

29 Palms Fire Department At Crossroads As City Mulls Funding Options

TWENTYNINE PALMS—A consensus that would unite the Twentynine Palms Water District and Twentynine Palms municipal officials over financially sustaining the fire department or possibly paving the way for a city takeover of its functions continues to elude the community.



Jim Thompson

department nevertheless remain committed to forging an alliance of

local agencies that will allow for the modernization and expansion of the department.

Since 1958, the fire department in 29 Palms has been overseen by the water district. The department grew to include two fire stations and seven firefighters to cover the 55 square miles within the Twentynine Palms City Limits and the 33

square miles of unincorporated county area that also falls under the water district/fire department's 88-square mile jurisdiction. The city does not contribute to, participate in or subsidize the fire department's operational budget, which is infused entirely by a special tax on landowners within the fire department's service area.

For some, the gradual growth of the local population over the decades, the incorporation of the city in 1987 and the continuing fire hazards and need for modernization of the department's first response medical care capability seemed to be an impetus for the city itself to assume from the Twentynine Palms Water District **See P 7**

Association Decertification Move Mars Contract Vote

Less than a month after the rejection of a contract worked out between San Bernardino County Chief Executive Officer Greg Devereaux and the union representing the lion's share of county employees, the San Bernardino Public Employees Association (SBPEA), a slightly revamped contract has been presented to the SBPEA membership.

Coinciding with the presentation of the new contract, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) has initiated a decertification campaign to remove the San Bernardino Public Employees Association as the designated union to represent the lion's share of San Bernardino County employee bargaining units.

In April Devereaux asked that county workers make a seven percent contribution to their retirement fund, a contribution which here-to-now was paid for by the county. Workers were also to be required to pick up a larger share of their health insurance premiums. With some 7,000 county employees represented by the association not participating in the vote, 3,523 voted against the contract and 2,001 members of the San Bernardino Public Employees Association cast ballots of acceptance.

Mediator Dave Hart was brought in to further the collective bargaining process with regard to the pending contract. Hart proposed that a previously offered one-time \$1,750 agreement incentive for accepting the terms of making their own seven percent contribution toward their retirement **See P 12**

Parent Trigger Foes Guzman & Yuan Head To Trial On Vandalism Charges

Victorville—Chrissy Guzman and Lori Yuan, the mothers of Desert Trails Elementary School students whose discomfiture over the "parent trigger" takeover of their children's school allegedly incited them to vandalism, have decided to go to trial rather than accept a plea deal on lesser charges.

Students at Des-

ert Trails Elementary School collectively were among the lowest performers on the state of California's Academic Performance tests for five years running.

Parent Revolution, a Los Angeles-based organization that challenges the traditional lines of authority in California's school system, targeted Desert Trails on the basis

of its spotty performance and used that to make it the first school ever subject to California's 2010 Parent Academic Empowerment Act, known by the colloquialism parent-trigger. Parent trigger allows parents who gather signatures from more than 50 percent of a failing school's parents to relieve the district and school principal of their

control of the school and fire up to half of the school's faculty and dictate other academic policies.

Yuan, who was chairman of the Adelanto Planning Commission, and Guzman were active in the Desert Trails Elementary Schools Parent Teacher Association and served as volunteer assistant instructors

and tutors at the school. They had strong opinions about the school's academic challenges and failures, believing that the schools test performance problems were rooted largely in the consideration that more than 30 percent of the students at the school had parents who did not speak English. Yuan and Guzman were **See P 5**

New Chromium 6 Standard To Impact Hinkley, PG&E

On July 1, the state of California will reduce by a factor of five the permissible amount of cancer-causing hexavalent chromium, also known as chromium-6, in drinking water, a move that will have a decided impact on the contamination issues plaguing Hinkley.

