

# The San Bernardino County Sentinel

News of Note  
from Around the  
Largest County  
in the Lower  
48 States

Friday, February 28, 2014 A Fortunado Publication in conjunction with Countywide News Service 10808 Foothill Blvd. Suite 160-446 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 (909) 628-8436

## County Lays Claim to \$33.8 Million In RDA Money Seized By The State



**Dena Fuentes**

The county of San Bernardino has moved

to claim \$33,818,415 it maintains it is due back from the state in the aftermath of the shuttering of its redevelopment agency in 2011.

In 2011, the state legislature at Governor Jerry Brown's instigation passed legislation, ABX1 26, closing out the more than 400 municipal and county redevelopment agencies in Cali-

fornia.

Redevelopment agencies were formerly adjuncts to local governments which were chartered to reduce blight in those communities and generate economic development. They were empowered to utilize money available from the state and federal government, otherwise obtain loans

or financing, or to use their own authority to issue bonds, the proceeds from which were used to eliminate blight and build infrastructure. The improvements from this redevelopment activity would then, theoretically, result in an increase in the value of the property within those redevelopment agency project areas. The increased

property tax revenue from those areas would be used to pay back the loans or debt service the bonds, that is, pay the bondholders.

The law called for the creation of successor agencies to the defunct redevelopment agencies, which would then oversee the discharging of the redevelopment agencies' debt. **See P 2**

## Moving SBSO Air Fleet From Rialto To SB International

After years of delays, the county board of supervisors this week officially committed to relocating the sheriff's department's aviation division from Rialto Airport to San Bernardino International Airport.

Upon the recommendation of David Slaughter, the director of the county's real estate department, and sheriff John McMahon, the county entered into a 25-year lease and fuel service agreement with the San Bernardino International Airport Authority for an approximately 61,640 square foot aviation facility consisting of a 27,500 square foot aircraft maintenance hangar, a 22,500 square foot storage hangar and 11,640 square feet of office space on approximately eight acres of land.

The county also signed a work agreement with the authority for the completion of 348,639 square feet of site work improvements.

San Bernardino International Airport is located on the grounds of the now shuttered Norton Air Force Base, lying between the cities of Highland and San Bernardino and north of Loma Linda. The airport is owned and operated by a joint powers agency, the San Bernardino International Airport Authority, which consists of the county of San Bernardino, and the cities of Highland, Colton, Loma Linda and San Bernardino.

According to a report to the board of supervisors jointly submitted by McMahon and Slaughter, "This item is for a twenty-five year lease with San Bernardino International Airport **See P 3**

## DA Pressured Lewis Heir To Wear Wire Prior To His Suicide, Lawsuit Claims

David Lewis, a third generation member of the Lewis Homes homebuilding and shopping center development dynasty, was driven to suicide in 2010 by pressure put on him by district attorney Mike Ramos to act as a cooperating witness against members of his family, according to a lawsuit filed by his widow and surviving



**David Lewis**

son.

Lewis Operating Cor-

poration and the Lewis Group of Companies today stand as two of the premier business operations in San Bernardino County. They are the corporate successors to Lewis Homes, which was founded in Claremont in 1955 by Ralph Lewis, an attorney, and his wife Goldy. Starting with small subdivisions, to which he had his wife



**Mike Ramos**

devote intense focus with regard to design

and living space detail, Ralph Lewis gradually expanded the company's operation to involve larger and larger development projects.

By the 1970s, Lewis Homes, which had relocated its corporate headquarters to Upland, had grown to become one of Southern California's major homebuilders. In the 1980s, the **See P 4**

## Bloomington Housing Project To Include County Library

In what appears to be the first such arrangement of its kind, a developer has been given clearance to build 190 high density residential units in an unincorporated county area conditional upon the inclusion of a library and other infrastructure elements in the development.

Irvine-based Bloomington I Housing Partners has obtained an entitlement to build 190

residential affordable housing unit on nine acres of county-owned property near the corner of Valley Boulevard and Locust Avenue in the community of Bloomington. One year ago, on February 26, 2013 the board of supervisors approved the selection of the Bloomington I Housing Partners, L.P. as the developer, following a request for qualifications process, **See P 5**

## County Cites Overriding Concern To Give 3,114 Unit Project Near Apple Valley Okay

The board of supervisors this week approved a 3,114-residential unit project on 1,557 acres in the unincorporated county area east of Apple Valley.

A public hearing on the Hacienda at Fairview Valley Specific Plan was held by the Planning Commission on December 5, 2013. Prior to the hearing, a number of letters both in support and in opposition to the project

were received and provided to the commission by separate memoranda. The commission recommended approval of the specific plan and related actions on a vote of 4-0, with one commissioner recusing himself.

The project is to be built at the northeast corner of Laguna Seca Drive and Cahuilla Road as a master planned residential community focused primarily on ac-

tive adults, ages 55 and above, totaling a maximum of 3,114 residential units, 15 acres of commercial and 336 acres of parks, equestrian facilities, and open space.

The project's proponent is Strata Equity Group Incorporated.

County Land Use Services Director Tom Hudson called the project "a sustainable system of housing, recreation, retail and infra- **See P 2**

## Thompson Will Replace Slaughter As County Real Estate Division Director

David Slaughter, the director of the county of San Bernardino's Real Estate Services Division, will retire next month.

The county has gone outside of its own ranks to replace him, recruiting Terry W. Thompson, who has over 28 years of extensive experience in real estate management, development, acquisitions, and leasing in the



**Terry Thompson**

commercial real estate endeavors throughout Southern California, to

oversee the division.

The director of the real estate services department directly oversees the real estate division and supervises the managers of the architecture and engineering department and the facilities management division, as well as the administrative and fiscal section that provides budgeting and accounting support to the group.

According to Greg Devereaux, the county's chief executive officer who made the final decision to employ Thompson, "Mr. Terry Thompson has a bachelor's degree in economics/business from the University of California, Los Angeles and is a member and past president of National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, South-

ern California Chapter, which is a nationally known commercial real estate development association. Terry has held several positions in Southern California and has handled assets and portfolios in excess of 13 million square feet of commercial properties, coordinated the marketing of land sales, and handled a variety of acquisition activ- **See P 11**



### County Approves Over 3,000 Units Near Apple Valley from front page

structure in which the development complements the natural resources and environment. The project will also ensure the development of a well-planned, balanced, and sustainable county by providing the framework for a master planned community. The project is organized around four neighborhood 'villages' that will be linked together through a network of local roadways, multi-use trails and pedestrian paths, parks, greenbelts, water features, and natural open space. The project

also contains two overlay districts that provide options for expanded equestrian uses and a golf course. The project is located approximately two miles east of the town of Apple Valley and within the town's sphere of influence."

According to Hudson the project is proposed to be developed in four phases over a 15-20 year timeframe. "It is important to note that the Hacienda at Fairview Valley Specific Plan is conceptual in nature and does not include any subdivision or precise development plans. Therefore, while specific acreage assumptions are assigned to each land use

category in the specific plan document for planning and environmental purposes, the land use areas shown on the land use plan are conceptual and will require specific mapping before individual development parcels can be created. Furthermore, additional studies will be needed before all necessary infrastructure and public facilities can be designed to accommodate the project's development phases."

