

the VOICE

OF THE CARMEL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING 31 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

MAY ♦ JUNE 2018

May 24th CRA Meeting

Come meet your Carmel Residents Association Board of Directors, speak, listen, comment, ask questions – and, oh, sip some wine and enjoy hearty appetizers at our members-only annual meeting. The meeting begins at 5 p.m. Thursday, May 24 at Vista Lobos Community Room and runs till about 6:30 p.m.

Unlike past years, when we heard short reports and announcements about CRA business and then heard an invited, featured speaker at a public event, this will be a special, members-only gathering. (The general public is, of course, welcome at many other CRA-sponsored events.) Another thing that makes this annual meeting special is the expected attendance of past CRA presidents.

Four members of the board of directors will speak for up to five minutes each to inform members of what the CRA is



Lauren Banner

doing and plans to do in the near-term in each director's area of expertise. When they've finished speaking, the floor will be thrown open, so that members can share their thoughts and ask questions of board members. A large majority of our directors will be in attendance.

Among the directors who plan to speak are CRA President and former three-term city council member Barbara Livingston, who will give a brief account of how the CRA was founded and comment on the association's return to our activist roots. Of course, we remain a lively social group, as well.

Media maven David Armstrong, non-fiction book author and former San Francisco Chronicle writer/reporter, will talk about *The Voice*, as well as our beautiful new website carmelresidents.org, our member straw polls and the revival of single-issue 'blue papers' on matters of concern to residents.



David Armstrong

Also scheduled to speak is board member Lauren Banner, chair of the CRA Lovers of Carmel Beach volunteer clean-up team for Carmel Beach, and, more broadly, the CRA's commitment to nurturing and enhancing our natural environment. One of Carmel's leading social activists, Lauren is also a board member of Sustainable Carmel.

For the grand finale, we'll hear from former Carmel Mayor Ken White, who will provide a look ahead for the CRA,



Ken White

the city of Carmel-by-the-Sea, and how the two can best work together to build a community that serves everyone.

After we've talked things over, we'll have some fun. There is ample time



Barbara Livingston

set aside to socialize and enjoy complimentary wine by the glass. This meal does not feature table seating but it is a meal. We'll enjoy a light repast of delicious finger food. Stalwart CRA members Vicky Kou and Sherry Williams are chairing the post-meeting fun. The duo will make and set up a buffet of mouth-watering appetizers. Barry and Kathleen Swift will pour the wine.

Sherry and Vicky are also looking for CRA members who can make and bring their own favorites to round out the menu. Platters of the following would be especially welcome: Open-face sandwiches, crostini, stuffed eggs. Interested? To volunteer and showcase your culinary skills, call Sherry Williams at (925) 640-1644 or Vicky Kou at 624-2819. ■

PHOTOS: CHUCK BANNER

May Annual Members' Meeting

The CRA Board of Directors,
past CRA presidents and
CRA members

Thursday, May 24
5 p.m.

Vista Lobos Community Room
Junipero Street & Third Avenue

*This annual meeting is for CRA
members only.*



The Taking of Carmel One, Two, Three

This month my president's message is inspired by the title of the 1974 movie "The Taking of Pelham One, Two, Three." Unlike the movie, which was a thriller, my message is a chiller. It is a call for deep reflection on the part of the entire community. It is a chilling look at what "success" has wrought on our village.

Taking #One.

Over-tourism, a worldwide phenomenon, has impacted our town with no visible sign that the city has taken steps to mitigate the problem. Our quality of life, once so valued for its serene, laid-back feeling, has become a mecca for travelers just passing through.

The visual and physical impact of all these visitors is upsetting the equilibrium of life in Carmel-by-the-Sea. No concern for the carrying capacity of our village has been given thoughtful analysis. No analysis of the cost ratio between income received from tourism versus the cost to the city to provide required services – for police, sanitation, trash collection, emergency services, etc. – over and above the needs of the residents, has ever been done.

These services are taking a big toll on the city's budget. Hence, new sources of revenue should be seriously considered in order to mitigate the expense of tourism on our village.

Taking #Two.

Our rightful claim to an environment that is safe, clean and beautiful has drawn hundreds of property owners wishing to



NIC COURY

maximize the size of their new or remodeled houses. This comes at a high cost for loss of tree habitat (one of the reasons that drew them to Carmel) and the loss of small homes that once characterized our neighborhoods. Now, almost every planning application is for the demolition of a small house and the construction of a two-story home.

