

The Carmel Pine Cone

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TRUSTED BY LOCALS AND LOVED BY VISITORS SINCE 1915

Kevin Bacon invited to stay

By MARY SCHLEY

THE PIG is a pet — not livestock — and therefore, he can go back to the house at Torres and Second, where his existence caused a small feud among residents a few months back. According to Carmel planning and building director Rob Mullane, the city has now “authorized the keeping of a pig on the property as a companion animal for a qualifying family member.”



Kevin Bacon

That decision was made by Mullane, and since no one objected to it during a 10-day appeal period, as long as owner Brandi Faia follows the conditions demanded by the city in exchange for the “reasonable accommodation” — i.e., the 40-pound pig named Kevin Bacon that’s a companion for her son, who has Asperger’s Syndrome — he can stay.

The pig was removed from Faia’s Torres Street home last month after a neighbor complained in December 2014 about squealing, and also worried about the pig’s care, according to police reports at the time. The pig also escaped from the property, and some were concerned he was living in the backyard without food or enough water.

But Faia, a longtime Carmel resident, said at the time that her

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CHOMP: Highway 68 roundabout could impede emergency traffic

By KELLY NIX

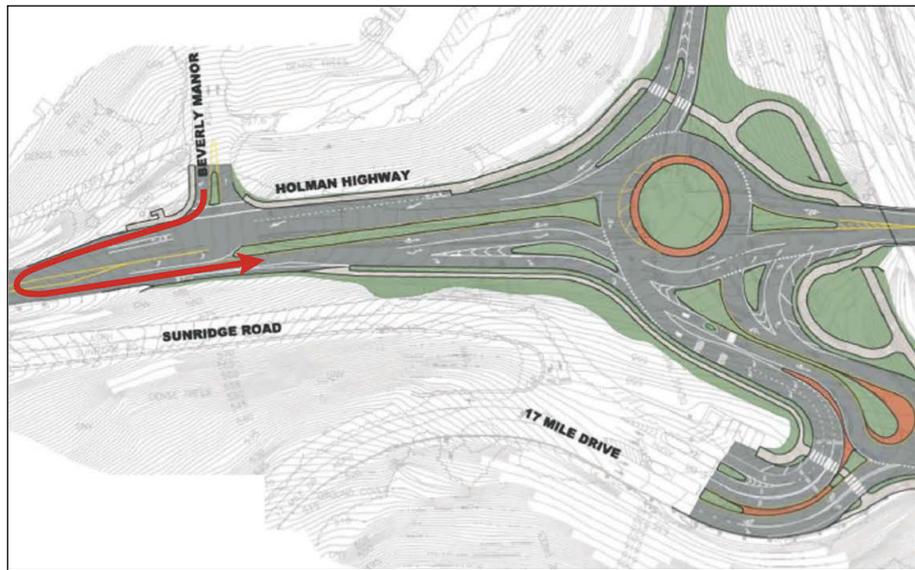
THE ROUNDABOUT under construction at Highway 68 and Highway 1 is supposed to smooth the flow of traffic, but the project has run into a roadblock over concerns from officials at Community Hospital that the new intersection will cause problems for ambulances and other vehicles entering and exiting the facility during emergencies.

Planners say a second roundabout will have to be built at the entrance to CHOMP to deal with the problem.

While the roughly \$8 million roundabout at the busy intersection is supposed to be safer and improve traffic flow when it opens in summer 2017, hospital officials say they’re worried that the redesign will actually clog the artery that leads to the hospital.

“We already experience congestion at times,” hospital spokeswoman Brenda Moore told The Pine Cone Tuesday, “and are concerned that the added traffic could impede ambulances as well as doctors and staff responding to emergency calls.”

The issue is this: When the roundabout opens, drivers exiting the Carmel Hill Professional Center — just east of CHOMP — will no longer be allowed to make left turns onto Highway 68. The left-turn prohibition will force drivers to turn west onto 68 and make a U-turn at CHOMP’s entrance before they can head back toward Highway 1.



This graphic shows how cars leaving the Carmel Hill Professional Center will have to turn west, make a U-turn at the entrance to CHOMP before heading east on Highway 68. To solve the problem, a new roundabout will also have to be built at CHOMP sometime in the future.

Depending on traffic flow, Moore said the project could actually prevent ambulances, doctors and patients from getting in and out of the hospital quickly — one of the issues the roundabout was touted to resolve.

“We anticipate that those drivers will turn around at Community Hospital’s main entrance,” Moore said, “and we do have concerns about the increased traffic volume.”

Highway 68 will be closed at times during construction, which is set to begin this fall, challenging drivers’ patience.

