

the VOICE

OF THE CARMEL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING 31 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

JULY ♦ AUGUST 2018

Carmel Could Have Residential Neighborhood Improvement Districts for Real. Here's How.

MONTEREY SHOWS THE WAY

By David Armstrong

In the last issue of *The Voice*, we published a satirical feature called “Carmel’s Can’t Miss, Sure to Happen Residential Neighborhood Improvement District.” It was a fantasy with a fictitious timeline purporting to show how Carmel created a Residential Neighborhood Improvement District in 2019, paid for mainly with transient occupancy tax (TOT) money.

Shortly after *The Voice* came out, former Congressman Sam Farr emailed CRA President Barbara Livingston. Such districts exist for real over the hill in Monterey, he wrote. In fact, Monterey’s innovative Neighborhood Improvement Programs (NIP) began back in 1985.

“It happened when the neighborhoods started complaining that they got no benefit from tourism money the city was collecting. The city council at the time realized ... that it might be better to allocate it to the neighborhoods, rather than back to the Chamber and promotional campaigns.”

Intrigued, we checked Monterey’s city website, <http://monterey.org>, with its detailed information. Then we telephoned Monterey’s NIP coordinator, Jeff Krebs, who explained what NIP does, and why.

“Some schools canceled their field trips to Colton Hall because it wasn’t ADA-accessible,” Krebs told *The Voice*. “So we installed an elevator.” The NIP has also paid for new traffic signaling, clearing fire-prone vegetation from city parks and widening neighborhood streets. These and hundreds of other improvements are funded with TOT money.

Public participation is essential, Krebs emphasized. “I talk to neighborhood representatives every day, they’re my clients. I

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like as much public input as I can get.”

Monterey’s neighborhood-friendly programs began when residents voted to amend the city charter to fund them with revenues from tourism. Tourism was surging in the mid-’80s, thanks to major attractions such as the then-new Monterey Bay Aquarium. The major source of money for the NIP, then and now, is the TOT collected from hotel room bills.

Monterey raised its TOT on hotel rooms to 10 percent, then allocated 8 percent of the TOT itself to neighborhoods, primarily for infrastructure upgrades. (It’s now a minimum of 16 percent of TOT.)

The city recognized 16 neighborhoods, and created the NIP Committee of

Monterey has injected \$79 million of dedicated TOT money into its neighborhoods since 1985.

appointed members who liaise with their own neighborhoods. Residents recommend specific projects at neighborhood meetings. City departments and commissions evaluate them. The city council decides which projects go forward and how much money they get. Recent NIP projects have cost from \$500 to nearly \$500,000 each.

The NIP budget was \$3.78 million in fiscal year 2017-2018. All told, Krebs said, NIP has directed \$79 million of tourist-generated TOT money to the neighborhoods over the past 33 years.

Why isn’t Carmel-by-the-Sea doing this?

Another phone call. This one went to city administrator Chip Rerig, who

returned to Carmel in 2016 after working for the city of Monterey. “It’s a program unlike any I’ve ever heard of in the United States,” he told *The Voice*. “It’s a wildly successful program. It certainly could be translated to anywhere.”

But, Rerig cautioned, “A downside of their program is that the money is funneled directly into capital improvements but cannot be used for maintenance. Once you build things, you *have* to maintain them.”

Carmel’s city council, Rerig stressed, has allocated significant Measure D local sales tax revenues to capital improvements here, and some of the higher than usual property tax money expected this year will fund capital improvements. Many such projects benefit Carmel residents.

“A challenge of our residential streets is that they are a little bumpy,” Rerig acknowledged. However, he observed, repaving Ocean Avenue benefits everyone, and is thus a very high priority.

Sam Farr, for his part, thinks Carmel should take a cue from Monterey and use TOT dollars to fund residential neighborhood improvement districts instead of unnecessary destination marketing.

“As a resident, I agree on no need for marketing Carmel,” he wrote. “Nepenthe, in the middle of nowhere, has no marketing plan. Social media is the new marketing tool. It works better than any other. So let’s take our town back and use the TOT as our budget to improve neighborhoods. Think about it. -- Sam Farr, former chair of the Congressional [Travel and] Tourism Caucus.”

