

# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## WATER DISTRICT GM: TAKING OVER CAL AM WON'T BE EASY

By KELLY NIX

THE CHIEF of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, in a report released late last week, laid out a complicated roadmap for a government takeover of California American Water's local water system, which the company has valued at more than \$1 billion.

Voters in November 2018 approved Measure J, which calls for the water district to use eminent domain, if necessary, to acquire Cal Am's water system — if doing so is determined to be financially "feasible." A team of consultants hired by the water district is trying to determine that, and the board is expected to review a feasibility report in October.

In a document released Aug. 19, water district general manager Dave Stoldt presented a complex plan to "secure and maintain public ownership of all water production, storage and delivery system assets" within the water district's territory.

In order for the creation of a public water system to

See **TAKEOVER** page 16A

## Marina files another lawsuit to stop desal

By KELLY NIX

AS EXPECTED, the Marina Coast Water District has filed suit to try to stop California American Water from starting construction of its proposed desalination plant near the city, claiming county supervisors' July approval of the project violated state environmental laws.

In a lawsuit filed against Monterey County and its board of supervisors, Marina Coast contends that "new information" indicates that groundwater impacts from the desal plant — which would provide a drought-free water supply to the Monterey Peninsula, but not Marina — would be "substantially" more severe than the environmental report for the project indicated.

"We have filed this suit to ensure the project doesn't move forward until all impacts, water rights, mitigations and alternatives can be evaluated using the most current information," Marina Coast general manager Keith Van

See **DESAL** page 17A

## Steven Whyte WWII tribute unveiled in Korea

By CHRIS COUNTS

NEARLY TWO years after his monument honoring the hundreds of thousands of women who were forced by the Japanese military to become sex slaves during World



PHOTO/COURTESY STEVEN WHYTE

Former comfort woman and present-day activist Lee Yong-soo, 91, embraces Steven Whyte's new monument at its unveiling in South Korea last week. Whyte spoke at a ceremony, as did South Korea's President Moon Jae-in.

## Crowds, street racers shut downtown

By MARY SCHLEY

CHAOS REIGNED for several hours on the normally placid streets of Carmel Friday night when a horde of exotic cars, reckless drivers and the people who love to watch them descended on the town, leading police to call in reinforcements, barricade streets and issue numerous citations.

During the height of the mayhem, more than 1,000 people mobbed the sidewalks and roads to watch drivers of Porsches, McLarens and other high-powered sports cars

peel out from stop signs, speed between blocks, rev their engines and spin donuts.

Smaller crowds had gathered in town Wednesday and Thursday nights, too, according to Carmel Police Chief Paul Tomasi, but Friday night, their numbers easily tripled.

"Friday was busy starting at about 5 p.m., when there were a lot of cars and people in town. Around 8, the exotics came to town and started driving around," Tomasi recalled. "It's all driven by social media and YouTube — they tell people where to go."

See **MAYHEM** page 12A



The drivers of this black Porsche and grey Dodge were both later arrested for reckless driving after spinning donuts in the middle of downtown as onlookers cheered them on. Considering the dangers of such maneuvers and the hundreds of people on the streets, police did their best to shut it all down Friday night.



## Ambitious condo plan gets love from commission

By MARY SCHLEY

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS generally liked a plan to build six condos on Dolores Street next door to the Seventh & Dolores Steakhouse when they reviewed it last week. But a couple of significant hurdles have to be overcome before the project breaks ground.

Fred Kern's plans call for constructing two contemporary-style buildings totaling 9,030 square feet on the two

lots that are now used by 7D Steakhouse for parking, and expanding the small building next to the restaurant by 452 square feet to turn it into a market. The 605-square-foot building "is just a little bit too small for just about anything," architect Adam Jeselnick explained.

Below ground would be a garage equipped with car lifts so it could hold as many as two dozen vehicles, even though it's only legally required to accommodate eight — one for each of the condos and two for the store. Rather than have a steep driveway and curb cuts, the garage would be accessed by a car elevator that would take up part of the sidewalk.

### Restaurant parking?

The most significant issues, planning director Marc Wiener told commissioners Aug. 14, are the fact the restaurant would lose its parking — which Kern said is not his problem, since the properties are separate — and that the little building might be considered historically significant, even though it's not 50 years old. A long fight was waged over the larger building next to it created by architects Walter Burde and Will Shaw as a bank nearly a half-century ago, and the restaurant there now was designed to retain it.

Wiener noted, however, that even if the little building is considered significant, the proposed addition would probably comply with the Secretary of the Interior's standards for historic properties.

He also said Kern would need permission from the city council to build the mechanical lift for cars, because the sidewalk is public property, and Wiener recommended the city require him to let restaurant customers use his parking garage, since it would lose its parking lot and was approved based on the assumption the lot would accommodate its workers and customers.

### Super green

Jeselnick explained the building, which would be constructed of concrete with metal and wood accents,

See **WHYTE** page 19A

See **CONDOS** page 20A