Hexavalent chromium contamination in Hinkley, a San Bernardino County Mojave Desert

community ten miles west-northwest of Barstow, came about as a consequence of Pacific Gas and Electric's operation of a compressor station there beginning in 1952. The compressor station was a facility located on a pipeline that ran between Texas and Canada and delivered in excess of three billion cubic feet of natural gas per day. The compressor station **See P 4**

Vicious Vanquishing Of Gooch Threatens To Turn Chabot's Victory Into A Pyrrhic One



Paul Chabot

While he was able to bask for more than a week in the intoxicating afterglow of his strong showing in this year's

primary election for the 31st Congressional District which put him more than nine percentage points above and 4,800 votes beyond his closest rival, Republican Paul Chabot is now confronted by the sober realization that both his strategy and tactics in obtaining the nomination to run as one of the two finalists in the November race may have made his June victory a pyrrhic one.

Against odds and con-

trary to the demographic numbers, California's 31st Congressional District is currently represented by a Republican, Congressman Gary Miller. But the Republican grasp on the district is a tenuous one.

Of the district's registered voters, 124,412 or 40.4 percent, are affiliated with the Democratic Party. Registered Republicans in the district number 104,154, or 33.8 percent. **See P 2**

Grand Terrace's Strategic Plan Paints A Picture Of A City On The Rocks

The city of Grand Terrace faces a catalog of daunting challenges, according to the 11-page strategic plan covering the years 2014 to 2020 city officials accepted last month.

Grand Terrace is the third smallest of San Bernardino County's cities population-wise and the smallest in terms of land area. Several geographical factors have

put it at a disadvantage financially throughout its 36-year history. On the city's east side lies Blue Mountain, physically separating it from the city of Loma Linda, and over which no significant roads or points of access traverse. South of the city is the 3,988-population unincorporated Riverside County community of Highgrove and beyond that the es-

entially unpopulated Riverside County frontier, with likewise no significant points of access. The 215 Freeway runs through the southwestern portion of the city, but on the city's northwest and northeast sides it rises majestically above the city of Colton, as its name implies, leaving the city separated and in some fashion isolated from its surround-

ing neighbors. While the city's elevated distinction from its neighbors and its resultant quietude is considered to be a plus by many of its residents in terms of living environment, the lack of population and dearth of vehicular traffic through the city proper has resulted in only minimal commercial development within the city. Thus sales tax revenue,

which is a major source of capital in most California cities, is severely limited in Grand Terrace.

The strategic plan accepted into the record in May by the city council, which is one member short following the resignation of councilman Bernardo Sandoval earlier this year, does not dwell on the relative advantages and disadvantages of **See P 11**

Chabot's Winning Primary Strategy Could Kill His General Election Fortunes *from front page*

There are a smattering of Green Party and American Independent voters in the district, along with 64,571, or 21 percent who have declined to state a party affiliation.

In 2012, after an absence of many years, California reinstated open primaries, in which voters of all parties are free to vote beyond the confines of those parties, for any candidate who qualifies for the ballot. The two top vote getters, regardless of party are thus allowed to proceed to the general election in November.

With the nearly seven percent registration advantage they held over the Republicans in the 31st Congressional District, Democrats had good reason to consider the 31st to be a reliable Democratic stronghold.

But events transpired to undo them.

Four Democrats – Pete Aguilar, Justin Kim, Rita Ramirez-Dean, and Renea Wickman – sought election in the 31st in 2012. Miller, who had been a member of Congress since 1999 and represented the solidly Republican 42nd District in southwestern San Bernardino County, northeastern Orange County and southwestern Los Angeles County, had seen his district reapportioned out from under him. Instead of vying against fellow Republican Ed Royce in a newly drawn Congressional District in Orange County, Miller opted to run in the 31st, believing his superior fundraising capability as incumbent might allow him to offset the registration advantage that fell to the Democrats. As it turned out, another Republican, Bob Dutton, who was in his last year as a member of the California State Senate at that time before being termed out of office, also ran for the 31st Con-

gressional District seat.

