

SPECIAL ISSUE

The Trees of Carmel

the VOICE

OF THE CARMEL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

MARCH ♦ APRIL 2022

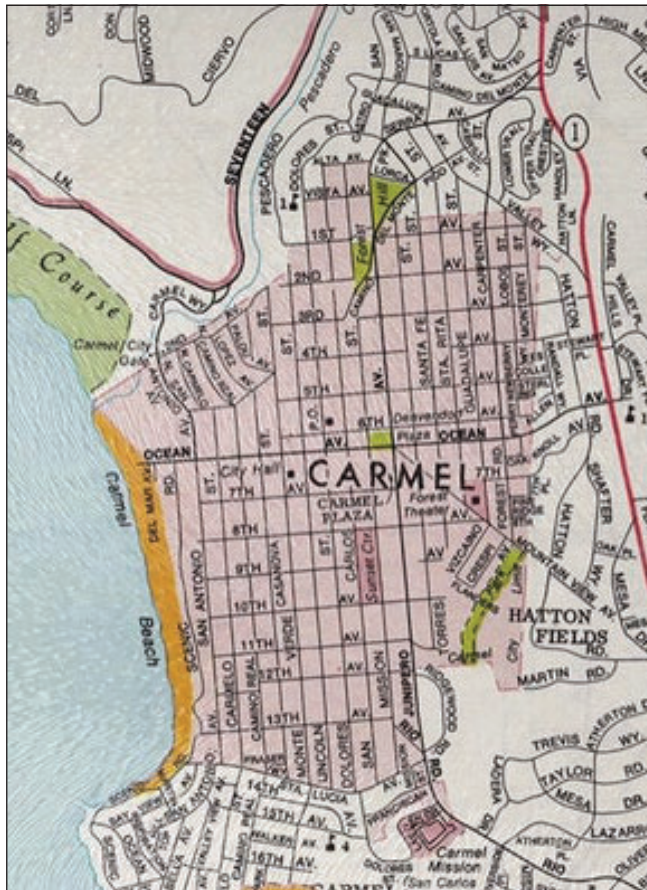
Carmelites—Who Are We?

Life in this small American Village has changed considerably in the last several decades. In the old days (Ah, that cliché again—the old days) we knew our neighbors, their kids, dogs, how much they owed on the mortgage and yes, just about the whole family story. It's different today.

We certainly know who lives right and left of us but in most cases that's about all we know. Not that we're necessarily stand-offish, rather these days we tend to keep to ourselves. Why? Perhaps we've become more private in this electronic age. Why not ask your neighbor.

The CRA thought it might be interesting and maybe even valuable to learn who we Carmelites are at the present time. It's not as though we're peeking into the neighbor's bedroom window, it's a kind of study of the folks who live in this place. And thanks to the latest US ZIP Code Census (January 1, 2022) we have a great deal of information and demographics right there on our electronic screens. So, here's the question: who are we anyway?

Now, we're talking only about ZIP 93921. We're all aware of the greater Carmel area, but then we'd have to dedicate this entire issue to the subject. Let's just look at Carmel-by-the-Sea, the Village.



The demographics:

We have a total population of 3,281. More women than men 1,853 to 1,428-- The overwhelming majority are white, 3,070. Asians and Hispanics share about equal numbers (240), while African Americans (11), Native Americans (2) and 5 Hawaiians fill out the chart.

The median age of Carmel's men and women is close to equal—women with a few points over men, might be a surprise there. We have total households of 1,881 with families in those houses at 888. How many people living in those houses? 2,388. Which begs the question: what does a .38 person look like? Finally, how many housing units do we have in this Village? 3,139.

Of course, we've not even touched on the second homes, those structures that are owned by people who live primarily out of town. And we need only to walk at night to see that so many houses in our neighborhoods are dark, thus unoccupied. According to 2021 City statistics there were 1,261 vacant second homes in town. The owners—what would that demographic be?

These latest census figures will not be surprising to many, but they can inform and enlighten our personal perceptions of just who we are and where we are. We can talk about the examined

life in terms of why we've chosen to live here. Why indeed. Do we fit in to this colony and why? The more we know about ourselves and the choices we make, the more enjoyment and comfort we may find in living. Living, in this case, is here, right here in 93921. ■

Carmel Residents Association - Advocacy

It appears that City government is unhappy with many of *The Voice's* views appearing now and then in various editions. A meeting was called. The CRA Board President and your Editor answered the call to meet. The top brass was there including the Mayor, the City Administrator, the Planning Director and the Vice Mayor. And so, the quite unexpected meeting began.

