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Beatles' 'White Album' performed live at Sunset



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Chasing bad guys and building a school

Carmel employee on patrol in Iraq

By MARY BROWNFIELD

NO TWO days are alike for Staff Sgt. John Hanson, a U.S. Army National Guardsman who, instead of fixing plumbing and heating problems at Carmel City Hall, works the night shift in an armored Humvee patrolling southern Iraq.

Stationed at Camp Cedar II, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers near the prophet Abraham's biblical birthplace of Ur, Hanson called The Pine Cone a few hours before the start of his mid-night shift last Tuesday.

"Just about every night, we get something going on," he said from the brigade operations center, as communications equipment squawked in the background during a mortar attack near one of the compound's guard towers.

Hanson, a longtime Carmel city employee whose National Guard unit was called up last November, helps patrol a roughly 20-square-mile rural area that includes a major highway running to Baghdad and a large fueling station. Mud huts dot a nearby village, and nomadic Bedouins populate the surrounding area. The camp serves as a way station not only for American troops, but also soldiers from Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, England and other allied countries.

"I don't think I've had a 'typical' night since I've been here," Hanson said of the numerous 12-hour shifts he's



PHOTO/COURTESY JOHN HANSON

Handing out T-shirts to local children is one of the fun things Carmel city employee John Hanson does while on duty at Camp Cedar II in southern Iraq. He described it as "the happiest day I've had in Iraq so far." At night, he patrols in an armored Humvee to keep Saddam loyalists from firing mortar, rockets and small arms into the camp.

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Sunset debate may climax June 8

By MARY BROWNFIELD

THE NONPROFIT that wants to run Sunset Center would have full control over which groups use it when and how much they pay, according to a draft agreement presented to the city council Tuesday.

The subject of months of negotiation between the city and Sunset Cultural Center, Inc., the agreement would run through June 30, 2007, and is set to be considered for adoption by the council at a special meeting June 8.

Attorney Steve Pearson, hired by the city to help draft the contract, highlighted its major points:

■ All revenues generated at Sunset, including ticket surcharges and theater rental fees, would go to SCC to run the center. According to projections from the nonprofit, revenues would increase from \$377,000 next year to \$708,000 by the end of fiscal year 2006/2007.

■ The city would directly or indirectly pay all costs not covered by revenues. The first payment of \$225,000 in start-up and working capital would be due five days after the contract with SCC is signed. The city would pay unspecified "enabling grants" to bridge the gap between income and operating costs each year, as well as \$50,000 "shortfall grants" if the pre-approved budget is exceeded. The total amount Carmel will fork over next year is projected at \$952,000, \$860,000 the second year and \$805,000 in 2006/2007.

See SUNSET on page 6 of the Real Estate section

STAFF: RAID RESERVES TO SAVE OUR JOBS

By MARY BROWNFIELD

CITY EMPLOYEES painted a picture of a dirty, unkempt town with an overwrought staff as the Carmel City Council considered adopting its 2004/2005 budget late Thursday afternoon.

The \$10,950,340 budget calls for eliminating 19 part-time and five full-time jobs, as well as four vacant positions, in order to avoid raiding the reserves to cover salaries.

Several speakers at the June 3 meeting advised the council to use money from reserves to keep the full-time workers on the payroll.

