

Workshop fire destroys Mission Fields home

By MARY SCHLEY

A FAST burning fire significantly damaged a home on Mission Fields Road just before 9 a.m. Monday. The blaze, which consumed much of the house and burned through the roof, probably ignited from sparks landing in sawdust accumulated in the owner's garage workshop while he was sharpening chisels, according to Cal Fire investigators.

"He went outside to take his dog for a walk, and turned around and saw it," Cal Fire Capt. Jennifer Valdez said of the resident, Dave Travaille. "The fire was already cooking away by the time he called us."

Fire engines from the Cal Fire's stations on Rio Road and in the Carmel Highlands, as well as from the City of Carmel, rushed to the scene to find flames billowing from the garage and its roof.

While the Monterey Fire crew stationed in downtown Carmel that was first to arrive worked to get water on the flames, firefighters from the Cal Fire engine that arrived 10 seconds later attacked the blaze through the front door. Sheriff's deputies who had arrived before any of the fire engines blocked the streets to stop traffic while the fire crews worked.

As some firefighters pulled hose through the front door and the garage, others carried it up onto the roof, where they doused flames through holes initially made by the fire itself and then enlarged by the crews so they

would be more useful, according to Valdez. All told, it took the work of more than 20 firefighters working on four engines about 30 minutes to contain the fire. Monterey County Regional Fire sent its breathing-support unit to recharge their air tanks.

The blaze extensively burned the roof, garage and laundry room, along with other areas of the house, the rest of which suffered smoke and water damage. Cal Fire officials put the estimated cost at \$300,000, and Valdez said a county build-

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PHOTO/COURTESY CAL FIRE

By the time firefighters arrived at this Mission Fields home, fire had already burned through the roof of the garage where sparks from a grinder ignited sawdust.

WITH HARDLY A WORD, BRINTON'S SHUTS DOWN — EMPLOYEES CRY FOUL

By CHRIS COUNTS

JUST ONE year after celebrating its Golden Anniversary, Brinton's abruptly closed its doors Sunday.

Eight of the store's employees, meanwhile, say they're still owed vacation pay or back wages and have filed claims with the state labor commissioner.

Offering a mix of hardware, kitchen and household accessories, garden supplies and gifts at its location in Carmel Rancho shopping center, Brinton's was a Carmel institution. So it came as a surprise to many — including its staff — when they learned the store was going out of business.

"They didn't give us much warning," said Tim Hoge, who worked as sales associate and an assistant buyer in the garden department for nearly four years. "We got a memo on Friday about a meeting on Sunday. Mr. Brinton came out and told us the store was closing. He said there was a lot more that he couldn't go into."

Hoge was one of eight employees who filed claims this week with the state labor commissioner.

"Many of us were shorted on vacation pay, if not pay in general," Hoge said. "It's really disheartening to work so long and not get paid."

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Slide closes Highway 1 in the usual place

By CHRIS COUNTS

CALTRANS OFFICIALS won't say how long Highway 1 will be closed at Pitkins Curve in Big Sur after a rock slide blocked traffic on the scenic route Jan. 22.

The slide occurred just south of an ambitious \$30 million project to construct a 620-foot-long bridge and rock shed along one of Highway 1's most troubled sections of pavement. The project is expected to be completed during the winter of 2012-13.

"There's still a lot of slide material on the road," said Colin Jones, a spokesman for Caltrans. "I would characterize this as a medium-sized slide. Staff and contractors are out there working as hard as they can from dusk to dawn to get the highway open. It's hard to pin down a date [for its reopening], but we're fortunate the weather has been good."

Jones said his agency's biggest concern is the stability of the nearly vertical hillside that looms over the road.

Workers are installing safety nets to prevent rocks from falling on the pavement. Jones called the Pitkins Curve area, which is located about 56 miles south of Carmel, "a prime

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Farr wants to do away with NOAA's lights

By KELLY NIX

CONGRESSMAN SAM Farr apparently doesn't think that a half-dozen light poles installed at a federal research facility in Pacific Grove belong in a scenic coastal environment, and he wants them gone.

In early 2010, without notice to the City of Pacific Grove or the California Coastal Commission, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration installed towering, solar-powered lamps at its fisheries facility on Lighthouse Avenue. NOAA cited national security issues and concerns over mountain lions for the reasons for the solar lights, which sit atop 20-foot-plus light poles.

But the lamps drew harsh criticism from coastal commissioners, city officials and some residents, who for two

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P.B. plan is well on its way to final approval

By KELLY NIX

THE PEBBLE Beach Co. gained another victory in its long struggle to build a spa, hotel and other facilities when the Monterey County Board of Supervisors this week voted to amend a land use plan that will allow the project to move forward.

After hearing almost full support for the plan from elected officials, business leaders and contractors — and also from the executive director of the California Coastal Commission — at Tuesday's meeting in Salinas, the supervisors unanimously approved the amendments.

The development plan, in the works since 1987, now includes a 100-room hotel or 10 homes adjacent to the Spyglass Hill Golf Course, 55 new hotel rooms at The

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Lively daughter of city's founding family dies at 94

By MARY SCHLEY

THE VIVACIOUS and charming Jean Draper — one of the last of a generation of Carmelites whose family strongly influenced the town's development, and who lived in an upstairs apartment downtown for much of her life — died Friday. She was 94.

"She was this wonderful person," remarked friend Nicki McMahan. "The kindest, generous, fun loving, stylish, most classy lady."

Born Dec. 4, 1917, Draper was the granddaughter of Scottish immigrant John Martin, who founded Mission Ranch — then one of California's first dairies — in the 1850s. She was the third child of Isabelle and Robert Leidig, and attended Sunset School, Monterey High School,

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Jean Draper



Larry Horan

Larry Horan, 82, was respected and loved in everything he did

By LEWIS ABRAHAM LEADER
Special to The Pine Cone

SIMPLY PUT, it was a life well lived.

Larry Horan, who died Monday of acute melanoma at 82, excelled in the courtroom and on the basketball court, in public service, and in his devotion to family, friends and faith.

And if you, like I, were fortunate enough to call him a friend, your life was that much richer for it.

Horan was an attorney for more than half a century and one of the most respected in Monterey County. That was the tip of the iceberg. During a rich and full life, he directed the Peace Corps in three Central and South American countries, was a regional director of the federal War on Poverty, served on the board of the Monterey Institute of International

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