

# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## COUNCIL WAIVES FEES FOR COTA, TOUR D'ELEGANCE

By MARY SCHLEY

THREE MONTHS before they are set to transform downtown into Automobile Mecca for a couple of days, the Concours on the Avenue and the Pebble Beach Tour d'Elegance received approval from the city council last week to proceed with their events.

Each also had some of their city fees waived, though the policy governing those discounts remains difficult to follow and is undergoing an overhaul.

"We're constantly trying to balance the economic vitality of special events vs. the impacts on the residential character of the community," city administrator Chip Rerig said at the May 3 meeting. "We believe at the staff level that these are good events. We see our friends and neighbors observing these cars, and it's healthy for our community. There are also economic benefits that allow us to revitalize the streets and parks and sidewalks."

### How much support?

But how much should the city support them? For example, Rerig said, taxpayers covered about \$7,000 in expenses to operate shuttles between downtown and the Mission during the Concours on the Avenue in order to reduce traffic and parking problems, and the council will have to provide direction on how much help the city should provide in the future.

"The event policy is something we've been struggling with," he said. "We do need your leadership and your policy direction, and then going forward, we can inform the community about what you expect."

Carmel Chamber of Commerce CEO Monta Potter said the city should do its best to support such events, and she noted that when the transient occupancy tax was implemented in 1964, some of it was supposed to be used for "community and cultural activities."

"That is what the hostelry tax was put in place for," she said, while the city's \$22 million budget allocates just \$27,500 to support events.

"It's very difficult when you're sitting up here and you

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## Big Sur matriarch dies



PHOTO/KYLE EVANS

With a face that reflected the hard work of raising a family in a remote and rugged place, Helen Morganrath left her mark on Big Sur. See page 10A.

## Cal Am declares test well a success

By KELLY NIX

CALIFORNIA AMERICAN Water this week declared its \$10 million test desalination well in Marina a success, saying it has demonstrated that the location and the slant-well technology it employs are feasible for a full-scale desal plant.

The viability of the test operation is a major milestone for Cal Am since slant wells, which draw ocean water through the sand instead of the open ocean, have not been used for desal plants in the United States. Cal Am drilled the test well early last year after getting a permit from — and at the insistence of — the California Coastal Commission. Open ocean intakes are opposed by environmentalists because of possible impacts on sea life.

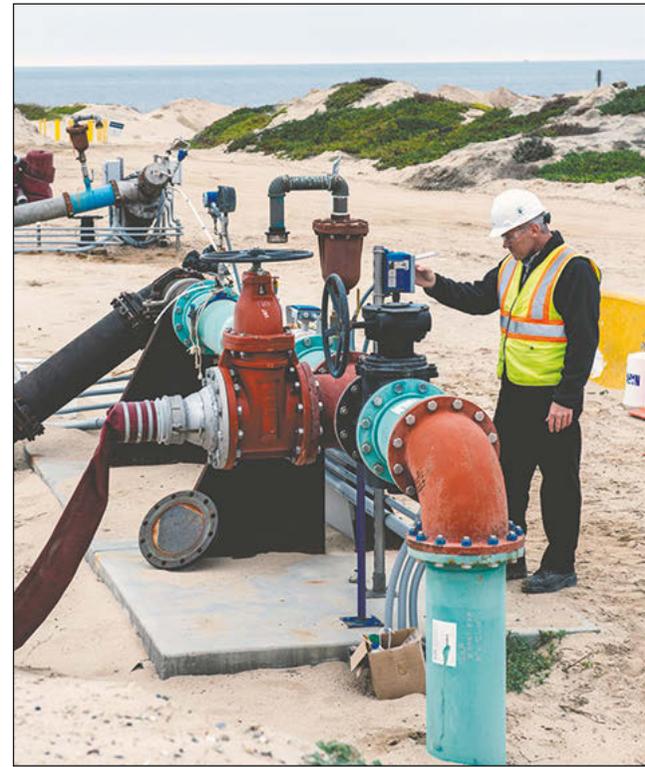
"The purpose of the test well was to prove that the location was feasible and that the wells drew the desired level of ocean water," Cal Am external affairs manager Catherine Stedman told The Pine Cone Wednesday. "It has proven those two points and is a success."