See BUDGET page 20A

BASIC GEOGRAPHY DOESN'T DETER CONSPIRACY THEORISTS

It's the great circle route, not government mind control

By PAUL MILLER

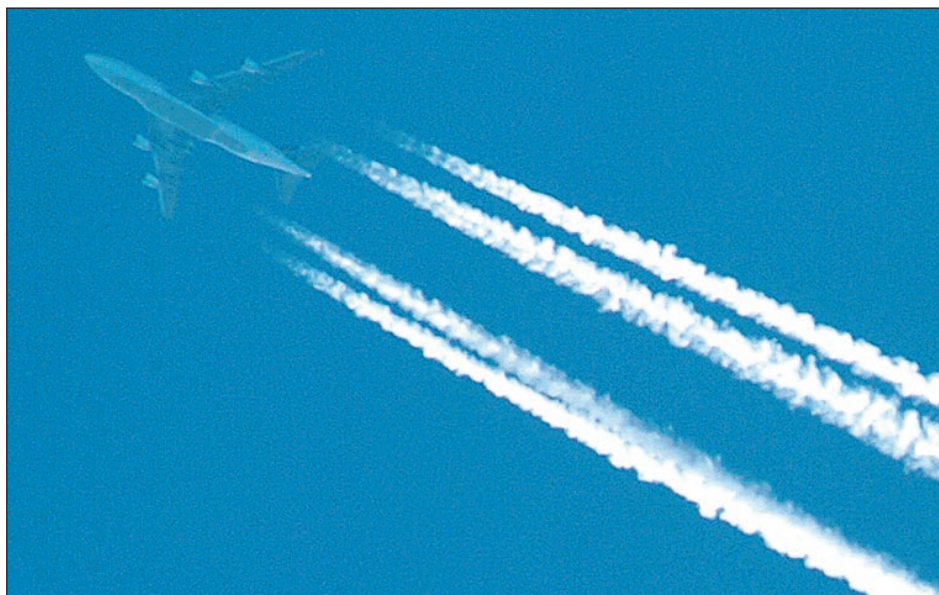
THE WOMAN with the charming southern accent was polite but determined when she called The Pine Cone office.

"Could you give me Doris Day's address?" she asked. "I have something to give her."

Thinking she was just a star-struck fan, we offered the woman a P.O. box number where she could mail something to the former Hollywood star, who lives in Carmel Valley.

"No, it's important I do it in person," she said.

We knew something was amiss when, less than half an hour after this phone conversation ended, the woman showed up at The Pine Cone office. Letting us in on her secret was as important as telling Doris Day, it turned out.



PHOTO/MICHAEL TROUTMAN

More than six miles above downtown Carmel, a Korean Airlines 747 on its way to LAX left behind four brilliant contrails on a late May afternoon. Should we all be alarmed?

"It's about all the contrails — you have so many of them here," she confided to this reporter. "They're part of a government project to control our minds."

She had a set of photos which she said had been taken in Carmel Valley, showing numerous contrails crossing a brilliant blue sky. "These are actually 'chemtrails,'" she said. A long list of web sites, she offered, expose the evil conspiracy behind the strokes in the sky — sites with titles such as, "The Mind-Altering Abilities of Chemtrails," and "Chemtrails: Culling the Useless Eater Population." One exposed a government patent for a device to generate contrails with various chemicals. Another linked the airborne trails to a host of maladies, including HIV, Gulf War Syndrome, attention deficit disorder and schizophrenia, which have appeared or grown much worse in the jet age.

And the woman believed it all. "You really should do a story about it." So did another

See CONTRAILS page 8A

Carmel Valley

CONTRAILS

From page 1A

caller several months before — a man from Carmel Valley who said the contrail problem was worse there than anywhere else in the country. He urged this newspaper to tackle such an important, but obviously dangerous, exposé.

“I knew you’d be too chicken,” he said, when told we weren’t interested in the contrail conspiracy.

Who you calling chicken?

“I get these calls all the time,” said Paul Turk, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration in Los Angeles. “Some people just don’t want to believe basic scientific information.”