Now, almost every planning application is for the demolition of a small house and the construction of a two-story home.

Indeed, our planning director Marc Wiener has spoken of the need to slow down demolitions, possibly

by tweaking existing codes, which would make retention of small houses more palatable by allowing new owners to add-on when necessary.

Additionally, the planning department might look at establishing a ratio of one-story houses to two-story houses on residential blocks. A mix of sizes, along with diversity in architecture, makes for a much more interesting neighborhood.

Taking #Three.

The business community works hard to attract visitors and that is understandable. Many downtown businesses depend on the tourist trade. But how they attract tourists is another matter.

The desire to create a marketing

'brand' for Carmel raises my hackles. We already have a brand. Carmel is a village in a forest by the sea.

That says it all. Village: small, quaint, walkable. Forest: lots of beautiful trees and clean air. Sea: we are on the ocean with a beach. How simple is that! Certainly, that brand would attract anyone looking for a beautiful, clean, safe environment in which to spend a few days or make a home.

According to the Carmel Chamber of Commerce, Carmel has been listed in various media as one of the top 10 cities in the United States – the only city on the list with a population of under 700,000. We have also made lists as the top small city in the U.S., and the most romantic city in the U.S.

We have no shortage of fame. So, why do we have to spend so much money advertising what people already know? (See related article page 3.) ■

Beth Wright



Beth Wright, a guiding light in the early days of the Carmel Residents Association, died February 18, 2018, at her home in Carmel-by-the-Sea.

Beth was a founding member of the CRA. She was the first secretary of our board of directors and one of the early presidents. She was a staunch defender and advocate for the preservation of Carmel's cultural, architectural and environmental history.

Beth wrote 'blue papers,' which were passed out at the post office, motivating residents to be on guard against inappropriate changes to the city's general plan – the 'constitution' of Carmel.

CRA members would do well to be inspired by this woman's activism and spirited defense of Carmel's vaunted village character.

CRA to MCCVB: Prove It

A BETTER WAY TO SPEND \$184,000

By David Armstrong

Here's a little story about a big number.

CRA President Barbara Livingston recently came up with a seemingly radical suggestion: Carmel-by-the-Sea should stop paying the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau to market Carmel as a mass tourism destination.

Why? Mass marketing isn't needed. Carmel is famous, and there are no data proving that large numbers of tourists come here chiefly because of the MCCVB. Besides, there are better uses for the \$184,000 the MCCVB requests for fiscal 2018-2019.

We asked CRA members this January what they think. In an online members-only straw poll, 86.4 percent of 118 responding members said no more money for the MCCVB. One voter remarked, "Carmel is already overrun with tourists. Our infrastructure cannot handle more. Besides, social media tout the whole Pen-

insula, including Carmel."

and in Mission Trail Nature Preserve. Carmel spends a lot to promote tourism, even without paying the MCCVB.

Rather than spend \$184K to duplicate already overlapping efforts of the city's marketing arm Visit Carmel (itself the recipient of \$120,000 this year in public money) and the city-subsidized, tourism-minded Carmel Chamber of Commerce, plus the downtown hospitality improvement district and proposed restaurant business improvement district, why not put the money where it's actually needed?

With three, soon possibly four, local marketing programs receiving generous injections of public money, the MCCVB – which markets all of Monterey County – is increasingly redundant.

The MCCVB is a non-profit marketing organization for destinations and private businesses invested in the conventions,

meetings and tourism 'space.' It buys print and electronic ads as far away as Europe and Asia, and works with visiting travel agents, bloggers and journalists on familiarization trips to the county. These days, the MCCVB is focused on China. The bureau is committed to a "China Ready!" campaign and the exclamation mark is a sign of how deep that commitment is. The outbound China market is huge, and pre-disposed (for now) to travel in groups, often on huge tour buses. Most stay a few hours, spend a little for quick meals and souvenirs, and, like tourists of any nationality anywhere, quickly move on.

