, a facial, or other spa treatments. Overlooking the Santa Lucia Preserve, Refuge is a place where haste, anxiety and cell phones are checked at the door.

■ Best Dentist

Eric Brown — *2 Via Joaquin, Monterey, and 108 Mid Valley Center, Carmel Valley - (831) 375-2322, ericbrowndds.com*

It's easier to understand a dental problem when you can see what the dentist sees, and Eric Brown's practice uses digital X-rays and intraoral cameras to show patients their teeth in detail and help explain the work being recommended.

That emphasis on understanding fits Brown's approach to care. The Marquette University School of Dentistry graduate practiced in Wisconsin and Southern California before moving to the Monterey Peninsula.

He served as president of the Monterey Bay Dental Society in 2018, and he continues to mentor dental students and serve as an evaluator of dental products.

Prevention gets prominent attention at Brown's practice, which has offices in Monterey and at Mid Valley Center. Fellow dentist Nate Ward is also on the team, assisting with thorough exams, including oral cancer checks.

Routine cleanings and advice for education about home care are part of the same effort, and both doctors are happy to discuss options like Invisalign, implants and other cosmetic fixes to bring out your best smile.

Continues next page





GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

■ Best Dermatologist

Joseph Rheim, Rheim Dermatology — *757 Pacific St., Monterey - (831) 373-4404, rheimderm.com*

For Joseph Rheim, dermatology is both a profession and a family connection. He joined the practice founded by his father, James, in 2004, after earning his medical degree at Tulane, the same school James attended. After his late father's retirement, Joseph has carried on his legacy at Rheim Dermatology, which for 45 years has served Peninsula families at its office on Pacific Street in Monterey.

Rheim's training included a residency at LSU Health Sciences, and he can take care of cosmetic enhancements like laser procedures, micro-needling, Botox and fillers. His clinical work addresses a range of skin types and considerations, including moles, acne, eczema and skin cancer risks. A patient's needs can change considerably over a lifetime, for reasons ranging from a persistent outbreak to a spot that looks different than it used to. Rheim can help you keep a close eye on those concerns, with practical advice for improving the health and appearance of your skin.

■ Best Ophthalmologist

Philip Penrose, Eye M.D. Monterey — *880 Cass St., Monterey and 21 Upper Ragsdale Drive, Monterey - (831) 373-0183, eyemdmonterey.com*

Pine Cone reader favorite Philip Penrose has loyal patients as far away as Guatemala, Mexico and Paraguay, where for years the bilingual ophthalmologist and eye surgeon has participated in service trips to underdeveloped communities.

Penrose is a board-certified ophthalmologist and an active member of numerous professional societies, including an affiliation with California Pacific Medical Center, training ophthalmology residents.

Closer to home, Penrose has performed cataract surgery on patients as senior as 102, specializing in procedures with premium intraocular lenses and wavefront LASIK. He even uses a vision simulator on an iPad so patients can test those options before they take the leap.

Eye MD Monterey has offices on Cass Street and in Ryan Ranch, which offer everything from simple check-ups and lens/contacts fittings — including for kids — to medical and surgical care for glaucoma and diabetic eye disease. Scheduling and patient information portals are accessible on Eye MD's website.

■ Best Optometrist

Blink Optometry Carmel — *Crossroads shopping center - (831) 250-6999, blinkcarmel.com*

Picking frames is the fun part of getting new glasses, but what leads up to it — a comprehensive eye exam, prescription assessment, all the charts and bright lights — can be drudgery.

Not so at Blink Optometry, Pine Cone readers' multiple-time selection for the best exam experience, plus a broad selection of optical and sunglass frames as a reward for ticking a vision test off your to-do list.

The shop stocks upscale glasses from Gucci, Tom Ford, Ray Ban and others, as well as sporty everyday options from brands like Oakley, Nike, Costa and Salt. (And, without judgment, they'll also tell you all the reasons prescription readers are better than over-the-counter "cheaters.")

