

# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## Superintendent of schools gone after less than a year

By MARY SCHLEY

SCOTT LAURENCE, who was hired last July to replace Marvin Biasotti as the superintendent of Carmel Unified School District, will give up his job at the end of June and take a \$100,000 payout, according to a separation agreement approved by the CUSD board of trustees Wednesday night.

Laurence, whose three-year contract included a salary of \$255,000, went out on medical leave for undisclosed reasons in January and was set to return last month, but he and district officials instead decided the relationship wasn't working for either of them.

The settlement unanimously approved by the board in open session June 22 states that "for a number of reasons, the relationship between Laurence and the

district has not met the expectations of both parties," and "it is understood and agreed that this agreement is a compromise of a potential dispute and contested claims, but both parties wish to end their employment relationship in a manner that is amicable and professional."

District officials and Laurence agreed he would be "considered to be on paid administrative leave" beginning May 19 and continuing through the end of June, and that he would also receive a lump sum of \$100,000 by July 30.

### No disparagement

In the settlement, the district and Laurence pledged to not disparage the other in public, and potential employers seeking references will be told that the relationship between Laurence and the district "did not meet the expectations" of either. The school board and Laurence also agreed not to sue each other.

At the meeting, CUSD Board President Mark Stilwell said the decision to terminate the contract "came after considerable discussion with Scott and even more discussion with board members," and while he would not go into detail about what caused the split, he commented, "We're sorry the relationship didn't work out as expected."

See **SCHOOLS** page 30A

## HEARING OFFICER DECIDING FATE OF FAMILY'S PIG

■ Complaining neighbor used Sharpie to draw poop on photos, owners say

By KELLY NIX

THE FATE of a pig named Bruiser, who is at the center of a dispute between his owners, the City of Pacific Grove and an irritated neighbor, is now in the hands of a hearing officer, who will decide in the next few weeks whether the family can keep the pet at home or will have to find someplace else for him to live.

On Wednesday at Pacific Grove City Hall during a nearly two-hour hearing, independent hearing officer Kim Murdock listened to Lisa and Mark Hanes explain why they should be allowed to keep their pig, and to their neighbor, Ray Magsalay, who contends the animal's poop has been the source of noxious odors that waft into his backyard and house.

"It's very unfair for my wife and me to live under these conditions," Magsalay, who is in his 70s, told Murdock.

The hearing was set earlier this month after city code

See **PIG** page 10A

## Beach fire decision for real this time

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CITY council will have another chance to vote in favor of the rules for beach fires that it unanimously approved earlier this month. Or it could change them. Again. Because the city failed to advertise the June 6 agenda item in the newspaper, the vote cast that night ended up being void, but city administrator Chip Rerig said this week that the discussion would be reflected in the report he will deliver at the June 30 special meeting, which will take place in city hall at 9 a.m.

"The decision's invalidated because we didn't do the noticing properly, but that will be the bulk of it," he said. "I'm going to focus on what the decision was on the 6th."

### A compromise

At that meeting, following a two-hour hearing with comments from about a dozen people who support and oppose the idea of allowing wood fires of any sort on the beach, the council unanimously voted to approve a revised program that would accommodate an unlimited number of propane fires, as well as wood fires contained in a dozen fire rings to be installed by the city.

That decision was a departure from the program that had been bandied about during the course of several meetings by the previous council, including former Mayor Jason Burnett and former councilman Ken Talmage, calling for an all-out ban on

wood fires and permitting only propane fires. Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District official Richard Stedman had warned that if the city didn't do something about wood fires, the district would seek enforcement action, since allowing them violates the district's rule stating that, "No person shall discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public; or

See **FIRES** page 31A



PHOTO/NATALIE CROFT

Sophie Weaver, Pearl Croft and Lillian Weaver warmed themselves by a fire Rusty Croft and Todd Weaver built out of sand last week to highlight the upcoming beach fire vote.

## Commissioners want less restrictive pot ordinance

By CHRIS COUNTS

MONTEREY COUNTY is at risk of becoming "the cannabis capital of the world," Sheriff Steve Bernal testified at a planning commission hearing June 22 on the county's proposed medical marijuana ordinance, but commissioners ignored the warning, voting unanimously to recommend that the ordinance be changed to make it easier for people in the industry to operate. Ultimately, it will be up to the county's board of supervisors to make those revisions.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the medical marijuana ordinance proposed by the county's planning staff is a section that would limit all medical marijuana growing operations to existing greenhouses located on farmland. Several planning commissioners said this wouldn't be fair.

"The prices have already tripled on existing greenhouses in the Salinas Valley," commissioner Martha Diehl told The

Pine Cone after the hearing. "I see a monopoly being created here."

While much of the discussion was focused on the land use aspects of medical marijuana — such as where it could be grown — the debate also turned to its merits. Are people using marijuana because they are seriously ill, or are they simply using it to get high?

Bernal conceded that medical marijuana is probably here to stay, but he told the commissioners he doesn't like the idea. He said studies show only about 5 percent of users have a serious medical condition, which was required by the 1996 ballot measure that legalized marijuana for

See **POT** page 14A

## C.V. housing would offer artists first dibs

By CHRIS COUNTS

IF AN affordable housing project located just east of the Carmel Rancho Shopping Center ever comes to fruition, it could be a boon not only for local workers and seniors, but for artists as well.

That's because the builder wants to give artists — if they meet income requirements — the highest priority when it comes to getting apartments in the development.

Matt Locati of Terex Development made the announcement at a meeting about the proposed complex which happened June 22 at The Barnyard shopping center.

The meeting also offered locals a chance to have input into the design of the complex. About three dozen people showed up, and besides making suggestions, they peppered Locati with questions about its impacts.

According to Locati, the plan is taking shape and incorporating ideas from the first two meetings. Once slated to have 150 units, it's been reduced to 120 units

See **ARTISTS** page 20A



PHOTO/KELLY NIX

Lisa Hanes' pet pig, Bruiser, takes a nap on his bed. The family is trying to keep the animal, which their neighbor says causes his backyard to stink.