While the test well has already gathered enough data for the environmental impact report for its desalination plant, Stedman said the operation is still relevant and will continue to collect data until the permit for the well expires in 2018.

"The reason to continue running the well is that the more data we gather, the better we can refine our design and treatment processes," she said, based on the salinity and other parameters of the water drawn at that location.

While the test well pumps 2,000 gallons of seawater per minute, the full-scale plant is expected to yield 16,000 gal-

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PHOTO/COURTESY CAL AM

Cal Am engineering manager Ian Crooks looks over monitoring data for the company's test well in Marina. This week, the company declared the operation a success.

## Candidates for Congress weigh in on immigration

By KELLY NIX

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION and securing the United States' southern border will continue to be contentious issues in this year's presidential election season, and the five candidates for the 20th Congressional District have offered their own ideas on the topics.

Four of the candidates vying for the job currently held by Rep. Sam Farr told The Pine Cone the United States must secure its border with Mexico.

None of them, however, said that a lengthy wall — like that proposed by Presidential candidate Donald Trump — should be a solution to halting immigrants from crossing over to the United States.

Republican candidate **Casey Lucius** called for a "coordinated strategy" to address unlawful entry, not just at the southern border, but also the United States/Canadian border.

"Despite billions spent, we know there are still major gaps in our border security," said Lucius, of Pacific Grove. "We do need to increase funding for border security, patrol and fence-

## BACH FEST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LEAVING

By MARY SCHLEY

BECAUSE OF her, the Carmel Bach Festival has expanded its reach, established its relevancy among many more Monterey County residents, and made classical music accessible and enjoyable to people of widely ranging ages and backgrounds. But Debbie Chinn will insist that the story is not about her — it's about the festival. Chinn, who became the fest's executive director in March 2012, will leave to pursue new challenges when her contract is up in September.

"Debbie has had many accomplishments as our executive director, and among the top are her expansion of our community engagement programs and the thought of really engaging the community, not just going out once a year somewhere," said Carlotta Mellon, president of the board of directors. "We've grown our audience locally — we have many more people from Monterey County. We've been making the festival more approachable for people, and trying to get across the message that we're a very welcoming festival."

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ing, but we also need interior enforcement and coordination with our international partners."

If elected, Lucius said she would support enhanced tunnel detection capabilities, maritime patrol aircraft, the expansion of video surveillance, and other means to secure the borders from smugglers and immigrants without documents.

"As someone who has run an operational intelligence unit, I have seen how important it is to get accurate information to everyone involved," she said. "We have thousands of state and local law enforcement officers who need better information and coordination with federal entities."

Lucius — who was the keynote speaker at a naturalization ceremony last year where 300 immigrants became United States citizens — supports a citizenship path for immigrants.

"We need to start with visa reform to ensure that those who want to work in the U.S. can work here legally," she said. "After consistent and legal status using a work visa, [illegal] immigrants should be able to apply for residency status. Assuming that no laws have been violated during their residency, they can apply for U.S. citizenship."

Democratic candidate **Jimmy Panetta** of Carmel Valley said that the willingness of immigrants to "take risks and work hard" — like he said his Italian grandfather did when he came to this country — is what contributes to the "greatness of our country and to the region's major economic drivers — agriculture and tourism."

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## Pine Cone poll this week

SUBSCRIBERS TO the Carmel Pine Cone's email edition will have a chance to sound off on races for county supervisor and U.S. Congress when the newspaper conducts an online survey beginning Thursday night.

Incumbent Dave Potter is being challenged by former United Way CEO Mary Adams for supervisor, while Republican Casey Lucius, Democrat Jimmy Panetta and a host of lesser known challengers are vying to represent the Monterey Peninsula in Congress.

Voting in the poll — which will be online only, and open only to subscribers — will begin Thursday night and conclude May 18, with results reported in next week's edition.

A similar poll done in March for Carmel's election for mayor and city council very accurately predicted the actual results.

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