It was explained that this get-together was to clarify the position of the City in its relationship to the CRA and to find friendly solutions where the government and the nonprofit had differences. A rapprochement if you will. What a good idea. And so, we listened.

As chief spokesman, the Mayor took the lead in outlining what he believed to be some unwelcome criticism of City government found in *The Voice*. For instance, the number of references to our shuttered library---to be fair, Harrison is open nine hours a week at this writing. The City *is* hiring we're told. It takes time to get up to speed. The pandemic changed everything we're informed. Yes,

agreed. And yet with a little research on the part of *The Voice* we found that there are at least 20 local libraries in Central California open six to eight hours a day.

Have we pushed too hard on this issue? If not the CRA, then who will look to what we consider an oversight? We believe residents want the freedom to visit our libraries, Harrison and the children's branch---open with convenient hours, at least one weekend day for working people and children. The discussion moved from perceived and continued negative stands on temporary parklets, to our very popular "Cheers & Chides" as being negative, unhelpful, and churlish.

So, what did we come away with at the end of the meeting?

We learned that the City government is unhappy with criticism, even constructive criticism.

However, there is welcome movement by the City in that direction with monthly meetings scheduled between members of both City leadership and CRA. Respect for differences of opinions is crucial, on both sides of any issue, in

fact, it's essential. Our position is that criticism can be positive, helpful, even necessary to lead to a realistic solution and hopefully to respectful collaboration.

The collective voice of the Carmel Residents Association cares deeply for this Village. We have been for thirty-five years supporters of Village character and its citizens, whether CRA members or not. We are always grateful for a City government that is strong and receptive to the needs and desires of its residents. And to those generous individuals who participate in that government.

The Voice will continue to publish that which it feels is relevant news and features. It will offer its editorial opinions in a fair and respectful way.

The Carmel Residents Association is committed to the protection and enrichment of the traditional quality of life in Carmel-by-the-Sea and the preservation of its heritage and natural beauty through education, community activities and advocacy. ■

The Editor

Betty White, Our Neighbor

Many years ago, when I was working behind-the-camera in television I had an early morning call to a small studio behind Columbia Pictures in what was called Gower Gulch, named for all the low budget westerns made by that studio. Times had changed and this little studio was now home to the production of TV commercials.

I was there to work as a prompter and script supervisor for a well-known TV host, Alan Ludden, known for his successful game show, "Password." As we began shooting the director called 'cut'--- "There's a call for you, Alan, it's your wife." Ludden exited the stage to his dressing room trailer.

A few minutes later he returned and apologized to the director and crew for the interruption. "Ah, but you gotta hear this, guys. That was Betty. She's booked for one of her animal shows

next week and is working on her costume. Actually, she's at her sewing machine making the dress right now. That girl, nothing will stop her."

Fast forward, as we say in show business, to one week during a taping of the Carol Burnett Show. There was our guest star, the bright, funny, attractive Betty White charming cast and crew, and audience, as only she could do. She was a joy and an absolute professional. The producers knew exactly what they were doing when they invited her back again and again.

Time passed and I moved to Carmel. One night at the old Butcher Block a steak house on Ocean Avenue I looked up only to see Betty White and husband at a nearby table. As I was leaving, I stopped just to say hello and walk on. Somehow, she recognized me. "What are you doing in Carmel," she asked? I told her I lived here. "Well, isn't that something, we have a house here, we're

neighbors."

And that was the last time I ever saw Betty White. In person, that is.

She delighted us for many years after. She was the sweet, favorite actor celebrity in Carmel. Best of all, she was our neighbor. Thanks, Betty. ■

Tom Parks



It Ain't Easy Being The Boss

It is a difficult role being an elected official or candidate in a small town. The press can be pointed with its appraisals.

"Burge is a joke" opined Stephen A. Reynolds, editor of *The Carmel Cottager* newspaper in April 1934 about a city council candidate. Writing an editorial in *The Pine Cone* for the same election, editor Perry Newberry named a specific candidate "a ferninst," admitting "it doesn't matter what it is, he's a 'ferninst.'" "It would be wiser to leave men (of his) disposition outside the railing that separates sheep from goats in the council chamber" concluded Newberry's commentary.

