

The Monterey Peninsula is home to hundreds of small businesses, including many owned and run by dynamic, entrepreneurial women whose success stories are an inspiration to us all.

Read all about them in this issue of The Carmel Pine Cone

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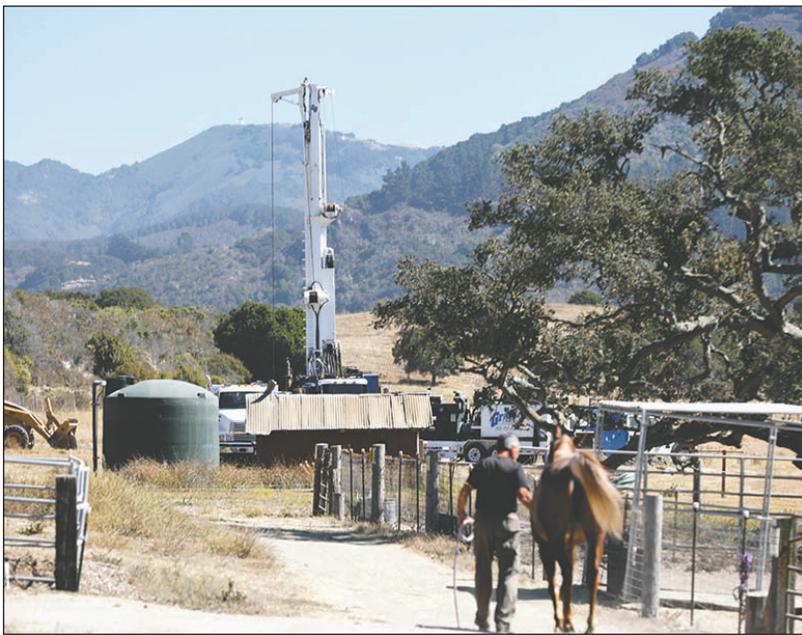
Volume 104 No. 38

On the Internet: www.carmelpinecone.com

September 21-27, 2018

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Mystery well at September Ranch



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

This week, you may have spotted a drilling rig at September Ranch, which has seen its share of development controversies over the years. According to the county, the rig is drilling a water well, which has a permit to "serve multiple connections," but nobody was saying what the connections might be for.

Cal Am's value exceeds \$1 billion, company claims

Takeover group criticizes estimate

By KELLY NIX

CALIFORNIA AMERICAN Water said a consultant has valued the utility's Monterey Peninsula system at more than \$1 billion, a figure that Public Water Now, the group behind a ballot measure calling for a public takeover of Cal Am, said is merely a tactic to "scare people" into believing a buyout would be too costly.

In a mailer to voters last week opposing the takeover initiative, Cal Am takes aim at Public Water Now's claim that Monterey Peninsula ratepayers can "afford" to buy out the water company, saying its Monterey system is worth \$1,044,000,000 — the first time the company has publicly placed a value on it.

The question of Cal Am's worth is central, since Public Water

Chief says speed limits require careful study

By MARY SCHLEY

RESIDENT MARK Bayne's hopes for a citywide 15 mph speed limit — with a few exceptions for major roads — were dashed at the traffic safety committee meeting last week. But Police Chief Paul Tomasi, who sits on the committee with public works director Bob Harary and planning director Marc Wiener, said at least a handful of streets could see the lower speed limit — but only if a traffic study shows it is warranted.

According to Bayne, many residents are upset at the speeding that goes on in town, and said he's even seen "normally quiet, docile people out in the street screaming at people to slow down."

But Tomasi said that, to prevent ticket traps, state law requires speed limits be set no lower than the speed 85 percent of the vehicles are traveling — a level that must be evaluated by a traffic engineer.

"It feels backward, because we are setting the speed limit based on the speed people want to go," he acknowledged, but without a survey, the speed limit can't be changed. "The enforcement aspect goes out the window if we just arbitrarily set the limit at 15 mph."

See **TRAFFIC** page 20A

City attorney: Legal bills not public

Appeal may be coming in public-records court fight

By MARY SCHLEY

IN THE middle of an escalating controversy over how much the City of Carmel spends on lawyers, city attorney Glen Mozingo started keeping the city's legal expenses secret by omitting them from the check register approved by the council every month.

That list of checks, which is a routine part of the council's monthly agenda packet, includes everything, from payments to Cal Am and PG&E, to checks written for insurance premiums, uniforms and dry cleaning, and gives taxpayers a way to keep track of what's being done with their money.

For years, it has included payments to law firms, investigators and the like.

But two months ago, Mozingo decided the check register could no longer include amounts paid for "legal services incurred for pending and active investigations, pending and active litigation, as well as recently concluded matters," including the total amounts spent on them.

He said the checks are a matter of "attorney-client privilege" and can be shielded from taxpayers, thanks

to a recent California Supreme Court decision.

Just by seeing how much has been spent, he said, "I can tell if someone is going to make a motion for summary judgment. If you do this day in and day out, you can tell. You can tell by where the case is in the process. This is no secret in the legal profession."

As a result, the checks written to Mozingo, as well as to any outside law firms assisting the city, no longer show up on the check registers, and they and their totals are not reflected in the total expenditures.

This week, in response to questions from The Pine Cone, he offered a possible concession: Listing all of the legal cases the city attorney's office is working on, and the total spent, without identifying how much is going toward any particular task or case.

"That way, I would not be broadcasting what cases I'm doing what on," he said. "That addresses 'We want to know what you're spending,' but it doesn't cross the line of the Supreme Court ruling."

Mozingo said he asked the State Bar to advise whether taking that route would keep him out of trouble.

The legal case

Mozingo said he believes the California Supreme Court's decision in Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors vs. The Superior Court of the County of Los Angeles, filed in 2013, requires him to keep legal spending private. The case focused on the ACLU's request via the California Public Records Act for legal invoices related to nine lawsuits alleging excessive force against jail inmates. The county agreed to turn over invoices for three resolved cases but withheld bills for those that were still active, because "the detailed description, timing, and amount of attorney

See **ATTORNEY** page 17A

And you thought it was for gloves ...



PHOTO/COURTESY TRACY TRAVAILLE

When a P.G. couple got their family minivan back from the Seaside Police Department Monday, they were shocked when they opened the glovebox — and so would anybody else who wasn't a drug user. See page 5A.

See **CAL AM** page 19A