

# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## DUI crash kills two in Pebble Beach

### ■ P.G. man arrested

By MARY SCHLEY

A 30-YEAR-OLD Pacific Grove resident who has received numerous traffic tickets — though none for drunken driving — was arrested Sunday night for a DUI crash in Pebble Beach that left two women dead and a third seriously injured. Only the driver, Stuart Elder, escaped with no more than minor injuries.

Driving southbound on Sloat Road near Bird Rock Road in a 2009 Cadillac Escalade at about 7:30 p.m. April 7, Elder veered into the path of a 2005 Ford Freestyle driven by a still-unknown 72-year-old Pebble Beach woman, hitting it head-on. The impact killed her and her passenger, 65-year-old Linda Larone, also from Pebble Beach. The Cadillac landed on its roof.

"He was traveling at an 'unknown speed,'" said California Highway Patrol public information officer Bob Lehman, quoting the officer's initial report. "But we'll see what our guys determine when they finish up their investigation here."

Cal Fire Battalion Chief Dennis King, who was on the scene, said the spread of the wreckage and the extent of the damage indicated Elder must have been speeding when he hit the women's car. "It looks like they may have been opposing each other on Sloat, and he was going too fast and in



PHOTO/DENNIS KING

This grim photo shows a black Cadillac SUV (at right), driven by Stuart Elder, on its roof after it smashed into a Ford (left), killing two women, Sunday in Pebble Beach. Elder was arrested for manslaughter and DUI.

wrong lane and slid sideways," King said. "It was a high-speed accident. The posted speed limit in Pebble Beach is 25 mph, and it's largely ignored, mostly by residents."

With the station about four blocks away, two fire engines arrived quickly, King said, and the ambulance got there simultaneously.

"They found right away that two people in one vehicle were deceased, so they focused on the people in the Cadillac," he recounted. "It was determined they wanted to fly both of them out, but they could only get one airship to agree to fly" because of the weather, which included wind

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## Cal Am opens door to public financing of desal plant

### ■ Burnett optimistic hurdle will be cleared

By KELLY NIX

THE SIX Monterey Peninsula mayors and California American Water have agreed to begin talks to figure out how much public financing should go into the proposed desalination plant in North Marina.

After a two-hour meeting Wednesday afternoon, Cal Am President Rob MacLean and Carmel Mayor Jason Burnett said they would try to reach a "settlement agreement" over financing a portion of the \$400 million desal facility with public bonds, which Burnett said would save water customers money because interest rates on the borrowed money would be lower.

"It involves getting their experts and our experts in a room together to not just find the problems, but find the solutions to those problems," Burnett said.

Though public financing would save money for water customers, it could also reduce the profit to Cal Am and its shareholders.

In testimony submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission in March, Cal Am director of finance Jeffrey Linam said if Cal Am accepted a large portion of financing guaranteed by the public, it could cause construction delays and open up the company to adverse tax implications, and may not save ratepayers money.

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## TIFFANY & Co. GETS SIGNS, LOSES AWNINGS

By MARY SCHLEY

THREE YEARS ago, teal awnings were approved for the exterior of the Tiffany & Co. store on Ocean Avenue — despite the fact the color goes against the city's desire for muted and natural hues, and that the awnings would be cosmetic more than functional — but the store never installed them, and the permit expired. On Wednesday, the planning commission, including two members who OK'd the awnings the first time around, unanimously denied Tiffany's request for re-issuance of the permit.

"Because this is a re-issuance, it's a new hearing, and the planning commission is not bound by the previous decision on this project," senior planner Marc Wiener told the commission April 10.

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## \$20M suit against title company over mini golf course

By KELLY NIX

THE PEBBLE Beach couple who battled unsuccessfully with the California Coastal Commission to keep a three-hole golf course in their front yard has filed a \$20 million lawsuit against the title company that failed to uncover environmental restrictions on their property when they were in escrow to buy it.

In 2011, after a decade-long legal battle with the coastal commission, Robert and Maureen Feduniak ripped out the golf course at their 17 Mile Drive property across from Fanshell Beach.

Now, the Feduniaks are targeting Old Republic National Title Insurance Company, which guaranteed the title when

they purchased the home in 2000 for \$13 million, for failing to warn them about a 1983 easement that required only native plants be used on the property.

Old Republic "provided the plaintiffs with a preliminary title report, which did not disclose the easement or the permit conditions imposed by the [California Coastal] Commission" prohibiting the existence of the golf course, according to the lawsuit.

The claim, filed by the Feduniaks' Monterey attorney Mark Cameron, asks a court to order Old Republic to reimburse them for all of the damages, legal costs and expenses they incurred defending a cease-and-desist order and

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## GROUP RAMPS UP EFFORT TO REMOVE TREES FROM OCEAN AVE. SAND DUNES

By MARY SCHLEY

SEVERAL LONGTIME residents don't want the sand dunes north of Ocean Avenue covered with Monterey cypress and pines and are tired of waiting for city hall to consider the matter, so they have taken it upon themselves to get the California Native Plant Society and the California Coastal Commission involved.

Longtime Carmelites Niels Reimers, Jim Emery and Andrea Thatcher hope to use historical and environmental arguments to convince the city to remove the numerous trees planted in the area as recently as last summer, as well as the older pines and cypresses there.

### Bare dunes

"Jim and I noticed the plantings on the North Dunes last summer — 23 new cypress trees planted on the dunes — and that led a bunch of us to get together with a core of people who have long histories here

and have feelings for the dunes," Reimers said Monday. Reimers and Thatcher, who graduated from Carmel High School in the 1940s, fondly remember the dunes when they were mostly bare sand.

Last fall, they took their concerns to the Carmel Forest & Beach Commission, which held a community meeting a few months later with the intention of getting more feedback from others regarding the ideal state of the dunes. The area is the subject of a master plan adopted by the city and has undergone a lot of work lately, including the installation of a viewing platform and boardwalk, and the removal of invasive ice plant.

### 'Loaded for bear'

"When we went to the meeting, the tree people were loaded for bear," Reimers said. "It was suggested that those of us who grew up here probably destroyed the plants, that the dunes were white partly

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PHOTO/PAT HATHAWAY, CALIFORNIA VIEWS

This photo of Carmel Point, Carmel and Pebble Beach from 1906 shows that much of the area was treeless at the time, including the big sand dunes north of Ocean Avenue and west of San Antonio.