Our local publications of bygone eras expressed colorful editorial enmity, throwing a caustic, pugilistic punch in an opinion piece at an individually named councilor or candidate. *The Pine Cone* has existed since 1915 and has tossed a few barbs over the century. Newberry wrote that one councilman whom he called out for refusing to abandon a proposal the editor viewed as undemocratic was "pig-headed." Newberry once referred to mayor John Catlin as a big city boss. It was transmitted with a pejorative tone in our little Village, population 2260.

The editors of *The Village Daily* (1933), *The Cottager* (1934), *The Californian* (1936), *The Sun* (1933) were conveyors of news, gossip and social whispers. They printed their commentaries with unrestrained asperity and fully supported by the First Amendment. Reynolds could be quite personal in his screeds. A 1934 piece read "Ross Bonham was the worst Mayor Carmel has ever had. I say this advisedly, because nearly every pre-election promise of Bonham's was violated." Reynolds finished "... he failed most ignobly in his duty toward those who had trusted him. I am ashamed of having supported him."

The editor with the most acerbic typewriter was Willard K. Bassett of *The Carmel Cymbal*. Writing of Bernard

Rowntree's candidacy for re-election in 1938, Bassett editorialized "he (Rowntree) has contributed the most towards making the present city council one of the most unsatisfactory the city has had in its history." "Bernard Rowntree, probably more than any other member of the present city council, is responsible for the present chaotic condition of the economic affairs of the municipal government."

Councilman George Wood was a frequent target of Bassett's. In 1927, the editor wrote that Wood was "the smug oligarchy." In another edition, Bassett expressed of Wood that "the extent of his knowledge (is) measured by the silly little notebook" the councilor carried



about Carmel. "We think the notebook quite too large for a proper comparison" concluded the editorial.

William T. Kibbler, a former mayor (1920-22/1924-26) later represented the Carmel area as a trustee on the Monterey Union High School board. An educational controversy arose in 1927 and Bassett wrote "And here in Carmel remains a man (Kibbler) who is doing petty politics at the expense of our children." the column continued, scorching the official. Kibbler

By Doug Schmitz



responded with a handwritten note to Bassett--- "Take my name off your mailing list and don't send that filthy disreputable sheet to me anymore. I don't want the dirty sheet in my house." Bassett's concerns about Kibbler were supported by the electorate. In the 1928 election for school board, the incumbent lost---283-49.

Bassett's longest feud was with councilman Joseph Burge, the same Joe Burge that Reynolds in 1934 called "a joke." Burge, thin-skinned and with an "ungovernable temper," sought to intimidate and bully the editor after a specific opinion piece in June 1937. Burge had previously threatened Bassett. During his term, Burge had been rebuked by his council colleagues on his recommendation for a street grader; was the lone councilor to vote against a pay raise for the Superintendent of Streets; had verbally assailed (frequently) the female city clerk; had directed, as Commissioner of Streets, that unsightly, large boulders be placed in the center of Ocean Avenue where there are now landscaped medians. Each of these episodes was news copy fodder for Bassett.

Upon reading *The Cymbal* on that Friday in June, Burge called Bassett at home expressing animus toward the editor about a specific story, asking what time Bassett would arrive at his office. Hearing the answer, the councilman retorted "I'll be waiting for you." The two encountered each other near the post office. Unable to control himself, Burge hit the small, wiry newsman in the face. Bassett ended up on the sidewalk.

In 2022, a few "thumbs down" in *The Voice's* "Cheers & Chides" seem pretty tame. ■

THE Trees of Carmel

by Nancy Twomey

Why must we care about our Village trees? The reasons are many indeed. And what does “care about” really mean?



■ Why do some not “enjoy” our trees?

Yes, they can be messy or costly to maintain. Others complain about taller trees blocking views, roots warping surfaces or that they limit sun access to solar panels. And those who are remodeling, or rebuilding are frustrated with efforts required to protect existing trees. However, we’d argue the positives far outweigh the negatives, only some of these benefits included here.

■ Let’s start with why do our trees matter.

The trees that adorn our little hamlet are primarily the Monterey Pines, Coast Live Oaks, and Monterey Cypress. Our established trees provide an amazing sense of place and enjoyment in this walkable town. They screen noise and soften the look of business and residential areas. Trees help increase property values, some say from 7-20%, with the resulting tax benefits. Trees connect us to nature and history, as they outlast us.