With regard to environmental compliance, Hudson said a project-level environmental impact report was prepared for the project, evaluating potentially significant effects.

"The potential environmental effects have been exhaustively analyzed in a final environmental impact report together with a draft environmental impact report and errata thereto, which is subject to certification by the board of supervisors. All of the potential environmental impacts were determined to be capable of being reduced to a less than significant level except in the following areas: 1) aesthetics, 2) air quality, 3) biological resources, and 4) traffic and circulation, which were determined to be significant and unavoidable."

Because not all the

### The San Bernardino County

## Sentinel

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project's impacts can be reduced to a level that is less than significant, findings of fact and a statement of overriding considerations was

adopted by the board of supervisors in approving the project. That vote was made unanimously.

*Continued on Page 5*

### RDA Fund Recovery from front page

This week, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors approved an agreement between the successor agency to the county redevelopment agency and the county to have the successor agency pay back \$12,180,971 in

outstanding loans from the county to its redevelopment agency. Those loans included one to the Cedar Glen Redevelopment Project Area of \$10,365,000 and another to the Mission Blvd. Redevelopment Project Area of \$50,000. In addition to principal on those loans, the first had

accrued \$1,755,628 in interest to reflect a debt of \$12,120,628 and the second had accrued \$10,343 in interest to reach a total debt of \$60,343.

The county claims that under a law passed after the redevelopment agencies were closed out, Assembly Bill 1484, the obligations the loans

involved could be reestablished if it is demonstrated the loans were made for a legitimate redevelopment purpose.

Those loans thus now stand as enforceable obligations, according to the county, and the California Department of Finance is obliged to make those payments in full to

the county.

Furthermore, according to the county, it is applying to have the successor agency to its redevelopment agency transfer all remaining funds, estimated to be \$21,637,444 of outstanding successor agency bond proceeds to the county relating to bonds

issued for redevelopment efforts in Cedar Glen and San Sevaïne.

Cedar Glen lies within the San Bernardino Mountains and San Sevaïne is in the unincorporated area between and north of the Rancho Cucamonga/Fontana city limits.

According to Dena Fuentes, the director of the San Bernardino County Department of Community Development and Housing, the aforementioned Assembly Bill 1484 gives the board of supervisors the authority to "act as the governing body of the successor agency to the redevelopment agency of the county of San Bernardino [to] adopt a resolution approving the agreement regarding expenditure of bond proceeds between the successor agency to the redevelopment agency of the county of San Bernardino and the county of San Bernardino for the transfer of all remaining funds, estimated to be \$21,637,444 of outstanding successor's agency bond proceeds to the county, to be expended in a manner consistent with original bond covenants."

That money, Fuentes said, included \$4,756,226 in Cedar Glen Tax Exempt Bonds, \$3,810,122 in San Sevaïne Tax Exempt Bonds, and \$13,071,096 in San Sevaïne Taxable Bonds.

# Inland Empire Bankruptcy Center

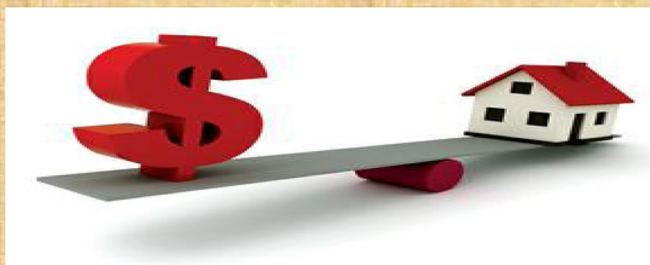
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## Glimpse Of SBC's Past Marmalade Mansions and Tangerine Skies

*Picture yourself in a boat on a river,  
With tangerine trees and marmalade skies  
Somebody calls you, you answer quite slowly,  
A girl with kaleidoscope eyes.*

By Ruth Musser-Lopez.

The "tangerine trees and marmalade skies," that John Lennon sang about sounds much like San Bernardino County no matter how you dice the citric acid:

The Beatles had to be singing about San Bernardino County with those words from "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."

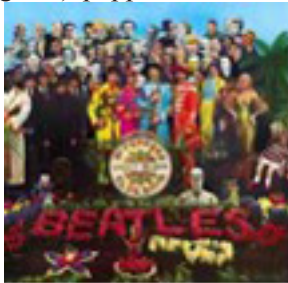
Picture yourself in a

boat on a river? You may never have had a chance to visit the east coast of California, which is the west bank of the Colorado River located in



San Bernardino County. Also, we do have the

Marmalade Mansions in Redlands and a (Sergeant) pepper tree lined



"Euclid Avenue" that we might just as well call "Tangerine Sky Preserve" because of all the relic grove mansions that remain after the tangerine and orange groves were leveled for housing.

No one seems to know where the Beatles

spent their time in southern California after their debut here at the Hollywood Bowl in 1964. Those two days remain a mystery but within three-and-a-half years they recorded "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" and released it in their Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album in 1967. Where did they go? San Bernardino?

Last week we featured indoor preserves or "museums" in our county. This week we are going for "outdoor preserves." Places where you might want to get out and walk

around—just like the Beatles may have done during those mysterious days after their big



splash at the Hollywood Bowl.

Historic outdoor "preserves" and places to go...in San Bernardino:

Marmalade Mansions 909/793-2546. If you can't live in a "Mar-

malade Mansion" why not just enjoy a slice of "lemon meringue" eye pie by viewing these re-

stored treasures of the SBC. More than 300 Victorian style mansions line or are near Redlands Boulevard—built by early citrus industry farmers who became wealthy while residing here in  
*Continued on Page 7*

### Sheriff's Air Fleet Going To SBIA from front page

Authority for a new aviation facility for the sheriff consisting of 50,000 square feet of hangar space for aircraft storage and maintenance, 11,640 square feet for office space and other aviation related site improvements on approximately eight acres located at San Bernardino International Airport in San Bernardino because of the need to relocate from

the soon-to-be closed Rialto Municipal Airport and provide additional hangar and office space to accommodate the expanded aviation needs of the sheriff."

On July 5, 1977, the board of supervisors approved a twenty-year lease agreement with the city of Rialto for 6.77 acres of land at the Rialto Municipal Airport for rent of \$1 per year. The county constructed a 12,750 square foot aviation facility for the sheriff to store and

maintain fixed wing aircraft and helicopters, and conduct aviation operations. In the thirty-seven years since the lease was originally approved, the board approved two amendments adding language regarding use of the airport and extend the term thirty years to the current lease termination date of June 30, 2027.

In 2007, however, the continuation of the sheriff's department's aviation operations at Rialto Airport was attenuated when the city of Rialto and its redevelopment agency entered into a development agreement with Hillwood/Lewis, LLC, pursuant to which the Rialto Municipal Airport would be decommissioned and the site redeveloped for non-aviation related uses.

At that point the county's real estate services department and the sheriff began searching for a new location from which its aviation division, the 28th largest air fleet in the world, could be operated. According to McMahon and Slaughter, "The parameters for the search were based on response times, weather conditions (ground fog, wind), sufficient ground to construct a larger facility to provide ongoing maintenance and storage for ten helicopters, four fixed wing aircraft and six command post/trailer vehicles, and the overall cost for a new

facility."

