

The Carmel Pine Cone

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TRUSTED BY LOCALS AND LOVED BY VISITORS SINCE 1915

Chance to glimpse Mission's solstice 'illumination'

■ A flower and a feast also draw crowds

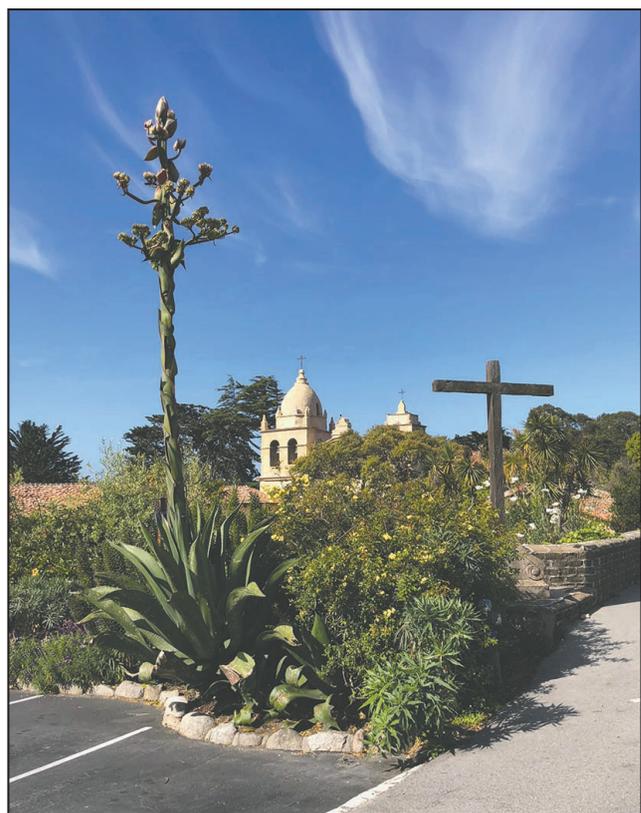
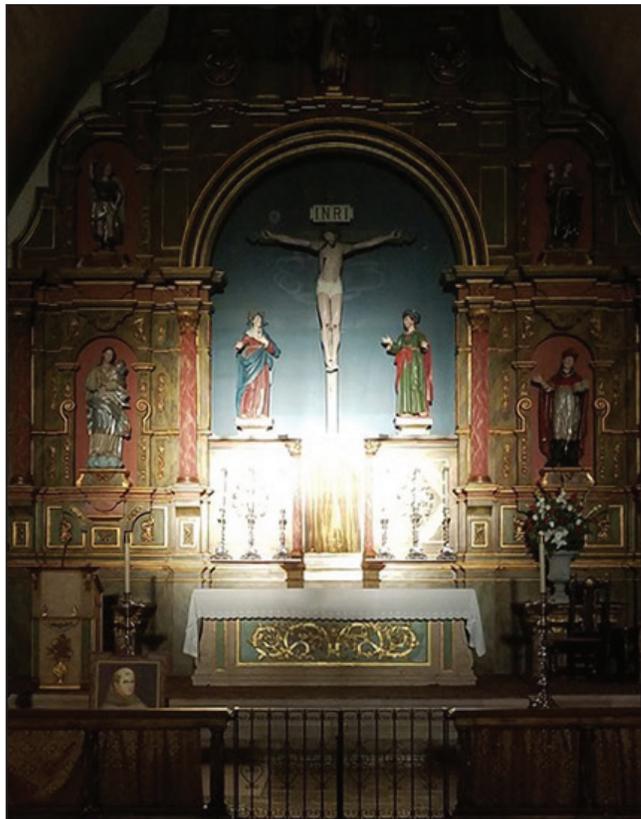
By MARY SCHLEY

THE HISTORIC Carmel Mission, a destination not just for locals, but for pilgrims and visitors from all over the world, is getting more attention this week than usual, with a couple of rare phenomena occurring.

Every year, around summer solstice, the rising sun shines through the Star of Bethlehem in the eastern side of the Basilica at just the right angle to illuminate the altar.

On Thursday, just before sunrise, hopefuls gathered aspiring to glimpse the illumination on the longest day of the

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PHOTO/(ABOVE) PAUL MILLER

In two rare sights at once, the early morning sun around the time of summer solstice shines on the altar at the Mission, and the agave near the front gate is flowering for the only time in its decades-long life.

PG&E: Mile-long pipe project to start in August

By MARY SCHLEY

AFTER BEING silent for the past several months, PG&E will hold a community meeting next week on plans to install new gas mains along several well traveled streets in town — and during some of the busiest months.