The problem is not nationality but sheer numbers, especially during near-simultaneous arrivals. If the MCCVB were

"Norway Ready! It would be the same. The village is one square mile, with a limited carrying capacity. MCCVB officials maintained at a special city council meeting February 5 that it doesn't target tour buses, but allowed that its overseas marketing may have unintended consequences and could attract day-trippers;



Just one of many tour bus arrivals, driven in part by destination marketing

they didn't know how many.

"The MCCVB needs to develop more specific data if they expect to receive destination marketing money from Carmel," concluded the CRA's issues committee. "Given the lack of data, no one can disprove residents' impressions, based on years of experience, when they believe that the increase in the Chinese day-tripper market is a direct cause of MCCVB's destination marketing in China for Carmel-by-the-Sea."

More broadly, tourist arrivals are surging, not simply due to the MCCVB, but for a wide range of reasons. Among them: lingering effects of last year's devastating fires in Napa, Sonoma and Southern California; hurricanes in the Caribbean; the \$120 million (up from \$50 million) for destination marketing spent by Visit California; and a robust economy that encourages people to travel.

It's not a radical idea to drop the MCCVB. The CRA recommends that \$114,000 of marketing money be rerouted to the Carmel Beach bluffs and Scenic pathway, and \$70,000 to Mission Trail Nature Preserve. Unlike the booming tourist trade, these jewels need plenty of TLC to shine.

David Armstrong is the former tourism writer for the San Francisco Chronicle. ■

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insula, including Carmel."

Last month, Livingston, CRA Issues Committee chair Georgina Armstrong and CRA Lovers of Carmel Beach chair Lauren Banner met with city administrator Chip Rerig. City officials suggested that if we want city hall to stop shipping money to the MCCVB, we should suggest another use for it.

Resident Greg D'Ambrosio proposed that the money be redirected to projects that will benefit both residents and visitors. D'Ambrosio, former city forester and deputy city administrator, requested that city hall put the 177K in a restricted fund, refreshed yearly and used solely to restore the bluffs at Carmel Beach and Scenic pathway and remove invasive plants there

Carmel's Can't Miss, Sure to Happen Residential Neighborhood Improvement District

A MODEST PROPOSAL

By David Armstrong

CRA President Barbara Livingston in a whimsical moment thought that Carmel should have a residential neighborhood improvement district to match the business improvement districts downtown. With apologies to Jonathan Swift, maybe this is how that modest proposal could come to pass.

June 1, 2018: A colorful delegation of locals arrives at city hall with a straightforward request: Create a residential neighborhood improvement district (RNID) for Carmel to keep residential streets in good repair, remove dangerous or dead trees from public land while always planting replacements, and protect Carmel's encroached-upon small houses. The city council, taken with the passion of the residents, votes 5-0 to move forward with this innovative idea.

August 1, 2018: The city signs a \$100,000 contract with the consultancy Let Us Help You Help Yourself For a Fat Fee Inc. to study how an RNID should be created. The consultancy is tasked with reporting back to council in 90 days with complete demographic studies, analyses of legal ramifications, and other niggling details. The mood is jolly-good. Everyone seems pleased.

October 31, 2018: Let Us Help You Help Yourself for a Fat Fee Inc. returns to city hall with what comes to be known as the Halloween Report. The demographic studies aren't quite finished. The legal ramifications are hard to figure out. What's the next step?

November 1, 2018: The Day of the Dead. The RNID seems DOA. But, wait. The city agrees to pay its trusted consultants an additional \$50,000 to ponder the matter. Let Us Help You, etc. has 120 days to come up with an action plan.

February 4, 2019: The plan is in. There will be a city-sanctioned Residential Neighborhood Improvement District. Corks pop. Toothy grins are seen everywhere in the village. The launch date is June 1, 2019, a year to the day after the idea was first mooted.

February 7, 2019: A P.G. weekly

newspaper fumes about Carmel's RNID, characterizing it as a prime example of Carmel's eccentricity and regulation-mad government overreach. Things get a little tense over the hill in Carmel-by-the-Sea. Still, the RNID dream lives on.

March 1, 2019: The RNID will happen, city officials assure anxious residents at the grand opening of downtown's 33rd wine-tasting room. However, there will be a slight delay until full implementation can occur. City officials explain they forgot to file the necessary paperwork to

*With apologies to
Jonathan Swift...*

launch the RNID; the filing date coincided with an open-house at downtown's new, 8,000 square-foot artisan cocktail tasting room and small-batch, self-serve food court.