Optometrists Telma Barseghian and Trevor Fogg lead the practice, where services also include contact-lens fittings, emergency eye care and coordination of care for cataract surgery.

They can also talk you through the perks of anti-reflective, scratch-resistant and photochromic lenses to meet your needs, whether you want to read more comfortably, avoid fatigue while working at the computer, or take in the wonders of Point Lobos with new eyes.

■ Best Orthopedist

Christopher Meckel, *Montage Orthopedics and Sports Medicine — 12 Upper Ragsdale Drive, Monterey - (831) 648-7200, montagehealth.org*

Christopher Meckel's orthopedic training took place, impressively, at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center. But what came after — a fellowship in joint reconstruction at AOS Medical Center in Glendale — introduced him to cutting-edge techniques for hip replacements and computer-assisted knee surgery, which later became central to his own practice.

Meckel is a co-founder of Monterey Spine & Joint, now Montage Orthopedics and Sports Medicine.

His focus remains total hip replacement and computer-assisted knee replacement. It's high-tech work, but with very ordinary ambitions, like helping patients walk more comfortably, take the stairs, or return to a favorite activity.

After surgery comes rehabilitation, and Meckel's prescription includes detailed instructions for physical and sport-specific therapy — and to that end, the practice recently opened a new rehab clinic in Carmel.

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From previous page

■ Best Pediatrician

Blake Bischoff, *Monterey Peninsula Pediatric Medical Group — 2 Upper Ragsdale Drive, Monterey - (831) 333-0999, mppmg.com*

Blake Bischoff's route to Monterey included Utah, Australia, Louisiana and Wisconsin, and fluency in Spanish is among many practical skills his travels have fostered. Born in Ogden, Utah, Bischoff earned his bachelor's degree at a state school, attended the University of Queensland-Ochsner medical program, then completed his pediatric internship and residency at Marshfield Clinic in Wisconsin.

He joined Monterey Peninsula Pediatric Medical Group in 2024, and his dual-language skills have benefited the practice serving families throughout Monterey County, beginning with newborn care and continuing through the college years. (Children from 6 months through age 5 receive a book to take home through its Reach Out and Read program — much more memorable than a lollipop and a pat on the head.)

At Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, the group provides sick visits, newborn and pediatric hospital care so families can receive help from their chosen clinic at all hours, and expectant parents can arrange a complimentary introductory visit before their baby arrives.

■ Best Plastic Surgeon

Douglas Sunde — *856 Munras Ave., Monterey - (831) 372-0200, drsunde.com*

Among those honored with Golden Pine Cones, Dr. Sunde — who splits his time between Monterey and Stanford, where he's an adjunct surgery professor at his eminent alma mater — is one of the longest-running award winners. Similarly exceptional are the results that patients credit to Sunde. Within his overlapping disciplines of cosmetic and reconstructive procedures, everything from mole removals and scar revisions to a neck lift are treated with attention to detail, since every intervention is individualized to a patient's specific health concerns, their age and gender.

Their relationship begins with an extensive consultation — with the perk of state-of-the-art imaging technology to understand options and visualize possible results.

In Sunde's view, the surface benefits are merely secondary.

"Plastic surgery is about more than looking good. For a lot of men and women, it helps correct years of discomfort, improving their quality of life," Sunde says.

■ Best Primary Care Physician

John Obert-Hong, *Montage Medical Group — Crossroads shopping center - (831) 718-9701, oberthong.com*

John Obert-Hong puts prevention and early detection at the center of his approach to family medicine. He also sees care as a team effort, with a patient's lifestyle and personal concerns at the center of their wellness plan.

The readers' choice for Best Primary Care Physician earned his medical degree at UTESA and completed his residency at the Medical College of Wisconsin, where he was chief resident.

