

Experience Hidden Valley



4/29
the Beethoven Project 6:30 pm
 Hidden Valley String Quartet
 a Beethoven and Bartok program
 concert, talk, appetizers, & wine



5/4-5/5
Carmel Valley Garden Show
 9:00 am-4:00 pm



5/16
Jura Margulis 6:30 pm
 a piano concert of Schubert, Liszt,
 Bach, Puccini, & Saint-Saëns



6/10-7/8
Masters Festival Concert Series
 Hidden Valley Theatre
 88 W. Carmel Valley Rd
 (831) 659-3115
 www.hiddenvalleymusic.org

Carmel Valley Gallery



Clockwise from above:
 CVA Annual Meeting of board and CV citizens at Del Mesa Carmel, March 24. ♦ Atrium of the newly renovated Quail Lodge. ♦ Try to find the Songbird Preserve. ♦ A common complaint in many of our neighbors ♦ Chester Dudley's 1947 Schulte Road bridge (right) and its replacement under construction (left). ♦ Residents and property owners join county planners, planning commissioners and representatives of CalAm to hear Jeff Szytel of Water Systems Consulting explain how a new bridge from Carmel Valley Road near Sleepy Hollow will allow heavy equipment to enter CalAm property (site of the gathering) pursuant to the demolition of San Clemente Dam.



LET'S GO OUTDOORS!
 Saturday, June 8, 1:30pm - 3:30pm
 Meet at Garland Ranch Regional Park Visitors Center
 Artist/author Paola Berthoin leads a gentle hike followed by readings from her *Passion for Place: Community Reflections on the Carmel River Watershed*, then invites attendees to sketch, write, or create a sensory map of their experience.
Open to all ages. Free of charge. Also enjoy the Summer Wildflower Show.

Current schedule of Easy-Access Tours at Pt. Lobos
Wednesday, May 1, 11:00-1:00 and Saturday, May 11, 1:30-3:30
*Highlights: Spring Flowers and Cormorants Nesting.**
Wednesday, June 5, 11:00-1:00 and Saturday, June 15, 1:30-3:30
*Highlights: Cormorants and Herons Fledging, Brown Pelicans Back.**
 *Meeting places to be announced.



President's Letter By Mibs McCarthy

It's Spring, and I am thankful to live in such a special place as Carmel Valley. It's not by chance that the natural beauty and resources remain all around us. On the one hand, much of the charm here comes from the rural character with mature, native vegetation, roads without street lights or sidewalks and the individuality of homes that blend in with the environment. On the other hand, maintaining this natural look and feel takes planning and adherence to guidelines.

Every resident of Carmel Valley has the opportunity to learn about and comment on building projects and use permits by getting a list of active projects from the County Planning Department's web site and attending meetings of the Carmel Valley Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC). Members meet every first and third Monday when there are issues for them to consider. The LUAC makes recommendations to the County. When there are concerns regarding a project, differences often can be worked out at the LUAC hearing to everyone's satisfaction before the project moves forward.

Our weekly e-bulletin is a great source of current information about meetings, hearings, and events. Look for a new section alerting you to Land Use issues. If you're not receiving this, you can sign up for it on our website (see below) or by sending an e-mail to carmelvalleyassociation@gmail.com.

We want to hear from you. We are seeking your opinion on what is "rural" and what is "not rural" for the purpose of planning. We will be sending a survey to all our e-mail contacts soon. As an incentive for you to participate, we will randomly select one person who responds to the survey to receive a gift certificate generously provided by Jeffrey's Grill and Catering, 112 Mid Valley Center, Phone: (831) 624-2029. To participate, please be sure we have your e-mail address.

In our weekly bulletin and on our website, we would also like to publish letters from you (members of our community) with comments or questions of interest to our readers. We are already providing a place for free publicity about events of interest to Carmel Valley residents, and we encourage you to help us make our calendar as complete as possible. All communications can be sent to our email.

VALLEY RESIDENT LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAM FOR PT. LOBOS

By Donna Kneeland

Barbara Grace, who arrived in Carmel Valley late in 2011, became a Pt. Lobos volunteer almost as soon as she had unpacked her things and settled into her new home. While Barbara and her late husband had been volunteers at Henry Coe State Park in the '90s and had always loved the scenic vistas and trails of the Central Coast, Barbara's career had been in technical writing and software development for IBM. Pursuit of outdoor activities was only for her leisure time.