San Bernardino International Airport, Chino Airport, Ontario International Airport and a site in Redlands were identified as potential locations for a new facility. County chief executive officer Greg Devereux was a strong proponent for basing the sheriff's air fleet at Chino Airport. All other participants in the process, however, favored San Bernardino International Airport, which was determined to be the best location and to have the best weather conditions for deployment in response to calls to the sheriff for aviation assistance, 71% of which are for services in the east end of the San Bernardino Valley. On April 6, 2011, the county administrative office approved Capital Improvement Program request No.11-188, submitted by the sheriff for a new aviation facility in San Bernardino consisting of approximately 39,000 square feet of hangar space, 16,000 square feet of office space and 4,200 square feet of shop space. Another factor emerged in headquartering the sheriff's aviation division in San Bernardino. The sheriff's emergency operations division includes both the aviation and volunteer forces units. The emergency operations division has forty-four full-time personnel and oversees over 2,000 reservists, citizens

on patrol, and other volunteers throughout the county. The emergency operations division provides aviation support to all agencies in the county and handles major disaster and large scale search and rescue operations. The volunteer forces unit is currently located at sheriff headquarters in San Bernardino.

According to McMahon and Slaughter, "Operationally and in the event of an emergency, it is ideal to have both units, aviation and volunteer forces, located in one facility and under one unified command structure. Consequently, the emergency operations division will also be located in the new aviation facility at San Bernardino International Airport."

Despite the paltry \$1 per year lease payments the county is making to Rialto for the use of the facilities at Rialto Municipal Airport, Rialto is required to provide relocation compensation and assistance to the existing tenants because of its closing. In order to provide a facility of like size and cover moving costs, Rialto offered to pay the county \$4,121,878, which the real estate services department and sheriff staff determined to be reasonable. The \$4,121,878 payment will be deposited into a Federal Aviation Administration required escrow account and disbursed

directly to San Bernardino International Airport Authority as part of the \$9,600,000 prepaid rent for the new sheriff aviation facility.

The twenty-five year lease agreement includes five five-year options to extend the term and will commence upon completion and issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the 50,000 square feet of hangar space, the 11,640 square feet of office space and site improvements. The rent for the hangar and office buildings for the initial term of twenty-five years is \$9,600,000 and will be paid in full upon completion of the facilities and commencement of the initial twenty-five year lease term.

The initial ground rent for the eight acres for the first five years of the lease term is \$6,850 per month. After the initial twenty-five year lease term and upon exercising one or more of five five-year options to extend the term, the county can acquire the hangar and office buildings for \$100. The county will be required to continue to pay ground rent during any extended term. The lease is exempt from requirements of County Policy 08-02-01 regarding leasing privately owned real property for county use because San Bernardino International Airport Authority is a public entity.

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## Lawsuit Alleges Lewis Heir Acted As Informant For Ramos from front page

company became known for its large master planned developments, involving specific plans that included homes, retail centers, schools and parks. By 1990, Lewis Homes was the single largest homebuilder in the western San Bernardino County cities of Ontario, Upland, Rancho Cucamonga and Fontana, and the torch had been passed to the second generation of the Lewis family – sons Richard, Randall, Robert and Roger – who guided the company's scope of operations beyond California to Nevada, Arizona and Utah and transformed the paradigm of Lewis Homes to include an array of partnerships and ventures falling under the umbrella of the Lewis Group of Companies. Now in its 59th year, the Lewis juggernaut has completed the development of 56,000 homes, 10,000 apartments and 14 million square feet of retail, office, and industrial space.

With the march of time, two members among the third generation of the Lewis Family were stepping into the shoes of their forebears, David Lewis and Jennifer Lewis, the son and daughter of Richard Lewis. Jennifer, with a bachelor's degree in urban and regional planning and development from the University of Southern California, was involved in the planning of new development projects.

David, who graduated cum laude with a B.A. in business economics and accounting from UCLA and went on to obtain a masters degree in real estate development with a specialization in finance and construction management from the University of Southern California, had acceded to become the executive vice president of the Lewis Group of Companies, overseeing both land acquisition and obtaining building en-

titlements in Nevada and Southern California. He had also worked closely with his uncle Randall on the marketing of the company's various proposed and completed projects, such as in March 2009, when the two made a presentation to the Rancho Cucamonga City Council relating to a proposal by a consortium the company had formed with several other developers known as Rancho Partners with regard to that group's plans to acquire 1,400 acres of surplus flood control district property within and straddling Rancho Cucamonga's city limits and subdivide it for both residential and commercial use.

By 2008, David Lewis was at the seeming pinnacle of success and was being groomed as the heir apparent to succeed his father as the head of the company. Along the way, he was elected to the board of directors of the Baldy View Chapter of the Building Industry Association, was a member of the Urban Land Institute, a member of the National Association of Office and Industrial Properties, as well as a member of USC's Graduate Real Estate Association.

Married and with a young son he had named after his grandfather Ralph, David was working in large part out of the company office in Las Vegas where he had established a second home, though he continued to have a role in pursuing business for the company elsewhere.

Sometime in 2009, however, his life took a sharp turn downward, subjecting him to heretofore unimaginable and, apparently unbearable, pressure. That pressure included an intensifying battle with drug addiction, pending criminal charges and the attempts by law enforcement to subjugate him into a role of informant against friends and acquaintances, politicians with whom his business dealings had brought him into contact, others in the building industry, and, worse still, mem-

bers of his own family.

While the precise set of circumstances that led David Lewis into the depth of despair have long been shrouded, that fog has now begun to lift.

What is established is that on June 22, 2010, he returned to his Las Vegas home and, according to the Las Vegas Metro Police, used a shotgun to kill himself.

The Clark County Coroner's Office ruled the death a suicide.

On July 11, 2011, Lewis' widow Rachel and son Ralph Lewis filed a lawsuit in San Bernardino County Superior Court naming the county of San Bernardino, state of California Highway Patrol, San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael Ramos, a State Highway Patrol officer identified only by his last name, Bissett, and three San Bernardino County sheriff's department employees.

Rachel and Ralph Lewis are represented in the suit by New York-based attorney Paul L. Mills.

According to the lawsuit, between June 6, 2010 and ending on June 22, 2010, Lewis "undertook a series of actions whose combined goal and intention was to commit suicide. During

this period he (Lewis) was subjected to coercion by the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office, defendant District Attorney Mike Ramos and other San Bernardino County employees, against decedent, to cooperate in an investigation of his family, including by wearing a concealed electronic recording device and other actions, when these defendants knew or should have known that, due to his vulnerable mental condition, this coercion was reasonably likely to cause decedent substantial or permanent mental injury, or cause him to take his own life."

The complaint highlights the fact that Lewis was arrested the day prior to his death. On June 21, 2010, Lewis was pulled-over by a CHP Officer on Interstate 15, and subsequently arrested for being under the influence of drugs. Several hours later, Lewis was released from the West Valley Detention Center in Rancho Cucamonga.

The complaint states that approximately 12 hours after his arrest, at or about 11:00 a.m., Lewis killed himself.

The lawsuit contends that the Lewis family was, at the time of Lewis' suicide, under investigation by the San Ber-

nardino County District Attorney.

During the last seven to eight months of his life, there were indicators that David Lewis was working with either the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office or another prosecutorial or investigative agency, meeting with or phoning witnesses and criminal suspects and their associates, seeking information and statements that would be of use in constructing any of a number of public corruption cases. The district attorney's office has not confirmed or denied that Lewis was acting in any such capacity.

