

# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## How to get the Vice President to drop by



PHOTOS/(ABOVE) COURTESY JASON BURNETT, (RIGHT) PAUL MILLER

Backstage at Sunset Center, Vice President Joe Biden and Carmel Mayor Jason Burnett (above) share a laugh while visiting with family members and VIP guests before an Obama/Biden campaign event Wednesday morning. A few minutes later, they were on stage, where Burnett introduced Biden, calling him, "an extraordinary vice president and an extraordinary human being," and then remained on stage while Biden spoke (right).

### ■ Step one: Elect Jason Burnett mayor

By PAUL MILLER

AMID ALL the campaign rhetoric, Vice President Joe Biden made some news when he spoke at an event Wednesday morning at Sunset Center. Calling Secretary of Defense



Leon Panetta, "my best friend in the administration," Biden disclosed that in May 2011, as President Barack Obama was faced with the decision whether to launch a raid deep inside Pakistan to try to kill Osama bin Laden, and amid widely reported doubts among White House advisors and Pentagon brass whether it would succeed, Panetta was "the only person who said unequivocally,

See **BIDEN** page 17A

## Water district: User fee protest failed

### ■ One-third of votes declared ineligible

By KELLY NIX

THE NUMBER of protest votes needed to halt a proposed Monterey Peninsula Water Management District user fee fell short by nearly 5,000, the district announced Monday. While the district plans to implement the fee as scheduled July 1, it will continue talks with groups opposed to the fee about possible concessions.

The district received 10,343 eligible protest notices of the 15,255 required in order to stop the user fee from going into effect. The district got a total of 15,709 protest letters; however, 5,366 were deemed either duplicates or ineligible for other reasons.

In response to the outpouring of opposition to the fee, the board may stipulate that it will expire someday and create a citizen's advisory group to make sure the money is spent as promised.

"The community asked for us to listen to them and work with them," water district spokeswoman Rachel Martinez told The Pine Cone Wednesday of the compromise talks, "and that is what the board is trying to do."

### 'Compromise' in works

On Tuesday, the district's water supply committee — composed of water district directors Jeanne Byrne, Bob Brower and Dave Pendergrass — met with representatives of several groups opposed to the fee, which would generate about \$3.7 million

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## P.G. city manager warns council about Agha's desal plan

By KELLY NIX

IF PACIFIC Grove teams up with Nader Agha on his proposed \$129 million desalination plant, it would mean big financial and legal risks for the city and a "low likelihood of positive benefit," according to a report released by city manager Tom Frutchet.

In a seven-page report submitted to the P.G. City Council this week, Frutchet cautioned that the city's involvement with Agha's proposed \$129 million Moss Landing desal plant has "downside risks that far outweigh the possible benefits." Agha promises his project would offer water at the lowest price to Peninsula ratepayers.

Frutchet outlined seven reasons, including significant financial and legal risks, the unlikelihood that the

California Public Utilities Commission would approve Agha's project, and doubt that California American Water would purchase water from the desal project to serve the Peninsula.

Also, "this project is way beyond the city's capabilities," according to Frutchet, "and would impose unacceptable costs on the other responsibilities and opportunities we have in the coming years."

Frutchet's report marks another dramatic turn for Agha's ambitious proposal. In the past month, Agha wrangled with the city over who would be responsible for defending it from possible lawsuits, and last week he accused members of an advisory committee of being "biased" against his proposal.

See **WARNED** page 20A

## Pilot died of heart attack, not plane crash

By MARY SCHLEY

THE MAN whose small plane plummeted at Salinas Airport and burned June 1 was a retired commercial pilot who lived in Carmel, Monterey County Coroner's detective Randal Dyck reported last week. Charles Russell Westcott, 73, died not from the wreck itself, but from the coronary artery atherosclerosis that stopped his heart moments after his plane lifted off the runway.

"The plane took off and continued flying upward, stalled, turned around, came back down

and crashed," Dyck said, but it wasn't due to pilot error. "Sometime after takeoff, Mr. Westcott had an arrhythmia, and his heart stopped working."

The experimental plane, a two-seat Prowler Jaguar Westcott had constructed from a kit, crashed into the runway, slid off to the side and caught fire, according to Dyck. He had no passengers with him, and no one on the ground was involved in the wreckage.

Because the plane caught fire, a forensic odontologist had to identify the pilot by matching his teeth with

See **PILOT** page 21A

## Bach Fest gets ready to celebrate 75th anniversary

By LISA CRAWFORD WATSON

EASE INTO your seat. Breathe, bringing yourself into the moment. Then close your eyes and let yourself listen. As the familiar music courses through you, lean into it, feeling purposeful, alive, uplifted, sacred. You are soothed, inspired, invigorated — and that's just the upcoming Carmel Bach Festival opening "grand scale performance" of Johann Sebastian Bach's Mass in B Minor.

What better way to herald the 75th anniversary celebration of the legendary festival than by listening to what many consider the greatest piece of classical music ever composed?

The Mass, completed the year before Bach's death in 1750, is actually a compilation of nearly 30 works, most of them composed earlier in his life, ultimately creating a consecration of his life's work.

"Two concerts have me really excited this year," said Adams Vocal Master Class director, dramaturge and lecturer David Gordon, who has been with the festival 30

years, the first nine as tenor soloist.

"The Mass in B Minor, Bach's most joyous, festive and celebratory work, is a perfect way to begin," he said. "And this will be my seventh year narrating the Tuesday night concert."

The Tuesday night program will be "Inside the Music: 75 years of the Carmel Bach Festival," which will weave a narrative thread throughout the history of the festival, he added.

Working through four centuries of music, conductor Paul Goodwin and Gordon will take their audience on a tour of 75 years of festival music, honoring music directors, conductors and musicians, and even the women who started the Bach Fest, Dene Denny and Hazel Watrous.

"I'm a real history buff, and I've been having a lot of fun researching the founders," Gordon said. "Denny and Watrous opened the first art gallery in Carmel,

See **BACH FEST** page 15 in the Real Estate Section

## Albino deer making a spectacle of itself



PHOTO/JOSE CASTILLO

If you think see an apparition lurking in your yard, you're probably just seeing one of two rare deer that were recently born in the Monterey Peninsula. See the story on page 27A.