

# the VOICE

OF THE CARMEL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING **31** YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

JANUARY • FEBRUARY 2018

## The Shape of Water

W-A-T-E-R is ordinarily spelled with five letters. But given the passionate and fractious approach to water policies in Monterey County over the years, 'water' might as well be a four-letter word.

The Carmel Residents Association will attempt to shed more light, and generate less heat, in our January meeting and speakers program about water policy, set for Thursday, January 25, at Carpenter Hall, Sunset Center. The gathering, which is free and open to the public, gets underway at 5 p.m., when three invited guests address the abiding question of whether Monterey Peninsula ratepayers would be better served by private ownership of the water supply, as we have now, or by public ownership, as most U.S. communities have.

Scheduled to appear – and answer only written questions submitted by audience members before or during the meeting – are: **David J. Stoldt**, general manager, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD); **George Riley**, managing director of Public Water Now (PWN), a prime backer of the proposed H2O ballot initiative calling for a switch to public ownership; and **Kevin A. Tilden**, vice president of California American Water, the area's privately owned and operated water provider, based in San Diego. Stoldt will serve as the event's moderator.

At issue are long-unresolved issues well known to residents of the rain-challenged Monterey Peninsula. The cost of water to ratepayers for use in homes, businesses and government, for one. The source of water, whether it be a traditional source

like the Carmel River, or a contemporary one such as Cal Am's proposed slant well, which the company says will funnel seawater to its proposed desalination ("desal") plant in Marina, for another.

The scheduled speakers, doubling as panelists, will address these issues, and more. All three come to Carmel-by-the-Sea bearing impressive professional credentials, as outlined in short biographies they provided to *The Voice* at the CRA's request.



David Stoldt joined the MPWMD as general manager in 2011. He has extensive experience in the private sector, including investment banking and consulting for public agencies. He has served as chief executive and chief financial officer for early stage startup companies, focusing on strategic planning, finance, marketing, logistics and management. He is also an experienced hand in the public sector.

Stoldt has an M.B.A. and Certificate in Public Management from Stanford University, an M.S. in energy and resources from UC-Berkeley, and a B.S. in civil and environmental science from the University of Illinois. He serves on the advisory panel of Stanford's Water in the West program.

Kevin Tilden oversees Cal-Am's business performance, business development and external affairs. He has been with Cal Am for 19 years. Cal Am is a subsidiary of American Water, based in New Jersey and operating in 20 states. He has a B.A. from the University of Washington and an M.B.A. from Pepperdine University. Tilden serves on the board of the California Water Association.

George Riley co-founded Public Water Now in 2013. A U.S. Navy veteran, he worked in local government for 29 years and retired from San Mateo County as director of housing and community services. Riley, who has lived in Monterey since 1997, holds a master's degree from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He is a long-time political activist, spearheading 2014's Measure O, which called for public acquisition of Cal Am; it fell short in that year's voting. He and Public Water Now aim to put H2O on the 2018 ballot, calling for public ownership of Cal Am, which PWN says charges the highest water rates in the country.

The proposed measure is already the subject of media interest, with one view-with-alarm Monterey Peninsula publication warning of a "government takeover." On December 1, Cal-Am and Public Water Now conveyed their sharply conflicting views outside the Carmel-by-the-Sea post office.

### JANUARY SPEAKERS & MEETING

Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup>

5:00PM

LOCATION:

Carpenter Hall, Sunset Center

*Come early, sip wine, write a question.*

*Free and open to the public.*

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY BARBARA LIVINGSTON



## Let's Do It, Let's Renew Our Memberships Now

*Carmelites do it/Renters do it/Even second-home owners do it/Let's all do it/Let's join the CRA!*

Cole Porter and I teamed up on this little ditty. We're hoping this irresistible tune will compel you to remove the membership envelope from your copy of *The Voice* and return it with your check and 2018 membership information - which we will not share with any other organization.

