

The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 95 No. 39

On the Internet: www.carmelpinecone.com

September 24-30, 2010

YOUR SOURCE FOR LOCAL NEWS, ARTS AND OPINION SINCE 1915

High-powered brain trust lined up for authors fest

By MARY BROWNFIELD

A SECRETARY of State, musicians, comedians, actors, economists, historians and other accomplished writers and thinkers will speak during the fourth annual Carmel Authors and Ideas Festival Sept. 24-26 at Sunset Center.

And the event warmup has a record 3,000 students from all over Monterey County meeting authors and attending talks Thursday and Friday, organizer Jim McGillen said. Julia Bolz, a lawyer who sidelined her career to build schools for girls in Afghanistan and has so far completed 18, is their keynote speaker, but the kids will also hear from other literary stars, such as Eric Schlosser ("Fast Food Nation.")

McGillen and his wife, Cindy, always try to line up different award-winning authors and speakers, including New York Times best-selling writers, and Pulitzer and Nobel Prize winners, each year, and the fourth year of the festival is no exception.

"There will be book signings and opportunities to meet the well known speakers. Attendees can even expect casual conversations and informal exchanges with the speakers," the McGillens tell prospective attendees. "We promise the weekend will exceed your every expectation."

The biggest name in the lineup is Condoleezza Rice, the 66th United States Secretary of State under President George W. Bush and also the first woman to serve as National Security Adviser. Throughout the weekend, she will discuss "Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir



Condoleezza Rice and Eric Schlosser are two of the big names appearing at Sunset.



of Family," described as the story "of a little girl trying to find her place in a hostile world and of two remarkable parents, and an extended family and community, that made all the difference."

Schlosser, a Monterey Peninsula resident and investigative journalist who is author of the seminal "Fast Food Nation" and producer of the film, "Food, Inc.," agreed to take part this year and is speaking to students as well as adults, according to McGillen.

"You talk about something that's timely," he observed, considering the recent food contamination scare involving

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No decision on Guillen's future

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

DESPITE WIDESPREAD expectations of an announcement Thursday afternoon from the Carmel City Council regarding the future of city administrator Rich Guillen — accused of sexual harassment and age discrimination in a lawsuit the city settled in July for \$600,000 — the latest of several closed-session meetings netted no decision late Thursday.

After two hours, Mayor Sue McCloud and city attorney Don Freeman reported the council took no action, and there was no mention of any future meeting when the issue might be taken up again.

The Sept. 23 closed session had been a continuation of a meeting Tuesday night that had media and community members waiting several hours in council chambers, and reporters and a handful of vocal residents again flocked to city hall Thursday, hoping to learn the fate of a man several of them have said should be fired.

But again, city officials had nothing to report about the Guillen, who was named in a suit against the city by former human resources manager Jane Miller in June of 2009 for allegedly making sexual advances, engaging in inappropriate behavior, favoring two particular employees and driving others to quit.

Sparks fly over wildfire prevention plan

By PAUL MILLER

WHEN A major wildfire breaks out, it costs taxpayers plenty to put it out. And that's why federal and state agencies offer generous grants of taxpayer funds for fire prevention — money that Monterey County officials want to help avoid a repetition of 2008's disastrous Basin Complex Fire in Big Sur.

But when a fire prevention plan tailored to obtain grant money was presented to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors Tuesday, environmentalists from around the state

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Sierra Club sues to stop Sand City resort

■ Cal Am, water district, developer listed as defendants

By KELLY NIX

THE SIERRA Club has filed a lawsuit against the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District and California American Water over a proposed \$300 million oceanfront resort in Sand City.

The suit, which also lists as a defendant National Security Guaranty — the developer behind the Monterey Bay Shores Ecoresort in Sand City — seeks to overturn a water permit for the resort approved by the water district in August.

The Sierra Club alleges the water district violated the California Environmental Quality Act by not examining the environmental impacts of the water permit on the Carmel River and its steelhead fish population before issuing the per-

mit, which allows Cal Am to deliver 90-acre feet of water per year to the resort.

"Our suit does not contend that SNG does not have water rights" for the resort, Sierra Club attorney Larry Silver told The Pine Cone Wednesday. "It just says that if the resort is going to get water, it shouldn't be at the expense of the Carmel River."

The 39-acre Monterey Bay Shores Ecoresort, proposed on a degraded site formerly used for sand mining, includes a 161-room hotel, 138 condominiums, and conference and spa facilities, and a dunes restoration habitat project. It would be located across Highway 1 from Seaside High School.

The project has the potential "through cumulative considerable impacts associated with the delivery of water to adversely affect the threatened steelhead and its designated habitat," according to the Sierra Club's 13-page lawsuit.

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DUO SUSPECTED OF PILFERING FROM GRANDMA

By MARY BROWNFIELD

OVER THE course of nearly a month, a Pebble Beach man and his female accomplice allegedly stole more than \$12,000 from his step-grandmother, who lives in Texas.

They used her personal information to obtain credit cards and access to her bank accounts, according to Monterey County Sheriff's Cmdr. Tracy Brown.

Theodore Lopez and Pacific Grove resident Amanda Spears, both 22, were arrested Sunday on charges of elder abuse, identity theft, burglary, grand theft and conspiracy, and taken to Monterey County Jail.

The crimes came to light after Lopez' father and step-mother, with whom he lives on Forest Lodge Road, began receiving statements for credit cards in the name of the grandmother, 85-year-old Nita Fallis, Brown said. They also noticed numerous withdrawals from Fallis' checking and savings accounts.

But Fallis "is in an extended care home in Texas," Brown said, while Lopez and his parents live in the home she owns in Pebble Beach. After receiving the suspicious credit-card and bank statements, the suspect's parents notified authorities the afternoon of Sept. 13.

Lopez and Spears, who lives on 19th Street in Pacific Grove, are both unemployed, according to the sheriff's office, and Brown said they used Fallis' personal information to obtain three credit cards, with which they purchased telephones, videogame players and games, and laptop computers from local businesses.

He said they also used Fallis' stolen personal information to gain access to her checking and savings accounts.

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Theodore Lopez



Amanda Spears

Dam removal to cost ratepayers \$49M

By KELLY NIX

CALIFORNIA AMERICAN Water has filed an application with the state so it can begin the extensive and costly process of removing the San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River to improve habitat for the river's

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PHOTO/PAUL MILLER

San Clemente Dam (lower left) will be removed because its reservoir is filled with sediment, it could collapse in an earthquake, and it's in the way of fish trying to spawn.