Some public officials were completely unsuspecting of Lewis. Others grew wary of him and his approaches. It is unknown what information he may have been successful in garnering. With his passing, he will not be available to testify against anyone, though it is conceivable that audio recordings made of conversations he had with various individuals might yet be produced as evidence against some targets of those investigations where criminal charges have already been filed. The three-year statute of limitations has elapsed against any targets not already

charged.

Rancho Cucamonga city councilman Rex Gutierrez, who was charged by the district attorney's office and subsequently convicted of theft, fraud and conspiracy for working on personal and politically-related issues while employed at the county assessor's office, told the *Sentinel* in an article published on July 9, 2010 and before his conviction in 2010 that he considered David Lewis, with whom he had become acquainted over the previous several years, something of a friend. But they were not overly close, Gutierrez said. Early in 2010, Lewis evinced an increased interest in speaking and meeting with him, Gutierrez reported. The timing of this coincided with Gutierrez's progress toward trial on the charges of which he was eventually convicted and which were filed against him in 2009. The first trial held on the matter ended in a mistrial on June 30, 2010, eight days after Lewis's death. Gutierrez was convicted at a second trial in October 2010.

The district attorney's case consisted of allegations that Gutierrez

*Continued on Page 6*

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# Affordable Health Care For All Hinges On A Fair Marketplace

By State Assemblyman  
Curt Hagman

With the help of Congress, the president's health reform concepts (usually referenced as Obamacare) became law and its supporters claimed it would spur better care, lower costs and build a stronger economy. But the more we learn about the plan as it is implemented, the more concerned hard-working Californians have become. For starters, do you remember the president's oft-repeated promise of "if you like your health care plan, you can keep it?" In California, insurers cancelled approximately 1.1 million individual health insurance policies that did not meet the Act's requirements even though people were satisfied with their existing plans.

That is why I have co-authored legislation to

allow these consumers to keep their preferred plans for an additional year. It will be a temporary fix, but provide some needed relief for those whose lives were disrupted due to a broken promise.

The New York Times reported that the Democrats in Congress attempt to use the Affordable Care Act to win over Latino voters. That has backfired. The attempt to court Spanish-speaking Latinos failed so miserably that it only helped to emphasize the many ways the Affordable Care Act, despite being directly marketed to this target population, could disproportionately hurt them by limiting doctor choices and certain types of coverage.

The lives of many Californians have also been disrupted thanks to the lack of privacy and security of their personal

information on Covered California (the state's Obamacare exchange). The press found that the exchange gave consumers' contact information to insurance telemarketers without their consent. People complained of receiving calls from agents trying to sell them insurance.

In response, I have also co-authored legislation to require Covered California to first gain permission from consumers before it releases their information to third parties. It will also require the exchange to notify the public of any breach in security. The threat of identity theft and fraud are real, especially since Covered California has hired felons

convicted of financial crimes to sign up Californians for insurance. Some of the hired felons were convicted of crimes such as welfare fraud, forgery, shoplifting and burglary.

The torrent of bad news continues. Covered California spent \$1.37 million for a promotional web video featuring Richard Simmons and an Obama impersonator. It is a waste of money. I would have preferred it spent on actually giving health care to someone in need.

With such questionable spending decisions, it comes as no surprise that Covered California now needs \$78 million to avoid a deficit after July 2015 and another \$34

million the year after. If it cannot find the money, California taxpayers could be forced to make up the difference. That means higher premiums, higher taxes or cuts in other services.

Unfortunately the problems I have mentioned are just the tip of the iceberg. The non-partisan Congressional Budget office recently reported that Affordable Care Act will result in the loss of 2 million full-time jobs by 2017. It is already hard enough for Americans to find good paying jobs due to the policy and tax burdens that liberal Congressional politicians have imposed on job creators. Perhaps it is why the president decided to delay the mandate forcing small businesses to shoulder costs they may not be able to afford from 2014 to 2016 – con-

veniently after the mid-term elections this year.

This is what happens when Congress assumes more control over health care – it creates winners and losers. Government needs to ensure a fair marketplace, but it should not be in the business of trying to do things that can be better handled by the private sector. By allowing the free market to work, we can offer affordable health care options for more people without raising taxes or busting the budget. Until that day comes, expect to see more costly developments in the months ahead.

*Assemblyman Curt Hagman, R-Chino Hispanic Floor Leader and represents the 55th Assembly District in the California IIs, is the Assistant R Legislature.*

## Bloomington Project from front page

to develop an affordable mixed-generational housing and library development.

In addition to building a 6,500-square foot county library, Bloomington I Housing Partners has agreed to provide \$2,012,590 toward

financing the construction of wastewater system improvements. The \$2,012,590 will be made available to County Service Area 70 in a lump sum. Any unused funds

will be returned to the County Department of Community Development and Housing upon completion of the sewer improvement project.

The county board of

supervisors accepted that financing arrangement this week.

A companion item approved by the board of supervisors approved a contract with Chris-

tensen Brothers General Engineering, Inc., to construct the wastewater system improvements, consisting of approximately 5,149-feet of 18-inch diameter PVC sewer line beneath Valley Boulevard, miscellaneous small diameter sewer lines, 20 precast manholes, a metering and

*Continued on Page 9*

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## Massive Subdivision Near Apple Valley from page 2

According to Hudson, the overriding benefits of the project included new residential development that satisfies an identified need providing housing for active adults in the region, the generation of sales tax revenue, improved drainage facilities for the area, compliance with the Town of Apple Valley's resident-approved density for the area of a maximum of two dwelling units per acre and new employment opportunities associated with the proposed commercial development.



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Lewis Heir’s  
Widow Files  
Suit, Claiming DA  
Manipulated Her  
Husband from  
page 4

had voted favorably as a Rancho Cucamonga city councilman on projects by developer Jeff Burum and that Burum had essentially rewarded or bribed Gutierrez by interceding with then-county assessor Bill Postmus, to whom Burum had delivered over \$400,000 in political contributions, to hire Gutierrez into a no-work assignment at the assessor’s office. After a two week trial and less than three days of deliberations, the jury deadlocked.

In the weeks and months before the trial, David Lewis made repeated contact with Gutierrez, inquiring about how the preparation for his trial was going and other issues involving Burum.

“I felt it was amazing how he would call me so often and ask questions about the Colonies and my involvement with Jeff Burum. I didn’t think about it at the time, but in retrospect I think it is conceivable he was looking for information that might have been of use in my prosecution or

in a case the district attorney’s office wants to make against Jeff Burum. I really didn’t get too deep into it with him. I pretty much told him I didn’t think Jeff had done anything illegal and said I didn’t know of anything inappropriate that went on.”

