

# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## Surveillance on Santa Lucia leads to drug arrests

■ Bomb squad also called to blow up old mortar

By MARY SCHLEY

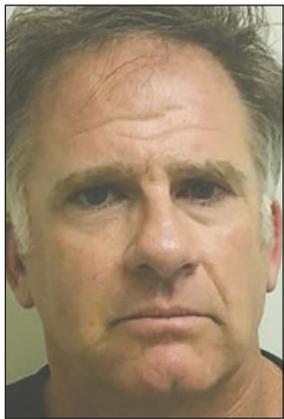
A HOME on Santa Lucia was raided, and two men and a woman were arrested Tuesday afternoon after police received a tip drugs were being sold at the home, and that a

parolee who lived there had a gun, according to Carmel Police Cmdr. Paul Tomasi.

During the raid, an old mortar round was also discovered in the back of a pickup truck, and streets were closed for several hours while the mortar was removed.

The dramatic events began after the anonymous tip was received from a nearby resident. Because drugs and guns

See **DRUGS** page 27A



PHOTO/COURTESY PAUL TOMASI (RIGHT)

Joshua Griffin (left) and Timothy Buhl were arrested Tuesday for drug possession and other charges after police raided a house on Santa Lucia Avenue. During the raid, police recovered an old mortar (right) which had to be blown up so it wouldn't hurt anybody. It all came as quite a surprise to residents of the quiet street, including former Mayor Sue McCloud, who lives right next door.

## Council wants parking kiosks gone by Aug. 1

By MARY SCHLEY

THE PAID parking program launched on Ocean Avenue last December may have succeeded in keeping downtown workers from hogging all the best parking spaces, opening them up for shoppers and visitors, but many residents hated how the parking kiosks looked, so the city council voted 4-1 Tuesday to remove them.

The kiosks, which charged \$2 per hour to park on the city's main street and allowed cars to remain in the spaces for up to four hours, achieved the intended result of keeping one or two spaces available per block, even during peak hours, according to data collected by a Walker Parking consultant, and they netted \$120,000.

Therefore, the program "may have worked technically, but not for the community," Mayor Jason Burnett observed at the July 7 meeting.

The city council voted to have the kiosks removed by Aug.

1, which will also be the end of the \$2-per-hour fee, at least for now.

The decision leaves unresolved what has long been acknowledged as a serious problem, and Burnett said, "I hope the council wants to continue to work constructively on parking issues in town."

Police Chief Mike Calhoun, who has gathered a lot of information and ideas from the public over the course of numerous meetings, said the next step should be to increase enforcement of the long-standing time limit on Ocean Avenue, and he asked the council for permission to hire another community services officer and to purchase another parking cart in order to help facilitate that.

"There's a lot of community support for increased enforcement," he said.

Other ideas included using a sliding scale to assess fines for overtime parking, with the first being a warning, followed by fees that escalate for repeat offenders, and creating zones where cars can be parked once for the allotted time but then must be taken outside of the core area.

See **KIOSKS** page 18A

## Drive to turn Pt. Lobos Ranch into state park revs up

By CHRIS COUNTS

NINE YEARS after taxpayers footed the \$13 million bill for 1,300-acre Point Lobos Ranch, which is across Highway 1 from Pt. Lobos State Reserve, officials from the California Department of Parks and Recreation still can't say when it will be open to the public. But two weeks from now, officials plan to unveil several alternatives for how the park will operate — and they're seeking public input.

The new park will be discussed when state parks hosts a meeting on the park's general plan July 22 from 6 to 9 p.m., at the Rancho Cañada Golf Club.

After the agency bought Point Lobos Ranch in 2006, state parks officials announced they couldn't open it until a general plan for it was completed. They later decided to combine the work of creating the plan with similar efforts for Carmel River State Beach, Point Lobos State Reserve and Hatton Canyon. But due to budget and staffing limitations, the effort stalled. In

See **PARK** page 18A

## City declares 'urgency' ban on fake grass

By MARY SCHLEY

ALARMED BY the increased use of artificial turf in place of water-guzzling lawns, the Carmel City Council voted Tuesday not to allow any more fake grass in the city.

"We have seen an increasing number of requests for installations," said planning director Rob Mullane. "The reasons for the requests are the high cost of water, the governor's orders [to cut water use because of the drought] and the city's own requests for water-saving measures. It's a very popular way to cut down on your water use, and in lots of communities, it's not an issue."

But in Carmel, he noted, "We have very restrictive guidelines regarding lawns." While the city discourages lawns that would be visible from the street, because they aren't in keeping to the town's more rural, forested character, grassy areas are occasionally allowed in backyard spaces.

The city's municipal code is silent on the use of fake grass, however, and after some homeowners installed artificial turf without permission, while others asked if they could,

See **GRASS** page 31A

## State OKs use of Eastwood water

■ May soon cut pumping from river and provide relief from moratorium

By CHRIS COUNTS

TWO YEARS after former Mayor Clint Eastwood proposed allowing Carmel and Carmel Valley residents and businesses to use 85.6 acre-feet of Carmel River water he has rights to, the State Water Resources Control Board approved a big piece of the plan July 3. The water has long been used to irrigate agricultural fields east of Highway 1, but a major portion of it is on its way to being available for human use, while the rest will be put back in the river.

"This is just one step in the process, but it's a very solid step," Carmel Mayor Jason Burnett told The Pine Cone. "The significance of this can't be understated."

While on Friday the SWRCB endorsed the basics of the plan, residents and businesses will have to wait at least a short while before adding a bathroom or kitchen. Burnett said the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District needs to make a change in one of its ordinances to permit the transfer of water rights from Eastwood to other private-property owners. But he said the item will be on the agenda at the MPWMD's board meeting later this month.

Assuming that ordinance is changed, residents who want to add a restroom or restaurant owners who want to add more

See **WATER** page 15A

## Test well will be shut down for at least eight weeks

■ PUC also extends comment period for EIR

By KELLY NIX

CALIFORNIA AMERICAN Water's desal test well in Marina will remain off until at least August after the California Coastal Commission said late last week that the well was "partly" responsible for a dip in nearby groundwater levels.

However, a Cal Am spokeswoman said that glitch would not affect the permitting schedule for the full-scale desal plant, which the company has said should come online in 2019.

Cal Am turned the test well off June 5 when the groundwater level in one of the company's numerous monitoring

See **DESAL** page 19A

## Is a seagull nursery OK in the residential zone?



PHOTO/COURTESY KATHY BANG

Sure, they're as cute as can be, but would you want them nesting on your roof? For one Carmel resident, the answer is a definite "Yes" and "No." See page 11A.