At a March workshop, the city council questioned the project's benefits, since the line wouldn't serve any properties here and would simply carry gas to other areas. The council also asked the company to find alternative routes that would be less disruptive than digging up Camino Del Monte, San Carlos Street, Fourth Avenue, San Antonio Avenue and Carmel Way.

A few weeks later, Joe Foster with PG&E public affairs said the company revised its plans to include new service lines to homes and businesses along the route, saying that replacing the old line would improve safety by including the latest technology and installing an excess flow valve at every connection. An excess flow valve automatically closes if there's a leak.

Since then, the utility company had been silent about the project, until this week, when officials announced a community meeting June 26 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. in the boardroom at Sunset Center at San Carlos and Ninth.

"Our first priority is to keep you and your neighbors safe, and we are dedicated to enhancing the integrity and health of the natural gas pipelines in your neighborhood," a letter PG&E plans to send to all affected property owners reads. "As part of PG&E's commitment to ensure your safety, we will be upgrading a portion of the natural gas distribution system that serves homes and businesses in your neighborhood."

Cars and golf

Although the council has yet to discuss the issue again or approve the required permits, PG&E officials announced they'll start work in mid-August to September — which would include the busiest time of the year in town, with Concours Week and this year, the U.S. Amateur Golf Championship at Pebble Beach — with construction continuing until December. Company officials have said they want the work done in time to handle increased demand during the winter. The original timeline was May through November.

The work, which entails the installation of almost a mile

of 6-inch pipeline, will be done in one-block segments. "The length of time for each segment will vary based on the number of services, scope of work, and conditions encountered during excavation," Foster said. "It is PG&E's goal to complete each segment as safely and efficiently as possible with minimal impact to the community."

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Panetta says asylum-seekers shouldn't be detained

By CHRIS COUNTS

REACTING TO news that President Donald Trump signed an executive order ending the separation of children from adults who are arrested illegally crossing the border, Congressman Jimmy Panetta criticized Trump's move because he said it would "implement the joint indefinite detention of children and parents."

In contrast, Panetta said a bill he co-authored this week would restore a program used by previous administrations to release illegal immigrant families "to family members in the United States" or fit them with ankle bracelets, while also trying to ensure they would show up for court hearings.

"The Keep Families Together Act, H.R. 6135, which I introduced this week, would prohibit the arbitrary separation of children and parents, establish a family unity preference [and] discourage the separation of siblings," Panetta said.

The congressman credited "the growing outrage from Republicans and Democrats" for spurring Trump into action. But he said he opposes the Trump administration's solution

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Jimmy Panetta

Sculptor's beloved bulldog, Lord Wellington, 11

By CHRIS COUNTS

ONE OF the most famous dogs in a town that's known for them — and a fixture at Steven Whyte's Sculpture Studio and Gallery for the past decade — Lord Wellington died June 19. An English bulldog, he was 11.

"This past week, even our massive teddy bear-lion-pig-dog found a fight he couldn't win," Whyte's wife, Ellen Wilson, posted on social media this week.

Lord Wellington was a familiar sight in Whyte's gallery on Dolores between Fifth and Sixth, where he charmed everyone he met. "Every day, he proudly went to work with Steven, greeting customers at the gallery and establishing an impressive fan club of locals and visitors," Wilson recalled.

Gallery ambassador

The English bulldog shared in Whyte's success as a sculptor and gallery owner. "He was with us the year we opened our first Carmel gallery, he would go on to supervise the gallery's remodel, expansion and our growth to another location," Wilson said.

Lord Wellington was credited with boosting business at the gallery. "We can track almost \$80,000 worth of sales to Wellington's work as gallery ambassador," she explained.

The English bulldog was a natural in front of camera, and the media took notice.

"He appeared on CNN, the Wall Street Journal, the San Francisco Chronicle and more," Wilson noted.

Besides being cute, Lord Wellington was also sly, and he used his affection for chasing balls to the gallery's advantage.

"One of his favorite customer service techniques was to

toss his toys from the front gallery onto the Dolores Street sidewalk," Wilson said. "When a passerby tossed it back his way, he would quickly return and toss it out again; before they knew it, the pedestrian was engaged in an impromptu game of fetch."

As he grew older, Lord Wellington's love of ball games waned, but he still knew how to win over gallery visitors, whose hearts he could melt "with no more than a snore."

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PHOTO/LORD WELLINGTON'S FACEBOOK PAGE

An English bulldog who greeted guests at Steven Whyte's downtown gallery for more many years, Lord Wellington passed away this week at the age of 11.