Obert-Hong has been recognized by readers for his empathy, responsiveness, and a desire — driven by his own passion for fitness, surfing and scuba diving — to make an active, healthy lifestyle accessible to all patients.

■ Best Chiropractor

Brian Rector, Monterey Chiropractic Group — *2511 Garden Road, Monterey - (831) 899-5900, montereychiropracticgroup.com*

Brian Rector has been practicing chiropractic care since 1994, long enough to see some patients return during different stages of life.

Thirty years of experience has also informed a holistic approach to musculoskeletal improvements, with support for scoliosis and spinal compression, as well as massage therapy and myofascial release.

That's a type of massage that treats the web of tissues surrounding large muscle groups, which can be responsible for chronic muscle tension.

Rector and chiropractor Madison Ferrante utilize traditional chiropractic techniques for spine, joint and mobility benefits at their clinic on Garden Road near the Monterey Airport, serving patients of all ages and activity levels.

■ Best Physical Therapist

Terrapin Physical Therapy — *5 Harris Court, Monterey - (831) 372-3579, terrapinphysicaltherapy.com*

A swimming pool isn't the first thing everyone expects to find at a physical therapy appointment. But at Terrapin Physical Therapy, aquatic rehabilitation is a signature feature of the program, since working in water can offer a different way to exercise when movement on land is difficult.

The clinic has a Hydroworx pool equipped with underwater treadmills and resistance jets, as well as video equipment to observe how patients walk.

At its Ryan Ranch office, Terrapin also

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provides conventional physical therapy for sports injuries, back and neck pain, balance problems and rehabilitation after surgery. Owned and operated by physical therapist Tony and retired nurse Heidi Pazzaglia, the clinic also has private treatment rooms and an exercise gym, with an emphasis on treatment based on a patient's goals, whether those involve returning to sports, recovering strength or managing daily activities more comfortably.

Manual therapy, joint mobilization and personalized exercise programs are part of the package, because the ultimate aim is for patients to regain useful, fluid movement — and reduce the likelihood of another injury.

■ Best Divorce Lawyer

Sarah Cavassa, Cavassa O'Connell — *50 Ragsdale Drive, Monterey - (831) 655-6868, cavassaoconnell.com*

If only divorce law were as simple as dividing the pie in half. Then attorney Sarah Cavassa wouldn't have five Golden Pine Cones to her name.

Nearly two decades of experience in family law have informed a deep and compassionate understanding of custody arrangements and other matters affecting families after a separation, including parental coordination beyond the table in her Monterey office.

That role is distinct from that of a judge or a lawyer representing one party, and it can extend well beyond filing to help parents manage ongoing disagreements within their established custody framework.

Divorce matters can involve straightforward agreements or extensive negotiations, and Cavassa is sensitive to each family's circumstances to determine what issues need special attention, and how they can be resolved as justly and efficiently as possible, so all parties can move forward.

■ Best Estate Planning Attorney

Jeannette Witten, Hudson Martin — *26515 Carmel Rancho Blvd. - (831) 375-3151, hudsonmartin.com*

Estate planning is more than writing down who should inherit a house, a savings account, or an heirloom wedding band. Who will make decisions if a person becomes unable to do so? How will property be divided? And who will ensure nothing slips through the cracks and into probate?

In addition to all the above, esteemed local attorney Jeannette Witten documents and executes her client's wishes with clarity, precision and sensitivity.

As the managing partner of Hudson Martin, P.C., her nearly 30 years of legal experience includes executing sophisticated business transactions, which frequently intersect with estate planning and wealth management.

■ Best Lawyer if You Need to Sue Somebody
■ Best Defense Attorney

Christina Goebelsmann, Hudson Martin — *26515 Carmel Rancho Blvd. - (831) 375-3151, hudsonmartin.com*

Not one, but two Golden Pine Cones for attorney Christina Goebelsmann capture her expertise on both sides of the legal divide: building a lawsuit and defending a client. Goebelsmann's previous — and varied — career as a federal attorney involved representing agencies in civil litigation and bankruptcy, investigating alleged fraud and abuse, and providing legal advice into federal loan programs, government contracts, employee standards of conduct, and administrative appeals.