Our membership drive is not limited to renewal but also encompasses signing up new members. We have found that second-home owners benefit from joining because they get a sense of what life here is all about; and membership prepares them for the time they permanently retire to Carmel-by-the-Sea. The CRA offers new year-rounders many opportunities to volunteer (see our membership envelope) which bring you into closer contact with other members of the CRA.

One misconception about CRA membership is that you have to be a homeowner to join. Not at all. We open our arms to all residents of our village and sphere of influence, including renters.

Another misconception is that members are required to do something straight-away when they join. Not so. I personally support many organizations for which I have no time to volunteer. But, because I appreciate the work they do, I am more than happy to support them with my contribution.

Two thousand eighteen marks the 31<sup>st</sup> year of the Carmel Residents Association. The CRA Board of Directors has planned a great program series for your enlightenment, as well as fun-filled social events for your pleasure. Additionally, we publish six bimonthly issues of "the

best little newspaper in the West," *The Voice*, which will keep you informed about what's going on in our village. New in 2018 is the strikingly transformed CRA web site, [www.carmelresidents.org](http://www.carmelresidents.org). It launched in December, just in time for the New Year.

Thank you, dear long-time members, for your continuing support, and welcome to all our new members. Together we can make a difference in the future of our village. Let's Do It!

*Together we can  
make a difference in  
the future of  
our village*

### Three New Year's Resolutions for Carmel

The New Year is a time for new beginnings. Here are three New Year's Resolutions I'd like to see Carmel make, and keep, in 2018:

**My first resolution** is for the city to find a new revenue stream to cover all the underfunded costs of hiring new city personnel to maintain our parks, beach and forest, repair our roads and public buildings and more. My choice would be a modest increase in hotel transient occupancy tax – TOT. Seaside has a 12 percent TOT, and I suggest Carmel match it. No traveler will question that increase. When we go to Boston, New Orleans, Los Angeles, do we ever challenge the hotel tax before we book our reservations? I doubt it.

**My second resolution** is that the city actively collect tour bus parking fees. We currently collect fees for only 11 hours a day. We all know that does not account for all the tour buses we see parked outside

Carmel Plaza on any given day. Research has shown that one trip by a large bus through town equals the weight and wear of 800 cars. It is only right that Carmel realize greater income from these huge vehicles to pay for the wear and tear on our infrastructure and trees. The added income could pay the salaries of additional parking officers.

**My third resolution** is that the city stop funding our share of the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB). That organization has a different marketing plan for the Monterey Peninsula and county than Carmel has for our village. The \$177,000 we're giving to the MCCVB in 2017-2018 fiscal year should be freed-up for better uses.

We live in a magical place, but we need to reflect on why it is so, and let city staff and decision-makers know how we feel on these important issues.

Together we will make a difference.



**CRA Communications Team**

Voice Newsletter: Barbara Livingston,  
David Armstrong, Mary Condry  
Tom Parks (editorial board)  
Kyle Ferdinand  
(Voice design and production),  
Georgina Armstrong (photographer),  
Monterey Bay Design  
(web design and site maintenance)  
Kathy Fredrickson (e-blast manager),  
Carl Iverson and Vicky Kou  
(Voice distribution),  
Lauren Banner (Facebook manager),  
Loren Hughes (e-mail manager),

# CARMEL CONTRACTOR CONUNDRUM

BY DAVID ARMSTRONG

Former Carmel Mayor Ken White and City Administrator Chip Rerig had a sit-down recently to talk over a few quality-of-life issues niggling the former mayor, things he thinks need correcting.

The conversation focused on unsexy, day-to-day stuff, such as how to get part-time residents from putting their pick-up bins in street side public rights-of-way and, more seriously, what to do about building contractors in residential neighborhoods who park oversized vehicles and leave building materials on city property, sometimes for months at a time. Especially that.

“I live in the southwest part of town,” Mayor White told *The Voice*. “There’s a lot of construction here. A lot of contractors – generally the newer contractors – leave their equipment on the street and sometimes in public rights-of-way. They leave dirt, gravel, lumber. There was a dumpster that was left for over a year. There was a small camping trailer converted to a tool shed.”

