

The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 99 No. 34

On the Internet: www.carmelpinecone.com

August 23-29, 2013

YOUR SOURCE FOR LOCAL NEWS, ARTS AND OPINION SINCE 1915

Hawk released after recovering from gunshot

By KELLY NIX

A HAWK that suffered a broken wing after being shot by a BB gun was released back into the wild Thursday morning. SPCA for Monterey County officials rescued the red-tailed hawk in the Corral de Tierra area on July 10 after a resident called the animal welfare organization. “The hawk was walking around somebody’s backyard and unable to fly,” SPCA spokeswoman

Beth Brookhouser told The Pine Cone. After undergoing surgery to repair the broken wing and subsequent physical therapy to regain proper mobility, the hawk was released at 11:15 a.m. When SPCA Wildlife Rescue Center supervisor Jessica Shipman let the bird go, he flew about five feet, landed, then sauntered to a nearby tree. “He hopped up to the top branches and looked around for a while, surveying the area,”

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PHOTOS/COURTESY SPCA FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

An X-ray (above) shows a shattered bone in an injured hawk’s wing and the BB that caused it. After the raptor was nursed back to health by the SPCA, it was as handsome as ever (left) and ready to be released back to the wild.

Tear-down of San Clemente Dam under way

By CHRIS COUNTS

ONLY A few months after the \$83 million San Clemente Dam removal project received its final permit, workers have begun work on tearing down the dam. “We’re in the process of creating an access road” from Carmel Valley Road to the site, project manager Jeff Szytel told The Pine Cone. “Access is the first key step.”

Because the project is subject to strict environmental oversight, workers are paying close attention to how the dam removal is impacting the surrounding flora and fauna. Not only are fences being erected to prevent wildlife from coming to the construction area, but workers are going to considerable lengths to move colonies of woodrats. “Any active nest must be relocated,” Szytel said. Szytel also said he is happy with the pace of construction. “Work is proceeding now that we have permits in hand,” he said. “We’re hoping to complete as much work as we can this year so we’ll be well positioned to stay on schedule.”



PHOTO/COURTESY CALIFORNIA AMERICAN WATER

Work has begun to build an access road so construction traffic can travel from Carmel Valley Road to San Clemente Dam and tear it down.

For updates on traffic delays — as well as videos showing the project’s progress — Szytel encouraged the public to visit www.san-clementedamremoval.org. As a result of the construction, a section of Carmel Valley Road is restricted to one-lane traffic. But at least they waited until Concours Week was over.

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WILL CELL TOWERS HURT MONARCHS?

By KELLY NIX

A PAIR of cell phone antennas disguised as hotel chimneys got the go-ahead from the Pacific Grove City Council Wednesday after a group of activists argued that radio signals from the devices could harm the city’s monarch butterflies. The council rejected a request by Nina Beety to continue a public hearing to consider an appeal of the city planning commission’s July 18 approval of the antennas. Beety is among more than 10 people — many of whom said they don’t live in P.G. — who spoke out Wednesday night against AT&T’s plan to install the antennas. “The butterflies will be long gone if we don’t do something about this,” according to a change.org petition organized by Augustina Ursino that had received about 400 signatures by Wednesday afternoon. Numerous people at the council meeting also spoke in favor of the antennas, which some said are necessary for emergency phone calls. AT&T wants to place the antennas inside faux chimney enclosures at The Wilkies Inn at 1038

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Managing Concours Week success no easy feat

By MARY SCHLEY

AN UNFORTUNATE truck crash, a fallen Monterey pine and poorly timed tree work along Highway 1 only served to highlight a fact many Monterey Peninsula residents already know: Concours Week is so successful and draws such large crowds that even when the roads are open, they are clogged with cars. Any hiccup, and the snarls stop being a frustrating inconvenience and turn into a maddening mess. As the 10-day period that culminates with the world-famous Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance adds more and more events, and the success of each increases, public officials and key decision makers are contemplating how to accommodate rising attendance without killing the goose that laid the golden egg. Over the last two weeks, traffic was seriously backed up at various times on all the principal arteries and on city streets seemingly everywhere. The worst was probably leaving Carmel Valley. Valley resident Carol Vetter found herself caught up in the jam induced by the Caltrans tree work on Highway 1 Aug. 9 when she tried to get to Pacific Grove. After an hour, she had moved hardly at all. “I finally gave up and headed back

toward the mouth of the valley, only to find out that the traffic was backed up even to Rio Road east to Via Nona Marie, where the cars had blocked my way to the post office. No problem, I went to Carmel Rancho, turned left and found that traffic was backed up on that road, too,” she said, so she parked the car and walked, just like many others in the area were, including the workers at the Big Sur Marathon office who wondered if they would have to walk home that night. “Praise God it was a lovely day for walking, and when the Concours traffic hit [later in the week], it was a piece of cake in comparison.” The three events held within the city limits of Carmel — the Concours on the Avenue Tuesday, the Tour d’Elegance Thursday and the Pacific Grove Auto Rally Friday — came off without a hitch, according to Mayor Jason Burnett. “I didn’t get a single complaint,” he said. “I got tons of positive feedback from businesses and residents and visitors.” Nonetheless, he, city administrator Jason Stilwell, Carmel Police Chief Mike Calhoun and other department heads will meet to assess what logistical improvements might be made in the future, from slowing drivers as

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Have you seen this Corvette?

By MARY SCHLEY

A RACE fan’s beloved 1962 Corvette was quietly rolled out of its parking spot at a Pacific Grove B&B while its owners were steps away, a vintage Impala was stolen from an auction’s parking area monitored by professional security guards, and two more historic Chevys were taken from a Monterey golf course used by another auction house over the weekend. With thousands of people in town for the historic races at Mazda Raceway, the Pebble Beach Concours, several major auctions, shows, rallies and other events — many of them driving beautiful collector cars of their own — the Monterey Peninsula became a “target-rich environment for thieves,” noted Pat Monahan, whose 1962 Corvette was stolen Saturday night, despite his making every effort to leave it in a secure, out-of-sight

spot in the parking lot of the B&B where he and his wife stayed. “I took every precaution, I thought,” he said, adding that the red Corvette with a hardtop was stolen on Aug. 17, sometime between 8:30 p.m., when they returned from dinner, and 9:30 p.m., when another guest noticed the ’Vette wasn’t in its usual spot. “They couldn’t start the car — it’s loud, and everyone knew the car — so obviously they pushed it out, and once they got it out of the driveway, it’s all downhill to the ocean,” he said. “My view is they never did start it.” He’s since blanketed Corvette owners groups, law enforcement agencies, dealers, auction houses, Internet groups, clubs, newsletters and the media with photos and details about the car and its disappearance,

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Be on the lookout for this pristine 1962 Corvette stolen from a Pacific Grove B&B Saturday night. Three other classic cars were also stolen during Concours Week.

PHOTO/PAT MONAHAN