Upper canopy trees protect the environ-

ment and the understory trees and vegetation. They catch the fog’s condensation for needed moisture. And for all who care about climate change forces, trees absorb carbon dioxide – an average tree captures nearly half ton of carbon dioxide over its first 30 years. Trees help moderate wind – with a grove of trees cutting a 20MPH wind to 5MPH. Trees produce oxygen by reducing pollution, soil erosion and runoff. And our trees provide habitat for birds and other wildlife.

■ Our trees have deep Carmel roots.

We all know a bit or a lot about our Village founders Powers and Devendorf in the early 1900-1920’s. They both highly valued the beauty in the nature of Carmel. Powers is known for his “romantic love of nature”. And Devendorf’s tenant was that a community should fit into its surrounding and the natural environment. Devendorf always planted a few trees with each lot he sold and encouraged new homeowners to grow trees with saplings he gave them. Devendorf was known to take his buggy about town to se-



lect locations for new trees. He also planted pines on Ocean Avenue in 1904 and cypress along Scenic and San Antonio, providing both privacy and buffer for the ocean winds.

In these early days with the sales of lots in Carmel, Devendorf’s message was the opposite of others of the time who emphasized “taming the wilderness.” He was also quoted



saying “I might have been a millionaire, but glad I sold land cheap to painters and poets who were glad to plant my trees.”

■ Why do these trees love it here?

But going back a bunch in time, the first European explorer here, Cabrillo in 1541, named our Peninsula “Cabo de Pinos” because of the Monterey Pines indigenous to only a few spots on the West Coast. It is said that our pines are the fastest growing pine on earth, when in favorable conditions they can grow 10 feet per year! So why are our pines so suited to our area? Well yes, this in part comes from our wonderful summer coastal fog. Our ocean canyon icy water cools the warmer air above producing our fog. We know the Peninsula is often covered in fog when the rest of the Central Coast is clear.

IN OUR "Village in the Forest by the Sea"

Our pines, redwoods, and cypress too, love the fog and are indeed great fog-catchers.

■ *Beyond Founders, our City's role.*

Throughout the history of the Village, Carmelites have appreciated the urban forest and sought to preserve it. In 1945 a gentleman was denied a request to cut down his tree, then sent a poem to the Monterey Peninsula Herald: "I asked them to cut down that tree; I was prepared for 'ifs' and 'buts'; they answered me in one word – "nuts." City Council further formalized its respect for our trees by the establishment of a forestry commission in 1958. Driven by the determination of council-member Gunnar Norberg, the Forest Commission shifted the responsibility of the City's trees from the City Council and placed it in the hands of a forester. Our first forester, Robert Tate, was quoted as saying, "Without the trees, the City would be little different from many other coastal villages in California." Taking on the forester role for the following 13 years, our local Greg D'Ambrosio was at the helm for openings of the tree-populated Picadilly Park, First Murphy Park, Forest Hill Park, Scenic Pathway and Mission Trail Nature Preserve where he continues to champion its future. Greg's forester efforts also included creating the tree inventory city-wide (at that time with 20k private and 12k public trees) and the initial Forest Management Plan.

■ *From Our City Forester today – Sara says.*

We are lucky to have Sara Davis as our Village forester to continue working for the wellbeing of our forest. Just some of her pointers include:

🌿 **MULCH** – It is very important to holding moisture and aiding in the health of our trees. You can get mulch for free from the City. Noting mulch is not a fire danger and the fallen leaves and needles help nourish the trees.

🌿 **FOREST FIRES** – We live in a Village with everyone not more than ½ mile from our stellar fire services. And our Monterey Fire monitors our Village homes, needing to minimize potential tree and vegetation fire threats and hazards.

🌿 **DROUGHT** – Sadly, trees become "stressed" in drought times and are weakened. This stress increases the Pine

Beatles population. And drought can also increase the likelihood of live oak root rot.



🌿 **SELECTING TREE CARE PROFESSIONALS** – When you hire these providers, be sure to check their references and insurance policy certificates (covering their employees). It is also critical that these vendors invest in continuing education commitment to their workers. Using landscape gardeners to prune trees is generally not wise and often not safe.



🌿 **SAFETY** – Branch and tree safety concerns take precedence over trees impairing views. Our City code today prohibits pruning solely for views. Please be thoughtful on where and what you plant, with the long term in mind.