Despite the nearly seven percent Democratic voter registration advantage in the 31st, simple mathematics hurt the Democrats as their vote was divided four ways, while the Republican vote was split two ways. Dutton and Miller proved to be the two top vote-getters and under California's open primary arrangement, the Democrats who ran third, fourth, fifth and sixth in the June race were shut out and the November general election came down to a race between Republicans Miller and Dutton. Miller prevailed in that race.

Earlier this year, the specter of déjà vu seemed to have descended on the 31st District. In February, Miller announced he would not seek reelection. By that point, Aguilar, the top Democratic vote-getter two years ago, attorney and Democratic Party activist Eloise Gomez-Reyes from Colton, former Democratic congressman Joe

Baca from Rialto and San Bernardino City Unified School District Trustee Danny Tillman, a Democrat, all qualified their candidacies in the race.

Miller's announcement brought two Republican hopefuls into the race, Lesli Gooch, a member of Miller's congressional staff, and Chabot, a self-styled anti-drug crusader who in 2010 had made a name for himself when he made a strong showing against the eventual victor in the race for 40th District state assemblyman, fellow Republican Mike Morrell.

For a time, it appeared that the Party of Lincoln might be able to recreate the outcome of 2012 in the 31st District, with each of the two Republicans managing to share enough of the Republican vote in the primary to outpoll all four of the Democrats dividing the Democratic vote. That scenario was attenuated somewhat when Ryan Downing, a Republican

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from Whittier, jumped into the race. Downing was able to run for the post because members of Congress need not live in the district they represent but must merely reside in the state in which their district is located. While Downing's presence in the fray certainly complicated matters for Chabot and Gooch, his was a marginal candidacy at best, as he had virtually no name recognition, no monetary backing to speak of, and woefully little in terms

of electioneering sophistication.

Early on, Democrats at the national level and some at the state and local level threw their support behind Aguilar. Democratic strategists, conferring about what steps could be taken to ensure that Democratic disarray in 2014 did not perpetuate Miller's incumbency beyond the current Congress, in short order hatched a game plan by which Aguilar was chosen as the logical party standard bearer. By promoting Aguilar early, engaging in brisk fundraising on his behalf and warding off any other Democrats so a concentrated party electoral effort to advance Aguilar could be mounted, high-ranking Democratic Party officials believed Aguilar could beat Miller in a toe-to-toe slugfest in November.

Well-connected Democratic-functionaries acted to boost Aguilar. In May 2013, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee selected Aguilar as one of five candidates nationwide to be included in its Jumpstart Program, which is intended to assist early-emerging Democrats seeking to unseat incumbent Republicans deemed to be vulnerable.

Party leaders convinced California's two senators, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, to endorse Aguilar. Party donors, inside and outside California, were encouraged to provide him with campaign cash,

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Continued on Page 6

Glimpse Of SBC's Past Our Historic San Bernardino County Fair

By Ruth Musser-Lopez

6-13-14. Some were fortunate enough to be able to attend our county's sentinel cultural event of the year--the San Bernardino County Fair--held May 24 through June 1 at the fairgrounds, 14800

you mark your calendar for next year. It's an annual event--a time when our friends and neighbors gather together to display or trade produce or other goods, to parade or display animals and enjoy the associated carnival or fun zone enter-

tainment. Our fair is actually an extraordinary event, first of all because it is plus a large assortment of poultry, farm animals, livestock and show horses.

all about us, here in the largest county of the lower 48 contiguous states. It's not just clowns, concerts and cars, but a huge variety of our local arts and crafts, showing off the array of products from our gardens, farms, vineyards and orchards, Bernardino County fairs by my Dad. We had to first be promenaded by the livestock pens, see all the pigs, horses and cows before being allowed to spend a dime at the fun zone. The anticipation was sometimes unbearable and obviously our minds were not on cows and pigs which we saw every day at the dairy. It was understandable on the part of my dad, of course, however since he was chief herdsman at the Musser family's Shady Grove Dairy then on 7th Street between Upland and Ontario. Seeing the competition was a first priority and he would often look for potential new purchases to improve the herd stock.

