Storm surprises plein air painters, soaks art fest

By CHRIS COUNTS

JUST AS she often does during the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in February — but usually restrains herself from doing so — Mother Nature turned her faucet and drenched last weekend’s Carmel Art Festival.

The 30 artists participating in the ninth annual Pro-Am in February — but usually restrains herself from doing so — Mother Nature turned her faucet and drenched last weekend’s Carmel Art Festival.

More than a dozen contests in the festival’s Quick Draw competition were just getting started Sunday morning when a loud crack of lightning was followed by a downpour.

“We are having a thunderstorm overhead’’ the festival’s Hella Rothwell told The Pine Cone. “Then there was driving rain — it was unbelievable."

Despite weather conditions Rothwell described as “horrid,” the contestants didn’t back down from their task, which required them to find a subject, complete their paintings and submit them for judging.

“I can’t give the artists enough credit,” Rothwell said. “One woman did her painting inside her car.”

Inspires winning piece

While the wet weather created practical challenges, it also offered creative inspiration.

“The clouds from a painter’s standpoint were amazing,” Rothwell continued. “They kept changing.”

Several of the artists who won prizes at the festival incorporated the weather into their pieces, including Sally Jordan of San Diego, who won this year’s People’s Choice Award. That means her piece, “Twilight Showers,” will be used for the festival’s poster.

Supes OK Big Sur engineering firm’s new site

By CHRIS COUNTS

OVER THE vehement objections of a group of neighbors — and despite the threat of legal action — the Monterey County Board of Supervisors voted 5-0 this week to approve plans for a business, Blaze Engineering, to move its operations to a property it owns in Big Sur.

Although vote was unanimous, four of the five supervisors expressed reservations due to the limitations of the new site, and proximity of neighbors.

“Honestly, this has been one of the most difficult things that I’ve experienced since I’ve been on the board,” 5th District Supervisor Mary Adams said before making the motion to OK Blaze’s plans.

The site is located along a dirt road that begins across Highway 1 from the Big Sur River Inn.

‘Noise and traffic’

The road is also home to several residents who say the engineering business will bring noise and traffic to their neighborhood. But because Blaze has played such a key role in maintaining critical infrastructure in Big Sur for decades, the move also has many backers, including Congressman Jimmy Panetta, former Congressman Sam Farr and some of Big Sur’s most prominent residents.

Blaze Engineering operated on a site nearby for many years before its lease expired last year. Since then, it has been storing its equipment at various locations.

At this week’s hearing in Salinas, Blaze’s attorney, Aengus Jeffers, asked supervisors to support the move.

“When Big Sur doesn’t have a lot of places set aside for these types of businesses,” Jeffers said. “Traffic along Highway 1 won’t increase and water use won’t increase. All improvements will be screened from Highway 1.”

Jeffers also urged the supervisors not to require that an expensive environmental impact report be done. “Requiring an EIR would set a dangerous precedent,” he added.

But Christine Kemp, who represents neighbor Matt Donaldson, noted that the proposed property is zoned for a visitor-serving business.

“Blaze is not visitor-serving,” Kemp insisted.

The attorney said the business would also cause blight.

DEADLINE

Sell your business and move to Big Sur

By CHRIS COUNTS

A HIKER who was lost for several days in the Big Sur wilderness made it back to civilization, but he had to leave behind his injured dog, a 7-year-old golden retriever named Blaze. A search operation to locate the dog was unsuccessful, although the man’s father said another is being planned.

Steven Sanguinetti started a backpacking trip May 11 at a trailhead across Highway 1 from Kirk Creek campground, about 53 miles south of Carmel. But two days later, he lost sight of what’s called the Ojoito Trail. As he and Bently tried to find their way back to Highway 1, they became isolated in a steep canyon noted for its difficult-to-get-around waterfalls.

After an exhausting two days in what the hiker’s father described as a “nasty gorge,” the dog had an injured paw and was too tired to continue, so Sanguinetti made the difficult decision to leave him behind, intending to return for him.

Between periods of heavy rain, wind and even thunder and lightning, the sun warmed last weekend’s 26th annual Carmel Art Festival in Devendorf Park.

Injured dog still lost after Big Sur rescue attempt

By CHRIS COUNTS

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Identical twins with plenty of talent

The Cadence of Alfred Sadler’s voice sometimes accelerates, much like a child describing the most exhilarating ride at a favorite amusement park, as he flashes back on a professional career that almost defies plausibility.

The Carmel resident is a 78-year-old medical doctor, three years retired from patient care, who dedicated a large part of his life to changing the landscape of American medicine, usually working shoulder-to-shoulder with his identical twin brother, Blair, a lifelong attorney who lives in La Jolla. Together they analyzed a wide range of medical-legal issues, and helped initiate sweeping changes in the world of modern medicine.

Before we get into it, let’s begin, here is an abbreviated list of accomplishments that are credited in large part to Alfred and/or Blair Sadler are the following:

- They helped draft the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, which was adopted by all 50 states by 1971 to provide the legal underpinning for the national network of organ donation that exists today.
- They prepared a position paper that led to the credentialing of physician assistants and nurse practitioners, clearing a path for those occupations to become a nationwide profession.
- They authored two definitive books on the physician assistant profession that were distributed to every medical and nursing school dean, every school of public health, every U.S. senator and congressman, and every commissioner of health in the nation in the early 1970s.