She holds a Juris Doctor from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, was admitted to the bar in 2010, and is senior litigation attorney with Hudson Martin, which is helmed by multiple-time Golden Pine Cone winner Jeannette Witten.

■ Best Public Relations Company

The Buzz PR, Marci Bracco — *(831) 747-7455, thebuzzpr.net*

For a major event or nonprofit campaign to be successful, people need to hear about it before it happens. Strategic timing and impactful delivery are the specialty of Marci Bracco and her team at The Buzz PR.

Bracco seems to have boundless energy and is great at making connections. The public relations firm has elevated major nonprofits, arts groups, community organizations and many Monterey County businesses, but beyond that, Bracco specializes in brand development, helping entrepreneurs or longtime local business owners to find new eyes through copywriting and ad visuals, search engine optimization, social media, and website development.

Bracco and her team are noted for their media connections, effective press releases, and responsive communication under all circumstances, not just when a crisis arises. Their work teaming businesses with nonprofits — especially those that benefit animals — is well-known in the community, as are her faithful French bulldog staff members. The Buzz delivers on its name.

■ Best Insurance Agent

Jeremy Carter Insurance Agency — *327 7th Avenue - (831) 204-0393, getinsurancecarmel.com*

Insurance can be straightforward, until you — the homeowner, driver or business owner — need to understand exactly what a policy covers. For clients looking for personal and commercial insurance, including auto, home and a variety of business types, Jeremy Carter Insurance Agency in Carmel also welcomes "hard to place"

Peninsula homes which may be vulnerable to fires, other natural disasters or environmental risks. Insurance needs can also change after a move, a renovation, a new vehicle or an expansion of business operations, and Carter and his associate Matt Menke pride themselves on "Service that doesn't stop at the sale."

With new or existing policies, they're committed to helping clients digest thorny insurance documents, understand their deductibles, limits and exclusions, as well as understand California's ever-shifting insurance landscape.

The Pine Cone recognizes Carter in a field where responsiveness and clear explanations are just as valuable as a price quote.

■ Best Shoe Repair

Federico's Shoe Service — *542 Abrego St., Monterey - (831) 312-1187, federicosdriveinshoeservice.localsearch.com*

Even if you've never pulled up to the window, you know Federico's, the drive-in shoe service on Abrego St. in Monterey. Let this be a reminder to pull out those boots that need buffing or to take off your well-worn belt and hand it over to the experts at Federico's, which has been giving leather goods a second life since before World War II. Soles, heels, zippers, shining, dyeing and more have remained in the capable hands of Jose Perez — who in 2020 took ownership of the Federico family shop, where he had worked since 1999 — and dedicated employees, whose work has been recognized by the Shoe Service Institution of America.

Repairing a well-made pair of shoes can preserve both the fit and the memories attached to them — Federico's serves customers who would rather fix a familiar favorite than start breaking in something new.

■ Best School

All Saints Day School — *8060 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 624-9171, asds.org*

Families grow at All Saints, from a child's earliest classroom experiences into the middle school years. Core academics, foreign languages, science, arts, athletics and extracurriculars abound, and several programs

See **AMAZING** *page 55 GPC*

To the Carmel Pine Cone Readers, including the best clientele, family and friends...

2026



THANK YOU
from the bottom of my heart!

Let's Celebrate!

Please come to a **Holiday Open House** and **Donation Drive** on **Wednesday, November 4th from 3-6pm!**

- 15% off all retail
- Giveaways
- Skincare consults
- French treats & drinks
- Raffle drawing for those who donate to the Community Homeless Solutions (1 grocery bag gets you 1 ticket). Donations may include toiletries, canned goods and any gently used clothing, books, home goods.