Contractors working in the downtown business district, he noted, pay city fees when construction encroaches on sidewalks or streets. That’s not the case in residential neighborhoods

This writer ran into a neighbor on a walk

around the ‘hood. Without prompting, the neighbor brought up the impact on her narrow block of Santa Rita Street when two homes were extensively remodeled at the same time. She could handle the noise, she said, and fully accepts that folks have the desire and the right to build and remodel, but those trucks and dumpsters!

“They’ve parked trucks and CAT bulldozers and left dumpsters on the street for months,” she said, exasperated. “They’re so big, and they’re ugly. It’s been awful.”

City Administrator Rerig is aware of the problem, telling us in a telephone interview that he accepted Mayor White’s request to talk about the issue because he hears residents’ concerns.

Construction is booming in the robust business climate, Rerig told *The Voice*. Amidst the hubbub, some contractors are using our public rights-of-way and narrow city streets as their corporate yards and racetracks.

“The banks are flush,” Rerig said. “They have lots of cash and they’re lending money on easy terms. There’s more construction in Carmel than when I first



worked here.” Building projects are also more detailed than in the past, he added, with ambitious finishing and interiors adding to construction time. “In the mid-1990s, houses took six to nine months to build. Now it’s taking 12 to 18 months.”

Most contractors are considerate, he said, and try to minimize their impact. Still, Rerig said that, “I’m trying to go out myself and talk to the contractors,” to explain the city’s approach.

*Residents with construction-related concerns can contact building official Dick Bower (831-620-2022) or public works director Robert Harary (831-620-2070) and tell them about the problem.*

## Meet the All-New CRA Website

***[www.carmelresidents.org](http://www.carmelresidents.org)***

If you haven’t seen the all-new [carmelresidents.org](http://carmelresidents.org) yet, now’s the time to jump online and check it out.

The site launched in December. And while our web address remains the same, what was old is new again when it comes to content and design. All the many lovely photos – nearly all taken by members - are new, and the text is all-new, with one notable exception: *The Voice*.

Issues of this publication and its predecessor, *CRA News*, dating back to 2010 are archived on [carmelresidents.org](http://carmelresidents.org) – and the graphics online are in living color. The CRA has donated ink-on-paper issues published before and after 2010 to the Local History

Room at the Park Branch library for history buffs to browse to their hearts’ content. We hope you enjoy them.

As for the new web site, we didn’t just tweak it, we transformed it, thanks to the web wizardry of Monterey Bay Design ([www.montereybaydesign.com](http://www.montereybaydesign.com)).

Look for the This Just In tab to hear about the latest developments. This Just In will also include a calendar as of January, 2018. Take a deep dive into the About Us section, which features bios and photos of your board of directors and a freshly written 31-year history of the CRA. Join CRA provides information about how to join the CRA and renew your membership.

And don’t forget to luxuriate in the Gallery. It’s simply gorgeous, and it’s fun.

# PacRep's Julie Hughett

BY TOM PARKS

A sunny afternoon under the shade of an umbrella proved to be a fine December day for a conversation with Julie Hughett, the indisputable star of Carmel's Pacific Repertory Theatre company and, arguably, the Monterey Peninsula's most revered actor. Hughett was at once approachable, forthcoming and modest, a working actor and businesswoman, both energetic and optimistic.

## **You keep pretty busy. Ever wake up wondering which hat to wear that day?**

When I'm in rehearsal I'm, of course, concentrating on the role I'm cast in. But I'm both a resident actor and the business manager of PacRep. And so I not only perform – and I love to perform – but that other hat is a very serious side of who I am. That's why I'm paid, and I love every moment of both disciplines. In fact, I might be one of only a very few people in the world who looks forward to an audit!

## ***' Whichever Hat She Wears, the Play's the Thing.'***

I'm a founding member of the company, which was established in 1986 in Pacific Grove. We moved to the Golden Bough in 1995.