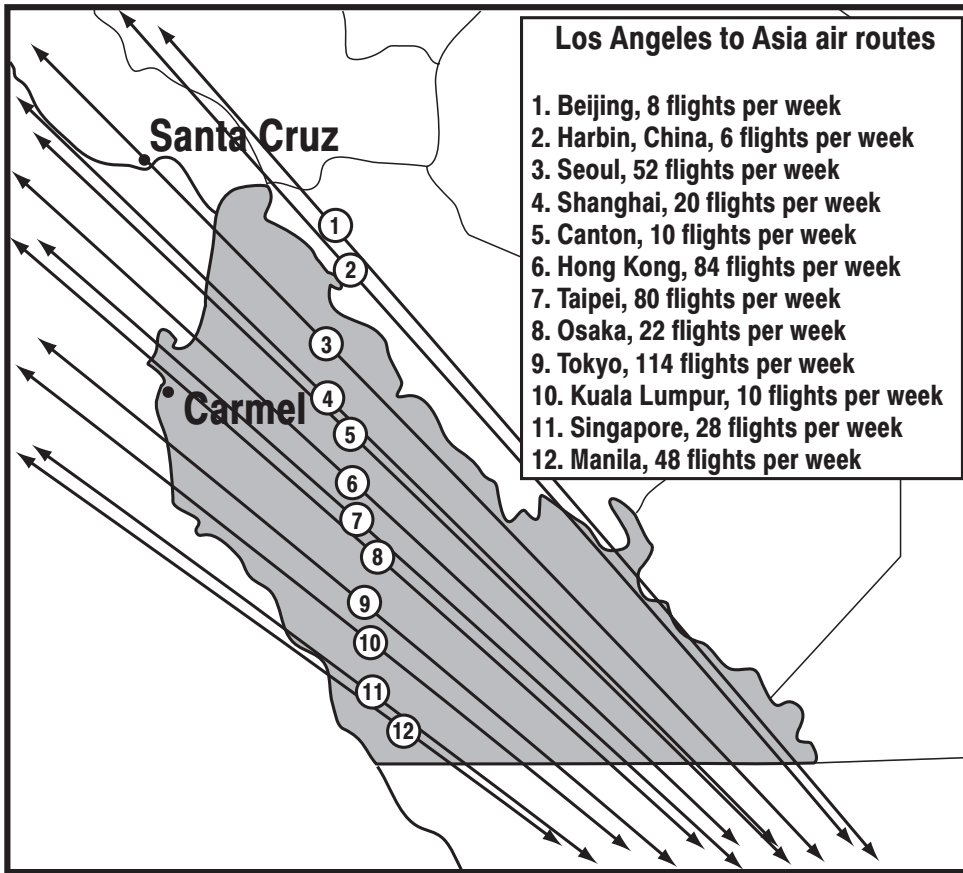
According to the Environmental Protection Agency, contrails form around the water vapor which is a normal byproduct of a jet engine in flight. “Depending on the temperature and the amount of water in the air at the aircraft altitude, contrails evaporate quickly (if the humidity is low) or persist and grow (if the humidity is high),” the EPA says.

But why do we have so many over the Monterey Peninsula?

“That’s because you’re right on the great circle route between Los Angeles and Asia,” said Captain J. Linde of Singapore Airlines after a recent flight across the Pacific. “If you don’t like it, you’ll have to move.”

Aircraft heading to China, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore from LAX, he explained, don’t fly west, the way you might expect from looking at a standard map of the world. The shortest route takes them to the northwest, over Monterey or San Francisco.

“Landfall in the United States for all those routes is over Central California,” Turk confirmed. “Then they head down



Great circle routes between Los Angeles and 12 cities in Asia cross Monterey County. Because the planes fly so high — more than six miles up — their contrails can be seen over large areas. With more than 400 flights every week, the vapor trails set conspiracy theorists atwitter.

the Central Valley to Los Angeles.”

There are more than 400 nonstop flights between Los Angeles and Asia a week, according to Thomas Winfrey, a spokesman for Los Angeles International Airport. Most of the flights use the Boeing 747, which eliminated the need to stop in Alaska or Hawaii when its ultra-long-range version was introduced in the 1980s.

When the circumstances are right, they can leave behind dozens of brilliant, but harmless, streaks in the sky on a single day.

Not surprisingly, the contrail conspiracy theorists weren’t mollified by information offered by officials with the government and the airlines.

“How naïve can you get?” asked a man from one of the websites. He declined to give his real name. “We’ve heard all their lies over and over again. Fortunately, a few of us haven’t been duped.”

“There’s a lot of passenger travel between Asia and the West Coast of the United States, and when you have

that kind of traffic you need an aircraft that can handle it,” said Zubin Daruwala, an official with Boeing’s 747 marketing group. More than 1,000 of the jumbo jets are in use around the world, Daruwala said, and the routes between Asia and the U.S. are “absolutely the principal market for them. A lot of airlines use the 747 as their flagship.”

A few of the airplanes flying the Pacific are twin-engine Boeing 777s. But the vast majority are 747s or Airbus 340s, which have four engines and produce distinctive quadruple contrails.

Routes can vary

Modern aircraft, equipped with satellite navigation equipment that allows them to pinpoint their position even when they are thousands of miles from land, don’t always follow great circle routes. Depending on the winds aloft, they may choose a longer track that will actually mean fewer hours in the air on a given day.

Also, while they are over land — and sometimes even when they are within a few hundred miles of the California coast — air traffic controllers at an FAA facility in Fremont require commercial flights to follow specific air pathways, Turk said, which deviate somewhat from true great-circle routes.

Nevertheless, when the winds are normal, planes packed with up to 400 passengers routinely fly over Monterey County between Los Angeles and 12 major cities in Asia.

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