David Armstrong is the former tourism writer for the San Francisco Chronicle. ■



Editorializing vs Fact-Finding: How We Cover Community Issues

Editorial comments, whether found in big city or small town newspapers, can be very appealing to like-minded persons, or to those who choose not to know both sides of an issue.

The editors of the CRA's *Voice* try their hardest to present both sides. This gives readers the chance to be informed and come to their own conclusions.

In recent months, we have presented the facts regarding the **Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau's request for \$183,000 of city money** to promote tourism in our village. We have made the case that the MCCVB's efforts are broadly generic, not tailored to Carmel. We think the city should direct this large amount of money to more pressing needs, such as Mission Trail Nature Preserve and the neglected bluffs at Carmel Beach. We agree that other cities in the county may well need the help of the MCCVB. But Carmel is equipped, through the likes of Visit Carmel, the Carmel Chamber of Commerce and business improvement districts, to market to the type of tourists we want: overnight visitors from all backgrounds. All of these named entities receive public money from the city.

The **proliferation of wine-tasting rooms** – there are 20 of them now, and counting – is another issue *The Voice* has addressed. We favor wine-tasting rooms, in moderation. But we are concerned by the lack of business diversity as wine tasting rooms continue to be added both south and north of Ocean Avenue.

On another pressing issue – the proposed **large building development on Eighth Avenue** between Junipero and Mission streets – the CRA is standing by the city's long-established policies, municipal code and General Plan. To wit:

- We support the city policy that says development must follow the topography of the land and that excess excavation of soil should be avoided.
- We support the California constitution in that the gifting of public land



NIC COURY

for private benefit is illegal.

- We support the city policy that no retaining walls should be built in the public right of way.
- We support the city policy that there should be no cutting of public trees (except for safety).

If this development, on the north side of Eighth, goes forward as planned, two condominiums will be built, one on top of the other, above a new, partially submerged garage. From the south side of Eighth looking north, this would look like a three-story building, which, again, the city says is not permitted.

A recent editorial in our local newspaper took on Carmel's forest and beach commissioners for unanimously voting in support of city policy and agreeing that the cluster of 13 public trees on this block of Eighth should not be removed for this project. The loss of forested character would, in the commission's opinion, be irrevocable.

Property owner and developer Thomas Fountain is challenging the city. In exchange, he has offered to build a sidewalk, requiring the removal of 13 trees. The Pine Cone editorial championed the sidewalk as mitigation for overturning city policies. The editorialist failed to note the existing pathway on the south side of Eighth,

which transports pedestrians safely and efficiently between Junipero and Mission.

The CRA supports the city's policies, put in place to preserve our village character and urbanized forest. From 1916 to the present, city councils and commissions have worked hard to create protective ordinances, policies and codes. We heartily support that effort. ■

The *Voice's* editor-in-chief, David Armstrong, has advised us that the present July/August issue will necessarily be his last. David has built a long professional career writing for national and international magazines, newspapers and websites, and the press of business no longer allows him to volunteer on *The Voice*. David stepped in after the sad passing of our former editor, Dick Flower, and we are deeply grateful to him for filling that void. David has brought *The Voice* to new standards of writing and editing, making the publication much more appealing and informational. ■



Would you like to help us write and edit *The Voice*? We will try to maintain the high standards that David has brought to *The Voice*, and with your help we will do that. Please contact Barbara Livingston at 626-1610 or carmellivingston@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Carmel Cleaners' Tammy Hall

By Tom Parks

She is arguably one of the best-known 'celebrities' in town. Yes, we have others – well, one other, possibly – but it is Tammy Hall, our friend who welcomes us with a smile week after week from behind the counter in Carmel Cleaners and is to many of us the *real* local star. Attractive, smart and professional, Tammy sets the bar high for excellence in service and courtesy. *The Voice* met with her the other day. No surprise, she was forthcoming with a natural charm that was, well, no surprise.

Tell us something about yourself, Tammy: your background, your roots. You were born in Korea.

Yes, and from a very poor family. Ours was a three-room house with a step down into a dirt-floored kitchen. We had to keep a fire going all the time in order to keep the floor where we slept warm. This was in Inchon. The family used public baths since we had no toilet or bathing facilities in this house. A bleak picture, I think you'll agree.