## **Can you share a bit of personal history with us? Who is Julie Hughett and where did she come from?**

I'm a local person, born, raised and educated on the peninsula. I always wanted to perform and played in several local theaters. I discovered Stephen Moorer, the executive director (and founder) of PacRep, and he discovered me. But what he didn't know at the time was that I was not only an actor but a person seriously interested in the business side of theater. So, when it came time to hire a treasurer for the company, I raised my hand, to the relief of everyone else in the room. I love the work, the detail and the results of basic organization.

## **You and Stephen were married?**

We were. That was a long time ago. And that marriage produced a lovely daughter, Claire.

## **Audiences have seen you in so many guises, in roles from Shakespeare to Chekov to Albee to Williams. Is there one favorite character that you have found most satisfying to play?**

All those playwrights are favorites of mine, and you're right, I've been lucky to have performed in their plays. But I have to say that Blanche is very close to being my favorite. "A Streetcar Named Desire" is a classic and Blanche is a great role.

## **You've done a great deal of Shakespeare.**

I have, and I love to play Shakespeare. I just closed in a production of "Cleopatra."

## **Theater on the peninsula – professional, regional, community – is lively. And the number of people who long to perform is impressive. What advice would you offer to a person who is yearning to act, forget age or sex? Is it as simple as "Go for it"?**

There's only one answer to that question: audition. Find out what shows are being mounted in what local theaters. Prepare a scene, a song, a bit, and present yourself to the director and decision-makers. You may have talent, and it may not be recognized at first try. So, you try again.

## **What's next, Julie? Anything on the horizon? A terrific part to play?**

Nothing right away. But that doesn't mean that I won't keep busy. Stephen and I do what we do, and that's called putting on a play. It takes energy, patience and planning. And I'm up for all of it. I love what I do, both on-stage and backstage. I can tell you what I'd like to do one day: Two completely different genres – so different that it's almost laughable. I'd like to play the marquise in "Les Liaisons Dangereuses." That said, I think I'd have a good time playing the mother in "The Music Man."



Versatile actress Julie Hughett

**JOIN THE CRA  
RENEW NOW  
JOIN THE CRA  
RENEW NOW**

# Four More Carmel Businesses Move or Close

BY DAVID ARMSTRONG

## One, two, three, four.

That's how many locally owned and operated businesses have shut down or moved out of Carmel-by-the-Sea since July of last year. Knapp Hardware, a downtown mainstay since 1945, closed its doors without warning in July, leaving a hand-lettered for-lease notice taped inside a locked door. At this writing in mid-December, the note was still there.

In late November, well-regarded auto mechanic Eric Nystrom ended his 13-year presence in the city following a dispute with his landlord, racecar star Mario Andretti's Peninsula Petroleum, over conditions of the lease and a rent hike. That was followed in December by Joanna and Dean Chapman's decision to close Chapman Gallery after 28 years downtown and move their framing and art restoration business outside the city, following a rent increase from their landlord.

The fourth business to close was Knitting-by-the-Sea, which vacated its Fifth Avenue space December 31. After some 40 years doing business in Carmel-by-the-Sea, it's gone for good.

When this writer knocked on the door at Knitting-by-the-Sea recently, shop owner Maurya McBride came up to talk. Around her on the floor were cardboard boxes half-filled with colorful yarn and other materials. Two associates were there to help McBride pack her materials and her memories. The shop operated on the north side of Fifth Avenue just off Junipero Street for 19 years, McBride told *The Voice*. She had served as store manager before buying the business.

Unlike the Chapmans and Nystrom, 'the knit shop' wasn't closing or moving due to a rent increase or dispute with the landlord. Rather, McBride explained, it couldn't survive due to a fast-changing industry. Local residents and some visitors used to frequent the shop, she said, because it was a reliably well-stocked place to buy luxury yarn. But that all changed.

"Now, people can buy quality yarn online. Also, distributors are selling directly to the public," she said.

Of course, businesses open and close all the time. There is a commercial life-cycle, and there are always risks in business, especially for small, local operations.

Underlying this cascade of change is the fact that all four affected businesses

catered chiefly to residents. Tourist-oriented businesses can and do close, too, but few are unique or locally owned. So, a village that once had three hardware stores now has none. The square mile is down to one auto repair shop. A community with an oversupply of kitschy art galleries has lost a legitimate gallery that other downtown galleries rely on for skilled framing and art restoration work. A modest shop for home knitters has vanished. It's not a new trend, but it is a disturbing one.

