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MAGNIFICENT BIG SUR ESTATE DONATED TO LAND TRUST

By PAUL MILLER

JUST A few months before learning she was dying of cancer, Virginia Mudd wrote a memo that would help determine the future of her beloved, 900-acre Glen Deven Ranch, which dominates a scenic ridge above Highway 1 and Palo Colorado Road in Big Sur.

"It is exhilarating to anticipate the future of this place we have lived in so long and loved so much," Mrs. Mudd wrote. The memo declared that she and her husband, Dr. Seeley Mudd, who had lived at Glen Deven Ranch for 30 years, would donate the entire ranch to the Big Sur Land Trust. Mrs. Mudd died in late 1998. Her husband passed away in September 2000. Last week, their wish came true when the BSLT took title to the Mudds' former home and

its vast acreage.

"This stunning property is exceptional not only for its

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PHOTO/BIG SUR LAND TRUST

Dr. Seeley and Virginia Mudd (above) planned for more than 20 years to ensure their 900-acre Big Sur ranch would be preserved after their deaths. Last week, the Big Sur Land Trust took title to the property, which has stunning views of the Big Sur coast (left) from Hurricane Point to Soberanes Point.

PHOTO/PAUL MILLER



Does Forest Theater make too much noise?

■ *Neighbors seek restrictions on plays*

By MARGOT PETIT NICHOLS

CARMEL'S CHERISHED Forest Theater, a rustic amphitheater surrounded by pines, has been in operation since 1910 when Carmel's bohemian population began putting on plays and musicals. But its current-day success has led to complaints from neighbors about streets clogged with parked cars and the late-night sound of boisterous musical productions, such as "Jesus Christ Superstar."

Some neighbors, including former cultural commission chair Carolyn Hardy, want restrictions on the use of Forest Theater: fewer productions, quieter music, limits on ticket sales and a curfew of 10:30 p.m.

At a meeting this week of the Carmel Community and Cultural Commission, Hardy was adamant that changes have to be made. Representatives of community groups that stage

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City committee looks at baths, health food for Carmel raccoons

By TAMARA GRIPPI

CARMEL'S WILDLIFE Education Committee — charged with creating a campaign to dissuade people from feeding the town's burgeoning population of raccoons — this week debated a host of issues, ranging from whether the city should discourage birdbaths and ponds to whether it should actually encourage the planting of raccoon-friendly trees.

And one member thinks the committee should acknowledge there are other animal hazards in the city besides the deadly raccoon roundworm parasite that can cause blindness and catastrophic brain damage in humans.

Veterinarian Laura Pasten argued that if the city warns people about the dangers of raccoon roundworm, it should also warn locals about the diseases carried in bird and dog feces.

"We have to remember that it's 10,000 times more likely for people to contract *visceral larva migrans* from ingesting dog feces," Pasten said.

But Rod Stofle contended that the committee shouldn't be tip-toeing around its original charge — warning the public about raccoons.

"We wouldn't be here if it weren't for concern about raccoons," Stofle said. "Why don't we call a spade a spade? This business about ourselves eating dog feces — that problem has been around since we were in swaddling clothes. Dogs aren't ripping roofs apart."

Committee chairwoman Barbara Brooks steered the discussion back to the task at hand — getting the message out that it's illegal to feed wildlife in Carmel.

Feeding raccoons and other wildlife is an infraction that carries a \$100 fine for each offense. The second offense within a year costs \$200; three times within a year and the fine goes up to \$500, according to acting police chief Floyd



Laura Pasten

Coastal commission flip flops on Carmel demolition

By TAMARA GRIPPI

CARMEL HOMEOWNER Larry Virkkunen — whose plans to demolish a cottage to build a new house for his daughters met with resistance at the California Coastal Commission back in January — learned April 13 that he'll be able to go ahead with the project after all.

A personal visit to the property by Coastal Commission District Director Tami Grove and planner Michael Watson convinced them to support the demolition and the design of a new, 1,599-square-foot replacement home. Carmel had also approved the demolition, but letters written by preservation activist Enid Sales convinced the coastal commission to delay final approval for many months.

"We were treated fairly by the city; the staff and mayor were great," said Virkkunen. "But the Preservation Foundation forced me to hire experts to prove that their claims the house was historic were not true. The whole process took more than two years and really did hurt our family."

At its Jan. 11 meeting, the state commission voted to delay the project, asking the Virkkunens to incorporate the 900-square-foot cottage into their new design.

However, in the meantime, coastal staff visited the Camino Real site and advised the commission that the cottage wasn't

historic and that removing it wouldn't have much of an impact on Carmel's community character.

The coastal commission ultimately agreed.

"Basically what we directed staff to do was to go back and see if it measures up to the Periwinkle standard and staff

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PHOTO/KIRSTIE WILDE

Plans to demolish the 900-square-ft. cottage to make way for a new, 1,500-square-ft. home were approved by the California Coastal Commission April 13. The owners designed the new house to harmonize with the one they built 12 years ago (at left, above).

See **RACCOONS** page 7A