

# CONCOURS WEEK



So many gorgeous cars and motorcycles ... so many events ... this week on the Monterey Peninsula!  
Read all about them in our colorful special section this week.



# The Carmel Pine Cone

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## Concours Week brings record crowds to Peninsula



Despite smoke in the air from the Soberanes Fire, the owners of a 1926 Locomobile (above) didn't seem bothered in the slightest when they rolled into town. At the Mission Wednesday, Bishop Richard Garcia kept a 1937 Delage safe by blessing it (right), while a muscular Cadillac (below) showed off its chops. And during Thursday's Tour d'Elegance (below right), crowds packed Ocean Avenue to ogle. For complete coverage of all the week's events, see our special section inside.



## Fire containment not anticipated until end of September

By MARY SCHLEY

THE SOBERANES Fire continued burning south this week, growing by a little more than 9,000 acres as it aggressively crossed the Big Sur River and sent more smoke toward the Monterey Peninsula even as classic cars crowded the streets for Concours Week.

Firefighters pushed the estimated date for controlling the fire to the end of September as their efforts stalled at 60 percent containment.

Throughout the week, crews worked at the southern edges of the now 79,000-acre fire, lighting back burns to keep it from encroaching on more homes and businesses. The stubborn blaze, which sparked from an illegal campfire in Garrapata State Park July 22, forced the closure of Highway 1 on several occasions, including for damaged trees, and led to some evacuations on the east side of the road, though most of those have since been reduced to warnings.

As of Thursday, only residents of most of Coast Ridge Road were still ordered to stay away, while homeowners in devastated Palo Colorado Canyon were surveying the damage and meeting with insurance agents to start figuring out how to rebuild.

Meanwhile, with more devastating wildfires raging elsewhere in the state, resources targeted to the Soberanes Fire have been reduced, with 87 engines working on it now, compared with a peak of more than 500 just a couple of weeks ago, and 2,858 personnel, down from 4,822 on Aug. 11. The number of bulldozers has dropped from 66 to 35 in a week, while water trucks deployed on the fire have increased from 54 to 66.

Twenty-one helicopters and six air tankers were dropping

See FIRE page 20A

## Charities join aquarium in opposing admissions tax

### Say fee would erode fundraising revenue

By KELLY NIX

PROMINENT NONPROFIT groups are speaking out against a proposed admissions tax in Pacific Grove, which city officials say would bring millions of dollars a year to the city, but which the groups say would be a blow to their fundraising efforts.

The Pacific Grove City Council voted 4-3 to place a measure on the Nov. 8 ballot which, if approved, would levy a 5 percent tax on tickets to the aquarium, museums, sporting events, movies and other activities. The city estimates it could generate as much as \$4 million a year to help pay for infrastructure maintenance and other expenses.

While the Monterey Bay Aquarium had been the sole voice against the proposed tax, other nonprofits are now coming out against the tax.

Rape Crisis Center executive director Clare Munteer said the tax would take away from its fundraising revenue, including money from the Together with Love Run/Walk, an event in Pacific Grove that's been held for 31 years and raises about \$40,000 a year.

"At 5 percent, this tax would take \$2,000 of our proceeds," Munteer told The Pine Cone. "We would either have to raise the entry fee or eat the additional cost."

See TAX page 18A

## Pig rescued but condor nests could burn

By CHRIS COUNTS

ALONG THE smoky and charred landscape of Big Sur, firefighters have come across a variety of displaced animals since the Soberanes Fire began, but none quite like Eloise.

A 40-pound domestic pig, Eloise was found early this week by a fire crew working along the Coast Ridge Road. In an effort to find the pig's home, the crew contacted the Big Sur Volunteer Fire

See PIG page 19A



A pig that was just out for a stroll in the burned area was found by firefighters this week in Big Sur and returned to its home nearby, while a captive condor (right) awaited transportation outside an area affected by the fire.

By CHRIS COUNTS

TWO WILDFIRES — the Soberanes Fire in Monterey County and the Chimney Fire in San Luis Obispo County — are burning toward each other, and three condor nests in the Big Sur backcountry are caught in the middle.

While no condors have been injured or killed in the fires, Kelly Sorensen of the Ventana Wildlife Society is concerned for their well being.

See CONDORS page 19A