March 7, 2019: Let Us Help You Help Yourself for a Fat Fee Inc. returns to lead a workshop on how to remember to file necessary papers. The cost is only \$20,000, a big win for taxpayers.

June 1, 2019: "A Gift to Carmel" – the long-pending Residential Neighborhood Improvement District – is a reality. Residents assess themselves \$20 per household per year to help pay for it. The city picks up the rest, funded by the hotel transient occupancy tax. Corks pop again. Toothy grins are seen once more. The sun is shining nearly everywhere today. Tender tendrils of wispy fog drift in over the North Dunes, where drop-dead gorgeous,

century-old Monterey cypresses and Monterey pines graced the coastline for generations before they were cut down, just before residents got organized.

July 4, 2019: The neighborhoods request a level playing field so that the RNID can enjoy the same status as commercial BIDS for hotels and restaurants. Locals merrily close off busy stretches of Carpenter Street for hours to host the biggest July 4th barbeque the village has ever seen. The city – citing the precedent of Concours on the Avenue, plus the Monterey County Vintners and Growers Association's Winemakers Celebration event downtown – gives the cookout its blessing. There are big bills for police overtime and trash collection. The city pays for them out of fee increases on oversized tour buses.

If you read this far, you realize this is satirical fiction, right?-Ed. ■

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WHY STOPPING EIGHTH AVENUE PROJECT IS SO IMPORTANT

By Georgina Armstrong

Is it just about trees?
Is it just about a sidewalk?
Is it just about setting a precedent?
Is that all this project is about?
No!

Developer Thomas Fountain is proposing to construct a residential building with two condominiums, one above the other, that will sit above a four-car garage that cuts into the slope of the land on Eighth Avenue between Junipero and Mission streets. The building is to be constructed on a sliver lot adjacent to an existing residence, also owned by Fountain, and will be three stories high when viewed from the Eighth Avenue perspective to the south.

The project, if it is built, will require the following:

1. An abandonment of city right of way. This goes against Carmel's general plan, which states that the full width of the right of way acts as a buffer area between the commercial and residential districts. These transition lots are intended to "ensure that design standards ... reflect more open space, landscaping and setbacks and on-site parking typically needed for the uses in this area." (P1-70).

2. The 'gifting' of public property for private benefit. Such an action violates the California Constitution. In addition to bartering away public property, as pointed out by the CRA's attorney, Pamela Silkwood, the city is letting the applicant do an end-run around the affordable housing requirement. This fact is mentioned in a city planning department report on the project.

3. The setting of a dangerous precedent. Street rights of way are not usually considered to be easements, but land that is owned by the city. These rights of way are often filled with lower and higher canopy trees that are intended to soften the bulk of buildings that are erected behind them. Thus, they enhance the effect of a

village in a forest.

While it is easy to abandon rights of way to developers who find that limitations on their properties are too great for the scope of their designs, such a precedent will appeal to those who desire to do likewise. Encroachments will be very attractive to those who see them as a way to maximize land use while increasing the value of their investments.

4. A piecemeal project, which can be viewed as physically changing the environment. In splitting a single large project into smaller ones, an environmental impact review under the California Environmental Quality Act is justified. What makes this a piecemeal project? It is a condominium project that requires an abandonment of public property, a lot line adjustment, tree removal, and the construction of a sidewalk; the sidewalk will require excavation and a retaining

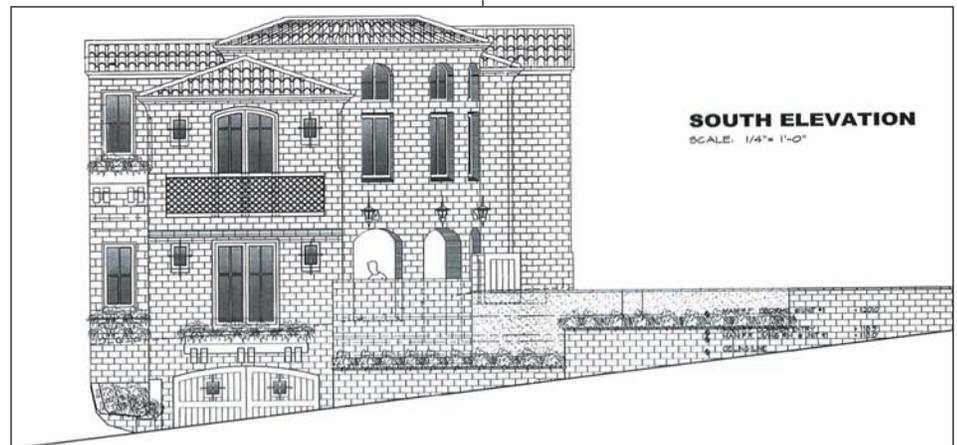
"The City and the applicant, by artificially narrowing the Project description, thus minimizing the Project's impacts, are undermining the public review process."

