



President's Letter

CVA Says Have a Fabulous February



C.S. Noel

February. That month that teases you to remember. Is this Leap Year, for a month with a robust extra day, or the skimpy business-as-usual February withholding that 24 hours you really could use right now? The month that muddles concentration on serious matters by plopping Valentine's Day right in the middle, and despite its weather prognostication reputation accorded by Groundhog Day on February 2nd, still leaves you with that not-really-in-the-know feeling of whether you need an umbrella or not for the rest of the month.

But it's not as bad as writer Todd Stocker would seem to imply by asking, "Why does February feel like one big Tuesday?" Because, regardless of whether it's 28 or 29 days, I'm happy to report that CVA has a jump on the year, and I'd like to share with you some of the significant things we're focusing on for 2023.

VACATION RENTALS

Vacation rentals have followed us right along into 2023, and there's no question that their presence will have an impact on our community. In the fourth quarter of 2022, CVA reviewed the Notice of Project (NOP) documentation that Monterey County's Housing and Community Development released for community comments (per the California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA, process).

CVA responded to the document with a 49-page answer highlighting such key concerns as understated current rental counts resulting in grossly overstated totals for the number of allowable residential rentals. The ever-increasing

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RESIDENTS ALARMED OVER CV ROAD TRAFFIC HAZARDS

By Carolyn Rice

Carmel Valley residents have harrowing stories to tell about scary Carmel Valley Road driving incidents they've seen endangering lives of drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Caron De Seguirant, Rippling River Residents Association president, said she is horrified by what she sees daily in front of the facility located just east of Carmel Valley Village. Many of the 84 residents have mobility issues and walk to the Village for groceries. Some move slowly, using walkers or wheelchairs, and when crossing the road they have limited time to reach the other side.

Eastbound, DeSeguirant noted, "Drivers accelerate to 60 or more as they leave the Village." Even the residents who exit Rippling River in their cars often have trouble turning onto the road, she said, noting Rippling River residents on foot or in wheel chairs have been killed by vehicles in the past. Speed signs just east of Rippling River in the westbound lane indicate 35 mph, and there is a 25 mph electronic "slow down sign" across from Esquiline past the facility's entrance. Moving both of these signs east so the "slow down" sign is just east of Rippling River would greatly benefit the residents there and perhaps save lives.

But dangerous drivers are not limited to this section of the Valley. Incidents have been witnessed from the mouth of Carmel Valley to beyond the Village, including tailgating, speeding, passing in the center turn lane, and drivers using cell phones.

Larry Bacon serves on the Carmel Valley Road County Advisory Committee chaired by Supervisor Mary Adams. According to him, during the last five years, no big increase in traffic volume has been measured on the road by the county. Rush hours create heavy traffic, but overall, the number of cars on the road remains fairly



Slow down sign east of the Village should be moved east of Rippling River. Photo by Mibs McCarthy

steady. Compared to rush hours in the Bay Area or Southern California, local drivers fare better, Bacon maintains.

But, he also recounted a personal incident when a driver in a speeding white truck passed him in the center turning lane. However, karma caught up with him, as several miles later Bacon witnessed the driver being ticketed by the highway patrol.

Even more patience may be required in 2023, as several new projects may cause delays. Bacon said Carmel Valley Manor plans to connect its septic system to the Monterey Peninsula sewer line that now ends at Quail Lodge. He said this big project may slow traffic for months. The Manor will pay for the project and has no choice but to do it, as its sewer system has failed, he said.

Another project in the early planning stages is the Los Laureles Grade and Carmel Valley Road roundabout. Peninsula drivers have experienced improved traffic flow from the roundabout built to connect highways One and 68 near Community Hospital. Similar results are expected from the one planned for the Valley. Bacon said community

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vacation rental demand also negatively impacts the county's ability to meet California state requirements for development of affordable housing elements which are so desperately needed in order for folks to live and work in our area. The NOP indicated wrongly that several areas of potential environmental impacts in the Draft New Ordinance for Vacation Rentals were insignificant. In our lengthy comments on the NOP, CVA disagreed with several findings and supplied evidence to support fuller considerations. We also proposed some alternatives and mitigations of impacts for the county to consider before providing a draft EIR for public comment. CVA's intent is to identify negative impacts in the ordinance and assess and support positive alternatives for mitigation. Another step coming up in the CEQA process is the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The county has estimated that the EIR will take until the third quarter of 2023 to complete and has stated that there will be further opportunity for public comment during this part of the process. This will take significant community involvement. Stay tuned for more!

