



CONCOURS WEEK

AUGUST 10-16, 2015



So many gorgeous cars ... so many events ... this weekend on the Monterey Peninsula!
Read all about them in our colorful special section!



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Burnett wants guarantee from Cal Am if test well fails

By KELLY NIX

AS CALIFORNIA American Water's \$10 million desalination test well sits idle while the company waits for a state agency to say it can be turned back on, Carmel Mayor Jason Burnett has proposed that Cal Am take on the financial risk of trying out the slant well so consumers don't have to.

Slant wells are highly favored by environmentalists over open-ocean intakes, but they are unproven as a method of drawing seawater for desalination. Cal Am is essentially being forced to use the technology for its desal operation because the California Coastal Commission has condemned open-ocean intakes.

But the water company intends to bill customers for the test well operation whether the slant wells work or not, and Burnett said that shouldn't happen. He wants Cal Am and its stockholders to foot the bill for the project.

"Put your money where your mouth is," Burnett told The Pine Cone Tuesday, talking about the water company. "If Cal Am is confident this technology will work, they should guarantee it. They should tell the community that if it doesn't work, they don't have to pay."

In a recent meeting with Cal Am President Rob MacLean, Burnett requested that Cal Am and its parent company, American Water, consider the idea. And he went further, say-

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Weekend fire ban enforced immediately

By MARY SCHLEY

A HALF-DOZEN security guards and a police officer were deployed by the city over the weekend to enforce the emergency weekend ban on fires on Carmel Beach that the city council passed last week.

Citing health concerns due to smoke, as well as environmental worries about the blackening of the famous white sands, the council decided to immediately impose the ban until it can get a plan in place to limit the fires and get them up off the sand. A proposed pilot plan that would accomplish those goals was approved by the council in May and will be considered by California Coastal Commission late this year.

More enforcers

The three-hour meeting Thursday night culminated in a unanimous vote to pass the emergency ordinance, which states that smoke levels during busy nights at the beach "at times exceed air quality standards and create an immediate potential health hazard." Therefore, the council decided, the ban was justified to "protect the public safety, health and welfare." Under state law, emergency ordinances take effect immediately and require a four-fifths majority vote to pass.

The new law will expire in 45 days, unless the council extends it again in September to a full year. In total, the temporary ban can run for up to two years.

The restriction on fires could also be made permanent, if the council and the coastal commission decide it should be.

The day after the ban was enacted Aug. 13, police

and security guards were busy making sure everyone followed it — and that on a weekend when many beach parties were probably planned.

"On Friday, we assigned a patrol officer to the ATV on the beach, and we had six security guards from 6 to 11 p.m., and then two guards from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.," Police Chief Mike Calhoun said this week. "The people on Scenic Road were

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PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Temporary signs warn beach goers to leave their firewood and matches in their cars on weekends and holidays.

Big Sur man's DNA solves White House mystery

By CHRIS COUNTS

EIGHTY-EIGHT years after the author of a best-selling book claimed President Warren G. Harding was the father of her child, the 29th president's grandnephew, Peter Harding of Big Sur, told The Pine Cone he now has conclusive evidence the mother's claim was true.

Written by Nan Britton, the book, "The President's Daughter," caused a sensation when it came out in 1927. It chronicled a six-year relationship between Harding and herself, and included details that made readers blush, such as a tryst in an Oval Office closet. Just 21 when the relationship began, Britton was more than 30 years younger than the president. Her daughter, Elizabeth Ann Blaesing, was born in 1919.

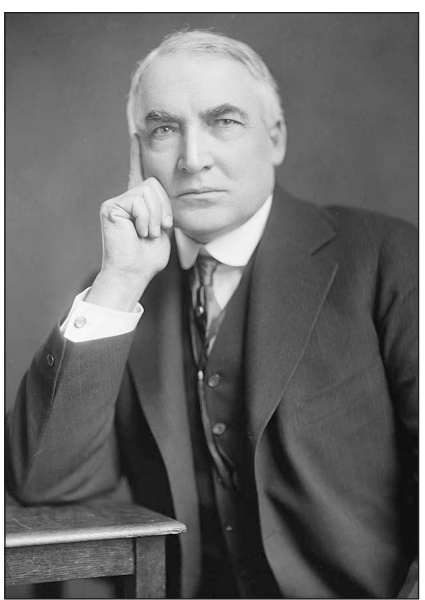
Unsuccessful efforts were made — and a bill was introduced in Congress — to keep the scandalous book off the shelves. But Britton, who claimed she received child support payments from the president for about four years, was unable to prove his paternity in court.

Like others in his family, Harding long believed Britton's allegations were false. But in 1965, he discovered that his father and uncle had gone to court to suppress the publication of love letters between Warren G. Harding and his previous mistress, Carrie Phillips.

"The very existence of the letters opened the door to my doubts," Harding said.

Four years ago, Harding finally read, "The

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After nearly a century of uncertainty, DNA testing shows that President Warren G. Harding (far left) fathered a child out of wedlock with a young woman named Nan Britton (pictured on the left with her daughter, Elizabeth). As a result, a local resident has a new set of cousins.

CONCOURS WEEK A BOON TO LOCAL ECONOMY

By MARY SCHLEY

HOTEL OCCUPANCY, room rates and transient occupancy tax revenues are always higher in Carmel during July and August than they are during any other two-month period of the year, according to data collected by city finance manager Paul Wood.

And, according to an economic impact study conducted by the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Concours Week, while it ties up roads and causes headaches for some, has a greater economic impact on the area than any other event during the year, with more than \$53 million pouring into the local economy last year as visitors came from far and wide to attend the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, the historic car races at Laguna Seca, and various other shows, auctions and rallies.

According to the data collected by the MCCVB and information gathered on 300 completed surveys conducted by Destination Analysts, about 85,000 people attended local car events in 2014, spending \$53,584,192 and taking up 36,214

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P.B. burglar caught in the act — of making himself a drink

By MARY SCHLEY

A HOMELESS Monterey man who allegedly made a habit of breaking into Pebble Beach vacation homes, staying overnight, eating the food and then stealing a few things was finally taken into custody late last month — while mixing himself an adult beverage in the kitchen of one of the houses he'd burglarized — twice — according to Monterey County Sheriff's Deputy Mike Smith.

"He was drunk as all get out," Smith said of Edward Caraccia, 31. "He was pouring himself a cocktail in the kitchen."

Smith said the arrest resulted from a series of fortunate events and the help of Pebble Beach Security and local surfers, without whom it might have taken much longer to track Caraccia down.

"Pebble Beach Security and the surfers are the heroes of this case,"

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