

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The Monterey Peninsula is home to hundreds of small businesses, including many owned and run by dynamic, entrepreneurial women whose success stories are an inspiration to us all.

Read all about them in this issue of *The Carmel Pine Cone*

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BACKBURNS JUMP LINE, THREATEN NEIGHBORHOODS

By CHRIS COUNTS

WITH HIGH winds anticipated later in the week, firefighters intentionally set fire to a wide swath of vegetation between Chews Ridge and the front of the Soberanes Fire Sept. 19 in an effort to protect nearby homes. But a pair of spot fires broke out on the wrong side of fire lines, causing alarm among residents.

A fire official conceded the burning operation didn't go exactly as planned, but she insisted it hasn't put any residents at risk. "Two spot fires from wind-driven embers came up from the burnout operations and went over the line," Soberanes Fire public information officer Elayne Briggs told

The Pine Cone.

Briggs insisted the firing operations paid off.

"While there's always some risk to tactics like these, it's a good thing we did it," she said. "What people need to know is that if we didn't do burnout operation, there was nothing to hold the fire as it pushes to the east."

But some residents were skeptical, including Cachagua General Store owner Michael Jones.

"I know you will be shocked — shocked! — to hear that the completely unnecessary Chews Ridge back burn has jumped the road," Jones posted on Facebook.

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Brazil Ranch — up for sale again?

By CHRIS COUNTS

MORE THAN a year after turning down a proposal by Grammy Award-winning musician and composer Philip Glass to establish a performing arts and environmental education center at Brazil Ranch in Big Sur, the 1,200-acre property still sits virtually empty aside from its buildings — and it's unclear if its owner, the United States Forest Service, even wants to keep it. And U.S. Rep. Sam Farr, who urged the acquisitions in the first place, said he might be OK with a sale, if the property is protected.

Glass, meanwhile, who plays a sold-out concert at Sunset Center Friday, is still looking for a site for his center.

Six years ago, Glass kicked off his annual Days and Nights Festival by suggesting that the Brazil Ranch would be an ideal location for a performing arts and environmental education center. At the time, a Forest Service official called the proposal "legitimate" and vowed to consider it. Carmel architect Mary Ann Schicketanz even drew up plans for the center.

Will the feds sell the ranch?

But last year, Forest Service officials notified Glass that they were declining his proposal — in part, because the agency doesn't have enough employees to provide the oversight required for such an ambitious project. And in a letter he was sent, officials acknowledged they were considering getting rid of the property, which was acquired by the Forest Service in 2002 for \$23 million of taxpayers' money. "Since the [Los Padres National Forest] does not have the resources to maintain the Brazil Ranch facilities, we are reviewing options of facility removal and/or conveyance as possible long-term solutions," wrote Forest Service official Robert

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PHOTOS/MICHAEL TROUTMAN, DMT IMAGING

Firefighters (left) light a backfire near Cachagua Saturday. A helicopter (above) being used to fight the Soberanes Fire reloads Tuesday at a staging area near Arroyo Seco.

Pig owners fined \$8K for keeping him

By KELLY NIX

THE CITY of Pacific Grove Monday sent the owners of a pet pig a hefty bill for not complying with a July order to remove the animal from their property, and the bill continues to climb at whopping \$500 per day.

On Sept. 19, P.G. code compliance officer Terri Schaeffer told Lisa and Mark Hanes, the owners of Bruiser, a potbelly pig, that they must pay \$7,667.50 in penalties and fees for failing to relocate the animal from their Ransford Avenue house.

"Thank you for your prompt remittance," the city's invoice says at the bottom.

The costs include \$700 for the 14 days the Haneses were being charged \$50 per day for not removing the pig starting Aug. 23, and \$6,500 since Sept. 6, when the fines increased

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Monning defends Panetta's qualifications

By KELLY NIX

ONE OF the politicians who 20th Congressional District candidate Casey Lucius claimed got "pushed aside" to allow Democratic rival Jimmy Panetta to run commented this week on his decision not to pursue the seat and defended Panetta's qualifications for the office.

State Sen. Bill Monning had long been mentioned as a possible successor to U.S. Rep. Sam Farr before deciding not to seek the seat. This week, Monning acknowledged that Panetta's name boosted his candidacy, but he also pointed to his achievements.

"Certainly, the Panetta name carries strong positives in the 20th Congressional District," Monning told The Pine Cone Wednesday. "That said, Jimmy Panetta has his own strong record of public service as a deputy district attorney, as a vet-

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PHOTO/PAUL MILLER

It's part of the most famous view in Big Sur, but the future of the land on the far side of Bixby Bridge is once again up in the air.

Council OKs preservation deals for historic homes, encourages others to sign up

By MARY SCHLEY

A LIMIT imposed to keep the city from losing too much revenue when it grants tax breaks to people with historic homes was significantly increased by the Carmel City Council last week. At the same meeting, council members also approved Mills Act contracts with the owners of four historic houses and said they hope more people will take advantage of the program.

"This Mills Act allows us to reinvest in our town," commented council member Carrie Theis. "It's nice to have four owners who are willing to reinvest in Carmel."

"This is fantastic that we will have four houses that will be staying the same," added councilwoman Jan Reimers after the group unanimously approved the contracts at the Sept. 13 meeting.

The Mills Act — which obligates homeowners to a minimum 10-year contract (with renewal provisions) for the restoration and maintenance of their houses and grants them a 40-to-60 percent break in property taxes in return — was enacted by the state in 1972, but jurisdictions are not required to offer it. The city added it to its books in 2004 when it adopted its Local Coastal Program, but that version was so

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PHOTOS/MARY SCHLEY

These charming houses on Dolores Street (left) and San Carlos Street will now be preserved by their owners, who will receive a property tax break in return.