And then your family moved to the U.S – New Jersey.

My father opened his first cleaning business. I was very young, 5 years old, and very shy. I helped out behind the counter after school, and when needed. I spoke very little English. But just as all children do, I picked up the language easily.

And then?

Well, I was always interested in learning – everything, I would say, but my real passion was the arts, the fine arts. Where did it come from, I don't know, but I pursued the arts with real vigor. I have a B.A. degree in fine arts from NYU, and one of my goals was to work in and be involved with art museums. Lucky me, I was for a time working at the Frick Collection in New York City.

Looks like you met your goal. The Frick! And then the move to the West Coast – Carmel-by-the-Sea.

Yes, my family decided to make the move in the '80s. My father, Deok Cheong (pronounced 'Chung'), opened the present business. I was still studying. I married and produced a son, and volunteered at the Monterey Museum of Art, where I taught folk art. That was fun and very satisfying.

When did you become part of your father's business?

I think it was in the early '90s. I decided it would be good for me to work in Carmel, where I live. I knew the business, so it wasn't a stretch to return. I could have gone back to teaching. I loved that, but then I loved many things, my interests were varied. So, here I am.



Tammy Hall: businesswoman, wit, confidante

Our readers will surely be interested in your experiences behind the counter at Carmel Cleaners. What about your customers? Most of them Carmelites? Are we friendly? Demanding? Come on, we can take it.

I have to honest with you, I love my customers. Ninety nine percent of my customers are great. Many of them are friends. Many of them come in just to talk about their lives, life here in Carmel, even world affairs.

I get calls all the time for advice: Should they clean some item by hand? How to remove a stain – should they bring it in, and if they do, when can they pick it up? It's like a family. And Carmel is a great place to have a small business, you really do get to know everyone. You know their kids. You know when they're on vacation and where they're going, and when they'll be home. Who's graduating, who's getting married, who's having a baby. This place is another Pine Cone. It's an extended version of *The Voice*.

Tammy, thank you. We now know more about you. You've known who we are much longer. ■

Aloha CRA MEMBERS

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 5 PM
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\$35 PER PERSON
INCLUDES DINNER, WINE, BEER,
PLUS ONE FREE MAI TAI

RAFFLE/AUCTION

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RELAX THOSE INHIBITIONS AND FIND YOUR ALOHA

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MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BRING FRIENDS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING CRA.

Mahalo



Long-Time Resident Remembers When, and Considers a Burning Issue

By C. Jonathan Shoemaker

(From time to time we may open our pages to village voices whose opinions may differ from ours. In the spirit of dialog, we present one resident's take on wood-fueled fires on Carmel Beach. -Ed.)

Gone are the days when most of the folks in Carmel were either related to or acquainted with almost everyone else in town, but we still cherish some of the traditions of bygone days: few sidewalks and streetlights, no house numbers or signal lights, chatting with acquaintances when getting our mail at the post office or while having a quiet meal downtown.

strictly according to specific instructions and officially inspected on a regular basis.” Will the city post disclaimers in case people get sick and die?

“Potential symptoms: dizziness, disorientation, nausea, vomiting, unconsciousness, cardiac arrest...” That’s the start of a very long list.

Due to my multiple chemical sensitivity syndrome – which didn’t extend to wood smoke in my earlier days – I appreciate the rule that fires are restricted to the south end of Carmel Beach. Almost everyone has respected that restriction. I can breathe comfortably while walking my dog on the north end, and other times I can walk from end-to-end in comfort. I have that choice.



Shoemaker: resident, teacher, writer

Is a “cozy fireside evening at the beach” to be the last vestige of residential Carmel?

What goes next? Our fire department?

Oh, yeah. That’s right.

The writer, C. Jonathan Shoemaker, is a long-time resident of Carmel-by-the-Sea and a retired Monterey County teacher. ■

I remember when residents could get what they needed a short walk from their homes. Now, central Carmel mostly serves those who don't live here.

The fire pits are a good idea for maintaining a clean beach, and it’s normal to clean up after ourselves in our own homes. I think it’s up to us, those who consider Carmel home, to respect the clean-up guidelines voted upon by our elected representatives and

to politely remind others to do the same.

Yes, it’s still our home.

