

Fun in the Sun

Your guide to summer in Carmel, Carmel Valley, Pebble Beach, Pacific Grove and Big Sur



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Little people, great leaps



PHOTOS/PAUL MILLER

Katie Stivers from RLS lower school (left) and Carissa Redfield from River School were among hundreds of school children who raced, jumped, hurdled and threw (javelin and discus) in the "Kids of Carmel" track and field meet at Carmel High May 18.

McPherson bill rolls thru Senate

By MARY BROWNFIELD

LEGISLATION TO give mayors control of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District sailed through the Senate Thursday on a 21-2 vote, just two days after water board directors signed a \$30,000 contract to hire a lobbyist to fight it.

Senate Bill 149, authored by Senator Bruce McPherson, would replace the water board with seven new members — one county supervisor and one elected official from each Peninsula city.

McPherson testified at a Senate hearing May 22 that SB 149 constitutes one of the highest priorities for his district, according to his legislative aide, Nick Janof. Since its inception 25 years ago, the district has spent \$55 million but has failed to develop a safe and reliable water supply as its mission requires, McPherson said. He also reiterated

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Wanted: films at Sunset Center

By TAMARA GRIPPI

ACCORDING TO a new survey, locals would flock to an Alfred Hitchcock film festival or a special screening of "Lawrence of Arabia" at the newly renovated Sunset Center. The latest Sunset Center interest poll conducted by the city revealed movies are one of the top three events Carmel citizens would like to see at their showcase theater.

And a member of the Sunset Management Committee with an impressive background in the motion picture business believes he can make it happen. Shan Sayles, the owner of numerous movie theaters throughout California, recently brought in equipment specialists to find out if Sunset can accommodate a projection booth.

The answer is yes. The initial cost estimate to install the movie screen, sound system and projection booth came in

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Council raids reserves to balance budget

By TAMARA GRIPPI

AFTER LEARNING the city's projected revenues for next year's budget will fall more than \$1 million short of its expenses, the Carmel City Council agreed to dip into its reserves to stay out of the red.

At a special meeting on the 2003/2004 budget May 20, the council agreed by consensus to rely on its healthy reserves — currently \$7.67 million — to balance the budget instead of laying off employees and cutting services.

However, hoping to avoid using reserves to balance the budget in the long term, the council is searching for ways to raise fees or taxes to make up the \$1.69 million deficit it expects in 2004/2005.

"None of us really liked the idea of going into the reserves because they've taken so long to build up," said Carmel Mayor Sue McCloud. Next year's expenses are budgeted at \$11.4 million, about \$1,040,000 more than taxes and fees are expected to generate.

Members asked Carmel City Administrator Rich Guillen to study a variety of new money makers suggested by employees, including: a 2 percent increase in hotel taxes, a restaurant meal tax, a tour bus parking fee, a parks assessment district and a bottled water sales program that would make use of the city's two active springs.

Guillen will also report back to the council on proposals for a new paid parking program at Sunset Center's north lot and a "permit improvement fee" that would charge contractors, tradesmen and developers 10 percent of the total value of their projects.

In the meantime, the city will continue its current freeze on any new capital improvement projects.

The bulk of Carmel's budget woes is due to sharp increases in the cost of employee benefits, though the city's disappointing returns in hotel taxes and sales taxes also share some of the blame, according to Guillen.

See **RESERVES** page 21A

RUSTIC SHOWPLACE FOR VALLEY TREASURES

By TAMARA GRIPPI

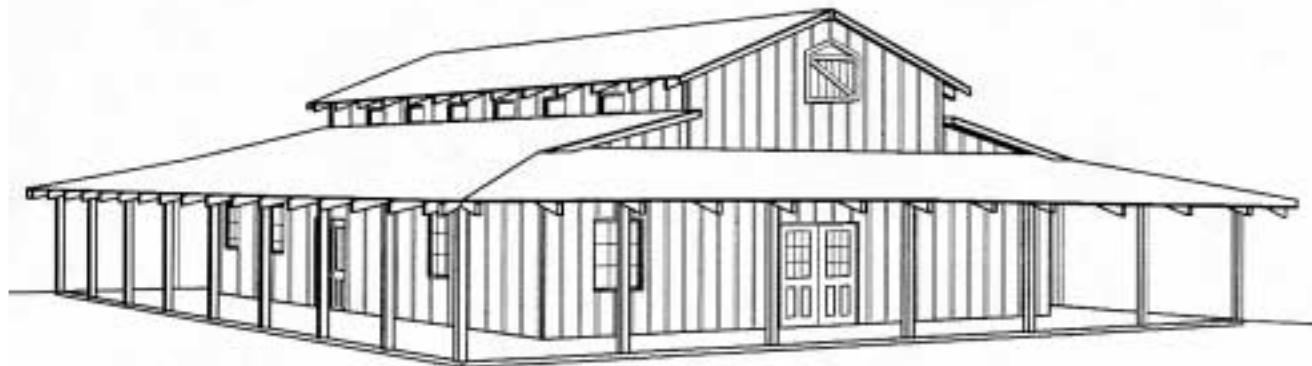
AFTER YEARS of fundraising for a small museum to show off treasures of Carmel Valley's rural history, the historical society is nearly ready to submit plans to the Monterey County Planning Department.

Ellsworth Gregory, president of the Carmel Valley Historical Society, reported his organization has already raised more than \$120,000 toward its goal of \$300,000.

Members hope to boost their fundraising efforts May 31 at the 11th annual California Cowboy Show at 6 p.m. at Hidden Valley Music Seminars. All proceeds from the event — featuring the entertainers Sons of the San Joaquin, Belinda Gail and cowboy poet Fred Engel — will go toward the museum.

Carmel Valley architect Joe Hertlein has already designed

See **MUSEUM** page 6A



DRAWING/COURTESY CARMEL VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Carmel Valley architect Joe Hertlein's vision for the future looks a lot like the past: A barn with wide porches would house antique farm equipment outside and historical treasures inside. Application plans for the valley museum are nearly ready for submission.