Gutierrez’s reference to the Colonies is to The Colonies at San Antonio project, which was undertaken by a company co-managed by Burum, the Colonies Partners. In 2002 the Colonies Partners sued the county over flood control issues at the Colonies project, located in northeastern Upland and in 2006, that lawsuit was resolved by a controversial 3-2 vote of the board of supervisors to confer a \$102 million settlement on the Colonies Partners. That vote was supported by then-supervisor Bill Postmus, and supervisors Gary Ovitt and Paul Biane. The San Bernardino County District Attorney’s Office and the California Attorney General’s Office indicted Postmus and Jim Erwin, a former president of the San Bernardino County sheriff’s deputies union who served as a consultant to the Colonies Partners during their efforts to settle their lawsuit against the county and who was later hired

by Postmus as assistant assessor, charging them with involvement in an extortion, bribery and conspiracy scheme in connection with the \$102 million settlement and Burum’s provision of four separate \$100,000 contributions to political action committees controlled by Postmus and Erwin, as well as Paul Biane, and Mark Kirk, Ovitt’s then-chief of staff. Postmus subsequently pleaded guilty to all charges against him and turned state’s evidence. A superseding indictment named Erwin, Burum, Biane and Kirk, charging them with bribery and conspiracy in relation to the settlement.

In the earlier referenced July 9, 2010 Sentinel article, Erwin said that the month before the original February 2010 criminal indictment was handed down he received a call out of the blue from David Lewis. The call was both unexpected and unwelcome, Erwin said, in that there was no particular affection between him and Lewis and indeed some small degree of tension in their relationship, in that his affiliation with Burum and his company, which to a certain extent has had a historical rivalry with the Lewis Group of Companies, put him at odds with Lewis.

“He told me he had

some Lakers tickets and that he would send a limousine out to pick me up so we could go to the game together,” Erwin said. “I didn’t really consider him to be a friend or even an acquaintance. I didn’t think it was a good idea. It occurred to me, and seemed more likely, that he would be wearing a wire. I mean, this phone call came out of nowhere. I politely told him, ‘No, thanks.’ It’s one thing to go out on the town with someone for a fun evening, but something again when they are trying to record you.”

David Lewis on multiple occasions over the last six months of his life was witnessed in the company of Upland Mayor John Pomierski, who, was eventually, in March 2011, indicted by a federal grand jury on political corruption charges involving, bribery, extortion and money laundering. He subsequently pleaded guilty and is now serving time in a federal penitentiary.

Lewis Homes, with its corporate headquarters in Upland, has historically been one of the major residential developers in the city. The Lewis Operating Company and the Lewis Group of Companies and their principals had been major donors to Pomierski’s electioneering funds over the ten

years he was in office.

Exactly what information was exchanged between Pomierski and young Lewis during their various huddling sessions is not publicly known. The exchanges, at the time they were taking place, were viewed simply by many as innocent social contacts between the up and coming developer and an established older, and more gregarious, political hand. Nevertheless, the FBI focus on potential political corruption involving Pomierski and reports that developers were being shaken down for kickbacks or having their projects and proposals benefited by upfront under the table payments made many developers doing business on the west end of San Bernardino County in general and in the City of Gracious Living in particular, very nervous.

David Lewis may have taken to his grave specific knowledge about any such kickbacks if indeed he ever had such knowledge at all.

The reason for Lewis’ apparent cooperation with law enforcement authorities is not entirely clear. For some time, his drug use was whispered about in rarified quarters of the community. His arrest by the CHP gave credence to those subliminal suspicions.

Such a proclivity, augmented by a sub rosa arrest, could have given the district attorney’s office or the FBI leverage with which to secure his cooperation in their investigations.

Perhaps of relevance is the possibility that he had either fear, or direct or indirect knowledge, of facts related to the FBI’s inquiry and where it might lead and was potentially personally caught up in the investigation into allegations of kickbacks and bribery involving developers and local elected officials.

In the lawsuit filed on behalf of his widow and son, however, the only reference to his acting as an informant is on behalf of the San Bernardino County District Attorney’s Office, not the FBI or U.S. Attorney’s Office.

“There was a state-created danger as to the district attorney, because he [Mike Ramos] coerced the decedent into conduct that pushed him in his fragile condition of mental disability into becoming suicidal. This affirmative action left him in a worse condition and caused his death,” a filing made on December 1, 2011 in U.S. District Court states.

That filing came after the case was transferred on October 4, 2011, pursuant to a motion by the county, to the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, Eastern Division, due to the federal causes of action listed in the lawsuit.

In addition to claiming that Ramos and district attorneys’ office subjected David Lewis to psychological pressure that led to his suicide, the suit also propounds the theory that the CHP and the sheriff’s department acted with callous disregard to David Lewis’ safety and wellbeing because several items indicating he was suicidal were found in his car at the time of his arrest, including books about committing suicide and the use of a firearm, as well as containers of a

Continued on Page 7

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County Treasurer Recalculates Grand Terrace’s Post-RDA Property Tax Revenue Yet Again

The city of Grand Terrace has been crossed up once again by the county treasurer/tax collector’s office, which for the third time in the last eight months has recalculated the amount of property tax residuals the Blue Mountain City will receive as a consequence of the shuttering of its redevelopment agency.

In 2011, the state closed out municipal redevelopment agencies statewide. That change was particularly hard on Grand Terrace, the county’s third smallest city population-wise and smallest in terms of viable commercial development, which translates into very low sales tax revenue. The city had traditionally relied upon its redevelopment agency to fund the employment of about one-sixth of its staff.

When the city passed its current 2013-14 budget, it had done so based on the county tax collector/treasurer’s representation that the city would be entitled to and would actually receive 20 percent of its post-redevelopment era property tax residuals.

City officials passed a preliminary budget in June that carried with it the possibility that city operations would be cut back on January 1 if city voters did not approve a utility tax in November. That measure did, in fact, fail, but city officials were heartened to learn shortly thereafter that the city would actually be receiving 45 percent of its property tax residuals.

The previously planned-upon cuts to municipal operations that were to go into effect with the new year were not triggered.

Within the last fortnight, however, the city’s financial consultant, the Rosenow Spevacek Group, informed acting city manager Ken Henderson that Grand Terrace can count upon receiving 29 percent of its property tax residuals.

The city council, which was scheduled to review the city’s mid-year budget figures and make any appropriate adjustments on February 25, put that discussion off until its March 11 meeting at which point its members hope to have firmer numbers with regard to the city’s eroding and fluid financial condition.

Glimpse from page 3

San Bernardino County during the early 1900s when citrus was the economic king. Obtain a guide from the Redlands Chamber of Commerce to expedite your trip at One East Redlands Boulevard, Redlands.

Tangerine Sky Mansions and the Madonna of the Trail statue. Okay, I coined the “Tangerine Sky Mansions” title myself, but it works. Here, along Euclid Avenue are



The Madonna of the Trail

relic grove mansions, some Victorian, that remain after the tangerine, grapefruit and mostly lemon and orange groves were leveled for housing. Start your visit at the

statue and drive, walk, run, bike all the way up Euclid. (You’ll like the trip back, all downhill). Designed by German born sculptor August Leimbach, the statue was a project of the National Old Trails Road Association, established by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in 1911. Leimbach’s vision for the 5 ton, 10 foot figure is a “pioneer mother whose husband had not come home when he promised. Believing he was in danger, she put her little child in a blanket, grabbed the rifle and her boy, and ran out to look for father” (as per Jim Turner, historian). Read more about the statue at <http://jimturner-historian.org>. The statue is located at the corner of Euclid Ave. and Foothill Boulevard (Route 66), Upland.

