

The Carmel Pine Cone

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Your whiskers are in my nose!



PHOTO/MICHAEL TROUTMAN, DMT IMAGING

Hundreds of California sea lions crowd usually quiet San Carlos Beach in Monterey Saturday, creating what one onlooker called a “very loud and stinky scene.” It’s unknown when the up-to-700-pound sea lions will leave, except to say that it will probably be when they want to. See page 14A.

County bans most short-term rentals

By CHRIS COUNTS

AFTER MORE than a decade of public hearings that pitted an emerging industry against many residents, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 Tuesday to strictly regulate short-term rentals in the unincorporated parts of the county — and effectively ban them in residential neighborhoods in Carmel Valley, Carmel Highlands and Big Sur unless a host is living on site. In contrast, unhosted vacation stays will be allowed in Pebble Beach, but only with a permit.

Fifth District Supervisor Mary Adams said the ordinance is “not perfect” but called it “a balance that will allow us to move forward and have some teeth regarding enforcement.”

Workforce housing

Adams said the ordinance is necessary to preserve local workforce housing, which many contend has been reduced by the popularity of vacation stays in residential neighborhoods.

“We have to act in the best interest of our

local residents,” she said. “We have to protect the limited housing we have.”

Before the vote on the rules, 46 residents spoke in favor of or against them — with most in support.

But some, like Richard Matthews of the Monterey County Vacation Rental Alliance, suggested that complaints about the industry have been overblown. He compared the ordinance to a sledgehammer and suggested it was the wrong tool for the job.

‘Very small problem’

“If you look at how many code enforcement cases actually have an alleged nuisance, this is a very small problem,” he said. “The data does not support the bans and heavy restrictions.”

Matthews said the vast majority of those seeking to rent vacation homes want one without a host — and he suggested the practice is here to stay, despite opposition.

Short-term-rental host Chuck Stein echoed Matthews’ concerns, suggesting that complaints about the industry have been

See **RENTALS** page 14A

CHP: Teen in fatal crash had been drinking, skipped sleep

By MARY SCHLEY

THE 17-YEAR-OLD Seaside resident who crashed his truck into a power pole on Highway 1 in Carmel in the early morning hours of May 12 — causing a chain reaction of wrecks that killed a motorcyclist — admitted to drinking the night prior and going almost 24 hours without sleeping, according to reports released by the California Highway Patrol following a state Public Records Act

request filed by The Pine Cone.

But the person who died, 44-year-old Ricardo De Orta-Garcia of Seaside, was responsible for his own death because he wasn’t riding his motorcycle at a speed safe for the conditions that foggy morning and therefore failed to avoid crashing into the downed power pole, according to the CHP.

Three other motorists who also hit the pole or its wires were doing the same — traveling at a speed unsafe for conditions — and none of the drivers who crashed that morning were cited, according to the reports.

Passed FSTs

Juan Ramon Munoz, the teen from Seaside, was driving a 2014 Ford pickup truck northbound on Highway 1 at 5:50 a.m. when he veered across the southbound lanes and hit the power pole before coming to rest in some bushes a few blocks south of Carpenter. According to the CHP’s description, the collision knocked down the pole, which had guy wires connecting to another on the east side of the highway. The fallen pole blocked the southbound

See **CRASH** page 16A

Undocumented closer to getting home loan help

By KELLY NIX

THE CALIFORNIA State Senate Tuesday passed legislation that would allow undocumented immigrants to be eligible for up to \$150,000 in taxpayer-subsidized zero-interest home loans, a move critics say the state can’t afford and will encourage more illegal immigration. The bill is now headed to the State Assembly for a final vote before Gov. Gavin Newsom can sign or veto it.

If the governor approves the loan program, it will add people without visas or other legal status to the already eligible low- and middle-income first-time home buyers who qualify for the Home Purchase Assistance Program, which offers loans of up to \$150,000 for down payments and closing costs.

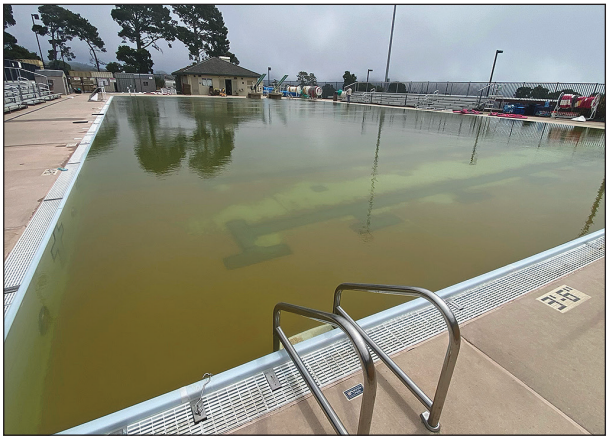
“This bill would specify that an applicant who meets all other requirements for a loan under the program shall not be disqualified solely based on the applicant’s immigration

See **LOANS** page 18A

Icky water closes CHS pool, forces teams to relocate

By KELLY NIX

WHEN THE Carmel High School girls water polo team went to practice early Tuesday, they got an ugly surprise. The water in their pool was a repulsive brown color



PHOTO/READER SUBMISSION

While Cal Am did maintenance work on its pipes, automatic refilling of the Carmel High pool turned the water an ugly brown.

that looked like sewage.

The transformation of the water — which was apparently caused by water company California American Water’s flushing of its distribution system — forced the girls, along with the CHS boys water polo team, to find different pools to practice in, a parent told The Pine Cone.

“Everybody is thinking it’s sewage because it’s brown,” according to the parent, who said they found out later it was not sewage but pipe sediment. Fortunately, the water

See **POOL** page 20A

Pebble Beach house sells for a record \$45M

By KELLY NIX

AN EXTRAORDINARY oceanfront property situated on one of the most attractive spots in Pebble Beach sold this week for \$45 million, the highest price ever paid for a home in Monterey County, according to realtors.

The 10,500-square-foot modern residence is just a few doors down from The Lodge and faces the storied 18th Hole of the Pebble Beach Golf Links. It has five bedrooms and six bathrooms and sits on nearly 1.8 acres of well-manicured grounds at 1544 Cypress Drive. The home belonged to former San Diego Padres owner John Moores.

Quiet sale

The listing was “off market,” meaning it wasn’t advertised or listed on the MLS, and realtor Ben Zoller, who represented the buyers, said the sale was a three-month process that came together at the beginning of August.

While the buyers have not been identified, according to county records they took title under the name Whiteapple DE LLC.

“My clients basically looked at every

luxury property that was for sale over the last couple of years and their attention was drawn to the detail and quality of construction of this home,” Zoller, who works for Monterey Coast Realty, told The Pine Cone Tuesday. “It

See **RECORD** page 15A



PHOTO/PINE CONE FILE

This home, shown not long after it was built in 1996, sits next to the 18th Fairway of the Pebble Beach Golf Links and sold this week to an undisclosed buyer for an astounding \$45 million.