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HOLIDAY
GUIDE

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Metered parking to go live Dec. 1

By MARY SCHLEY

THE 10 paid-parking kiosks installed on Ocean Avenue between Junipero and Monte Verde streets in the core commercial district last weekend are set to go live Monday, Dec. 1, city administrator Doug Schmitz announced Friday. The meters, which are a six-month experiment in the city's efforts to ease parking congestion downtown, will cost \$2 per hour between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. daily, and max out after four hours. They can be paid by coins, credit or debit card, or via a cell phone app called Parkmobile.

Schmitz said Carmel Police Chief Mike Calhoun contacted Monta Potter, CEO of the Carmel Chamber of Commerce, "to ascertain whether initiating paid parking at the commencement of the holiday shopping

Hidden under plastic bags along Ocean Avenue are 10 parking kiosks just like this one. Starting Dec. 1, they will be taking people's money.

season might be detrimental to our shopkeepers." She reportedly told him she didn't think it would be bad for downtown businesses, so the program is a go.

To help visitors and locals learn how to use the kiosks — which require entering the vehicle's license plate number but do not necessitate placing a receipt on the dash — National Parking & Valet, the company the city hired to administer the paid-parking program, will provide "parking ambassadors" to answer questions and provide directions.

Carmel P.D. community services officers will enforce the paid parking in the 90 affected spots by using technology that reads license plates to determine if the cars are legally parked and whether they have exceeded their time limits.

According to figures provided by Calhoun to the city council earlier this month, the total revenues expected during the six-month peri-

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John Hanson gets his job back

By MARY SCHLEY

MORE THAN a year after he was fired by Jason Stilwell, building official John Hanson was reinstated as a city employee Tuesday night when the council met in closed session to approve a settlement agreement with him.

Immediately after the announcement was made public, city administrator Doug Schmitz called Hanson to give him the news and ask when he wanted to come back to work.

"My family and I are so happy," Hanson told The Pine Cone later that night. "I'm coming back to work on Monday."



John Hanson

Hanson first joined the city's workforce in 1988 and took a job in the building department in 1997. He became chief building official a decade later and held that job until he was fired on Aug. 5, 2013.

A retired first sergeant of the U.S. Army National Guard who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, Hanson, who is in his mid-50s, was also a reserve officer for Carmel P.D. for eight years and said he hopes to talk to police Chief Mike Calhoun about regaining that status.

The council's vote Tuesday night marked the end of the lawsuit Hanson filed last summer claiming wrongful termination, violation of due process, disclosure of confidential personnel information, defamation, deprivation of his property interest and breach of contract, among other charges. As part of his agreement with the city, Hanson will withdraw the suit.

According to the document approved Tuesday, Hanson will receive back pay and benefits of about \$134,000, and damages and expense reimbursement of \$100,000. His attorney, Michael Stamp, will be paid \$105,000.

The payout is covered by the city's insurance, minus its

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Marina asks judge to block test well permit

By KELLY NIX

THE GOVERNMENT agency that supplies water to Marina and Fort Ord filed a lawsuit this week against the California Coastal Commission, seeking to overturn the commission's approval of Cal Am's desalination test well.

In the suit filed Nov. 25, Marina Coast Water District seeks a court order compelling the coastal commission to set aside its decision granting California American Water a development permit for the test well, and an injunction preventing the agency from issuing the permit. The test well, to be drilled on property in Marina, is intended to provide water-quality and other data for Cal Am's full-scale desal

plant, which is also proposed for Marina.

The complaint also seeks an order prohibiting Cal Am — named as a party of interest in the lawsuit — from beginning construction on the test well, which is expected to operate for up to two years. Cal Am was set to begin drilling the well in December.

"Unless this court stays the project," said Marina Coast's attorney, Howard F. Wilkins III, who filed the complaint in Sacramento Superior Court, "the imminent project construction will destroy rare coastal sand dunes, which have been found to be environmentally sensitive habitat areas by the

See **MARINA** page 10A

HELPING PETS FIND HOMES WITH A BACKDROP AND AN UMBRELLA LIGHT

"The eyes are the soul of the animal, the ears show its happiness, the nose its health, the paws its playfulness, and the tail its spirit."

— Steve Sloop

By LISA CRAWFORD WATSON

HE NEVER imagined that making a donation to the SPCA for Monterey County would lead to the development of The Shelter Art Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to presenting animals in the best light — literally.

But standing at the reception counter at the SPCA off Highway 68 between Monterey and Salinas, Steve Sloop saw a list of job openings at the organization. Having recently retired from a Forrest Gump-like career that included portrait photography, filmmaking, television, teaching, being a pilot for the U.S. Air Force and an airline, and serving as a U.S. Marshall in the Virgin Islands, he had moved with his wife to Monterey.

"Nobody wanted an old pilot," says Sloop, "but my wife wanted me out, working. One of the jobs available at the SPCA was animal care technician. I thought, 'I can do that; I can come in and love on the animals.' But it turned out the job was much more difficult than it sounded. One of my tasks was to do animal intakes. This is the worst day in the life of these animals. We poke and prod and give shots and test tem-



Compared to the haggard ones you sometimes see at shelters, who could resist kittens like these? The answer, it turns out, is nobody.

See **PETS** page 12A



PHOTO/COURTESY STEVE SLOOP

A pioneer in pet photography, Steve Sloop makes homeless animals look like movie stars — which has helped them find homes.