FIRE SAFETY AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION

The non-profit organization Fire Safe Council for Monterey County (FSCfMC) has done such a service for our Valley and for the county at large through its leadership in the Firewise USA program. Its educational outreach efforts and additional support for new Firewise neighborhoods have been a big reason we have so many wonderful Recognized Firewise Communities in our area, making us all safer.

The CVA board feels our area could accrue additional safety benefits working with Firewise Communities to address the needs of neighborhoods with vacation rental properties to ensure out-of-area owners are aware of the State of California's PRC 4291 legislation requiring all owners to perform specific fire safety property maintenance tasks. These tasks are mandatory and a legal responsibility of property owners, but out-of-area owners may not know this.

Likewise, vacationing visitors themselves could benefit greatly from the availability of informational material explaining fire safe practices to follow during their visit, as well as information, instructions, and

directions in the event of an emergency evacuation due to wildfire. The Firewise USA program encourages Firewise Communities to perform neighborhood evacuation drills to prepare for emergencies, which can be coordinated with support from Monterey County Regional Fire District. There could be even further benefits to be gained by running such drills coordinating evacuation with multiple Firewise Communities at the same time to uncover impacts to evacuation that might not otherwise be as evident.

ROADS and TRAFFIC

Both vacation rentals and wildfire evacuation have impacts on our roads and traffic. Demand for vacation rentals increases around dates for special events. For example, Car Week in 2022 brought in approximately 85,000 visitors during the height of fire season and affected roads throughout the Peninsula, in Carmel Valley, and on Highway 68. The Monterey County Office of Emergency Services (according to the most current plan available) lists two primary evacuation routes and three secondary routes. It is extremely important that the county special event planners consider these routes when approving permits, particularly when the same dates are requested by multiple events. Neither primary nor secondary routes were designed to handle the high volumes of traffic these events attract, particularly in an emergency situation. Attendance numbers as well as the number of events scheduled in a particular time frame should be carefully reviewed to manage risk to potential evacuation in a wildfire event.

You'll be hearing more about all of these areas and other items of importance and interest from CVA as we move through the year. And remember, if you are experiencing problems regarding vacation rentals, roads, or other county matters, please contact CVA. Board members attend many county meetings, some participate on county committees, and we can often direct you to the proper contact or alert the county to common problems for attention.

UNTIL MARCH

Whatever this month brings, I wish you a fun, fulfilling February, and remember what *Sight Seeing At Home* blogger, J.R. Stockton says, "February is merely as long as is needed to pass the time until March."

CARLSON'S CONSTELLATION

How local stars light up a village

by Rick Manning

“Get to know your neighbor. Volunteer. Show gratitude. Give back to your community.” This is Danielle Carlson’s advice, and she follows it. She grew up during the '80s and '90s in unincorporated east San Diego, an area called Jamul (Ha-mool), which means “muddy water” in the local native language of the Kumeyaay tribe, but she found her home in Carmel Valley Village. Danielle met her husband, Brent Carlson, a Village local, 19 years ago on a relatively new platform called Match.com while he was living in Logan Heights, near downtown San Diego. During the beginning of their relationship Brent brought Danielle to his home town and she instantly fell in love. When she first arrived, she saw the holiday lights in the Village and had a vision that she could help make them even better and brighter. She certainly did. That’s not all!

Brent and Danielle's long-term goal of living in Carmel Valley Village permanently became reality in 2014. Brent's parents moved here in 1976 into a post-adobe home by the airfield. Brent's father, Bud Carlson, is a retired U.S. Navy captain and pilot who coached several sport teams during his children's youth. Her “mum-in-law” Elizabeth Carlson has been involved with the local historical



Danielle Carlson



Danielle provided this photo of many of the volunteers she organized to help with the annual Village Christmas decorations. They gathered at the last minute for take down, due to predicted rain.

center. Because of Brent’s family ties, Danielle feels a strong connection with friends and community members and to the lifestyle of Carmel Valley. Danielle loves our rural world - the parks, the river, our village, and especially its community — and feels she’s living “the dream”; she is exactly where she wants to be, doing exactly what she wants to be doing. The couple welcomed their child, Violet, in July 2019. “It makes me beam with joy to know that our daughter will be attending the same schools and growing up in the same community where her dad and his siblings grew up.”