588 Houston St, Monterey | www.shelleyskin.com | (831) 324-4611

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Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District



2026

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

GPC Winners by name of winner

■ Food and Wine

Ad Astra Bread Co. — Best Bread
Akaoni — Best Japanese/Sushi Restaurant
Alvarado Street Brewery — Best Place for a Beer
Bernardus — Best Monterey County Chardonnay
Best Monterey County Sauvignon Blanc
Brophy's Tavern — Best Fish & Chips
Bruno's Market — Best Neighborhood Market Best Deli
Cafe Rustica — Best Restaurant in Carmel Valley
Carmel Bakery — Best Bakery
Carmel Valley Coffee Roasting Company — Best Coffee Best Coffeehouse
Cella — Best Restaurant in Monterey
Christian Pepe — Best Bartender
Crossroads BBQ — Best BBQ
Cultura — Best Mexican Restaurant
Cypress Inn Terry's Lounge — Most Dog-Friendly Restaurant
Dametra — Best Mediterranean Restaurant
Dave Sidener Sardine Factory — Best Sommelier
Dawn's Dream — Best Monterey County Rosé
De Tierra Vineyards — Best Tasting Room
Best Monterey County Pinot Noir
Best Monterey County Merlot
My Favorite Monterey County Wine
Farmers market — Best Fruits and Vegetables
Foray — Best Restaurant for Seafood
Best Restaurant for Steak
Best Place to Take Clients
Most Romantic Restaurant
Best Restaurant for a Special Occasion
Best Restaurant Service
Best Restaurant in Carmel
From Scratch — Best Breakfast
Galante Vineyards — Best Monterey County Cabernet Sauvignon
Grasing's — Best Wine List
Gromada Carmel Valley — Best New Restaurant
Julia's — Best Restaurant for Vegetarians
L'Escargot — Best French Restaurant
Lalla Grill — Best Salad
Layers — Best Special Occasion Cake
Little Napoli — Best Italian Restaurant
Maligne — Best Restaurant in Seaside
Michael Chang — Best Chef
Mission Ranch Hotel and Restaurant — Best Brunch Best Outdoor Dining
Namaste India Bistro — Best Indian Restaurant
Nepenthe — Best Restaurant in Big Sur
Nielsen Brothers Market — Best Wine Store
Pacific Thai — Best Thai Restaurant
Paradise Catering — Best Caterer
Passionfish — Best Restaurant in Pacific Grove
Patisserie Boissiere — Best Desserts
Revival Ice Cream — Best Place to Get Ice Cream
r.g. Burgers — Best Sandwich or Burger
Roy's — Best Restaurant in Pebble Beach
Sea Harvest — Best Seafood Market
Sur — Best Family Restaurant
The Meatery — Best Butcher
Tommy's Wok — Best Chinese Restaurant
Vesuvio — Best Cocktails Best Happy Hour
Best Pizza

■ Recreation and The Arts

At home — Best Place to read The Pine Cone
Bubba Pickens Band — Best Local Music Group (rock jazz and pop)
Carmel Art Association — Best Art Gallery
Carmel Beach — Best Place to Watch the Sunset
Best Place to Walk Your Dog Best Beach
Carmel Garden Inn — Best Inn/B&B
Carmel Valley Athletic Club — Best Fitness/Health Center
Center for Photographic Art — Best Photo Gallery
Cypress Inn — Best Hotel
Best Place to Relax and Listen to Music
Most Dog-Friendly Hotel
Garland Ranch Regional Park — Best Hiking Trail
Harrison Memorial Library — Best Library
Jewish Food Festival — Best Faith Community Event
La Playa — Best Hotel

Continues next page



The Carmel Pine Cone
Press Release guidelines

Press releases about newsworthy events should go to the following Pine Cone reporters:

Mary Schley: Carmel-by-the-Sea, food & wine, police, fire, criminal courts and schools
mary@carmelpinecone.com