When we were young we were taught to be thrifty and learn to do for ourselves or Shady Grove. My dad, Alvin Musser, or Shady Grove Dairy, would often donate calves to the 4H Club for the purpose of providing an opportunity for young members to learn "the ropes," raise them, groom them and feed them. He would then buy the heifers, back at the SBC fair auction. The young people would compete for high-

we politely called it the "manure bagging business." It was actually a business that he thought up for my brothers--selling bags of steer fertilizer at the "cash & carry" corner store, the Shady Grove Dairy market on 7th and Grove just a block from the dairy in the late 50s, early 60s. My brothers would sell a bag for 25 cents but paid me a nickel for every bag I filled. That's what you call "pecking order." Later, they replaced me with a bagging machine. That is what you call "progress." With pecking order and progress working against you, "ya' jes' gotta move on."



You bag it, I'll sew it. University of Southern California's archived photos of the 1952 San Bernardino County Fair Princess Maya Williams and Prince Robert Fowlkes who won their titles by accumulating points in the 4-H club respectively in home economics and animal husbandry. Note the hats that identify 4-H members at that time. <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll44/id/81793>

Oh, but I must first tell you about the new equipment by brothers were so excited about. It was an entire operation complete with all of the latest technology: a conveyor belt to carry up the "dried material" to the grinder, which would release the pulverized product into the bagger when a lever was pulled. When I bagged we were using a stapler, but with the new operation--there was a hand held zip "sewer." The boys were really in business then with a professional looking product all neatly sewed up at the top.

Well, back to the fair. Its funny how people change, as they get older. Just like my Dad, I am an animal lover and now enjoy the animal exhibit more than anything else at the fair. I don't particularly enjoy seeing

cattle, and pigs is still a really big deal at the San Bernardino County Fair even today. There are strict rules including 120, 90 and 30-day weigh ins, tagging and ownership deadlines for livestock entries. "Most of the entrants are 4H and Future Farmers of America (FFA) with the animals being judged when the fair isn't even open, and of course Barstow Country Butchery does 40-60% of his yearly business after the animals are sold" a fairgoer informed me.

Thank goodness for liberation and change--"back in the day" in the fifties and sixties, in our public schools, female students were still ushered into domestics, home economics, sewing and cooking and male students filed into wood shop and mechanics. The 4-H Club on the other hand was always pretty good about allowing young people to pursue the path of their desired training. I recall my first cousin Bernice, who I am very proud to be closely related to,

Continued on Page 5



Our extraordinary SBC Fair as viewed in the 2012 fair blogshots at <http://www.sbcairevents.com>

Seventh Street in Victorville. It's a temporary one-week "affair" so if you missed it, make sure

tainment. Our fair is actually an extraordinary event, first of all because it is

plus a large assortment of poultry, farm animals, livestock and show horses.

The word fair comes from the archaic term fayre, "of pleasing appearance" and it is things



"I'll bet she eats bacon too" said one observer on seeing this 2011 SBC Fair blog shot at <http://www.sbcairevents.com>. Pigs are as smart or smarter than dogs, the smartest of all the barnyard animals according to some experts.

that are pleasing in appearance that you will see here, no matter what age you are. As a matter of fact, as you probably have already learned, what is fun and pleasing changes over the years of a human's life span.

For example, I can recall when I was a girl in the 1950s, being escorted along with my mother and siblings to both the L. A. County and San

est auction price and then were awarded for best in show. Not only was this a learning experience for the young people, it also helped raise funds for the 4H Club and was good publicity for the local dairy business to boot. It was a win-win situation all around.

My Dad, bless his heart, also set us up in our own business....