In 2016, Danielle became involved with the Carmel Valley Community Youth Center (CVCYC), by jumping in with both feet to run the office in the early part of the year. She suggested the CVCYC take over the management of the holiday lights in the Village as an annual community event. During her time with the CVCYC, she agreed to organize the annual Carmel Valley Santa’s Fly-In post-parade events.

In 2020, during the pandemic and after the fire evacuations, Danielle noticed how much trash was accumulating on Carmel Valley Road. The Environmental Health Department was having trouble staffing crews to clean up. In October, Danielle and other Village locals organized a team of volunteers to clean up Carmel Valley Road and Laureles Grade.

Danielle has now stepped back from the community center and has focused her efforts on a wider range of local issues such as sanitation, maintenance, and safety in the Village, but her main focus is still the Carmel Valley Santa’s Fly-In.

She joined the Rotary Club of Carmel Valley Village and the Carmel Valley Village Improvement Committee around the same time in early 2021. Later the same year, the Rotary Club of Carmel Valley was asked to step in for Kiwanis to organize the parade. Although Danielle was no longer involved with organizing the post-parade festivities at the CVCYC, she remained interested in parade planning, so she has been working closely with the county on permits to keep the Santa’s Fly-in parade going.

Danielle suggests that we all work with Monterey County to make the valley better. One way is by using the UConnect app, (type UConnect into the Monterey County search box). Residents can submit a picture of an issue such as a fallen tree or missing street sign. In the future, she would love to create a single source to which anyone could go to find opportunities to volunteer and information about how to get involved locally. Danielle says, “I love being that person in our community that has a wealth of resources to help my neighbors near and far.”

Danielle is fun to work with, organized, efficient, and enthusiastic. She’s vice-president of her neighborhood Rancho/Middle Canyon Firewise community, which was celebrated as the 600th such group in the state last December 13th at our Village fire station. She’s helped Rotary establish butterfly gardens at Laguna Seca and in King City, as well as assisted in organizing the recent shot clinic at Hidden Valley Music Center. In her downtime, Danielle enjoys belting her heart out at the Running Iron when it hosts karaoke on Sunday nights and hopes you will join her! What a dedicated and spirited public servant.

LIGHTING EXPERT ADVISES CV ON DARK SKY PROTECTION

By John Heyl

Meredith Nole, a member of the Illuminating Engineering Society, is an experienced lighting designer who lives in Carmel Valley. She has graciously begun working with CVA on resolving lighting issues in the Valley to help protect our dark sky while continuing to provide safe lighting around businesses and homes. The new lighting at the Carmel Valley Athletic Club parking area reflects her work and the willingness of Carmel Valley businesses and citizens to protect our night sky.

She and CVA President C.S. Noel took a little tour and inventoried night lighting at businesses along Carmel Valley Road. Her full report is available on the CVA website from the Issues page.

One example of a recent success story: Meredith helped Mike Kucher, the owner of Kasey's, who was concerned about a citizen's complaint on the Next Door platform about glare that showed across the valley at night from the gas pumps



"Barn door" fixtures for lighting over ATM focus light just where it's needed. Photos by John Heyl

and the ATM located nearby. Meredith advised Kucher of LED alternatives to the high-pressure sodium fixtures to facilitate asking PG&E and the ATM owner to update the fixtures to eliminate light pollution. Meredith proposed changes to the LED bulbs at 2700 Kelvin, which is most suitable to Carmel Valley. The ATM owner installed "barn doors," which go on the sides and tops of the existing fixtures to focus the light and prevent light spill. Not only were glare and light pollution reduced, but the new LED bulbs use much less wattage, thereby lowering Kasey's electric costs. Meredith

would still like to address some glare from the high lights, but the improvement is a wonderful work in progress that can help guide others in lighting decisions sensitive to maintaining our dark sky.

Some of you may have attended the January 21 workshop CVA co-hosted at the Carmel Valley Library. Meredith shared documented facts and figures about how lighting impacts human health due to color and intensity of LED lighting and provided photos and examples of color ranges available in modern LED lighting options. CVA hopes to host more workshops and continue raising awareness about effective, safe, and dark-sky friendly lighting in our valley.



