



President's Letter

Preserving our Cherished Memories



Part of preserving the Valley's character involves cherishing the memories of its special people and places. We sadly note the passing of former CVA director John Walton, who during his tenure on the CVA board served as our lead on water issues. John was the husband of our longtime president, Pris Walton. He had retired from his position as professor of sociology at U.C. Davis and was the author of several outstanding books about the history of Monterey County.

Another of the remarkable people who have helped cultivate our Valley community was the late CVA vice president Rick Manning. The CVA board is working on a tribute to Rick that it hopes to unveil soon. Among his numerous CVA contributions, Rick was closely involved in our efforts to save the historical Carmelo Athletic & Social Club building, which very unfortunately burned this spring. CVA extends its appreciation to Superintendent Sharon Ofek and the Carmel Unified School District (CUSD): through their cooperation, CVA has been able to reclaim some lumber from that structure. Thank you, CUSD!

In policy-related matters, CVA continues to monitor enforcement of the 2024 Vacation Rental Ordinance for Inland Areas. Litigation against the ordinances by a trade group, the Monterey Vacation Rental Alliance, is pending and will be considered by the court in late August; the CVA will submit a legal brief in support of the ordinances. In the meantime, the ordinances are subject to enforcement, and CVA is monitoring enforcement

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CVA RECLAIMS WOOD FROM CARMELO BUILDING FOR MEMORIAL FOR RICK MANNING

by Alex Brant

The Carmelo Athletic and Social Club building on Robinson Canyon Road burned down earlier this year, just as the Carmel Valley Association had been working with the Carmel Unified School District (CUSD) to try to preserve it.

Built in 1895, the historic structure long served as a central gathering place for residents from further out in the valley to near the coast. It was a place where the community came together for dances, boxing matches, plays, and countless social events. It was one of the oldest community buildings in Monterey County, and its loss marks the end of a remarkable era.

In the aftermath of the fire, the CVA partnered with CUSD and Henningsen Construction, the firm that handled the demolition, to carefully salvage some old-

president, who recently passed away. It is hoped the bench will be placed at Garland Ranch Regional Park, offering a peaceful space for reflection in one of Rick's favorite natural places.

- The remaining wood will be used to build a handcrafted conference table, preserving the spirit of community and continuity that the building once embodied.

The Carmel Valley Association would like to express deep gratitude to Sharon Ofek, Dan Paul, Bob Gruber, and Brent Henningsen for their collaboration and support throughout this process. They worked with us to ensure that something lasting and beautiful could be repurposed from the ashes.

While the building may be gone, its spirit endures. Through the work of the CVA and its partners, a piece of the valley's history is being reclaimed—and with it, a heartfelt tribute to those who have shaped this community, past and present.



growth redwood lumber from the wreckage. CUSD's maintenance crew and Henningsen Construction played an instrumental role in helping identify and preserve usable wood. A hearty group from CVA's Natural & Cultural Heritage Committee then got together and moved the wood into storage.

Now, that reclaimed wood is being transformed into a meaningful tribute.

- A memorial bench will be constructed in honor of Rick Manning, the CVA vice

Photos above by Paola Berthoin, to the left, by Luana Conley



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implementation. Also on our radar are the recently signed state bills limiting the application of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), especially SB 131. While aimed at reducing barriers to needed construction, especially of housing, the law takes a piecemeal approach to the types of projects it covers. We must hope for the best but brace ourselves for negative consequences as well.

Emergency preparedness requires trust and communications across many levels of government and private and public entities. Earlier this year CVA vice-president Charlie Wahle and I welcomed the opportunity to meet jointly with Monterey County's Chief Administrative Officer Sonia De La Rosa and Supervisor Kate Daniels. One of the main topics of discussion was how CVA could serve as a supportive partner in helping residents understand the county's emergency response plans, including how emergency instructions are issued and how evacuations are managed. In this issue of the CV Voice, CVA's wildfire resilience lead, Kim Forrest, explains more about evacuation zones.

This spring Dick Stott, a decade-plus veteran of the CVA board, left us when he and his wife Teri relocated to be nearer to family in Placer County. Dick was for many years a stalwart, measured, and insightful member of our land use committee. Dick managed our website and nimbly edited our e-bulletin, which he dispatched every Thursday, come rain, freeze, fire or earthquake. (He has continued this role in absentia, while we recruit the crew it will take to replace him!) Dick also served as our membership chair, systematically maintaining our membership roster and managing the process of sending out renewal reminders. Although Dick misses the Valley, he is enjoying his next chapter, spending more time with his grandchildren and playing flamenco guitar.