New businesses will occupy the vacated spaces. The question is: What kind of businesses? In a city that abhors empty storefronts, it sometimes seems that filling empty spaces with practically anything is an overriding concern. Doing that may well accelerate a race to the bottom, with convenience stores, tacky T-shirt shops, quick-serve eateries, more wine-tasting rooms and hectoring skin-care joints replacing high-quality businesses that provide practical services and fine products.

For the business owners the city has lost, the holiday season must have been a melancholy time.

When two residents phoned Eric Nystrom in mid-December, a month after he left the garage in the Shell station at Fifth Avenue and San Carlos Street, he wasn't ready to handle the repair their car needed. Nystrom told Pacific Grove's Pine Cone newspaper he was looking for a new space at the mouth of Carmel Valley and has kept his old phone number.

Joanna and Dean Chapman are switching operations to their residence in mid-Carmel Valley, where they set up a home studio. They've kept their old phone number, too. The space on Seventh Avenue near Mission Street became too expensive to rent. Dean will pick up and deliver jobs for clients at Tony's Frame Shop in downtown Carmel.

McBride is looking for a job. "I need to save money for retirement," she told *The Voice*. "Knitting-by-the-Sea wasn't a real money-maker. It's been progressively getting worse." Does she have a new job? "No," she replied. "I'm going back to school. I want to enter the medical field."



From top left: Former homes of Nystrom's Auto Repair Shop, Chapman Gallery, Knapp Hardware.

## Baby Makes 15

The planning commission approved on December 13 an application by Carmel Valley's Holman Ranch Estate Vineyards to open another wine tasting room south of Ocean Avenue, over-riding its own guidelines, which were designed to locate new tasting rooms north of Ocean (see Cheers & Chides, page 8). Holman Ranch will be the 15<sup>th</sup> tasting room in the south of Ocean commercial area. That said, commission guidelines may still re-route most or all additional tasting rooms to north of Ocean. Up to three permits a year can be issued city-wide for new tasting rooms, and there is no moratorium on opening new ones. Already operating or approved north of Ocean are three rooms: Carmel Road, De Tierra and Albatross Ridge – four including the tasting room at Bruno's Surf and Sand.

## City Corrals Concours

Carmel City Council on December 4 gave Concours on the Avenue founders and operators Doug and Genie Freedman something to talk about on the plane ride back to their home base in Atlanta. An unmoved council voted 4-1 to end public subsidies to Concours, noting that while non-profit Carmel Foundation which received some proceeds has filled out the application form, Concours is for-profit. The Freedmans will have to pay up to an estimated \$60,000 in hard and soft costs, and accept Sunday as one of three requested days for the August event. The couple hadn't wanted Sunday. The council also shot down the proposed three-year contract, approving a year-to-year deal.

## Police Chief Pitches for Videocams on Poles

Carmel Police Chief Paul Tomasi made a strong pitch to the city council in the council's December 4 special meeting. The subject: mounting video cameras on high poles at four exit and entry points in Carmel. The object: to deter crime - and catch criminals who aren't deterred - by capturing their license plate numbers and vehicle types.

The cameras would be mounted on and near Carpenter Street, Ocean Avenue, Rio Road and the Pebble Beach Gate. The video would be on 24 hours a day with a live feed to the police station. Unlike, say, the CCTV cameras mounted throughout the United Kingdom, Carmel cameras would not include facial recognition or link to other databases. The council budgeted \$80,000 for the mounted cameras.

## Police Station Gets \$1.75 Million Makeover

The city council approved a \$1.75 million contract for a project to remodel and expand the half-century-old Carmel Police Station at Fourth Avenue and Junipero Street. The 4-1 vote accepting one of four competing proposals will not require any excavation but will enable the CPD to upgrade and relocate its emergency-operations center and add three new offices, among other features.