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New Chromium 6 Standards Will Impact Hinkley from front page

in Hinkley was one of eight such stations along the line in California. Natural gas available in the line was used to fuel compressors which repressurized the gas to push it through the pipeline. At Hinkley, the compressed gas was cooled with water circulating through two cooling towers. From 1952 until 1966, hexavalent chromium, also known as chromium 6, was added to the cooling water to prevent corrosion to the cooling towers and the water circulation system. Wastewater from the cooling system was disposed of in unlined ponds at the Hinkley site. Beginning in 1964, after the danger of chromium 6 was recognized, the cooling water was treated to remove the chromium before it was disposed in the pools and a non-chromium-based additive was substituted into the cooling system in 1966. As of 1972 the cooling water was pumped into lined evaporation ponds.

These improvements to the system, however, did not undo the ecological havoc that had occurred up until 1972.

In 1988, the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, which oversees water quality issues in that portion of the desert, issued a cleanup and abatement order to PG&E to investigate a plume of chromium 6 in the water table. In 1991, the water board issued permits to treat the contaminated groundwater using land treatment units.

In 1993, attorney Ed Masry, with whom Erin Brockovich, a Hinkley resident, was working, filed a multi-plaintiff direct action suit against PG&E, alleging contamination of the town's drinking water and untoward consequences of that pollution. In 1996, the case was settled for \$333 million, the largest settlement ever paid in a direct-action lawsuit un-

til that time. In 2000, the matter became an international cause célèbre, with the release of the blockbuster movie Erin Brockovich, which related a substantially accurate version of events in Hinkley. Contrary to widespread public assumptions, Pacific Gas & Electric's payment of the \$333 million did not redress the underlying problem. Masry and his law firm netted over \$100 million in legal fees. Only a few of the plaintiffs received more than \$100,000. No physical solution to the contamination problem was effectuated.

In 1997 and 2004, the water board reissued follow-up permits to PG&E for the use of land treatment units in the contaminated groundwater around Hinkley. In 2006, with the Hinkley groundwater contamination issue fading from public consciousness, the water board gave permits for two subterranean remediation systems to clean up the source and central areas of the plume. In 2008, however, the issue was resurrected as one of regional and local concern when, amidst the water board's provision of a permit for Pacific Gas & Electric to apply additional cleanup measures, it issued redrafted cleanup and abatement orders. Steadily over the last five years, the condition of the lingering contamination in Hinkley has grown into a larger and larger public issue as evidence of how the underground plume of chromium 6 continues to migrate through the water table into the area from which local wells draw water used for household purposes has emerged.

The best hydrological data now available indicates the plume is more than six miles long and two miles wide and gradually expanding.

Chromium is the 21st most abundant element in the earth's crust and as such naturally occurs in rocks, soil, ground water and plants.

Under current guidelines, the U.S. Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency specifies 100 micrograms per liter as the maximum acceptable total chromium contaminant level acceptable in water to be consumed by humans. The current California state standard is half that at 50 micrograms per liter. But that standard applies to the most benign form of chromium, and not hexavalent chromium or chromium 6.

Trivalent chromium – chromium 3 – is the dominant form of chromium in nature, and is virtually insoluble in water and stable and immobile in soil. Hexavalent chromium – chromium six – is not abundant in nature, is soluble in water and is a potential carcinogen if inhaled.

Earlier this spring, the Department of Public Health submitted its final regulation decree to the state Office of Administrative Law which placed a cap on chromium-6 of 10 parts per billion. That standard has now been accepted by the state under the Administrative Procedures Act.

Project Navigator Ltd., an environmental engineering firm based in Brea which is the scientific adviser to the Hinkley community has been monitoring wells in the area. There have

been contradictory reports about the level of chromium contamination in the area, with the distinction between chromium 3 and chromium 6 often being blurred.

PG&E has been providing bottled water to some Hinkley residents and providing a costly whole household replacement system to others who have had trace levels of chromium-6 showing up in their groundwater.