~ Pamela Silkwood

its okay; if granted, it would head to the city council for final approval. That takes a minimum of three months – not one month – as the project was on track to do when it started its journey.

Why? Because the city council actually reviewed it first when the planning commission sought direction on the plan to install a sidewalk as part of the project at the developer's cost.

CRA President Barbara Livingston asked if the matter was being heard by the



wall that will run half the length of the block and may not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. As lawyer Pamela Silkwood states, "The City and the applicant, by artificially narrowing the Project description, thus minimizing the Project's impacts, are undermining the public review process."

Now, let's look at that public review process.

Where trees are concerned, a proposal starts with the forest and beach commission. Then, a proposal as complex as the sliver lot on Eighth Avenue would proceed to the planning commission for

forest and beach commission, and Mayor Steve Dallas told her it was not. It then headed to the planning commission for a review of the design concept of the condominium only. Michael LePage, chair of the planning commission, objected to not being allowed to rule on the whole project, and promptly sent it to the forest and beach commission, where it is expected to be heard in May.

Due process is now, finally, being served, and residents can get involved before the wrong precedent wins the day.

Georgina Armstrong is chair of the CRA Issues Committee. ■

Removal of North Dunes Trees Appealed

Friends of Carmel Forest President Maria Sutherland filed an appeal as a private citizen March 26 to the Coastal Commission to reduce the removal of significant trees and ensure replacements for the North Dunes Restoration Project at Carmel Beach. Sutherland stressed, “The goal of this appeal is not to hold up the project, but to make it better.” The restoration project, supported by a biologist’s report and with broad city approval, could remove up to 31 trees for native scrub ground cover. “One of my goals is to identify, protect and ensure the continuity of the historic Monterey cypress corridor along Ocean Avenue west of San Antonio,” Sutherland said.

Caulkins’ Royal Takedown

Former Monterey Herald editor Royal Caulkins on March 27 posted a scathing blog report on voicesofmontereybay.org alleging that Carmel City Attorney Glen R. Mozingo has exaggerated or fabricated many of his legal credentials. Caulkins’ lengthy bill of particulars has not as yet been independently refuted or verified. Caulkins has questioned Mozingo’s veracity since January 2017. The Monterey County Weekly has also accused Mozingo of misrepresenting himself.

CRA Wins Continuance on Eighth Avenue Project

The CRA won a continuance for later reconsideration of the planning commission’s approval of plans to build two new residential units and remove 16 trees on the north side of Eighth Avenue between Junipero and Mission streets. The city council has final authority on the matter. Through lawyer Pamela Silkwood, the CRA charged that the city violated its own procedures by wishing to ‘gift’ public land to a private developer and failed to provide due process. The continuance went unreported in local media.

Needed: Temporary Private Housing for Visiting Amateur Golfers

The Player Private Housing Committee is asking Monterey Peninsula residents to volunteer to host top visiting amateur golfers in their homes. The players will be here from August 9 until as late as August 20. These accomplished male competitive golfers from around the world in a wide age range will play in the USGA-sanctioned U.S. Amateur Championship, in Pebble Beach. Interested? Go to <http://survey.usga.org/s3/2018Player-HostHousingQuestionnaire>.

Police Department Re-Do Advances, Grows More Costly

The planned renovation and expansion of the Carmel Police Department compound at Junipero Street and Fourth Avenue took a step forward April 3 when the city council approved an increase of \$75,000 in design fees for Kasavan Architects. With the increase, design work will come to \$197,000. Total estimated cost of design and construction is \$1.75 million. City officials are hopeful ground will be broken by the end of 2018. Present plans call for expanding to the Junipero sidewalk and removing trees and vegetation. Ordinarily, the project would first go to the historic resources board before any schematic drawings. That body weighed in on the matter April 16.

