

Carmel

Art Festival

Plein Air Competition
Carmel Youth Art Show
Sculpture in the Park
Kids Art DayBULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CARMEL, CA
Permit No. 149

The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 94 No. 20

On the Internet: www.carmelpinecone.com

May 16-22, 2008

YOUR SOURCE FOR LOCAL NEWS, ARTS AND OPINION SINCE 1915

Dog on mend after beach rescue by police, fire, bystanders

By MARY BROWNFIELD

A COLLISION with a submerged rock at Carmel Beach Saturday morning severely injured the chest of a greyhound who was romping in the surf.

But thanks to the help of Carmel firefighters and a local veterinarian, the dog survived and is recovering after emergency surgery, her owners were happy to report this week.

"None of us thought she was going to make it," said Jan Avent, who adopted Petey four years ago from a rescue group that finds homes for former racing dogs. "She's looking great."

Avent and her husband, Dave Rossetti, live in the San Francisco Bay Area but also have a home in town and were walking their dog on the beach the morning of May 10. As greyhounds are wont to do, Petey was running ahead of them at the north end, and the tide was out.

"We were enjoying the beach like everyone else was Saturday morning, and Petey was just exploring the tide pools and having a great time around the rocks," Avent recalled. "She came



PHOTO/COURTESY JAN AVENT

Petey the greyhound rests comfortably after colliding with a submerged rock at Carmel Beach and being stitched up by a Crossroads vet Saturday.

around one of the outcroppings running and she misjudged. She went through water and collided with a rock that was below the surface, and it ripped open her chest."

See RESCUE page 28A

Local real estate market picking up, realtors say

■ Bargains bring out buyers; upper end also strong

By KELLY NIX

AFTER NEARLY three years of declining values, sluggish sales and overall pessimism, the Monterey Peninsula real estate market has made a significant upturn in the past few months, according to realtors.

The president of the Monterey County Association of Realtors this week reported sales are stronger than they have been for past two years, while other realtors say they're breaking sales records.

"There is definitely the sense things have picked up," said Kim DiBenedetto, a realtor and president elect of MCAR. "I think people are really getting the message it's a good time to buy."

In the past four weeks, between

25 and 30 homes were sold on the Peninsula, according to county records. Since August 2006, most weeks have had only 15 to 20 home sales.

In a May letter to employees, Keller Williams Carmel area manager Janet Reilly said April marked the realty firm's best month ever. And Coldwell Banker Del Monte's Tim Allen said he's breaking personal records for sales in some segments of the market.

Out of the woodwork

A Wall Street Journal article last week predicted April 2008 will mark the bottom of the U.S. housing market, meaning home prices have tapered off and the trend won't get any worse than when the bust began in mid-2005.

The article said homes on average are back to being as affordable as during the 1990s. Potential buyers who had been priced out of the market are realizing they can afford to get back in, it said.

DiBenedetto said that same trend is occurring locally.

"I've got buyers calling me out of the woodwork who have been holding off the last couple of years," she said. "All of a sudden they are ready to go."

Whether the upturn will have longevity is anybody's guess.

See DONATE page 10A

See REAL ESTATE page 21A

River parents pitch in to refill Highland Elementary coffers

By MARY BROWNFIELD

AN IMPROMPTU pass-the-hat effort during a Carmel River School fundraiser helped repair some of the pain and loss suffered by students at Highland Elementary School in Seaside after their clerk forged checks to steal \$10,000 that had taken the kids five years to raise.

"It's been a tough year in terms of not having those funds and not being able to provide the activities that we would," principal Donna Kiernan told The Pine Cone this week. "Our children raised those funds

with penny drives and a walk-a-thon, and all that money was intended to support them."

River School parent Todd Hornik, a Monterey County deputy district attorney and candidate for Superior Court judge, heard the story firsthand. Two days prior to River School's annual Spring Fling fundraising dinner and auction at Mission Ranch, he watched the sentencing of 23-year-old Laura Javier Barroso, whom he prosecuted. She had pleaded

Ted Leidig's suicide leaves family, friends distraught

By MARY BROWNFIELD

RESTAURATEUR AND longtime Monterey Peninsula resident Ted Leidig, a member of one of Carmel's oldest families, committed suicide in his family's remote Carmel Valley cabin late Wednesday morning, according to the Monterey County Sheriff's Office. Leidig was alone in the cabin when he died of a gunshot wound to the head from a .38-caliber revolver. He was 63.

"He had called two friends of his, and they were both concerned," said Sgt. Mike Richards of the coroner's office. "One of them made the initial call to 911 that prompted the deputies to respond, and another showed up shortly after and actually heard the gunshot. The deputies probably arrived two minutes after that."

They summoned Carmel Valley Fire Department and an ambulance, first for help getting through the gate to the property and then to stand by in case medical care was needed.

"No evidence of criminal activity was found at the scene," he reported. An autopsy is planned for May 16.

'Generous and kind'

Born June 28, 1944, and raised in Carmel, Leidig attended Sunset School and Carmel High.

See LEIDIG page 25A

Poet, publisher and modern-day troubadour

By CHRIS COUNTS

A REMARKABLE creative odyssey ended last week when Ric Masten died after a nine-year battle with prostate cancer.

"He went out tapping his fingers to the music," reported his daughter, Jerrie Hanson. "He died peacefully and gracefully."

Surrounded by his family, Masten passed away May 9 at his home in Palo Colorado Canyon. He was 78.

Masten was born and raised in Carmel, where his father, Richard T. Masten,



Rick Masten in 2000 after being named Carmel's "People's Poet."

See MASTEN page 11A



PHOTO/MARY BROWNFIELD

On Ocean Avenue last August, Ted Leidig (left, in sunglasses) cuts the ribbon for the new medians to which he and his family donated. Next to him are his cousin, Glenn Leidig, and Glenn Leidig's wife, Marian.