Chris Counts: Carmel Valley, Big Sur, Arts & Entertainment and scholastic sports
chris@carmelpinecone.com

Kelly Nix: Pacific Grove, Pebble Beach, Monterey, Seaside, state government, civil courts and water
kelly@carmelpinecone.com

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

GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

Michael Troutman — Best Local Photographer
Monterey Bay Aquarium — Best Family-Friendly Activity
Monterey Jazz Festival — Best Local Festival
Monterey Museum of Art — Best Museum
Monterey Symphony — Best Local Music Group (classical)
Nicole Cromwell — Best Local Artist
Pacific Grove Golf Links — Best Golf Course
PacRep — Best Performing Arts Company or Group
Point Lobos — Best Place to Take Visitors
My Favorite Park
Richard MacDonald Dawson Cole — Best Sculpture Gallery
Salty Soul Sanctuary — Best Yoga Studio
Sunset Center — Best Concert Venue

■ Retail

Ace Hardware — Best Hardware Store
Ami Carmel — Best Gift Shop
BMW of Monterey — Best Car Dealer
Carmel Drug Store — Best Pharmacy
Carpets and Floors — Best Carpet and Flooring Store
Devine & Co. — Best Jewelry Store
Diggidy Dog — Best Pet Store
Epiphany Bridal — Best Place for Brides to Shop
Fleurs du Soleil — Best Florist
Foxy Couture — Best Women's Clothing Boutique
Best Resale/Consignment Shop
Best Women's Accessories
Best Place to Buy Designer Clothes
Best Vintage Clothing Store
Griggs Nursery — Best Garden Shop
Hedi's — Best Men's Shoe Store
Khaki's — Best Men's Clothing Store
Lemos 76 — Best Gas Station
Lloyd's — Best Women's Shoe Store
Lula's — Best Candy Shop
Mad Dogs and Englishmen — Best Bike Shop
Mum's — Best Furniture Store
Pebble Beach — Best Golf Shop
Porsche Monterey — Best Car Dealer
River House Books — Best Bookstore
Rosebuds — Best Children's Clothing Store/Boutique
Best New Business
Shoshin — Best Housewares Store
Stone's — Best Pet Store
Swift Car Wash — Best Carwash
The Crossroads — Best Shopping Center
The Treadmill — Best Place to buy Athletic Wear
Valley Hills Nursery — Best Garden Shop
Wittpenn's Antiques — Best Antique Shop

■ Services and Health Care

After Hours Plumbing — Best Plumber
Ailing House Pest Management — Best Pest Inspection
All Saints Day School — Best School
Axiom — Best Home Technology
Blake Bischoff — Best Pediatrician
Blink Optometry — Best Optometrist
Brian Rector — Best Chiropractor
Carmel Beach — Best Place to Get Married (non-church)
Carmel Mission — Best Place to Get Married
Carmel Realty Company — Best Place to Work, Best Real Estate Company
Carmel Valley Manor — Best Retirement Community
Casa de Amigos — Best Pet Boarding
Casner — Best Pest Inspection
Cate Electric — Best Electrician
Chad Hawke, Synergy One Lending — Best Real Estate Lender
Chase — Best Personal Bank
Christina Goebelsmann — Best Lawyer if You Need to Sue Somebody, Best Defense Attorney
Christopher Meckel — Best Orthopedist
Cypress Painting — Best Painting Company
Douglas Sunde — Best Plastic Surgeon
John Obert-Hong — Best Primary Care Physician
Eric Brown — Best Dentist
Federico's — Best Shoe Repair
Finn & Cohen — Best Accountant
Gene's — Best Auto Body Shop
Heart Dominguez — Best Veterinarian
Jeannette Witten — Best Estate Planning Attorney
Jeremy Carter Insurance Agency — Best Insurance Agent
Joseph Rheim — Best Dermatologist
Kasavan Construction — Best General Contractor
Lemos 76 — Best Auto Repair Shop
Melanie Klaumann, All Saints — Best Teacher
Melanie Pitnick — Best Investment House/Advisor
Monterey County Bank — Best Business Bank
Monterey Peninsula Engineering — Best Engineer
Oya — Best Hair Salon
Paula Arnold — Best Travel Agent
Philip Penrose — Best Ophthalmologist
PM Landscaping — Best Landscaper-Gardener
Samuel Pitnick — Best Architect
Sanctuary Vacation Rentals — Best Real Estate Rental Company
Sara Brown, All Saints — Best Principal
Sarah Cavassa — Best Divorce Lawyer
Scudder Roofing — Best Roofing Company
Sea Blush Studios — Best Interior Design Business, Best Staging Company
Shelley Bennett — Best Skin Care
SPCA Monterey County — Best Place to Volunteer, My Favorite Non-Profit
Suds n Scissors — Best Pet Care
Terrapin Physical Therapy — Best Physical Therapist
The Buzz PR — Best Public Relations Company
The Refuge — Best Spa
Tina's Nails — Best Nail Salon
Tope's Tree Service — Best Tree Service

