

## LOCAL/STATE

# canal repairs



PAUL ZAMORA/Associated Press  
talks to dignitaries

mento, but it will not  
me law unless voters  
ove it on next Novem-  
ballot. Aside from new  
ey to upgrade aging  
s and pumps, the land-  
package includes  
s to restore the ecologi-  
fragile Sacramento-San  
uin Delta, promote  
r conservation and  
tor groundwater.  
environmentalists and  
e fiscal conservatives  
raised concerns about  
milestone water deal,  
h also sets aside \$3 bil-  
that can be used to  
ase California's water  
ly by building new  
s and underground

storage.

Among the leading candi-  
dates for taxpayer funds is  
Temperance Flat, which  
would be built in the narrow  
canyon above Friant Dam  
on the San Joaquin River,  
northeast of Fresno. It could  
hold up to 1.3 million acre-  
feet of water, which local  
officials and farmers say is  
crucial to satisfy agriculture  
and a growing population.

A three-year drought, cou-  
pled with environmental  
restrictions on the amount  
of water that can be pumped  
south from the delta, have  
given new urgency to the  
debate as farmers have had  
to idle hundreds of thou-  
sands of acres of croplands  
and lay off thousands of  
farmworkers. Cities, too,  
have been forced to ration  
water supplies, and demand  
will only grow as California's  
population is projected to  
soar to 60 million by 2050.

"This is one of the most  
fertile areas of God's green  
earth and it's going to stay  
that way because Demo-  
crats and Republicans  
crossed the aisle and made  
it happen," said comedian  
Paul Rodriguez, an ally of  
the governor's who plans to  
stump for the water bond on  
late-night talk shows in com-  
ing months. "It's going to be  
difficult to tax yourselves,  
but this is what we're asking  
you to do."

foreclosure counseling  
homebuyer education  
ed through the Hous-  
Resource Center of  
terey County.

rr said that move was  
ded to ensure there  
d be adequate funding  
lly prepare prospective  
ebuyers for purchasing  
w home, because only  
\$10,000 from the NSD

prevention effort, essentially  
preparing prospective buy-  
ers to buy a home so they  
can avoid many of the pit-  
falls of foreclosure.

Barr said lenders will  
have the discretion about  
who can qualify for the  
mortgages, and no special  
program rules will apply.  
But she said she believes  
lenders will avoid offering

# Prolonging life seen as cruel, if death is inevitable

By JANE PALMER  
Herald Staff Writer

Advances in medicine can  
improve our lives but not nec-  
essarily our deaths, said a  
Stanford university professor  
speaking at Monday's "Who  
Owns Life?" lecture at the  
Monterey Conference  
Center.

While medical technology  
has advanced in the last two  
decades, sometimes,  
attempts to improve a per-  
son's life when death is immi-  
nent are not only futile but  
painful, said David Magnus,  
before the talk co-presented  
by Monterey Peninsula Col-  
lege and the Community  
Hospital of the Monterey  
Peninsula.

"Death was a lot easier  
when there wasn't as much  
that we could do," Magnus  
said. "We can make a pretty  
drawn-out, but unpleasant,  
death in an ICU setting."

Technologies are intended  
to be a bridge to help the  
very sick get to a healthier  
state where they can enjoy  
life, Magnus said. The prob-  
lem is, these technologies  
can prolong patients' final  
days when there is no hope  
for recovery, he said.

Frequently, family mem-  
bers push for more treatment  
simply because it is available,  
said Magnus.

"We are increasingly used  
to the idea that death is an  
option and that families have  
a right to demand things,  
even if they don't work," he  
said.

Family members are hang-  
ing on to hope that a miracle  
will happen, without consid-  
ering the quality of those  
final hours, said Stanford pro-  
fessor Hank Greely, who was

a featured speaker at Mon-  
day's talk. "This is America  
— where we don't believe in  
unhappy endings."

Moreover, there exists  
plenty of evidence that the  
dying patient does not want  
their death unnecessarily  
prolonged, Magnus said.

"It is pretty clear that we  
are doing things to people at  
the end of life that they prob-  
ably wouldn't want done to  
them and are probably of no  
benefit to them at all," Mag-  
nus said.

While 75 to 80 percent of  
people die in health care fac-  
ilities, not in the comfort of  
their own homes, their  
authority to orchestrate the  
details of their dying  
moments frequently can be  
undermined, Magnus said.

"It is pretty unusual for  
people to pass away in the  
way that they think they are  
going to," Magnus said.  
"When people become inca-  
pacitated near the end of  
their lives, their wishes may  
not be respected."

Magnus recommends  
addressing this issue by  
drawing up an advance direc-  
tive. Greely recommends  
frank discussions between  
seniors and their family  
members well in advance of  
their dying days.

"Talk to them enough so  
they will be comfortable  
when the time comes that  
they are doing the right  
thing," Greely said.

"Any peace of mind that  
you can give your loved ones  
is precious," he said. "It is the  
last gift that you can give  
your family members."

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