

# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## Wild Volvo ride ends in Taste restaurant window

By MARY SCHLEY

A MAN floored his Volvo in reverse out of a gas station, across the street, over the sidewalk and through the window of a Pacific Grove cafe around 2 p.m. Dec. 12. He and his passenger were uninjured, and fortunately the road was clear, the sidewalk was empty, and the restaurant was closed. While the window, wall and some of the bistro's interior were damaged, property restoration crews enabled

it to be open for business within a few days.

"I got a call from one of my employees that a car had gone through the window," Bill Karaki, who owns Taste Cafe & Bistro at the corner of Forest and Prescott in Pacific Grove with his wife, Sue, said from the scene Monday afternoon.

He learned an older couple in a Volvo sedan had hit the

See CRASH page 22A



The owner of Taste Cafe arrived to find the back end of a Volvo hanging into his restaurant after the driver mistook the gas for the brakes and careened backward out of a gas station across the street.

PHOTO/BILL KARAKI

## County OKs zoning for latest P.B. Co. plan

By KELLY NIX

A DECADE-PLUS-OLD proposal from the Pebble Beach Company to build a new hotel, spa and extra parking while preserving hundreds of acres of forestland was given a big boost Wednesday, when the Monterey County Planning Commission voted 9-1 to amend a land use plan that will allow the development to be built.

Receiving support Dec. 14 from business leaders, residents and even environmentalists, the plan includes a 100-room hotel adjacent to the Spyglass Hill Golf Course, up to 80 new hotel rooms at The Lodge and 60 at the Inn at Spanish Bay, and 90 single-family homes. It also calls for preservation and protection of 635 acres of forested open space,

See PLAN page 27A

## Big Sur trail workers avert disaster by dousing illegal campfire

By CHRIS COUNTS

IN BIG Sur, the names of wildfires — like the Basin Complex Fire of 2008, the Rat Creek Fire of 1985 and the Marble Cone Fire of 1977 — are part of the region's lore. But thanks to a pair of trail-work volunteers, the Stone Ridge Fire of 2011 will likely soon be forgotten.

Two weeks ago, a powerful wind storm hit Big Sur, knocking out power, breaking windows and even causing the death of a condor researcher. Afterward, Ventana Wilderness Alliance volunteers Mike Heard and Robert Parks hiked along the Stone Ridge Trail Dec. 6 — a path the VWA has been rehabilitating — to see what condition it was in following the storm. They found the trail littered with downed trees and debris, and they smelled smoke.

Climbing over several fallen trees, the volunteers found the source of the smoke at an illegal campsite, where a smoldering campfire was burning part of a downed tree just inch-

See FIRE page 18A

## Rancher, dairy farmer aid efforts to save condors

By CHRIS COUNTS

WHAT DO a cattle rancher, a dairy farmer and an environmental group have in common?

They all want to see the California condor return in large numbers to the skies above the Central Coast.

On a lonely, grassy ridge within the boundaries of the 7,000-acre El Sur Ranch, the carcasses of cattle are regularly fed to condors, which subsist entirely on carrion. While the ranch's owner, James Hill, has sought no credit for his efforts, executive director Kelly Sorenson of the Ventana Wildlife Society — which is spearheading condor recovery efforts — told The Pine Cone this week that he considers the ranch owner an unsung hero.

"He's real humble, but he deserves some credit," Sorenson said. "He goes out of his way to benefit the condors. He's

always been very supportive of what we do."

Sorenson approached Hill — heir to a 19th century railroad fortune and one of Monterey County's biggest landowners — about a decade ago and received permission to use a ranch road to access an adjacent property where the VWS delivered carcasses to condors. Hill not only offered access across his land, but later he began to bring cattle carcasses to a nearby site on his property and set up his own condor feeding zone.

"Over the last six or seven years, we've delivered 30,000 to 40,000 pounds of carcasses," explained Hill, who recently

See CONDORS page 19A

## DOG THROWN FROM CAR FOUND INJURED BUT ALIVE

By KELLY NIX

IF FROSTY the dog could speak, there's no doubt he would have an amazing tale to tell — including roaming the cold, wet streets of Monterey, foraging for scraps of food, dodging cars and curling up at night under whatever shelter he could find.

Until Wednesday, when a Monterey woman found the thin, dehydrated, tick-ridden Frosty outside her home, the dog had been missing since Dec. 5 after a passerby reported a driver threw him from a moving car near the Lighthouse Avenue tunnel.

Dirty and with a right eye so severely injured that it had to be removed, the dog was found alive — a fact some believe is a miracle.

And despite all Frosty has gone through, the nine-day adventure apparently didn't break his spirits.

"He's been so sweet since we got him," SPCA for Monterey County spokeswoman Beth Brookhouser told KION Wednesday. "He's been wanting to give kisses, he's been snuggling."

Frosty's story began when a man reported he saw the driver of a Buick sedan throw the dog out of the vehicle. The bystander briefly caught Frosty — who was wearing an Santa Cruz SPCA collar — before he escaped and ran off.

The man called the agency to report the incident, and SPCA officials contacted the Seaside family which had been fostering Frosty. The family said he escaped from their home Dec. 1, four days before he was reportedly tossed from the sedan.

Though volunteers and staff from the SPCA searched for Frosty several days after he went missing — and there were numerous reports of sightings of him — the little dog left no trace.

It wasn't until the unidentified woman on Manor Road off

See FROSTY page 21A



PHOTO/COURTESY SPCA

SPCA veterinarian Dr. Carol Lida examines Frosty before performing surgery to remove the little dog's injured right eye. He is reportedly recovering well.

## Ride to school sparks car vs. bicycles battle

By MARY SCHLEY

A GROUP of bicycle-riding kids and parents commuting to River School has raised the ire of a mother who drives her child to school. The two sides have clashed on more than one occasion, requiring intervention from police, according to bike-riding dad and Bay Bikes owner Devin Maheen.

Maheen lives in Mission Fields and rides with his own children, ages 7 and 9, to school every day. Other students and at least one other parent accompany them, with the group numbering between four and 13, and one adult leads while another follows. Maheen said they are careful to ride with traffic, use hand signals and follow the rules of the road, but the narrow, curving stretch behind Carmel Mission can be tricky to navigate, and often the bicyclists have no choice but to ride in the traffic lane, since there is no bike lane.

The conflict first arose about a month ago, when a father and his daughter got separated from the rest of the riders because they were going a little more slowly due to the girl's having "a bad day" and not wanting to ride

See RIDE page 20A