With Dick's departure, CVA is recruiting volunteers for its membership committee. If you could devote a few hours each month to helping us maintain our membership records or could occasionally welcome visitors to the CVA's table during events like the Fiesta, please let me know. In the meantime, I appreciate everyone's patience as I catch up on membership record-keeping and acknowledgments.

CPUC, CDO, CAL AM WATER PRESSURE

by *Mibs McCarthy*

Since early days on the Monterey Peninsula, the Carmel River has been the chief source of fresh water for the area. Cal Am pumped water from the river so severely that it desiccated riparian habitat vital for life along much of the river. For a time, it was even listed as one of America's most endangered rivers.

In 1995, 30 years ago, the CA State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) issued Order 95-10 to Cal Am to decrease its dependence and impact on the Carmel River. That order established that Cal Am's legal right to Carmel River water was only 3,376 acre-feet per year (AFY), just a fraction of the approximately 14,000 acre-feet it was pumping from the river at the time.

In 2009, when Cal Am had not developed a new water supply, the State Water Board issued a cease-and-desist order (CDO) to force Cal Am to reduce its pumping of the Carmel River to its legal limit by the end of 2016. With that order, Cal Am was forced to stop installing new water meters within its service area, freezing new development. The order also created pressure to conserve water and efforts to find a replacement water supply. A new source of water became available through expanded capacity of the Pure Water Monterey recycling facility. "The Pure Water Monterey Expansion is expected to come online by the end of 2025. Funded and built by Monterey One Water, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD), and Marina Coast Water, it will expand the recycled water supply on the Peninsula to approximately 60% of existing customer demand and will provide for new housing and jobs," says David Stoldt, General Manager of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has been deliberating on the 25-year water supply and demand forecast for the Monterey Peninsula; a decision is expected in late July, just prior to publication of this article. Cal Am is trying to persuade the CPUC to adopt a 2050 water demand of 13,732 AFY. We use about 9,000 AFY now, so that would be a 50% increase in water demand over the next 25 years, presumably associated with a 50% increase in population.

In contrast to Cal Am's projections, the



Photo by Warren "Pete" Poitras

Public Advocates Office (the independent consumer advocate at the CPUC), MPWMD, Marina Coast Water District, City of Marina, and Public Water Now have presented evidence that the 2050 demand forecast is in error and should be revised. They assert that the CaAm estimate contains over 2,000 acre-feet of false demand. Cal Am is using its inflated demand estimate to justify its proposed desal plant, which would raise the cost of water on the Peninsula by 50% to 70%. Pure Water Monterey expansion will provide about 12,000 AFY of supply plus storage. That appears to be more than enough water for growth for the next 25 years; it does not seem that desal is needed within the next decades.

Once the CPUC has make a decision about the Peninsula's water demand forecast, MPWMD is expected to request that the CDO be lifted. MPWMD asserts that the necessary terms for lifting the CDO have been fulfilled: since December 2021, Cal Am has stayed within its legal limit of water taken from the river, and furthermore, the 2000 AFY that will be provided by Pure Water Monterey Expansion constitute the required "permanent supply of water that has been substituted for the water illegally diverted from the Carmel River."

In its quest to achieve approval for its desalination project, Cal Am is presently resisting the lifting of the CDO. When Cal Am's president, Kevin Tilden, was asked if Cal Am would agree to lifting the cease-and-desist order he said that he would not, unless the Water Management District dropped its Coastal Commission lawsuit and agreed to support Cal Am's desal.

However the CPUC adjudicates the demand estimate, it is likely that the CDO will be lifted soon, perhaps by year's end. This will have complex implications for the Monterey Peninsula, including Carmel Valley, as it will open the way for numerous development projects.

SNAKES OF CARMEL VALLEY: NATURE'S RODENT CONTROL TEAM

by Marianne Gawain

With summer sunbathing season underway, don't be surprised if you encounter snakes lounging near trails, basking around the yard, or perhaps gliding across your social media feed. While many people fear snakes and even reflexively kill them, we should appreciate their importance in the ecosystem and their value to our communities as nature's pest control specialists.

Leading the CV team is the Pacific gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer catenifer*). With mottled scales of dark brown and tan, and their behavior of hissing and shaking their tails when threatened, gopher snakes' primary defense mechanism against predators is mimicry of their venomous rattlesnake cousins. In fact, gopher snakes are harmless to humans and should be welcomed as beneficial neighbors. Pacific gopher snakes are non-venomous constrictors whose diet includes ground squirrels, pocket gophers, rats, and mice – exactly those creatures that wreak havoc in our gardens and around our homes. A single gopher snake can consume dozens of rodents annually.

Another of our local snakes is the handsome California kingsnake (*Lampropeltis californiae*). These striking—in a good way--- serpents are patterned with bands of cream on black. Like gopher snakes, they're constrictors that help control rodent populations without posing a threat to people or pets. They also have the remarkable ability to eat other snakes, including venomous species, thanks to adaptations including specialized proteins and antibodies in their blood.