I remember when residents could get most everything they needed just a short walk from their homes. There were many service stations, groceries, doctors – our choice of barbers and appliance stores – from art supplies to lumber yards. Now, central Carmel mostly serves those who don’t live here.

But *we* still live here. About the closest place we might satisfy our daily shopping needs is “Carmel Center” located at the mouth of the Valley. How’s that for irony? Is ‘Carmel’ moving away from us, or are we turning our backs on Carmel?

Why would we turn our backs on our locally owned shops that are still here to serve us? Why invite more outsiders to open shops to serve even more outsiders?

Over 100 years ago, artists and writers from the Bay Area enjoyed themselves at Carmel Beach around a wood fire. Carmel residents have traditionally enjoyed family gatherings, weddings and high school reunions at the beach. I proposed to my wife beside the embers of a beach fire in 1962; and routine trips to the beach were an integral part of our 50 years together.

Despite all those wood fires at the beach, and those warming our living rooms, Carmel still enjoys close to the cleanest air quality in the world. Are we really thinking of replacing wood with propane?

According to the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission, propane burners “... can be immediately dangerous to life and health unless operated

Carmel Candidates Forum Set for Sept. 27

Mark your calendars for the MCRA-sponsored Carmel Candidates Forum, Thursday, September 27 at Carpenter Hall, Sunset Center, moderated by Monterey County District Attorney Dean Flippo.

The forum is a panel discussion with a question-and-answer session with the citizenry. All candidates for mayor and city council are invited. Mayoral candidates are incumbent Steve Dallas and challengers Eugene Hughes and Dave Potter. Council candidates are incumbents Carrie Theis and Carolyn Hardy and challenger Jeff Baron.

The event is free and open to the public, 7-9 p.m., Thursday, September 27, 2018.

Dallas, Potter, Hughes Sprinting for Mayor

Carmel Mayor Steve Dallas is running for a second term. Dallas, former chair of Carmel's planning commission, was elected mayor in 2016. He is joined in the horse race by former Monterey County Supervisor Dave Potter, who is also a former member of the California Coastal Commission. Also running is Eugene Hughes, a nuclear engineer and public safety specialist making his first bid for public office. Election Day is November 6.

City Council Approves \$25.5 Million Budget, With No Changes

Carmel City Council on June 5 voted 5-0 to adopt a \$25.5 million budget in fiscal year 2018/2019. That's up about \$2 million from last year. Higher than expected tax revenues, including funds from Measure D, the 1 percent sales tax adopted by voters in 2012, and higher property tax revenues, are expected to help pay for the increased spending. Public safety, employee salaries, CALPERS pension obligations and major capital improvement projects for city infrastructure account for the bulk of spending.

The council accepted staff recommendations that the budget be approved exactly as submitted, overriding public criticisms and suggestions, which included paring back Carmel's \$1.1 million marketing budget, beginning with a contested \$183,000 to the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau for destination marketing. Nevertheless, said councilmember Carrie Theis, "I appreciate people's comments, because it brings to light what we need to focus on."

New City Web Site Up, More Work to Do

After a long gestation period and rising costs, the city launched its new web site in late spring. The site, www.ci.carmel.ca.us, replaces a decade-old predecessor

often criticized by frustrated users for being opaque and out of date. The reboot is a step in the right direction, but problems persist. A search in mid-June for forest and beach commission archives showed no 2018 postings and maneuvering around the site is still not readily intuitive.

Trees Planted at Forest Theater for Clayton and Linda Anderson

Former Mayor Jason Burnett's request to have two trees planted at the Forest Theater to commemorate husband and wife Clayton and Linda Anderson has been put into effect by city administrator Chip Rerig and Mayor Steve Dallas. The late Clayton Anderson was co-founder of Friends of Carmel Forest and a Carmel Forest and Beach commissioner. Linda Anderson was long involved with Friends of the Forest and served as a community activities and cultural commissioner. Additionally, the Andersons each served as presidents of the Carmel Residents Association. Clayton originated CRA traditions such as the beach-clean-up. Linda designed, edited and wrote much of The CRA News newsletter. Linda and Clayton moved to Boise, Idaho, to be close to their children. Clayton later passed away.

