

The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 102 No. 49

On the Internet: www.carmelpinecone.com

December 2 - 8, 2016

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CRUMBLING ROOF REPLACED, SOLAR PANELS INSTALLED AT GOLDEN BOUGH THEATER

By MARY SCHLEY

STEPHEN MOORER, executive director of Pacific Repertory Theatre, likes to point out that he's helped save 118 trees and 623 barrels of oil, and prevented more than 11,000 pounds of carbon dioxide from ending up in the atmosphere.

But what the theatre's board of directors and bookkeeper probably like even more is that by installing solar panels at the Golden Bough Playhouse on Monte Verde Street, PacRep has saved more than \$1,900 in energy costs in the two months since the panels were installed in late September.

The nonprofit theater company launched a fundraising effort to pay for a new roof and make a down payment on the solar panels late last year, and Moorer said that with a matching grant from Bill and Nancy Doolittle, the effort successfully generated \$45,000 for the roof and \$20,000 for the panels.

Easy permits

"About a year ago, with all the roofing companies adding solar options, and looking at replacing our roof, we looked at it as an option," he explained. "We had said it would be great to go solar someday."

Last year, the state required local cities and counties to streamline permits for solar panels, and planning director Marc Wiener said the applications don't even go to design review, like almost all other aspects of exterior construction do.

"If one comes in, it goes straight to a building permit," he said. The city is also required to accept applications by email or other electronic means, rather than in hard copy. The Carmel City Council amended its ordinances accordingly last year, and 10 permits have been issued since then.

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PacRep Theatre executive director Stephen Moorer (back of group at right) and his staff point out the badly crumbling roof set to be covered with solar panels installed by Solar Technologies of Santa Cruz (below).



Taxpayers stuck with \$72,000 retirement bill

By MARY SCHLEY

A CHANGE that was to save the city tens of thousands of dollars by having employees contribute more of their own money toward their retirements was approved by the workers and the city council more than a year ago. But the change was never implemented, human resources manager Maxine Gullo discovered during an examination of city records.

Gullo, who was hired six months ago, also found that the city was behind on its payments to the union's separate pension plan.

"I was going through our contracts, making sure we were current and in compliance," she told The Pine Cone. "When I realized those deductions were not being held back, that was when I backed up to figure out why, and it was because the CalPERS paperwork had not been completed."

Gullo said her first six months have "been about finding out whether we are in compliance, and then finding the problems and resolving them."

And the next six will be spent "figuring out procedural or personnel issues that led to them not getting done."

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Panetta in second week of capital orientation

Seeks assignment on ag committee

By KELLY NIX

VYING FOR office space on Capitol Hill, getting an earful on ethics, and deciding which government committees to be a part of are among the many tasks Jimmy Panetta is managing as part of his transition from Monterey County gang prosecutor to the 20th Congressional District's new representative in Washington D.C.

Member-elect Panetta, 47 — the choice of voters Nov. 8 over Republican challenger Casey Lucius — is in the second week of orientation for newly elected lawmakers in the House of Representatives.

"They put you in a classroom and they dump a lot on you," Panetta told The Pine Cone Wednesday. "You are drinking from a fire hose."

Panetta and the dozens of other new members are learning security, travel tips, briefings on the code of ethics for public officials (the House Ethics Manual runs more than 400

See **PANETTA** page 20A

'Nutcracker' gets local flavor



PHOTO/COURTESY DANCE KIDS

Sure, they're really cute and talented, but do you know what this cast of characters from Dance Kids' "Nutcracker" ballet really needs? S.F.B. Morse, the Carmel Mission and the Feast of Lanterns. See page 29A.

ENCRYPTED RADIOS HERALD NEW ERA FOR POLICE, SHERIFF

Most emergency calls will become secret

By MARY SCHLEY

TESTING IS underway on the \$14 million, multiyear plan to move all of the county's fire, medical and police radio traffic to a digital system, and if all goes according to plan, the transition will be completed by the end of next month. When that happens, members of the public — including the media — will no longer be able to monitor most police transmissions, as the dispatchers and officers will be using encrypted channels.

The new system, which has been in development since

2009, will improve emergency communications, because the transmissions will be clear, and people speaking on their radios won't "step on" each other the way they do with analog frequencies, which results in noise or static on the channel.

"We need to take advantage of changes in technology — it will give us a more efficient public safety radio project," said William Harry, director of the Monterey County Emergency Communications Department. "It's been going on since 2009 and we're at the tail end. It will be successful."

But the improvements come at a cost, because they will dramatically increase law enforcement secrecy, which watchdog groups and journalists do not endorse.

"The public needs to keep an eye on what law enforcement is up to, and they also need to know about crime in their communities," said Paul Miller, publisher of The Pine Cone. "The level of secrecy at police departments and the sheriff is really bad now, and putting communications off-limits is going to make it a whole lot worse."

Years in the making

The last several years have been spent designing and planning the new system, including building new towers so the transmissions can reach everyone, and buying all the new technology.

Harris Corporation is building the infrastructure and has been conducting its own internal tests, according to Monterey County Sheriff's Cmdr. Joe Moses. Starting on Monday, parts of the system — including the Monterey County Jail's radio channel — will go live during a 45-day reliability test. "Then at the end of that, the rest of the county will be phased in," he said. "The entire system will be online by end of January."

See **RADIOS** page 12A

DA's office working to comply with Prop 57

By KELLY NIX

MONTEREY COUNTY District Attorney Dean Flippo said his office is working on the difficult task of determining which convicted criminals in the county's two prisons might be eligible for release early under Proposition 57, which voters passed on Nov. 8.

Proposition 57, according to backers Gov. Jerry Brown and others, will allow parole consideration and good behavior opportunities for some felons convicted "nonviolent crimes," therefore freeing up space in the state's crammed prisons and saving money. Those opposed to the proposition, however, argued that the law will actually put violent criminals back on the streets.

"Very frankly, I think it makes us more of an unsafe community," Flippo told The Pine Cone.

Nevertheless, the Monterey County DA's Office started

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