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## THE SPEED BUMP IS NO MORE

By MARY BROWNFIELD

THE DOLORES Street speed bump that had neighbors drawing battle lines was removed Tuesday, a week after a contentious community meeting in Carmel City Hall where residents bickered, found no compromises, threatened to sue and walked out in anger.

At issue was the black and yellow plastic speed hump nailed to the asphalt last October, mostly in response to the organized campaign and repeated pleas of resident Jeff White, who said people speed down the narrow street, endangering pedestrians and pets. The short stretch is a thoroughfare

See **HUMP** page 22A



PHOTO/MARY BROWNFIELD

Public works superintendent Stu Ross and his crew remove a controversial plastic speed bump from Dolores Street Tuesday.

## Laird calls for delay in water cutback order

By KELLY NIX

IN A letter to the State Water Resources Control Board, 27th District Assemblyman John Laird urged the agency to delay acting on a cease and desist order that would require the Peninsula to limit its water use to extremely low levels.

In the three-page letter dated March 25, Laird also criticized the California Public Utilities Commission for taking three years to finalize an environmental impact report on Cal Am's proposed Coastal Water Project, which includes a desalination plant that would provide a drought-free water supply.

"This order would punish the local Monterey Peninsula community for the slow speed at which the PUC has moved to conceive and design a new project," according to the letter.

Laird's letter was sent to the SWRCB on the heels of a public hearing in Monterey set for Tuesday in which Peninsula residents may voice their

See **DELAY** page 15A

## Poll: Pine Cone readers support incumbents

AN INTERNET poll of subscribers to The Pine Cone's email edition shows that mayor Sue McCloud has an overwhelming lead over challenger Dogman McBill, and that incumbent council members Karen Sharp and Ken Talmage have solid leads over challenger Michael LePage.

The survey, conducted March 9-23 via an independent polling firm, showed McCloud with the support of 85 percent of respondents who expressed a

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## Firefighters battle city over merger

By MARY BROWNFIELD

AS CARMEL City Council candidate Michael LePage used his support for the potential consolidation of Carmel Fire Department with those in Pacific Grove and Monterey to separate him from the incumbents, city administrator Rich Guillen printed "An Open Letter from the City Administrator Regarding Fire Department

See **MERGER** page 23A

## Misdemeanor charge in fatal crossing accident

By MARY BROWNFIELD

THE DRIVER accused of hitting and killing 62-year-old Rebecca Tarumoto as she crossed a downtown street last October will face one count of misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter, Carmel Police Cpl. Steve Rana reported this week. The Monterey County District Attorney's Office filed the charge after a detailed investigation conducted by the California Highway Patrol.

"I basically brought the CHP in because we hadn't had a fatality in a long time, and I wanted to make sure our findings would coincide with those of a state entity that's used to doing this all the time," he said. In fielding such requests, investigators take all the data and determine

See **CHARGES** page 11A

## Ready for the crowds ...



PHOTO/KELLY NIX

A two-acre main tent, a 3,200-square-foot kitchen and several auxiliary tents have been set up for the inaugural Pebble Beach Food & Wine festival this weekend. Tickets to many of the events are still available. See our coverage on pages 16A and 18A.

## Cross owner asks supes for help

By CHRIS COUNTS

BESIEGED BY hundreds of pounds of retaliatory junk mail and frustrated by code enforcement activity that could require him to spend as much as \$1,000 to make legal a 12-foot cross he constructed seven years ago on his 40-acre ranch, Carmel Valley resident Larry Scholink turned to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors this week for help.

Scholink — who has received thousands of pieces of junk mail with messages such as "Remove Your Bigot Cross" printed on the mailing labels — asked the supervisors to stop the code enforcement activity and investigate the junk mail harassment, which he believes is illegal.

"This has nothing to do with code enforcement," insisted Scholink, a born-again Christian. "This has everything to do with Jesus Christ."

The junk mail — which has targeted not only Scholink but his business associates and elderly parents — began arriving two years ago. He said he has no idea who is sending the mountain of mail, and he isn't

even sure if it's a crime. But Scholink said the FBI has been contacted about the deluge, which he said is costing senders like John

See **CROSS** page 22A



PHOTO/CHRIS COUNTS

Scholink's cross has gotten a lot of media attention. After asking supervisors for help Tuesday, he was interviewed by KSBW.