



# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## Homeowner sues over golf balls in his yard

By KELLY NIX

A CORRAL de Tierra man who lives next to a golf course is so tired of golf balls landing in his yard — including one that nailed him in the shoulder while he was tending



PHOTO/KELLY NIX

This peaceful looking residence off Highway 68 is actually under constant bombardment by golf balls hit from an adjacent driving range, its owner claims. He knew the home was next to a golf course when he bought it, of course, but the number of golf balls is “far beyond what a reasonable person might expect,” he says.

his garden — he’s filed a lawsuit against the owner of the course, the realtor who helped him buy the house, and the man who sold it to him, complaining that he was never told about the errant ball problem.

In a Jan. 24 lawsuit, Gary L. Olimpia, whose home is adjacent to Corral de Tierra Country Club off Highway 68, said it’s not uncommon for more than 100 golf balls per week to land in the yard of his home on Vista Dorado Drive.

Crash landings of the dimpled spheres, he said, are so common that he can’t let his 15 grandchildren play outside for fear they’ll be injured.

Olimpia is suing the golf and tennis country club, the home’s previous owner, Bernard Lantis, and realtor Maria Betts and Shankle Real Estate, alleging they failed to disclose the “golf ball intrusion problem.” Among other things, Olimpia wants a judge to order Corral de Tierra to stop the use of its driving range until it’s been made safe.

“The amount of golf balls which intrude onto [Olimpia’s] property on a regular basis,” he contends in his lawsuit, “is far beyond what a reasonable person might expect to occur when living next to a golf course.”

As an example, Olimpia said he picked up 122 balls that accumulated in his yard over a five-

See **GOLF** page 26A

## Voters will decide Cal Am takeover bid

■ Water board accepts petitions, puts issue on June ballot

By KELLY NIX

THE MONTEREY Peninsula Water Management District board voted Wednesday night to let the people decide the fate of a water group’s initiative that seeks a public takeover of privately held utility California American Water.

Though directors had the option of deciding to pursue the public buyout of Cal Am on their own, they decided that voters should make that decision. The group behind the effort, Public Water Now, collected enough valid signatures for the initiative, which was certified by the district Wednesday, and the issue will be added to the June 3 ballot.

The June election will cost the district — and therefore Peninsula water customers — about \$80,000 to \$100,000. If the initiative passes, the “feasibility and acquisition plan” it calls for that will cost “hundreds of thousands of dol-

See **TAKEOVER** page 21A

## Austin cleared of perjury charges

■ He lives in town, DA says, so use of fake address wasn’t a crime

By MARY SCHLEY

PUTTING TO bed any rumors about where Carmel City Council candidate Lucas Austin lives, and whether he is eligible to vote and run for office in town, the Monterey County District Attorney’s Office said this week that its investigation shows that he began renting a house in town last Dec. 1. Assistant DA Berkley Brannon also announced that, even though Austin knowingly listed a fake address, NW Lincoln and Fifth, as his home address on his paperwork to run for election, and swore it was true “under penalty of perjury,” prosecutors will not charge him with any crime.

“Although Mr. Austin intentionally provided a false location for his residence, he correctly identified his residence as existing within Carmel-by-the-Sea,” Brannon said. “The crime of perjury requires a false affidavit in which the signer

See **AUSTIN** page 14A

## P.B. academy opens just in time for AT&T

By KELLY NIX

AS THE world’s best golfers arrive in Pebble Beach for the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am next week, they’ll find something completely new to help them fine-tune their games.

Just in time for one of the year’s biggest events, the P.B. Co. opened an advanced practice facility and academy that employs state-of-the-art technology and good, old-fashioned customer service to help golfers of varying abilities improve their games. It also has a new driving range and new areas to improve their putting, chipping and bunker shots, including greens that resemble the ones on the Pebble Beach Golf Links.

The Pebble Beach Golf Academy & Practice Facility — across Portola Road from the former driving range — offers

See **ACADEMY** page 14A

## Supes lobbied hard to allow short-term rentals

By CHRIS COUNTS

BACKED BY about 50 people, a new group called the Monterey County Vacation Rental Coalition urged the board of supervisors this week to allow short-term rentals in the unincorporated parts of the county, including Big Sur and Pebble Beach.

And as early as Monday, the draft of an ordinance permitting short term rentals in those areas could be released, county planning official Carl Holm told The Pine Cone.

At the Jan. 28 meeting, Janie Rommel-Eichorn of Big Sur told the supervisors the coalition seeks to work with “the board, county staff and the public” to create “a fair and reasonable system of regulation” for the industry.

Currently, short-term rentals are not permitted in the county’s coastal zone, although many are available in Pebble

See **RENTALS** page 8A

## BIG SUR OCEANFRONT GETAWAY SELLS FOR \$31M

By CHRIS COUNTS

A HOME with stunning views of the Big Sur coast, along with more than 90 acres of rugged land divided among two parcels, sold last week for a staggering \$31,394,000 — one of the largest sale prices for residential real estate in Monterey County history.

The seller was David F. Brubaker, and the buyer took title via a company called Ankle Crisper LLC. Calls to Brubaker and Ralph Arnheim, a Palo Alto businessman who is either the actual buyer or his representative, were not returned.

One of the properties is the site of the distinctive Staude House, which was named for its first occupants, pharmaceutical businessman Tony Staude and his wife, Marguerite, who achieved fame as the designers and

financiers of the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Sedona, Ariz. Tony Staude died in 2006.

Designed by the late architect George Brook-Kothlow of Carmel Valley, the Staudes’ Big Sur house was constructed in the late 1960s with reclaimed redwood bridge timbers.

The house was small, just two bedrooms and two baths, with a total living area of 2,234 square feet, according to county records, but was built in a breathtaking location on the edge of the Big Sur coast. Its distinctive circular shape is clearly visible in aerial photographs.

A separate structure on the southern part of the property comprises just 435 square feet, according to county records.

See **GETAWAY** page 27A



PHOTO/RICHARD OLSEN

Somebody with really deep pockets is the new owner of this amazing home at Highway 1 and Anderson Creek in Big Sur.