Planning Commission Wants a Re-do of Police Station Re-do

It's back to the drawing board for the planned expansion and remodeling of the Carmel police station. The much-mooted project, which started as an \$800,000 job, grew to \$1.5 million, then to \$1.9 million. The increase, proponents say, is needed to update the 50-year-old complex. The latest iteration of the cop shop would require removing 11 trees and pushing the west wall of the building all the way out to the sidewalk on Junipero Street. That prompted commissioner (and building designer) Christopher Bolton to say, "I don't like this design. I think it



looms over the street." Commissioners Gail Lehman and Stephanie Locke agreed. Upshot: the commission requested a conceptual landscape plan. As always, the city council will have the last word.

Theis, Baron, Hardy Enter City Council Race

Sitting councilmember Carrie Theis announced she is running for re-election to city council in November. Appointed councilmember Carolyn Hardy is running for an elected term. Former forest and beach commissioner Jeff Baron also threw his hat in the ring for a four-year council term.

Carmel Nixes Press Reports Claiming Mozingo Inflated Resume

Carmel City Council on June 5 rejected claims that city attorney Glen R. Mozingo exaggerated or fabricated parts of his resume. Media reports by voice-sofmontereybay.com writer (and former Monterey County Herald editor) Royal Calkins, and separate accounts in the Monterey County Weekly, were unfounded, a city investigation concluded.

Carmel Resort Inn

The Carmel Resort Inn re-opens in slo-mo. Lessors brought some of the 2-star motel up to code, but weeds abound and work continues.



Members listen and talk to CRA speakers at our annual meeting. The members-only event, hosted by the CRA Board of Directors in the Vista Lobos Community Room on May 24, drew an engaged crowd that also enjoyed complimentary wine and finger food. Sherry Williams and Vicky Kou did a great job on the food.

For a Fun 4th, Stop by CRA's Treats Tent

The CRA will once again give away fresh fruit and almonds in our street side tent right by Devendorf Park, part of the city's annual 4th of July celebration. Helping out will be Bob and Mary Condry, Ovilee Kennedy, Frankie Laney, Barb and Dick Stiles, Kathleen and Barry Swift, Dianne Terrell, Fran Vardamis, Maryellen Wilson and Jon Wolfe, says event chair Ann Pendleton.

Our kind vendors, who provide our fresh fruit and nuts, are CAPEX, Andre-Paul and Marie Esteve, the California Table Grape Commission, Whole Foods Market, Tanimura & Antle, Costco, Trader Joe's and the California Raisin Growers Association. We invite you to stop by our tent, say hello and pick up a bowl of fresh and healthful fruit and almonds. And we wish you a safe and happy 4th of July.

CRA Election Results

Georgina Armstrong was elected to the CRA Board of Directors in May. Re-elected board members are Mary Condry, Ann Pendleton and Ken White.

Help Us Fund the All-New 'Carmel A to Z' Booklet

The CRA will publish an all-new edition of our indispensable "Carmel from A to Z" booklet in September. This incredibly helpful alphabetized publication, vetted by city staff for accuracy, tells residents and newcomers alike all they need to know about life in the village.

CRA members willing to donate funds to help with the publication costs could send a check to:

CRA, Box 13, Carmel, CA 93921.
Checks should be notated for A-Z.

Reader Alert!

A person or persons posting under assumed names – and using a Facebook group name similar to the CRA's Facebook group – continues to write attack messages deriding specific city council candidates and endorsing a mayoral candidate. These posts do not come from us. Please know that the CRA as an organization has decided to neither endorse nor oppose candidates for public office. Individually, members can, of course, endorse or oppose any candidates they choose.

Read All About It at This Just In

Want to get the latest city and CRA news, and get it fast? It's easy. Just go to our website www.carmelresidents.org and click on *This Just In*. We often have detailed, independent reports on city council and commission meetings posted Wednesday or early Thursday. Why wait for the Pine Cone to show up online late Thursday or on paper Friday? Get it first on our site.