Route 66 From the Madonna of the Trail to the Colorado River crossing, there is only one section where Route 66 is segmented and that is in the city of San Bernardino by the I-215. Many sites along the RT66 corridor can be enjoyed from the win-

dow of your car: historic structures, abandoned ghost towns, ghost service stations and scenic desert vistas and landscapes. Many books and online resources are available—I started to list historic places, however the list of “must-sees” is so long that I would not want to leave anything out. Instead, I will devote a separate Glimpse to this topic. Construction activities along that section of 215



The Bottle Tree Ranch

will soon end leaving a connected variation of Route 66 that can be used as an emergency and maintenance road about 250 miles long.

Cross County.

Elmer Long’s Bottle Tree Ranch. A folk art forest, two-plus acres large with hundreds of metal sculpture trees adorned with colored bottles, signs and other fun historic nick-nacks. Photo credit, Karen C. [http://www.yelp.com/biz\\_photos](http://www.yelp.com/biz_photos). North from Victorville on old Route 66, past the cement plant. Oro Grande.

Mary Mitchell’s Botanical Garden at Mitchell’s Cavern. The cavern is closed but outside is a wonderful botanic garden of Mojave native plants including rare cactus and other varieties. Take Essex Road north from the I-40, East Mojave.

Noah Purifoy Outdoor Desert Art Museum 213/382-7516. Recycled objects take on a

new form and meaning. Check out this “high desert nature museum” on the website before you go. <http://noahpurifoy.com>. Blair Lane, Yucca Valley.

Agua Mansa Pioneer Cemetery (909) 370-2091. This cemetery is

the oldest remaining cemetery in San Bernardino County (1855) and was the site of over 2000 burials, many with grave markers in Spanish. A small museum introduces the visitor to the now vanished 19th century communities that founded this cemetery, special features of this cemetery, and cemetery art. 2001 W Agua Mansa Road, Colton

Yanks Air Museum 909/597-1735 WWI, Golden Age of Flight, WWII, Korea, Cold War,



The Purifoy Outdoor Desert Art Museum

Rock Spring, Fort Paiute. Originally a part of a huge network of ancient Native American trails connecting the Colorado River region

*Continued on Page 9*

Lewis Heir from page 6

prescription drug used for the treatment of a mental disability.

On December 14, 2011, U.S. District Court Judge Virginia Phillips dismissed the civil rights claims, and remanded the case back to the state superior court to hear the wrongful death claim.

On January 9, 2012, Phillips’ decision was appealed by the Lewises.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on February 24 issued a decision denying the ap-

peal and upholding Phillips, in effect returning the case to West Valley Superior Court for litigation regarding the wrongful death allegations minus the civil rights violations aspects contained in the complaint. The state court action had been stayed pending the ruling from the Ninth Circuit.

The Ninth Circuit ruled that despite David Lewis’s “erratic driving and materials in the car suggesting suicide,” there were insufficient grounds “to plausibly al-

lege that an officer conducting a routine DUI arrest was deliberately indifferent to a suicidal arrestee.”

The Lewises have two weeks from February 24 to request another hearing before a circuit court judge panel or appeal the Ninth Circuit’s ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court

The lawsuit seeks compensatory and special damages against the county and state, and punitive and exemplary damages against the individual defendants.



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## County Overturns Planning Commission's Denial Of Helendale Solar Project

The board of supervisors this week overturned the county planning commission's denial of Sunlight Partners, LLC's application for a conditional use permit to establish a 7.5 megawatt photovoltaic solar power generating facility on 80.6 acres in Helendale.

On October 17, 2013, the county planning commission conducted a public hearing to consider Sunlight Partner's application for the conditional use permit pertaining to the project. The planning commission heard testimony from the general manager of the Helendale Community Services District, who expressed concern that the project would impact the adjacent property owned by the district, which is currently used as a park. The district objected to impacts to scenic vistas that would result from the project and asserted

the park would be adversely subjected to dust and blow sand originating from the project site. While the matter was continued until the November 7, 2013 county planning commission meeting, the commission, by a vote of 3-2, directed staff to prepare findings for denial of the conditional use permit for the project based on the project being inconsistent with the goals and policies of the general plan, which require land use compatibility. County Land Use Services Department staff indeed prepared and presented findings for the denial of the project to the planning commission.

At its November 7, 2013, meeting, only four of the planning commission's five members were present. In addition to staff's findings for the denial of the project, the commissioners who were present were provided with the appli-

cant's revised site plan that incorporated an increased setback from the park property to reduce impacts related to aesthetics and blow sand. The revised site plan showed an increase in setback from the park property to the fence line from 15 feet to 249 feet.

According to Tom Hudson, the director of the Land Use Services Department, "This design change solves an inconsistency in the initial study/mitigated negative declaration related to the minimum distance from the proposed facility to the existing off-site residences. The revised plan was presented to the planning commission for consideration."

Additional testimony was provided by the Helendale Community Services District reiterating concerns regarding the potential impacts on the adjacent property, including blow sand and impacts to view quali-

ties. The representative of the Helendale Community Services District also stated that she did not agree that the revised site plan presented at the hearing would reduce those impacts.

At the conclusion of the November 7 public hearing, the planning commission voted 2-2 on the item with one commissioner not present. By rule, the project was denied for not having the required majority vote for approval.

On November 18, 2013, the applicant filed a timely appeal of the planning commission action to deny the project. The issues raised in the appeal application included making reference to the consideration that the planning commission dismissed staff's original recommendation to approve the project based on findings that the project complies with the county's general plan and development

code that was supported by analysis contained in the planning commission staff report.

Moreover, according to the appeal, the findings for denial were not supported by evidence, and the denial of the project violated the California Solar Rights Act.

More than three months later, in his report to the board of supervisors on Tuesday, Hudson said, "Notwithstanding the outcome at the planning commission, staff is recommending that the appeal be granted and that the project be approved. Staff believes that the revised site plan submitted by the applicant between the October 17, 2013, and November 7, 2013 planning commission meetings mitigated the concerns initially raised by the Helendale Community Services District and the planning commission. The significant increase in project

setbacks assuages the concerns expressed as to aesthetics and blow sand. The increase in setbacks also resolves the issue of the minimum distance from the proposed facility to the existing off-site residences. Findings for approval have been provided based upon these revisions."

In his presentation to the board of supervisors, Hudson also made available the proposed findings for denial that were prepared at the direction of the planning commission and which were adopted by virtue of the 2-2 vote.

The project site is situated in an unincorporated county area in the desert. The primary facility access point is proposed on Smithson Road, which runs along the southern project boundary. A secondary access point is proposed on Wild Road along the

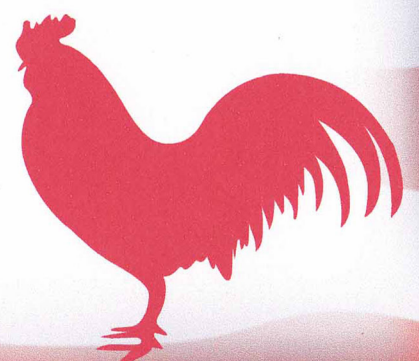
*Continued on Page 12*

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**Bloomington Project**  
*from page 5*

monitoring facility at the connection with the city of Rialto, and road repairs upon completion of the sewer line construction and other apurtenances. These will

provide sewer service by means of publically owned and operated sewers as an alternative to private septic waste disposal systems currently in place at the site.