Pacific Gas & Electric sought ways of keeping the contaminated water from migrating to other areas of the aquifer and tainting the water there. One effort Pacific Gas & Electric made to prevent the spreading of the plume entailed drawing up to 80 gallons of water per minute from supply wells south of the compression station, pumping it north through new underground pipes and injecting the water outside the northwestern plume boundary. This strategy, Pacific Gas and Electric claimed, was intended to "create a hydraulic barrier designed to prevent spreading of the plume." While partially effective, that measure did not achieve the goal of reducing the chromium 6 in the water supply to an acceptable

level.

As a practical means of ensuring that the tainted water does not end up in the drinking glasses, cooking utensils, showers, baths, toilets and garden hoses of Hinkley residents, PG&E offered to provide every household and business in Hinkley with either a filtration/treatment system to capture the chromium before it would be dispensed at the tap or in the alternative, commercial bottled drinking water.

More than two years ago, with no certain, final and comprehensive cure of the problem in sight, Pacific Gas & Electric in April 2012 began surveying homeowners with regard to their willingness to sell their property and move elsewhere. When roughly two-thirds of those surveyed indicated their readiness to depart the community, PG&E began making offers to individual property owners and undertook appraisals of their properties. As soon as mutually acceptable terms between PG&E and the individual homeowners were arrived at, purchases were made. In early 2013, homes in Hinkley were being sold to PG&E at a rate of two to four per week. Once the

houses are empty, Pacific Gas & Electric has not spared time in having those homes razed, foreclosing any possibility that squatters or anyone else will be tempted to take up residence therein again.

In 2013, the Santa Ana-based law firm Callahan & Blaine filed suit against PG&E in San Bernardino County Superior Court on behalf of a substantial number of Hinkley residents who were not a part of the litigation brought by Masry. Callahan & Blaine are seeking that the plaintiffs be recompensed for the damages they have sustained as a consequence of the continuing contamination and the ongoing expansion of the toxic plume and its threat to the area's groundwater.

In early 2012, Hinkley's population stood at 1,900. Today it has dwindled to an estimated 1,100, as residents continue their exodus. Last year, the Barstow Unified School District moved to shutter Hinkley School at the end of the 2012-13 school year. The town is down to one market, a post office and a tavern.



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Glimpse from page 3

ing awarded with her picture in the paper with the cow she raised. Who would have ever guessed that she would eventually go on to become the "Quilt Queen" of Upland, auctioning off quilts mid May every year at the historic Upland Academy gym to benefit the needy as part of the Mennonite World

two 3rd places and one honorable mention. For joy! Bradley YardArt of Arizona gave her one of his art pieces, a clay turtle from his garden display that he sets up each year, and she received \$32.00 in award money, plus two \$20 gift certificates from an Italian Restaurant in Hesperia "only 65 miles one way" she said, "but what the heck."

point of Route 66 between Barstow and Needles--incredible amounts of citrus and grapes by the tons. These crops add to our San Bernardino County economy and tax base while the transfer of fifty thousand acre feet of water a year as the Cadiz Corporation proposes, for use outside of our county on the Orange County coast, only acts to transfer jobs,

year, committed to an archaeological "dig" out in the Mojave Desert that had long before been scheduled for the same week. I am not trying to make an excuse, but the work was important--the prehistoric site had been looted and destroyed

cal sites evidenced to be well over 2000 years old. Measures had been implemented around 2004 by a damage assessment team, to restore the site to "normal" appearance. In the restoration work, bails of straw had been placed in the huge pits

ity scene manger--all we needed was a baby Jesus. We had to scrape up and sift the straw mixed with the looters backfill to check for any remaining clues of the prehistoric past. We then set about installing a barrier fill of block tile between what



Declaring May 16 and 17, 2014 as World Hunger Relief Day in Upland California my very, very, distant cousin, Upland Mayor Ray Musser (middle) awards my close cousin, "Quilt Queen" Bernice (Musser/Engle) Hallowell (right) and Patricia Havens (left) with a proclamation.