## No Wood Shake Roof for Home on Lobos

City Council on November 27 over-ruled a planning commission decision requiring a home on Lobos Street to have a traditional wood shake roof. Citing the fire danger to Carmel, with its abundance of trees and frightening outbreak of wildfires around California, the council OK'd a more fire-resistant asphalt shingle roof.

## Permitting Construction Overflow

The feature article "Carmel Contractor Conundrum" (see page 3) outlines rising objections to overflowing construction sites in residential neighborhoods, where trucks, bulldozers, dumpsters, dirt, tools, gravel and lumber are sometimes left on narrow city streets or in city-owned rights-of-way. Not mentioned in that story is this relevant element: planning commission decisions sometimes allow considerable simultaneous house-building or remodeling projects in small areas, raising the discomfort of motorists, pedestrians, residents and visitors (see photo this page of side-by-side building sites.) Permits are also sometimes issued to projects virtually across the street from one another, which induce the same problems.

As there is an uptick in permit requests due to a flush investment market, the commission and city council could benefit the community by taking a proactive approach to how projects are approved so that the impact on residents and others receives a much higher consideration. Then, noise, parked vehicles and equipment storage during build-outs can be managed more effectively.



*Two house-building sites side-by-side in residential area*

## Was That a Great Holiday Party or What?

To say that CRA members and their guests were pleased to be at the 2017 Holiday Party, held for the first time in a long time at La Playa Hotel, may be an understatement. Joyous may be more like it.

More than 80 celebrants sipped complimentary wine on the outdoor terrace before enjoying a sumptuous sit-down dinner in the hotel's dining room. A comfortable, clear December night provided an orange-streaked sunset, followed by softly enfolding evening light, right on cue.

Inside, at nicely set round tables hosted by members of the CRA board of directors, diners had a lovely meal and enjoyed attentive, courteous service. CRA President Barbara Livingston, who made a brief, gracious speech and gave copies of the CRA book "Stories of Old Carmel" to winners of a drawing, was the hostess with the mostest. Event organizer Darlene Mosley, just days removed from successful surgery, greeted everyone with a smile and her customary energy. The party radiated elegance and non-stop congeniality. It seemed to embody the warmth of Erl Lagerholm, who loved the holiday parties and whose generous bequest helped make this one a success.

What a night. Let's do it again this year.

### ***Overheard on Ocean Ave:***

First woman to another woman:

*"I've never been to Carmel."*

Second woman: *"What?"*

First Woman: *"I've been to*

*Carmel-by-the-Sea, but I haven't been to Carmel. Have you?"*

Second Woman: *"Er, no."*

First woman:

*"I wonder where it is?"*

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Carl Iverson and Vicky Kou distribute copies of every new issue of *The Voice*, hot off the presses, at the Carmel Post Office downtown. Here they are in action on a lovely day in Carmel-by-the-Sea.



## Save The Date: February 21<sup>st</sup>

CRA members, mark your calendars for our first CRA Dines Out! of 2018. We will be dining at the famous Cypress Inn on the patio under the stars (with heaters), weather permitting. If it's too chilly or wet, we will have the cozy dining room for our meal.

The Cypress Inn has planned a delectable meal for us. There is a first course of mixed organic salad greens or beef barley soup, followed by a second course with a choice of Monterey sand dabs, chicken piccata or primavera pasta. Lemon curd cake and coffee will conclude this wonderful meal for members and their invited friends.

Please join in the fun at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 21, at Terry's Bar in the Inn. The dinner will be \$40 per person. House wine is \$7 a glass and, of course, Terry's Bar will be available to us on a no-host basis. Please make your reservation early, but no later than February 15, to save a place for what's sure to be a delightful and memorable evening. Send your checks with your choice of entrée care of Darlene Mosley, P.O. Box 1135, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921.