Carmel Beach Clean-Up is Coming Up

On Saturday, July 21, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, CRA Lovers of Carmel Beach will gather at the bottom of Ocean Avenue. As always, there will be organic coffee and treats for both humans and dogs. July is a heavy use month, so it is all the more important that we show up and help remove the trash from our exquisite beach. Big thanks go to Eco Carmel. CRA Lovers of Carmel Beach was a recipient last year of their program that helps local organizations. Eco Carmel raised \$516 for us and helped get much-needed supplies for our volunteers. Keep your eyes open



for our Sifting Days. In conjunction with Elevate, an organization started by one of our middle schoolers, we will be sifting charcoal from our sands, keeping them from going grey.

Here's Where You Can Find The Voice

The Voice is now available free of charge at the beginning of January, March, May, July, September, and November at these locations:

CARMEL-BY-THE SEA: Bruno's, Nielsen's, Carmel Drug Store, Il Fornaio, Carmel Laundry, Harrison Memorial Library.

THE CROSSROADS: Safeway, Ace Hardware, CVS, Carmel Valley Roasting Company.

THE BARNYARD: Lucky, Cornucopia, Rancho Laundry, Carmel Valley Coffee Roasting Co.

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The CRA does not sell, trade, lend or in any other way share our members' information with any organization or company.


CHEERS & CHIDES


 **CHEERS** to forest and beach commissioners: chair David Refuerzo and members Al Saroyan and Michael Caddell, for their vote May 10 not to cut down 13 trees on public land on the north side of Eighth Avenue between Junipero and Mission streets. The 3-0 vote resulted in a continuance (temporary hold) on the big building project and sidewalk planned for the site. The CRA advocated for the continuance. It was an affirmation of the city's long-held policy of not cutting trees on public land unless they pose a threat to public safety. City council gets final say.


 **CHEERS** to Carmel architect Brian Congleton, for his sensitive and caring approach to the design of new additions to the 1920s Hansel and Gretel cottages originally designed by Hugh Comstock. The Historic Resources Board praised the way Congleton nestled the additions into the forest landscape. Planning commissioners were pleased by Congleton's resilience in working on the project for many years. He served as president of the American Institute of Architects in 2004.

 **CHIDES** to an editorial in the June 8 Pine Cone that sneered at "... the infamous public comment period at the beginning of every meeting ..." Members of the public get just three minutes each to weigh in on complex issues at city council and other city hall


meetings, and many cannot or do not stay throughout the multiple-hour meetings. It's hardly populism run amok.


 **CHEERS** to Mayor Steve Dallas and city councilmember Carolyn Hardy for their efforts to reduce the \$183,000 paid to the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau for redundant and unproven destination marketing of Carmel-by-the-Sea in fiscal year 2018/2019. Sadly, the remaining three council members solidly opposed the reduction, and all five voted for a budget that retained the 183K.


 **CHEERS** to the city for making additional efforts to step-up surveillance of illegal wood-fueled fires on Carmel Beach. Such fires are set out of season, outside of posted hours or directly on the sand, contrary to city policies. The city is now using an all-terrain vehicle to supplement foot patrols.

 **CHIDES** to the Pine Cone weekly for a key omission in a page 1 story in the June 1 issue about former county supervisor Dave Potter's announced intention to run for mayor of Carmel. The Pacific Grove paper duly reported that Potter favors sending city money to the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau, but failed to mention that his wife sits on the MCCVB's board of directors. For the record, the CRA neither endorses nor opposes individual

candidates or ballot measures. We do support well-rounded, detailed reporting of community issues.

 **CHEERS** to the Carmel Public Works Department for the finely tuned schedule of street and sidewalk repairs downtown and in the neighborhoods - though most of it has targeted neighborhoods south of Ocean Avenue. The work this spring was done on schedule and with a minimum of disturbance and fuss. Now, about those long-overlooked sections north of Ocean...

 **CHEERS** to the city for raising tour bus parking fees, albeit not high enough. Fees were recently increased to \$20 per hour from \$10. Several CRA members have been pleased to see parking enforcement officers working pro-actively in the Junipero parking zone by Carmel Plaza to ensure fees are paid at the ticketing kiosk. This is progress, but more can be done. Pebble Beach charges \$5 per passenger for tour buses entering its gates.

 **CHEERS** to the Monterey County Weekly and reporter Pam Marino. Marino's cover story on the ingenuity and travails of a senior activist who gets around the county by bus was an informed and empathetic eye-opener. It's especially impressive for a paper that skews toward younger readers.