Hunger Relief project.

Speaking of quilts, the San Bernardino County fair is a great place to show off domestic products of all kinds and a good place to look for quilt donations for next year's World Hunger Relief auction. I understand that the entire Building #4 where the Domestic Arts are displayed is filled with quilts hanging from the 30-foot ceiling.

Linda DeLuca-Snively, of Newberry Springs, tells me that she went to the fair twice before she found that building, after which she decided to enter into the fair herself.

"It's really fun to attend and see your items on display" she told me. I guess so--she won! First Place in Peach Preserves, Second Place in Cherry Preserves, Third Place in Prickly Pear Jelly, Honorable Mention in Pineapple/Peach Jelly. She also won "Best of Division" in the ceramics section plus two 1st places, three 2nd places,

Its pretty amazing, too, to see the wonderful produce that comes out of San Bernardino County from the Inland Empire to the High Desert to the Colorado River - the corn from Chino, the citrus from Upland to Redlands, the grapes from Rancho Cucamonga and Guasti, the pistachio nut crop from Newberry and all of the alfalfa, cotton and okra being grown north of Needles on the Mojave Indian Tribe's farm. Sometimes you will see exotic fruit or giant zucchini, watermelon or pumpkins that were grown in someone's back yard.

I don't know how much of all this is being displayed at the fair this year, but it should be and I plan to look for it next year--especially a display of the organic crops being grown right smack in the middle of the desert with just a little water brought to the surface there at Cadiz just south of the southern most

resources and growth elsewhere, not to mention the strong potential of the downdraft causing subsidence and further drying and warming of our desert.

I missed the fair this

Guzman & Yuan from front page

highly critical of the parent trigger movement being applied into such a situation and thereby allowing those whose own academic failings were responsible for the underlying problem being permitted to take on authority over the learning environment at the school.

After the parent union at the school obtained the requisite number of parent signatures in early 2012, the school district challenged the validity of the signatures and sought to prevent the takeover from proceeding. A law firm on retainer to Parent Revolution intervened, however,



In the Mojave Desert, far from the fair, a crew, consisting of David Ingraham, Dylan Day, and John Michael Adams, was hired to sift straw out of a previously plundered and looted prehistoric archaeological deposit. Work was performed in a restoration assessment project, which involved soil and deposit testing leading to professional archaeological determinations as to the value of the site in terms of its potential to yield information important to the prehistoric record.

by pothunters in 1997 through 2001. The looters were first caught up with in Death Valley, arrested, served time and fined about \$345,000. You can read about it by looking up "Operation Indian Rocks" on the internet.

I was part of a team of archaeologists who were following up on the damage assessment and strategy to mitigate or repair the damage done by the looters at two particular archaeologi-

dug by the looters and then covered with the vandals' "back fill" (also described as the piles of cultural soil the looters had removed from the holes while looking for relics).

Our assignment was to determine if this restoration measure worked—but ten years later the straw had been scattered all about by the wind and rodents. It was obviously a failed mitigation attempt. The site looked like a nativ-

undisturbed deposit was left and the holy mess the looters had made. It was not an easy task to remove the straw from the soil mix. On further thought, if only we had one or two of those lowing fair cows and perhaps a goat to eat all the straw that had scattered about, it would have saved us a lot of work.

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and the takeover was granted through a court order in the late summer of 2012, but did not come in time for the change, which called for the firing of the school principal and allowing the parent union to essentially hire half of the school's teachers, to take effect in the 2012-13 school year. Subsequently, the parent union's agenda changed to converting the school to a charter school and La Verne Academy was chosen as the operator. That plan was finalized in June 2013. On June 26, 2013, according to the district attorney's office, as Yuan and Guzman were assisting with the shuttering of the school for the summer, they used ketchup, mus-

tard and paint to deface a Desert Trails Elementary School classroom.