The project is one undertaken by San Bernardino County's Com-

munity Development and Housing Department. To facilitate the project, the Community Development and Housing Department requested assistance from the County Special Districts Department to provide for the construction, op-

eration and maintenance of the sewer facilities. On November 19, 2013, the board of supervisors approved and adopted a resolution of formation to create County Service Area 70, Zone BL, to provide sewer service to the Bloomington devel-

opment and the approved service area. The district and the city of Rialto approved an extraterritorial agreement to accept waste generated within the district for treatment and disposal by the city of Rialto in lieu of constructing and operating a

district-owned wastewater treatment plant. The agreement was approved by the city of Rialto Public Utilities Commission on November 19, 2013; approved by the Rialto City Council on

*Continued on Page 10*

**Glimpse from**  
*page 7*

and the Southwest with the Pacific coast, the trail was adapted as a road by the United States Army war department in the late 1850s, which experi-

(1926), then I-40 (1970s) were built. Numerous military outposts, forts and camps were established along the route near water sources. The rock wall ruins of Fort Paiute can still be seen.

particularly the one to Fort Paiute. Take plenty of drinking water and research your trip before traveling. Much information is available online, at the Bureau of Land Management offices in Barstow and Needles and also at the Mojave Desert Heritage and Cultural Association at Goffs (see below). The vistas in the East Mojave are gorgeous and a future Glimpse article is planned to provide a more in depth coverage of the Mojave Road corridor and outposts. East Mojave.

East Mojave Desert Heritage and Cultural Association 760/733-4482. An outdoor refuge for east Mojave cultural artifacts, historic equipment and structures plus a library full of history and a 1920s school house. Northeast on

Goffs Road from I-40. 37198 Lanfair Road, Goffs.

The Mystic Maze 760/326-3853 Commercial or Aboriginal? The aggregate in this 100 acre surface mine operation was used for railroad ballast in the 1880s railroad and bridge construction over the Colorado River. The unique appearance, alternating rows of dark gravel on light undersurface, was rebilled by renowned photographer, Edward S. Curtis, over 20 years later in 1907 as an Indian Stone Maze. On contract to the Santa Fe Railroad, Curtis was first to spin the yarn of prehistoric mysticism. Walk around some of this 100 acre preserve to determine for yourself that the rows do not form a maze. Or do they? Take the Park

Moabi turnoff, south, then left to the funky Fish and Wildlife sign. Park Moabi Area.

Old Trails Bridge construction began in 1914 on this enormous arch bridge over the Colorado River as a part of the transcontinental National Old Trails Road route,

tons and at one time was the longest and lightest bridge of its kind. The bridge has an enormous 600 foot span supporting an 800-foot bridge that carried automobile traffic over the Colorado River until 1948, and is now used as for the Pacific Gas and Electric



Yanks Air Museum

mented with camels to build it. It was the 35th parallel route, used by immigrants in the 1860s and 1870s before the Santa Fe Railroad (1880s), National Old Trails Road (1912) then Route 66

Also, the prehistoric and historic rock art at Camp Rock Spring and Fort Paiute are "must-sees." Four-wheel drive high clearance vehicles are strongly recommended on the dirt access roads,



Old Trails Bridge

connecting St. Louis to Los Angeles and in 1926 as Route 66 connecting Chicago with L.A. This innovative landmark in civil engineering weighed only 360

natural gas pipelines. The bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. Topock near the Colorado River.

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# San Bernardino County Coroner Reports

Coroner Case #701401689 – On 02/26/2014, at 8:54 PM, San Bernardino Police Department responded to a report of a collision involving two motorcycles and a car in the area of Mill St and Mt Vernon Ave in San Bernardino. Edwin Nunez, a 23 year old resident of San Bernardino, who was ejected from his motorcycle, was transported to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center where he later died of his injuries. An autopsy will be conducted to determine the cause of death. The San Bernardino Police Department is investigating the incident. [022714 0804 SY]

Coroner Case #701401661 – On 2/26/2014 at 1:32 a.m., California Highway Patrol received a 911 call for a man down in the center median in the 13000 block of San Bernardino Avenue in the City of Fontana. Officers and fire department paramedics responded to the scene and arrived to find James Edward Sowell, a 55 year old resident of Ontario, unresponsive and with obvious trauma to his body that was consistent with being struck by an automobile. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [022614 1609 SY] [022714 0811 SY]

Coroner Case #701401604 – On 02/23/2014 at 8:29 AM a 911 call was received by California Highway Patrol reporting a 2004 Chevrolet Blazer had been involved in a single vehicle rollover on the eastbound lanes of Interstate 40, 1/2 mile east of milemarker 129, in Needles. Paramedics from Baker Ambulance pronounced the driver, William Frank Clowes Jr., a 71 year old resident of Los Angeles, dead on the scene. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [022514 1431 SY] [022714 0812 SY]

Coroner case # 701401581 – On 02/22/14, at 2:36 AM, two vehicles collided at the intersection of Kendall Avenue and University Parkway in San Bernardino. One of the vehicles caught fire and a female adult, Carol Rose Anderson, a 44 year old resident of Victorville, was pronounced deceased on-scene. [022214 0900 TC] [022514 1434 SY]

Coroner case #701401527 – On 02/20/2014 at approximately 6:36 AM, Ontario Police and Fire responded to a medical assist call in the the 1400 block of South Monterey Street in Ontario. Sergio Luis Cedeno, a 31 year old resident of Chino, was found on the sidewalk deceased with upper body trauma. The Ontario Police Department is investigating this incident. [022114 0946 SY]

Coroner case #701401506 – On 02/19/14 the Ontario Police Department received a call at approximately 7:15 AM of a disturbance in the 900 block of E. 5th Street in Ontario. When officers arrived they found Thomas Carmona, a 47 year old resident of Ontario, unresponsive and with traumatic injuries. Carmona was pronounced dead at the scene. An autopsy will be performed to determine the cause of death. Ontario Police Department is investigating this incident.[022114 0938 SY]

The Coroner Reports are reproduced in their original format as authored by department personnel.

## Bloomington Project from page 9

December 10, 2013; and approved by the board of supervisors on December 17, 2013.

The arrangement ap-

proved by the board of supervisors on Tuesday set terms for on-going sewer fees including those fees required for treatment by the city of Rialto; allowing for a reimbursement agree-

ment and collection of proportional share of the improvement costs from other benefitting properties; and providing requirements for conveyance of the improvements to the district.

Phase one of the

Bloomington Affordable Housing Project, which is to entail Mediterranean-style structures, is projected to begin construction in fall 2014. The first phase will consist of 70-units for se-

niors, public library, and 2,200 square foot senior community space. It will also include 36 family units, 2,625 square foot community center and classroom facility. Phase two will consist of the re-

maining 84 family units. The housing project will lease one, two, and three-bedroom units.



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### New Head Of County Real Estate Division from front

ities for various firms in Southern California. In the position of real estate services director, Mr. Thompson will oversee the real estate services department group consisting of 153 employees and multiple budgets that aggregate to nearly \$380 million.

Architecture and engineering is responsible for planning and implementing the design and construction of capital projects associated with county-owned facilities including major repairs to or replacements of mechanical and other building systems and components as well as new construction. Architecture & engineering manages the capital improvement program budget that currently includes approximately 275 projects with budgets totaling \$278 million and has an operating budget of \$2.7 million to support 19 staff.