🌿 **POWER LINES** – Don't plant trees that are going to be 25ft tall under power lines, with all that growth will deliver.



This list could continue, as there is more, but we will end it here almost...



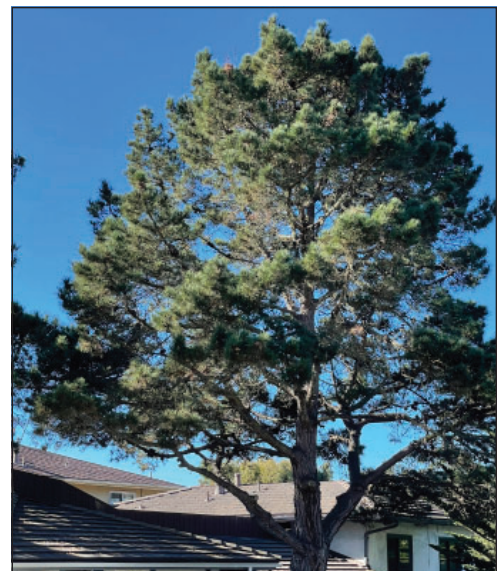
Finally, Sara highlighted a few additional important points. A refreshed urban Forest Master Plan will be developed over the next year. The first step is defining the deliverables and contracting with a consultant for this effort. Of course, our Forest & Beach Commission will provide oversight for this and there will be multiple public input sessions for residents. She also strongly recommends your trees are inspected by a qualified arborist every 3-5 years. This inspection can help get in front of growth that creates future risks to property or people and identify early signs of disease or harmful insects. In addition to skilled staff for the public tree maintenance, Sara has deployed the new online mapping inventory of Village trees, their size, age, type, major events, and health throughout our Village, on public and private property.



This Carmel tree inventory is accessible by the public at carmelca.treekeeperssoftware.com. Check it out.

■ *Our Village Trees Worth.*

To wrap up, our trees are indeed a critical part of the Carmel experience, yesterday, today and for the years to come. Whether it's the City or residents, continuing to invest in what trees bring to our lives and Village, we hope you agree, is definitely worth it.



■ *Postscript*

This article continues with important contributions from Friend of the Carmel Forest and the Forest and Beach Commission, plus online resources and references that can be found at www.carmelresidents.org/trees. ■

ABOUT Town

Great City Engagement with Winter & Company Ahead

If we rewind the clock a bit, Noré Winter and his team were engaged (20 years ago) by the City to help rework our Village Design Guidelines (Commercial & Residential). With some arm twisting by our City Planning & Building Director, Noré is coming out of his retirement, again contributing his talents to Carmel. Noré has a tremendous success portfolio of preservation alongside of new building and architecture. The insights and history he and his team bring to Carmel are impressive; check out www.winterandcompany.net for more

on this firm's work. CRA is pleased to see this engagement get started providing this great expertise. Community participation and further details will come from Brandon Swanson, targeting May! (Also see the March 24th CRA Program on the next page.) ■

By Nancy Twomey



What Are Your Priorities?

City leadership is planning one more review round on prioritization of new, postponed and partially completed projects. They critically need all of our input to guide their decisions on best use of available city \$'s and time. As many have said, there is always more to do than time in the day. This crucial session is expected to be scheduled in March - watch your CRA email for meeting details. Don't miss it! ■

Another Local Legend - John Madden's Passing

As covered in local news, John passed unexpectedly in recent months. One of his second homes was in our town with a priceless view of our amazing beach. When here in town, he was noted for chatting with passersby outside Bruno's and enjoying poker games. Before my time but personally, my father-in-law was John's football coach through his high school years at Jefferson High in the Bay Area's Daly City. Rest in Peace. ■



Active Hiring Underway by our City – please join us!

Be sure to promote these new openings to your friends, family and other great talents looking to join our community. There is a link available on the City website at ci.carmel.ca.us. ■

Do You Subscribe to our City's Friday Letter?

Get a weekly, yes weekly, update on the latest from the City with brief video included, plus sign up to be emailed agendas for upcoming City council, boards, commissions and specific topics of interest to you. The link to this signup is on the city website. ■

City's Upcoming Social Events

As things open more, this roster will grow once again; our CRA Facebook, emails and website will provide the latest. But as of this issue short term, there is not much to

mention. Longer term, the upcoming Memorial Day, July 4th and August Concours on the Avenue...we anticipate will bring us together for celebrations and more. Thanks to everyone on City staff for hosting outstanding holiday gatherings this past Fall. ■

Reminder on St Paddy's day...Green Beer Anyone?