Restaurant Business Improvement District Planning Costs Rise

In February, the city agreed to put in \$10,000 for consultancy Civitas to plan and structure a proposed downtown restaurant business improvement district. At the city council’s April 3 meeting, the sum hit \$40,000. A new plan calls for the city, tourism marketing group Visit Carmel (itself partly funded by the city) and



downtown restaurants to each pay one-third of the 40K to Civitas. An additional \$200,000 would be raised for marketing city restaurants and BID administration from an assessment of .25 percent of gross sales in downtown restaurants. The city would take a 1 percent (\$2,000) fee.

Owner of Shadowed Small House Appeals

Resident Laura Spiegelman, who owns a small house on Guadalupe Street near First Avenue that she says will be shadowed by a bulky, two-story house planned for a vacant lot next door, filed an appeal to the city council to overrule a planning commission decision to allow the house to be built unaltered. This is an issue throughout Carmel, with the trend toward two-story, look-at-me houses.

City Raises Ire of IRS

The Internal Revenue service fined the city \$12,100 in December 2017 for filing its 2015 W-2s late. In March 2018, city finance manager Robin Scattini, who started on the job this January, asked the IRS to refund the fine. No word yet on whether the money is coming back.

Carmel Resort Inn Reopens

Residents observed in April a partial re-opening of the Carmel Resort Inn, 14 months after it closed. New lessors have worked hard to bring the rundown 20-cabin, 2-star up to code. Their work continues as guests arrive.

CRA Appreciates Whittakers



Willa Aylaian (right), owner of Whittakers of Carmel, the beloved gift and flower shop on Ocean Avenue, receives a CRA business Certificate of Appreciation from President Barbara Livingston.

Don't Forget to Vote

Now is the time to cast the ballot found in this copy of *The Voice* in the annual election for your CRA Board of Directors.

There are four announced candidates for four open seats this year. They are: Georgina Armstrong, Mary Condry, Ann Pendleton and Ken White. All are incumbent members put forward by the board's nominating committee. All CRA members in good standing are eligible to run. In addition to providing check boxes next to nominees' names (see insert), we have also provided a space for the name of write-in candidates. Please note that write-in candidates must be nominated by 10 CRA members to qualify for the ballot.

Exercise your right to vote. Please mark your ballot and return to CRA, P.O. Box V, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921. The last day to vote is May 19, 2018.

Hall Succeeds Nelson as Board Secretary

Ann Nelson resigned as Secretary of the CRA Board of Directors but remains on the board. Ann's successor is Karyl Hall. Karyl joins the CRA Executive Committee as our new Secretary.

Save the Date: CRA Luau Set for August 30

In addition to the inserted election ballot, check out the colorful informational leaflet about the upcoming CRA Luau in the Forest in this issue and be sure to keep it handy for reference.

The luau, held every summer in

Indian Village, Pebble Beach, is always great fun. How could it not be, with the buffet meal, beer, wine and mai tais, crazy Hawaiian shirts and skirts, a raffle, prizes and more? All this for \$35 per person. Proceeds go to our community support programs.

Voice Now Accepting Advertising

The Voice is now accepting paid advertising. We are looking for local businesses and non-profits that value our community's quality of life, respect the natural and historic environment, and appeal to residents as well as visitors. Support the **Carmel** publication that cares about Carmel.

For ad rates, sizes and schedules, e-mail carmelresidents@gmail.com, go to www.carmelresidents.org or phone (831) 250-5700 and ask for David.

Here's Where You Can Find The Voice

The Voice is now available free of charge at the beginning of January, March, May, July, September, and November at these locations:

CARMEL-BY-THE SEA: Bruno's, Nielsen's, Carmel Drug Store, Il Fornaio, Carmel Laundry, Harrison Memorial Library.

THE CROSSROADS: Safeway, Ace Hardware, CVS, Carmel Valley Roasting Company.

THE BARNYARD: Lucky, Cornucopia, Rancho Laundry, Carmel Valley Coffee Roasting Co.

Read All About It at *This Just In*

Want to get the latest city and CRA news, and get it fast? Just go to our website www.carmelresidents.org and click on *This Just In*. We often have detailed, independent reports on city council and commission meetings posted Wednesday or early Thursday. Why wait for the Pine Cone to show up online late Thursday night or on paper Friday?