When she began to explore Pt. Lobos, she learned of plans to make the Bird Island trail an ADA trail. "I could hardly believe it," she said, "when I learned that people in wheelchairs might be able to see China Cove for the first time." For her "public walk" with an accessibility theme, she assembled a disparate group of friends, ranging in age from 14 to over 80, with one lady

in a wheelchair, and off they went to tour the Easy-Access trails during harbor seal pupping season. On this first venture, she didn't try to keep the group together but went back and forth on trails to communicate and answer questions. After they were finished, the daughter of a lady who had experienced the tour from a wheelchair asked Barbara how to sign up a friend with MS for a tour like this. This was the start of an idea: *Easy Access Tours at Point Lobos*.

During a docent tour of the Bird Island ADA trail, while it was being constructed, docent coordinator Melissa Gobell suggested that Barbara organize Easy-Access, so Melissa and Barbara scheduled a meeting for March 20, 2012, which was announced at the next docent meeting. Their brainstorming session culminated in the new



"Easy-Access Adventures," with a new kind of walk geared to those who moved at different speeds. Instead of everyone trying to stay together as a group to hear the docents explain points of interest, docents are stationed at particular points along the trail. When visitors reach each station in turn, they can hear what the docent has to share and may also ask questions about what they're being shown. Information on such topics as native flowers, whales, geology, seals, otters, sea lions and the history of Pt. Lobos are just some of the subjects covered by docents at their stations along the trail. While Easy-Access is designed for those with mobility challenges, all visitors are welcome to join the tour and move at whatever pace they choose.

Call Melissa Gobell at 831-625-1470 for further information. Easy-Access Adventures is implementing an outreach program for agencies and organizations that serve seniors and those with disabilities. To add your organization to the list or arrange for a presentation to your organization, please contact Melissa at mgobell@parks.ca.gov. (See the current schedule on Page 2.)

Why permits matter

By Glenn E. Robinson

The County permitting process is rarely sexy and generally only draws the attention of serious land use geeks and occasionally neighbors of proposed projects. But the importance of a well functioning permitting system is critical to creating safe and beautiful neighborhoods, to reducing potential conflict between neighbors, and to insuring future home owners that their new home is safe for their families.

Permits come in a variety of shapes and sizes, from the entirely discretionary that require the approval of the elected officials, to code enforcement officials signing off that a home addition was built to the current professional and safety code levels. An example of the former is the proposed Rancho Canada subdivision, where the owners have sought to transform a handful of legal lots of record into a large subdivision consisting of scores of legal lots of record. There is no Constitutional right to subdivide property,

and obtaining a permit to do so is entirely at the discretion of elected officials, in this case the Board of Supervisors. That is different from building a first home on an existing legal lot, where the property owner has an absolute right to proceed, within the existing planning and zoning framework. But even here, permits will be required to make sure the house is built properly and does not represent an undue safety risk to its inhabitants or neighbors because of, for example, shoddy electrical wiring in the house.

A properly functioning permit system protects four critical elements. First, it protects neighboring home owners against ugly and unsafe structures being built that could threaten the health and property values of neighbors. Second, it protects future owners of that very home or business that the structure was built to proper code at the time of construction, so they need not worry about slipshod and dangerous construction. Third, a healthy permitting system helps guarantee the property rights of the current owner when a building is constructed fully within the parameters of existing rules. Discontent-

ed neighbors would have no legitimate legal grounds to complain when the permitting rules have been followed. Fourth, a well functioning permit system helps protect the environment. For example, the abuse of water rights and over-pumping the Carmel River can be avoided in a healthy permitting system.

But all of this requires diligence by Monterey County. The county can add whatever requirements it wants to a discretionary use permit, but if it has no meaningful system of following up, then abuse will almost certainly follow. This has been the exact criticism by many over the approvals of both the September Ranch subdivision and the Carmel Cottages project, where water was a critical issue. Monterey County tried to get around the issue by putting in place permit requirements that it has virtually no capacity to actually enforce.

A healthy and well-functioning permitting process helps create livable, safe and beautiful communities, even if it can sometimes be a bit of a headache.