HOTELS & INNS



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The Carmel Pine Cone

GOLDEN PINE CONES

AMAZING

From page 52 GPC

connect students across grade levels.

Specialists and aides ensure no student is left behind — and this particular Golden Pine Cone is awarded in the same spirit, recognizing every student, family, teacher and staff member who embody the spirit of All Saints.

Headed by Sara Brown, the warm and welcoming school is animated by a diverse community and anchored by a Christian mission of "honoring and celebrating the inherent worth of each individual." All Saints was founded in 1961, when three Episcopal parishes got together to form the school in Pacific Grove.

Four years later it moved to its "present, beautiful, permanent" location on Carmel Valley Road, according to its website.

Since then, the school has remained small, with fewer than 300 students total and a 5:1 student-to-teacher ratio that ensures personalized attention for every developing mind.

■ Best Teacher

Melanie Klaumann, All Saints Day School —
8060 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 624-9171, asds.org

An art teacher can introduce students to more than paints, pencils and paper, and Melanie Klaumann's talent for teaching students to observe and represent the world around them — and the contents of their own imaginations — has earned due praise.

In the words of head of school Sara Brown, "One of Melanie's many special gifts is helping every student see themselves as an artist. She builds their confidence as they explore different mediums, develop new skills, and are introduced to artists and ideas that inspire them."

All Saints introduces arts education to its youngest students, and the program layers new creative challenges with every subsequent grade.

"Our young artists explore several techniques in a variety of media including painting, drawing, printmaking, mixed media, ceramics and sculpture.

Students learn about the work of modern artists and expand their visual vocabulary by talking about these works in relation to the elements of art and design," according to the school.

■ Best Principal

Sara Brown, All Saints Day School —
8060 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - (831) 624-9171, asds.org

A principal is the Swiss Army knife of administrators, tending to each individual classroom while ensuring the entire campus works in harmony.

The multifaceted Sara Brown, a repeat Golden Pine Cone winner, has the added distinction of leading All Saints Day School for more than 25 years.

The challenge is not insignificant, since the co-ed program serves students from preschool through eighth grade — guided by a faculty including classroom teachers, subject specialists and division leaders who, like Brown, have served generations of Monterey Peninsula families.

A message from Brown on the school's website describes the magnitude of their collective duties.

"Beyond science, math, reading and writing, we believe in nurturing the whole child," she says. "We want our children to feel confident in who they are, to understand their own feelings and the feelings of others, to advocate for themselves, and to speak their minds."

Finis

The *Carmel Garden* Inn



2026

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We're lucky to have such devoted readers ...

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

■ **"You have a wonderful publication. We read the online edition every week."**

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

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

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

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

— unsolicited reader comments


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