Sign Up Now for July 4th Table in Devendorf Park

Carmel-by-the-Sea offers an annual Fourth of July picnic in Devendorf Park, and various organizations help with

offering food at the event. The CRA has been offering individual bowls of fresh fruits topped with almonds, free or with a small donation. Anyone who would like to help should contact Ann Pendleton (aksimpleton@comcast.net). Involvement includes a planning meeting. On July 4th we set up our booth, pass out fresh fruits and then clean up the area. It's a fun way to get involved with our city's traditional Fourth of July festivities.

Last Call to Renew Membership

Membership chair Ann Pendleton is issuing a last call for 2018 membership renewals. Forms are available online at carmelresidents.org or by calling Ann at (510) 388-6256.

CRA Communications Team

Barbara Livingston, David Armstrong,

Mary Condry, Tom Parks

Voice Editorial Board

Monterey Bay Design

Voice Design & Production

Website Design & Production

Georgina Armstrong

Photography

David Armstrong

Advertising Manager

Lauren Banner

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Art Haseltine

Memorial Gift



Beth Wright

from Barbara Livingston

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.

👍 CHEERS & CHIDES 👎

👍 **CHEERS** to the forest and beach commission for their steadfast dedication to saving trees in our urbanized forest. The commission managed to keep three gorgeous eucalyptus trees growing in the garden of the Carmel Art Association from being taken down. Planted there, probably by artists, years ago, the trees add a sculptural element appropriate to an art gallery.

👍 **CHEERS** to city councilmembers Carrie Theis, Carolyn Hardy and Jan Reimers, who played important roles in the two-month-long, three-lawyer city investigation that found Mayor Steve Dallas innocent of sexual harassment but guilty of boorish behavior. The councilmembers struck a tricky balance between being sensitive to alleged victims, being discerning in assessing the accusations, and showing some heart in a matter that deeply, and understandably, shook up the city.

👎 **CHIDES** to advocates of a downtown Restaurant Business Improvement District (see page 6) for allowing an initial estimate of \$10,000 to study and structure the potential RBID to balloon to \$40,000.

👎 **CHIDES** to Michael LePage for publicly admonishing resident Laura Spiegelman, who is appealing plans to build a two-story home on a vacant lot next to her small house (see page 6), saying Spiegelman could have bought the

lot herself. Not everyone has the money to do that, even in generally prosperous Carmel. Talk about a “Let them eat cake” moment.

👍 **CHEERS** to Diane and Gordon Simonds, who founded River House Books in the Crossroads nine years ago. At press time, the Simonds appeared to have found new owners to give the esteemed bookshop a last-minute reboot when it looked as though it might have to close. Having River House Books nearby helps book lovers around the Peninsula take heart. Fortunately, Carmel-by-the-Sea still has Pilgrim’s Way Bookstore and Secret Garden; it’s the last village bookshop, and a delightful part of downtown.

👎 **CHIDES** to council member Jan Reimers for acknowledging at the city council’s April meeting that people have the right to appeal a decision to remove up to 31 trees from the North Dunes. She then admonished listeners that, after all, the city council, forest and beach commission and planning commission voted unanimously to take the trees down and pointedly asked that an accounting of how much the appeal will cost the city be kept. Friends of Carmel Forest President Maria Sutherland is appealing to the Coastal Commission to require the city to replace lost trees. Is this an attempt to intimidate Sutherland and discourage others from supporting her? Maybe, maybe not, but either way it sounded awful.

👍 **CHEERS** to Dr. Wade Huntley, of the Naval Postgraduate School, for addressing members of the CRA and the public about the delicate diplomatic and military dance between the United States and North Korea. Dr. Huntley carved time out of his very busy national and international schedule to come to Carmel and talk about a matter with global implications, and we are grateful to him for doing that.

👎 **CHIDES** to restaurateur Rich Pepe for continuously stirring the pot by insinuating city collusion against him and his business.

👍 **CHEERS** to two groups of MEarth students who in early- and mid-April helped remove invasive plants from several sections of the Mission Trail Nature Preserve. The students helped pull gnarly blackberry vines and ivy, among other things.



A gorgeous sky at Carmel Beach