The facilities management division provides for day-to-day and 24/7 emergency maintenance

and repairs, grounds upkeep and custodial services to county-owned facilities and associated equipment. In addition to a budget of \$16.5 million for supplies, equipment and tools and a staff of 111, the facilities management division also manages county utilities expenditures with a total budget of \$21 million.

The real estate division negotiates and administers revenue leases for the use of county-owned facilities and expenditure leases for leased space throughout the county for departments and their employees to deliver services in locations convenient to county residents, and provides property management for county-owned real estate. The real estate division also provides appraisal, acquisition, and relocation assistance to acquire rights-of-way for public safety projects, transportation corridors and floodways, sells surplus property and acquires land and facilities for various county functions. In addition to an operating budget of \$3 million to support 23 staff, budgets for rent payments and property management total \$58.4

By Diane Dragotto Williams

California Ground Squirrels have known to cause the greatest damage to the Pacific States agricultural fruit, nut and grain crops of any mammal! They also can carry zoonotic diseases like Tularemia and the Plague. So, why are they even important to our ecosystem? Besides being the pesky garden thieves of our flowers and vegetables, what



good are they? Sometimes called Beechey Squirrels, these unloved rodents play an important part in creating habitat for other animals, like snakes, deer mice, lizards, and burrowing owls! They are also a good, nutritious food source for red-tailed hawks, golden eagles, raccoons, foxes, badgers, bobcats and even, mountain lions. Helping to aerate the soil as they excavate for their burrows,

million.

Thompson, whose tenure with the county will begin on March 10, 2014, will receive a total annual compensation package of \$227,025, consisting of \$154,053 in salary and benefits of \$72,972.

### Upland Trash Rates To Rise

This week the Upland City Council approved by a 3-1 vote increasing trash rates for residential and commercial customers. Councilman Glenn Bozar opposed the hikes and councilman Brendan Brandt abstained.

The rates will go into effect unless more than fifty percent of the city's customers file written objections to the increase.

## County Wildlife Corner

### California Ground Squirrels

ground squirrels aid in seed dispersal when a cache is forgotten.

A large (9 to 26 oz) squirrel of a gray-brown color, mottled by light flecks on the back, and



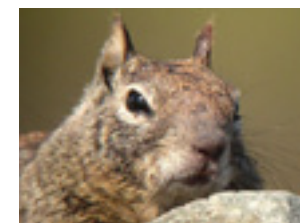
a lighter mantle on the shoulders, it has a long, somewhat bushy, tail. Common in fields of stubble, along roadsides, on well-grazed pastures, rocky out-croppings, and sparsely wooded hillsides, it looks for open areas to protect its retreat. These dens are generally under a log, tree, rock or simply made as a lone mound of dirt with a hole for the main entrance. Creating



underground passages and nests, a whole colony can be supported, with each individual squirrel having their own access. Spending most of the time no more than 82 feet from their burrows, they are watchdogs, keeping a clear view of their sur-

roundings. Hibernating from summer until early spring in snow areas, they can be active year round under normal weather conditions.

Breeding occurs just after the animals emerge from winter lairs, with females producing one litter per year. Five to eleven young may leave the den at 5 to 8 weeks old after being weaned



6 to 8 weeks. Parented by the mother only, she protects her pups by moving them frequently to avoid harm. One of their most formidable enemies is rattlesnakes, but Beecheys have an ingenious method of distracting them from their young. Mother squirrels chew on skin shed by rattlesnakes, and then lick themselves, and their pups, to disguise their scent! Mothers will also use sandkicking and swishing of their tails as techniques to lure snakes away from the occupied shelters. With an amazing lifespan of six years, they communicate with a variety of sounds, especially barking, with overt tail signals, warning the population of impending danger. Ex-

tremely vigilant, they also secrete odors when noises are heard, to deter predators.

Foraging for food is one of their main occupations, feeding on insects, small vertebrates, leaves, stems, flowers, bulbs, roots, seeds, fruits and berries. Filling their cheek pouches with discoveries, they can pop up from behind a rock or tree, and yet amuse us,



as they pull plants down into their tunnel, their trophy disappearing before our eyes! Even though at Wildhaven Ranch, they are prolific, and can undermine our landscape, causing erosion problems, we realize their purpose. We do not use rodenticides that can kill other animals, but we allow nature to take its course, and apply judicious, safe control to the varmit, we annoyingly call, Beechey!

*Wildhaven Ranch is a wildlife sanctuary in the San Bernardino Mountains specializing in educating the public about wildlife in our ecosystem. Visit them at [www.wildhavenranch.org](http://www.wildhavenranch.org) or call for tours at (909) 337-7389.*

### Remembrance

to be held for the late

**Jon Mikels,**

*founding member of the maiden Rancho Cucamonga City Council who was later Rancho Cucamonga Mayor and Second District San Bernardino County Supervisor*



**When:** March 1 at 2 p.m.

**Where:** Upland Brethern in Christ Church, 845 West Arrow Highway in Upland

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# California Style In The Wind

By Grace Bernal



It's all over and reality triumphed over fashion as fashion week has ended. Here we are



up and that's it. The best fashion show happens on the streets. The one trend standing out at the



moment isn't about new clothes but about unbuttoned coats. According to the weatherman it will be getting cooler and the coat will be handy. Why not change up the style of how to wear the coat? Since the look has been decided and the coat is going to be needed, wear it like they did during the



coat like a cape in the wind.

"I remember when people actually wore coats and ties to theatre every night. They don't anymore. It's very different." ~Harold Prince



California weather we still have attitude when it comes to fashion. So, go



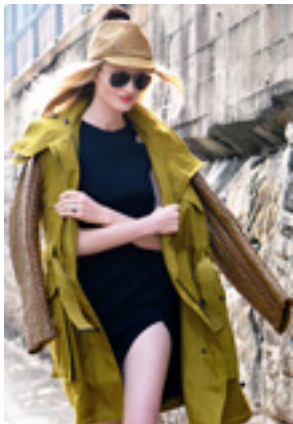
ahead, run around with your coat flapping in the wind like wings. Let the cold weather come down on us and drape on your



back again dressing up for an ordinary day. Maybe the megadoppler



radars will prove right and rain and snow will finally come down. We all know the California palm trees could use the rainy weather. With that said, fashion is all about attitude and people have



decided as the fashion troops they are that they will wear a coat. The late hottie breed has a great attraction to fashion and all the people of style love to do is dress



## Bloomington Project

from page 9

northern project boundary.

The project is to entail photovoltaic panels mounted on single axis trackers, supported by steel piers driven into the ground to an appropriate depth, as determined by soil conditions. The height of the panels will not exceed nine feet. The trackers will form rows running north and south.

The design proposes five concrete pads, approximately 20 feet by 40 feet that would support 500KV inverters and mechanical components. Electricity generated onsite will be delivered to the existing electrical transmission system at the connection point along Smithson Road. The site will be surrounded by an eight foot high chain link fence with a security video monitoring system. The electricity produced by the arrays will be sold to Southern California Edison under two long-term power purchase agreements. The first agreement was executed

in January 2012 and required power generation by July 2013. An extension has been requested. A second agreement was executed in December 2012 and requires power

generation by June 2014. The board of supervisors was scheduled to consider the appeal on February 11 but postponed the hearing until this week.

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