Check out our local Irish establishments including (remembering everyone is Irish on March 17th) Brophy's Tavern or Mulligan Public House, plus other Village restaurants who may be offering special "festivating" as well. Be sure to wear your green (or not). ■



Enjoying Our Carmel Winter Sunsets – Ahh!



MARY'S Corner

CRA No-Host Gathering

As you know, we had to delay our February get together. Terri and Ross Kaplan have rescheduled us to meet on Wednesday April 6 from 4 to 6pm at Vesuvio Restaurant once again. We'll be in the Lava Lounge and Happy Hour pricing will be available for both food and beverage. No reservations are needed, as we will each order from the menus and receive separate checks.



CRA Membership Perk

Those of us who have renewed now get to use our new 2022 VIP cards! Don't forget that membership is open to all who consider our Village their own. Joining or renewing can be done through our website online. Let's get out and patronize these fine local establishments!

Save the Date – Annual Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will be held the evening of May 19th, complete with food and beverage. Your 2022-2023 board members will be introduced. More details to come.

Our Community Table

Don't forget to stop by at the farmers market on the last Thursday in March and April. We love to see everyone and better yet.....perhaps you would enjoy volunteering to help staff our table! CRA has its materials there through October this year.



By Mary Condry



Memorial Gift



Mitzi Francis
by Dean Francis

Honorarium



Nellie Mae Lambert
by Roy and Renee Lambert

31 Years of Beach Clean Up!

Please join us on Saturday March 19th and each of the following months on the third Saturday from 9AM until Noon. We enjoy working on the beach through October and meet lots of nice folks!

CRA HOSTS – “Guiding Our Village Architecture” with Brandon Swanson

Mark your calendars for Thursday March 24th 7PM at Carpenter Hall in Sunset Center. This is a do not miss meeting - if you care about the Village look and feel in the years to come.

With recently implemented State and Regional laws, and forthcoming updates to our City's Design Guidelines, Municipal Code, and General Plan - Carmelites are anxious to learn more and contribute their views. The cherished character of our Village is showcased in the homes we live in, the business & civic buildings we patronize, and our precious forest by the sea. Our Director of Community Planning and Building, Brandon Swanson, will provide updates on state and local regulatory initiatives affecting the future character of Carmel-by-the-Sea. Brandon's team will be undertaking long-range planning efforts, each including numerous public meetings seeking community input to ensure our voices are heard and incorporated.

Please join us for this interactive session with Brandon to better understand the latest status of these moving and inter-related topics. As usual, this program is open to the public, masks and proof of vaccination are required, plus wine will be served as doors open at 6:30 PM. With the strong interest and Brandon's offer to participate in a Q&A session after his presentation, we may run to 8:30 PM.



Brandon chatting with locals at our CRA fall event; Chip Rerig, our City Administrator, and Brandon enjoying the Halloween Parade; yes, Brandon is the tall one.



Place
Stamp
Here

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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 Pasteur's Esperanza Carmel (aka The Pit) 5th and Dolores, newest redesign anticipated to be on the March or April Planning Commission agenda – for concept review and public comments. Check out these updates.



CHIDES Speaking of trees there still remains (too long?) a dead tree on the corner of Dolores and Seventh.



CHEERS Kudos to residents who enjoyed or survived the Bill Murray Fan Club gathering – aka the annual AT&T ProAm Golf Tournament, with great weather throughout.



CHIDES One of the two glass doorways into the Post Office from the Dolores Street entry is still broken with a handwritten sign “Do not use.” Now into month number 9.



CHIDES The library. We're waiting and waiting and waiting. AND WAITING.



CHEERS Watch out for the runners coming our way to participate in the upcoming International Big Sur Marathon Saturday April 24th. “Carbo-loading” will be well covered by our many great dining establishments.



CHEERS Go get ‘em, the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea! Verizon has dialed a wrong number.



CHEERS With grateful remembrance for the grand years Barbara Livingston served CRA and all citizens of Carmel and beyond. It's been a year since she left us, but what she left us with was a better Village in the Forest-by-the-Sea.



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