Dinner conversations

Along the way, the Sadlers had two private lunches with Chief Justice Earl Warren of the U.S. Supreme Court, testified before both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Supreme Court, testified before both the U.S. Senate

THE ARTISTIC passions of Carmel Valley artist Sam Johnston took a sharp detour the first time he ventured toward the top of Laureles Grade, set up his easel in the Hidden Hills, and took in a view that was very different than anything he’d ever seen in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Until that moment, his attention had most closely been affixed on figure painting, a much different creative exercise than interpreting the scenery.

“When you’re painting a model, all of your concentration is on the model because that’s the path the painting you need to get it exactly right. Painting the background … for me, that’s almost a way to release tension,” Johnston explained.

“When I was looking over the landscape that day, I can remember thinking, ‘This is like painting the room (behind a model).’ You still want to make it look right, but it doesn’t have to be perfect. That difference is very relaxing, and that’s when I got hooked on painting landscapes, too.”

The 67-year-old Carmel Valley Art Association painter still creates striking portraits upon request — the commissions keep coming in — but Johnston said landscape paintings are for him, a deeper personal experience.

A house call

At Allentown High, they took advanced classes in mathematics, physics, English, and other subjects, and were members of the National Honor Society. Sadler reaches back to age 5 for a moment that subsequently altered the course of his life.

“My brother and I came down with a painful middle-ear infection, and a marvelous pediatrician, Dr. John Pfromm, made a house call,” he recalled. “I never forgot how gentle he was as he sat beside our bed, and I remember staring at his big, black medical bag.”

Later, Sadler was a sophomore at Amherst College in Massachusetts, discussing career plans with classmates, when he flashed back to Dr. Pfromm and decided medicine would be a rewarding career.

The brothers sang in the university’s glee club, played tennis, and also were part of the A CHANGE OF SCENE CAN BE MAGICAL

The twin Barabas at Florida State University, who lives in La Jolla. Togeth-
The National Institutes of Health director, and other important vice president for health affairs, Dr. Luther Terry, a legendary human being in research, the definition of death, and ge-Service — at the height of the Vietnam War. The Sadlers left for an opportunity at the University of Pennsylvania, but left for an opportunity at the University (graduating at the top of his class), Blair to the senior. Their careers crossed paths for the first time as postgraduates, the twins headed to Philadelphia, but In 1968, they became chief consultants to the Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in drafting the Uniform An-atomical Gift Act, which streamlined national laws for organ donations. That process included presentations to both houses of the U.S. Congress and the saddest private lunches with Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren. “We called our mother after that first lunch and said, ‘Mom, you won’t believe what just happened’,” Sadler remembered. In 1970, the babies were born at Yale University to study a floundering emergency medicine system in Connecticut and create one of the first physician assistant programs.

Just station wagons

“Emergency medicine was in total disarray nationwide at the time,” Sadler said. “Ambulances were just station wagons with no room for treatment. Drivers and attendants had only a modicum of training. ER doctors and nurses didn’t receive any special training. That’s what Blair and I walked.” Their study of 169 ambulance companies and 35 hospitals, plus ER doctors and nurses, produced a 700-page report for the governor of Connecticut, and resulted in the training of 2,000 EMTs in the state over the next four years, plus edu-cation for ER doctors and nurses. Their report was published as a book, “Emergency Medical Care: The Neglected Public Service.” In 1973, the 32-year-old brothers were hired to help launch the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the largest foundation in U.S. health, where they helped develop a national system for emergency medical services modeled on the system they had created for Connecticut at Yale. “Around 1976 I got to that fish-or-cut-bait point in my ca-reer: Would I ever go back to becoming a real doctor, like Dr. Pfromm, who made that house call when I was 5 years old?” Sadler wondered. While Blair moved to La Jolla to become president of Children’s Hospital — a position he held for 26 years — Alfred went to Massachusetts General Hospital to do a rare and rig-erous second internship and complete a residency in internal medicine.

In 1981, he joined Drs. John Kennedy and Craig Chris-tensen in Monterey, and practiced for nine years at Commu-nity Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. Later he served as medical director at Harder Urgent Care in Salinas, where he led a team of physicians and physician assistants, and served as a primary-care physician before retiring from practice in 2016. In 2018, Sadler was honored as “Physician of the Year” by the Monterey County Medical Society. “Becoming that pri-mary care doctor I had always wanted to be was very rewarding,” said Sadler, who lives near the Carmel Mission with his wife, nurse practitioner and artist Edi Matsumoto, whom he mar-ried in 2007.

“My goals now, I guess, are to become Edi’s art agent, and travel a bit, and continue with the physician assistant program at CSUMB,” he said. “I’ve also become very involved with Toastmasters, and the Asian Art Society.

“And, of course, we also have needs here: homeless people ... underserved people ... those issues have always been very important in my life and career, and they still are.”