## What We Learned at CRA's November Speakers' Meeting

There were several takeaways from November's CRA meeting at Carpenter Hall, when four senior leaders at City Hall – among them, City Administrator Chip Rerig – spoke to CRA members and members of the public about city operations. Here are three to remember:

- > There is not a moratorium on wine-tasting rooms in Carmel-by-the-Sea, as some residents assumed. There are already 15 tasting rooms south of Ocean Avenue. Counting the four tasting rooms north of Ocean, the city has 19 all told. City Hall's Marc Wiener told the meeting there are up to three permits per year for new winery outposts.
- > There are all of two city employees to monitor 10,000 trees in the village, according to public works director Robert Harary, due to personnel shortages and underfunding
- > Residents often consider protruding tree roots and other uneven surfaces to be tripping hazards for pedestrians. "We don't call them tripping hazards," Rerig remarked.

# Carmel Residents Association

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The CRA does not sell, trade, lend or in any other way share our members' information with any organization or company.

## CRA Board of Directors

Barbara Livingston, President

Loren Hughes, Vice President

Jon Wolfe, Treasurer | Ann Nelson, Secretary

Members: David Armstrong, Lauren Banner, Janine Chicourrat, Mary Condry, Darlene Mosley, Tom Parks, Ann Pendleton, Dick Stiles, Charlotte Townsend, Ken White

## CHEERS & CHIDES

 **CHIDES** to the planning commission for approving, contrary to the staff's

recommendation, a new wine tasting room south of Ocean Avenue, joining the 14 winery-owned tasting rooms already there. In taking this action, the commissioners violated their own policy, which states that all new tasting rooms should be located north of Ocean. Citywide, there are now 19 wine-tasting rooms.

 **CHEERS** to Carmel city staff and employees for their seemingly effortless teamwork in providing us with marvelous seasonal events such as the Halloween parade, Carmel city birthday parade, holiday tree-lighting and more. These men and women get the event up and rolling, take it all down within hours, and everything is back to normal.

 **CHEERS** to recently hired public works director Robert Harary for his tell-it-like-it-is city infrastructure 'report card.' He didn't sugar-coat it: Pavement of roads and streets: C+; storm drains: a dismal D-; city vehicles: C; forest and beach: B; city buildings: C-.

 **CHIDES** to the Pacific Grove-based Pine Cone weekly's on-going dismissals of public water advocates in editorials as "water crazies". Look, water is a contentious issue, and we all have our opinions. If the paper wants to editorialize against a Cal-Am public buyout, that's fine. But a little civility goes

a long way. We have enough name-calling on the national and international level. Let's not have it here.

 **CHEERS** to the planning commission for expressing appropriate skepticism in a recent, non-binding hearing to a misbegotten proposal to move a portion of the culturally significant 1972 Burde bank building, occupied by Seventh & Dolores (7D) restaurant. Most commissioners argued that relocating a portion of the building to another spot on-site would destroy the architectural intent and design of original architect, Walter Burde. Developer Fred Kern and architect Adam Jeselnick are spearheading the proposal, which has not yet been voted on.

 **CHEERS** to the city council, led by Carolyn Hardy with an able assist from Carrie Theis, for declining to spend taxpayers' money to underwrite the annual, for-profit Concours on the Avenue and saying no to an aggressive demand for a three-year contract; it'll be a year-to-year deal. Concours, part of the Car Week extravaganza, did get three days, as organizers Doug and Genie Freedman wanted for their big 'do, but they didn't get the exact days they insisted on getting. Well done, councilors.

 **CHIDES** to Bobby Richards, the '1' in the City Council's 4-1 Concours vote. While acknowledging he is a friend of the event's co-organizer Doug Freedman, Richards didn't think he needed to recuse himself,

and didn't. But he should have. It's hard, if not impossible, to be objective about a chum.

 **CHEERS** to Carmel's Harrison Memorial Library for being chosen one of just 13 'star libraries' in California by the national librarians' professional publication Library Journal.

 **CHEERS** to community services officer Lisa Johnson for coordinating the Seniors Helping Seniors program for the past 20 years. The program, initiated by the Carmel Police Department, enlists seniors in the village to call homebound seniors every morning to check on their well-being.

 **CHIDES** to Carmel Resort Inn. Still an eyesore. Still a firetrap.



*Discarded lunch wrappers, scattered debris on deteriorating site.*