The Northern Pacific rattlesnake (*Crotalus oreganus oreganus*) also finds a home in Carmel Valley. As a venomous snake, it has a fearsome reputation, yet it too plays an important ecological role, feeding on rodents and serving as prey for red-tailed hawks, great horned owls, and of course, kingsnakes. Rather than fear and extermination, rattlesnakes deserve respect at a distance, as they're generally non-aggressive and prefer to retreat when encountered. You can discourage rattlesnakes from hanging out

around your house by clearing brush and woodpiles that serve as hiding places for snakes and their rodent prey, a step that will help reduce wildfire fuel as an added bonus. Rattlesnake relocation is not recommended as a DIY activity—call in a wildlife control specialist. If your dog enjoys poking his nose under rocks and logs, you might ask your vet about the canine rattlesnake vaccine.

Garter snakes are the most widely distributed snakes in North America; species found in Carmel Valley include the common garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) and the Western Terrestrial garter snake (*Thamnophis elegans*). As they seek a moist habitat, they are often found near water or in meadows. While these slender snakes prefer to eat amphibians and small fish, they'll readily snack on mice and young rats when the opportunity arises. Their presence indicates a healthy ecosystem as they require clean water sources and diverse prey.

Learn more about these snake species and other serpentine Valley residents such as racers, ring-neck snakes, and sharp-tailed snakes, on the website CaliforniaHerps.com and at iNaturalist.org, where you can contribute your own citizen scientist observations.



Gopher snake hissing is all show, unless you're a rodent.



The handsome kingsnake is nice too.



Rattlers demand your awareness.

RAVES AND FAVES

Story and photos by Carolyn Rice

Carmel Valley is full of fun places to visit and things to do, but many are not well known. Here are some discoveries made by this reporter while meandering around the Valley this summer.

For a taste bud burst head for Sweet Reba's in the Crossroads. This bakery creates small morsels covered with sugar and cinnamon called cindos. The donut/muffin treats pair great with your favorite to-go coffee from the Carmel Valley Roasting Company a few steps away.

A sand sculpture masterpiece at Hacienda Hay and Feed beckons drivers into the in Mid-Carmel Valley establishment. The sprawling business with a California ranch feel boasts a country store, market, saloon, animals, and a covered event center. Locals and tourists can enjoy a variety of activities with line dancing for beginners and experienced dancers a favorite draw. Stop by for monthly schedules and tickets to this boot-stomping affair and other events.

Carmel Valley artist Rusty Crofts creates the sand sculptures in front of Hacienda Hay and Feed. He goes on the road near and far with his talent for company conferences and private parties.

A few miles farther down Carmel Valley Road, cross the Carmel River at Rosie's Bridge on Esquiline for visit to The Creamery. Customers arrive early in the morning for a sticky, caramel bun and coffee to enjoy on



the outdoor patio under the stately oaks, a perfect spot for birdwatching. Goat cheese made on the premises and cows' milk cheese from other cheesemakers are a handy buy for a later picnic.

Stay healthy by eating leafy greens, as wellness articles encourage readers. Home gardeners can create an edible garden with organic plants from Honey Blossom Retreat Garden. This 200-acre ecological, sustainable enterprise near Jamesburg was founded five years ago by Marie Jaques Bonney. Her business grows close to 200 perennial and annual plants. Besides unusual edibles, she raises native plants that attract birds, bees, and hummingbirds and help with fire safe landscaping.

The Village Fire Station open house on May 30th provided fun activities and information for adults and kids. A conversation with the fire captain revealed something many residents don't know but should. Did you know Carmel Valley residents, business owners, employees, or tenants who live in the Carmel Valley Fire Protection footprint are not charged for an ambulance ride to the hospital? Several years ago voters approved Measure F, which provides for the paramedic ambulance service now operated by Monterey County Fire District. Insurance is billed first, but Measure F funds pay any amount not covered.

Please check the websites of these Carmel Valley businesses or agencies for more details on locations, hours and other information.



Marie Jaques Bonney sells her organic plants at local festivals and farmer's markets.

Left, Rusty Crofts creates sand sculptures at Hacienda Hay and Feed.

HAVE YOU MEMORIZED YOUR "ZONE" YET?

by Kim Forrest



In June we published a short article about evacuation zones in the CVA weekly e-bulletin, after noting some concern and confusion by Carmel Valley residents during the June 16th "Carmel Fire." During that fire, seven evacuation zones were included in an evacuation warning. An evacuation warning means people within those zones should be prepared to evacuate at any time; they do not need to leave immediately, but do need to be alert and prepared to leave if an evacuation order is called. We ended the article with a suggestion that residents memorize, write down, or print maps of their evacuation zones.

