

The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 102 No. 25

On the Internet: www.carmelpinecone.com

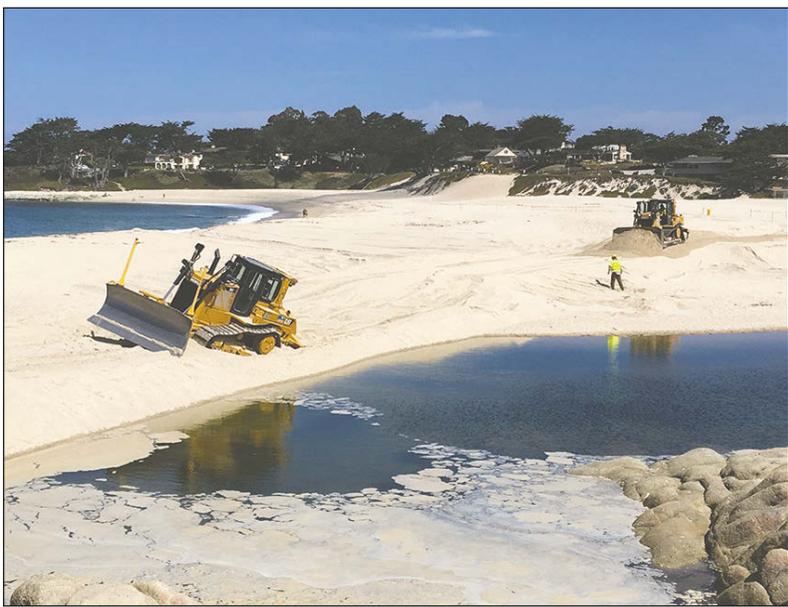
June 17 - 23, 2016

TRUSTED BY LOCALS AND LOVED BY VISITORS SINCE 1915

Bulldozers build up sandbar to keep waves out

By CHRIS COUNTS

TO PREVENT salt water from inundating the Carmel River Lagoon during the summer and fall — and provide valuable habitat for steelhead too young to survive in the



PHOTO/CHRIS COUNTS

Usually, when bulldozers are seen at Carmel River State Beach, they're cutting a channel in the lagoon's sandbar to reduce the threat of flooding. This week, the bulldozer operators had the opposite strategy in mind.

ocean — county workers used heavy equipment this week to move an estimated 1,200 cubic yards of sand to shore up the sandbar that separates the lagoon from the sea, county official Melanie Beretti told The Pine Cone.

Building up the height of the sandbar makes it much harder for waves to topple over the barrier and increase the salinity of the water in the lagoon. Also, it traps more fresh water behind the bar, keeping the water level higher and providing young steelhead with protection from predators, especially cormorants, terns and ducks.

The work was the reverse of what's usually done by bulldozers on the beach, when they're used to open a channel in the sandbar to release water from the lagoon after it swells from rain. The work usually happens each year in the late fall or early winter, and it's done to protect homes along the lagoon from flooding.

EIRs due for flood control projects

Besides building up the height of the sandbar, the county is planning next month to release the environmental impact report for a multifaceted project that would use tons of rocks to protect Scenic Road and the Carmel River State Beach parking lot from erosion. Another element of it is to install a lengthy barrier in the lagoon to prevent the flooding of homes to the north.

See **LAGOON** page 18A

Council OKs 'onerous' policy on special events

■ For-profits would have to partner with nonprofits or the city to get subsidies

By MARY SCHLEY

TACKLING THE thorny issue of how to accommodate special events in town, and whether to subsidize them, the Carmel City Council wrangled with the details for more than two hours last Tuesday night before endorsing a 20-page policy drafted by a large committee over the course of nearly 20 meetings and discussions, and almost a dozen revisions.

The group of city staff, residents, business people and others was charged with developing standard criteria for the approval of special events, ensuring that any fee waivers are fairly given and fit in the budget, considering ways the policy "might advance the ethics, character and strategic goals of the community," and finding ways to encourage events during off-peak times, according to the report from Carmel Police Cmdr. Paul Tomasi. In the course of their work, members reviewed Carmel codes, policies from other cities, and relevant laws like those pertaining to alcohol and public health, and discussed the issue with the city's insurance carrier.