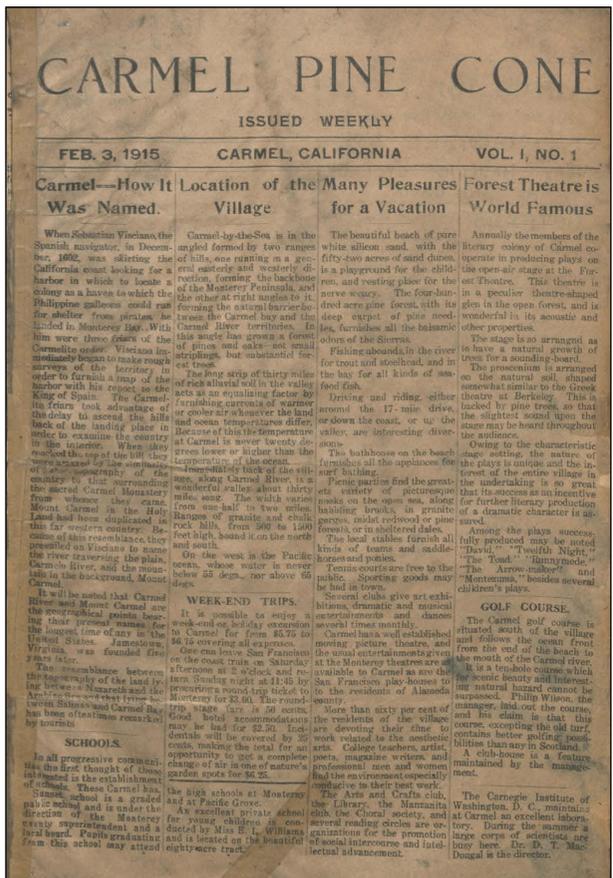
Officials, Moore said, are also worried that the plans don’t call for the addition of a lane for drivers leaving

See **TRAFFIC** page 14A

The Pine Cone is 100

THE CARMEL Pine Cone was founded in February 1915, and this week the newspaper is celebrating by publishing a special, 32-page section that includes a profile of founder William Overstreet, tributes from local VIPs, plenty of historic photographs, and a look back at the important events, and some not-so-important events, covered in its pages.

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The front page of the very first Carmel Pine Cone, February 3, 1915.

ABANDONED DUFFLE BAG LEADS TO BOMB SCARE

Transient hospitalized for psychiatric evaluation

By MARY SCHLEY

A BUSY restaurant, a hotel and some offices were evacuated last Thursday night after a man left a duffle bag at the offices of Neill Engineering on Mission Street and didn’t come back to pick it up.

Carmel police called in the Monterey County Sheriff’s Bomb Squad, which used a robot to blow the bag apart, only to find it contained little more than clothes and a laptop. The bag’s owner, later identified by police as a 25-year-old transient, failed to come back for it due to suffering some sort of psychiatric illness, and he was hospitalized for an evaluation the following day.

Around noon on Feb. 12, with the city full of visitors for the week’s AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament, the man walked into Neill Engineering and asked workers if they would keep an eye on the camouflage rolling duffle for 10 or 15 minutes while he met up with some friends, according to Carmel Police Sgt. Ron Pflieger. But by the time 5 p.m. rolled around, he hadn’t returned, so an employee called the police department to find out what to do with it.

The duffle contained no identifying marks, however, and officers responded with caution, calling for the bomb squad to inspect the bag and, if necessary, get rid of it. A 150-foot perimeter was established, forcing the evacuation of Casanova Restaurant, which had dozens of reservations, a hotel, a salon, apartments and some offices, according to Pflieger. Bystanders — including many restaurant workers in chef’s whites and aprons — lingered on street corners a safe distance away.

When the bomb squad arrived, deputies first X-rayed the bag, according to Pflieger.

“They have a device that can penetrate to a certain depth,” he said.

As soon as deputies saw an image of the laptop’s circuitry in the bag, they decided to move to the next step.

“On one of the initial passes, they saw what looked like a switchboard with wires, but they couldn’t distinguish what it was,” he said. “At that point, it could be a device that’s possible to be remotely detonated.”

So the bomb squad sent in the robot, which dragged the

See **SCARE** page 13A

Mary Schley nominated for Pulitzer

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

THE REPORTER who covers city hall for The Pine Cone, Mary Schley, has been nominated for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting, publisher Paul Miller announced today.

“I submitted the nomination several weeks ago, but I waited until today to announce it, because I wanted to do so in conjunction with The Pine Cone’s 100th birthday,” Miller said Thursday. “It’s been an honor to publish her stories, especially over the last two years, during the scandals at city hall. They’re something that everyone who’s ever worked here would have been proud of.”

Schley, 42, has worked at The Pine Cone since 1998, covering city politics, law enforcement and the schools, in addition to writing a weekly food column.

“Of course, it’s her coverage of city hall that has really

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