This is the link to the interactive Evacuation Zone Map: Monterey County Emergency Information Application (Public), or type into the address bar:

<https://tinyurl.com/yee6rkjz>

Using this map, you can type your address into the search bar at the top and the map will zoom into your general location, or you can scroll and zoom in to find your evacuation zone.

The map comes with a cautionary note: "Please note that fire, evacuation, and other hazard boundaries are approximate and can change rapidly. This map is based on official mapping sources that show rough footprints of active emergencies and emergency notification areas from responding agencies that may take several hours to produce. Please monitor official County of Monterey updates at alertmry.org or call (831) 796-1905 for specific emergency information, such as road closures and evacuations."

An evacuation order means people in those zones should leave immediately. If you need more time to evacuate than an immediate order allows, or if you feel your life is in danger, local authorities suggest that you leave early. Leaving early will also help you avoid traffic congestion.

Light Pollution vs. Dark Skies: It's Up to You

By Meredith Nole, John Heyl, and Charlie Wahle

Flagstaff, AZ, became the first "Dark Sky City" in America in 2001 after realizing that the city was generating excessive light pollution in the night sky. A dedicated group of astronomers and citizens convinced the AZ Dept. of Transportation that giant city-sized highway lighting could be reduced while still providing needed safety at a major junction between two busy highways. Out of that success, in 1998 the Dark Sky Association formed and has now grown into a successful and growing international movement called Dark Sky International.

From research on the "Effects of Light on People" by Dr. George Brainard and Dr. Mariana Figueroa, we know the intensity of artificial lighting affects plants, animals, and people. The side effects of light pollution impact humans' need for complete darkness during sleep to promote a balanced metabolic system. When we recognize the need to preserve darkness at night, humans can sleep more peacefully with regular cycles, as can the animals we share the Valley with: the birds, the bats, the mountain lions, and particularly the other humans we live with.

CVA encourages awareness and individual action among our residents, businesses, and visitors to keep our skies dark at night. Why? Because our mission is to preserve and protect rural nature and quality of life of the Valley, and naturally dark and starry skies are crucial to the people and the other animals living here.

Dark Sky advocacy involves working to preserve beautiful places where we and our animal neighbors can see stars at night. Over the last few years CVA has worked with management at several protected local lands, parks, and preserves to encourage their applications for recognition as Dark Sky Places. As this preservation effort grows into our own local Dark Sky chapter, we can envision a Dark Sky Region that extends from Monterey Bay to Morro Bay along the Central Coast. Wouldn't that be awesome?

Meanwhile, light pollution exists here and continues to chip away at the natural darkness. Light pollution, the consequence of excessive lighting, is defined as any bright light going into a space beyond where it is needed or intended to illuminate whether that is across a street or a few miles, regardless of fixture type or any specifics of the manufacturer.

This is one environmental problem we can directly affect through our choices and actions at the local level. The Dark Sky movement also seeks to educate people and civic entities about choosing to use responsible outdoor lighting.

Carmel Valley resident, Meredith Nole, has brought her lifetime of experience as a lighting expert to the work of consulting



Old pole (in background) spread glare. New one focuses light only where needed.

with Home Owners Associations (HOAs), the City of Carmel, the Carmel Valley Athletic Club, Riverwood Community, and businesses in Carmel Valley. Meredith guides them in revamping their older continued on Pg. 6

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Banner photo of early June before the sun broke at Garland Ranch Park's Mesa Pond, by Warren "Pete" Poitras

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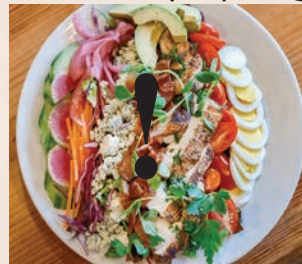


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Dark Skies, continued from pg 5.

lighting designs to meet 2025 standards. Her fixtures effectively focus streetlamp pole lighting downward so it only lights where it is needed, and she provides modern controls which further regulate the artificial lights' uses. She knows the certified Dark Sky lighting manufacturers who provide these fixtures and employs Carmel Valley Electric and other local companies to help with installations. Her connections with fixture and control hardware manufacturers provide solutions that save darkness and energy while providing safe lighting. Meredith also helps homeowners, as they consider those folks across the valley who see glare; one can make fixture upgrades and choose lower energy LED bulbs—3000 kelvin for white, or 2700 kelvin for soft warm white—to be sure one's lighting is targeted and not spilling into someone else's darkness. Much of this work can be done without a permit.



Woodys

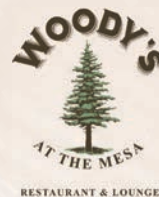
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