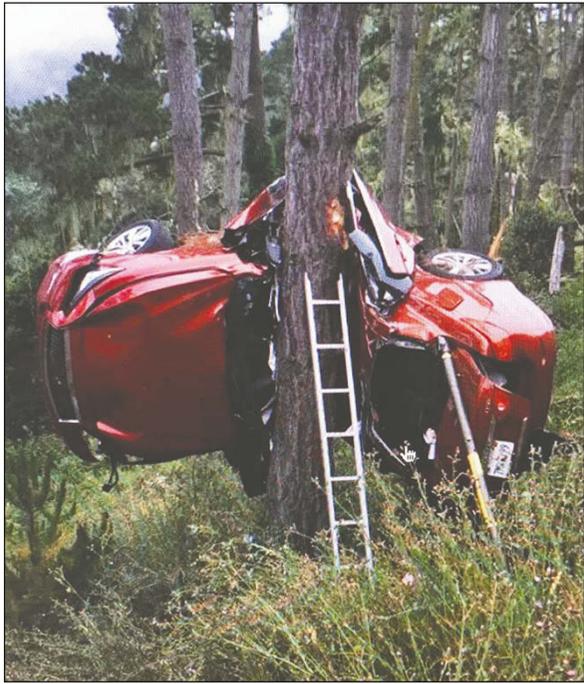
The group also concluded that, in light of a 2008 U.S. District Court decision that determined jurisdictions cannot pick and choose which organizations to support with public

See **EVENTS** page 15A

Cause of car vs. tree crash still unknown

A 21-YEAR-OLD man from Seaside died last week when the 2014 Infiniti he was driving ran off the road on southbound Highway 1 north of Carpenter Street and hit a tree with such force that a heavy wrecker had to be called to remove it from its suspended position several feet off the ground. The crash occurred just

See **CRASH** page 14A



The California Highway Patrol is awaiting toxicology results to determine if drugs or alcohol had a role in this fatal accident on Highway 1 last Tuesday.

Dog reunited with family after 16 days in wilderness

By CHRIS COUNTS

PEOPLE WHO live around here have been known to get lost in the thick and tangled vegetation that covers the steep hillsides of Big Sur, so it comes as no surprise that a 2-year-old male pit bull mix from Texas would suffer the same fate. But, remarkably, after 16 days alone in the Big Sur backcountry, the dog is safe and sound and back where he belongs.

The dog — whose name is Zeak — arrived in Big Sur just three weeks before his disappearance. He's been staying with Mary Lu and Magnus Toren of Partington Ridge because their son, Stephan — the dog's owner — is on a four-month tour of duty with the United States Coast Guard.

According to Toren, everything was going fine until May 29, when the two of them visited a friend about three miles

away. Soon, Zeak was playing with several other dogs. "They were frolicking on the lawn, and then — boom! He was gone," recalled Toren, who serves as executive director for the Henry Miller Library.

Not long after Zeak disappeared, Toren received word that the dog had been seen "pacing back and forth" along Highway 1 near Coast Gallery. "Some neighbors saw him along the highway," he said. "Several cars stopped to try and help him."

See **DOG** page 19A

P.G. to put admissions tax on November ballot

■ Aquarium officials vow to fight it

By KELLY NIX

THE PACIFIC Grove City Council this week took the initial steps to ask voters to impose an "admissions tax" on tickets sold at the Monterey Bay Aquarium and most paid activities and events in the city, including movies, concerts and possibly golf.

Late Wednesday night, the council voted 5-2 to direct city staff to come up with ballot initiative language and present it to the council at its July 20 meeting. City manager Ben Harvey said Aug. 3 is the deadline to file a notice of election for the item to appear on the Nov. 8 ballot.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium, the largest organization that would have to collect the tax, has offered the strongest

See **TAX** page 10A

A day after the end of his Big Sur backcountry odyssey, Zeak hangs out at the Henry Miller Library with Magnus Toren, who is taking care of the dog for his son while he serves in the United States Coast Guard.