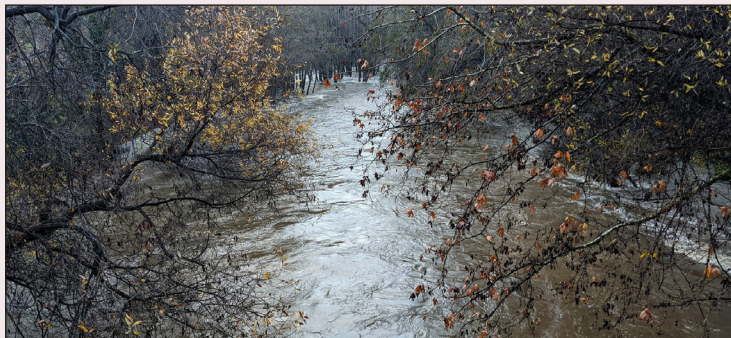
Sodium light on parking lot pole cast light over large area.

RON PIERCE aka HENRY TUNAHUNA,

his intentionally humorous pen name from the late '70s, is a 32+ years Valley and Village resident, with three children graduating from Tularcitos Elementary School in the 1990s. "Henry" has, for the past decade or so, freely shared images on FaceBook from his "saunterings" in the area, as well as from his Morning Chair. "There is something magical about just sitting, and waiting for Nature to come to us...and she will..."



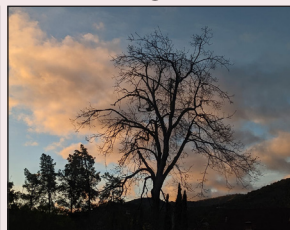
"The Village in a puddle."



Looking downstream from Rosie's Bridge.



Ron tracks the state of the universe from his "Morning Chair."



Marking the opening of his favorite Village Peace Rose.



Ron says, "My favorite rock, because it shows the thoughtfulness of the original fence builders in not bulldozing it out of the way, instead making some cuts to the fence planks."

New Owner for Carmel Rancho Shopping Center



Photo by Andy Sudol

The Carmel Rancho Shopping Center has a new owner, Balboa Retail Partners, headquartered in Los Angeles. They own 86 properties in 21 states, including properties in Santa Cruz and Sunnyvale. The center is anchored by Prim's Carmel General Store and home to over 20 businesses, not including the Carmel Rancho Car Wash. At some properties, working with its affiliates, Balboa Retail Partners is converting failing retail commercial buildings into residential apartments. The website for one Santa Monica project said, "The existing surface parking and outdated commercial buildings no longer meet retail needs, cater to driving and are not pedestrian friendly. Redevelopment of the site provides an opportunity to meet community housing needs and our city's sustainability goals." A Prim's staff member said the store will remain unchanged during the next year.

Road, continued from Pg. 1

meetings for input on the project will be upcoming. When started, this project will disrupt traffic flow.

Bacon has concerns about deteriorating road conditions in Carmel Valley but notes the county has many roads needing repair, so county officials have to consider crumbling roads countywide when selecting projects.

He said in the past the committee has chosen not to recommend more stop lights up and down the road in order to keep traffic moving and has favored the implementation of middle-of-the-road turn lanes for safe entry and exits from the road. The climbing lane at Carmel Valley Road and Highway One improved traffic flow out of Carmel Valley, and Bacon noted recently the bicycle lane at Carmel Rancho Boulevard was widened for bicyclists' safety.

Monterey County Sheriff Public Information Officer, Derrell Simpson, said sheriffs patrolling Carmel Valley Road would take appropriate action and cite or arrest anyone endangering lives by driving recklessly. "We would definitely pull them over and take appropriate action," he said.

The CHP did not respond to written questions or phone calls concerning their patrol of Carmel Valley Road.

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County speed limit sign westbound on CV Road across from entry to Rippling River. Photo by Mibs McCarthy



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Banner page photo, sunrise in Carmel Valley by early riser Ron Pierce.

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2023 Annual Membership Meeting

Sunday, March 5, 3:00 – 5:30 p.m.
Hidden Valley Music Seminars Theater
Refreshments will be provided by Jerome Viel, of Jerome's Carmel Valley Market.

The current board members nominated for new three-year terms are Paola Berthoin, C. S. Noel, Eric Sand, Bob Siegfried, Dick Stott, and Charlie Wahle. The new board and board-designated officers will be introduced at the annual meeting. Speakers to be announced.

Please join us! The gathering is free and open to the public.



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