The pair was not charged with the vandalism, alleged to represent roughly \$8,000 in damage until November 27. Yuan and Guzman pleaded not guilty to the charges but in February the Adelanto City Council removed Yuan from the planning commission.

Since November, the pair has made nine court appearances. There were indications last month that a plea arrangement had been struck by which Guzman and Yuan would pay restitution and plead to a lesser misdemeanor, and be put on two year's probation. That deal fell through,

in part it has been suggested, because one of the witnesses the district attorney's office is relying upon cannot connect either of the defendants to the crime.

Two individuals who are scheduled to testify on behalf of the prosecution are Adelanto Elementary School District's director of classified human resources Donna Landry and district maintenance supervisor Phillip Gonzales.

The district attorney's office is now proceeding with felony vandalism charges against both defendants in lieu of the plea. A pretrial hearing is scheduled for June 18 and the preliminary hearing on the matter is set for June 23.

Chabot's Attack On GOP Rival Gets Complication
from page 4

and money started pouring into Aguilar's political war chest. More attention was drawn to him, ensuring even more contributions, when the Washington-based news organization, Politico, in July named Aguilar one of "50 Politicos to watch in 2013." By this spring, Aguilar had over \$1 million in his political war chest.

Despite all that, Baca, Gomez-Reyes and Tillman somehow failed to get the message and each of them campaigned as if they believed they not only merited being sent to Washington, D.C., but had a realistic shot at getting there. Myopically, the two best funded Democratic candidates - Aguilar and Gomez Reyes - after utilizing a modicum of their available resources to promote themselves, spared little expense in attacking each other as well as Baca. With only one exception, a hit piece put out by Gomez Reyes that zeroed in on Baca, Aguilar, Gooch and Chabot by labeling them as "lobbyists," Aguilar and Gomez concentrated on trashing one another, and Baca, ignoring the woefully underfunded Tillman and Downing, and carrying on as if neither Gooch nor Chabot were

in the race.

This provided Chabot and Gooch with a golden political opportunity, one by which they could soldier on as earnest and dignified candidates who remained well above the fray, allowing the residual benefits of the vitriol among the others to redound to their benefit. Curiously, however, a mudfest broke out between Chabot and Gooch.

Chabot's initial electioneering involved touting various endorsements he was receiving from local officials and political figures. On March 19, however, the Chabot campaign actuated the first negative informational blitz relating to either of the Republican candidates in the form of an email from John S. Thomas, Chabot's chief strategist, and Ryan Hall, Chabot's communications director, assailing Gooch as a "lobbyist and DC insider." Gooch, Thomas and Hall insisted, "Lies to voters about [her] business experience. If Gooch is willing to lie to voters about this, what else is she hiding?" The email then quoted Chabot as saying, "My opponent, Lesli Gooch, has exaggerated her business experience. By her own admission, via her LinkedIn profile, she has done nothing except work for elected officials and then was paid to lobby them for their vote

and now she's trying to perpetuate the cycle by running for office."

When the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee followed the lead of Miller and endorsed Gooch, Chabot and his election crew went ballistic. Chabot charged that the county's Republican Central Committee and its most influential members were "corrupt."

On March 28, Hall sent out an email to high propensity Republican voters stating that "In a shocking revelation, news broke yesterday that Congressional candidate Leslie Gooch, running in the 31st district, was a long-time lobbyist for infamous indicted developer Jeffrey Burum."

The reference was to an ongoing criminal case that had been filed against Burum relating to his activity prior to the 2006 settlement of a civil suit brought by his company against the county of San Bernardino over flood control issues at one of his company's development projects in which the county paid out \$102 million. Burum has maintained his innocence and the case has yet to go to trial.

Thomas was quoted as saying, "Voters should be appalled and disappointed to discover that Leslie Gooch has not only been dishonest about hiding her past as a lobbyist, but

she has represented indicted individuals in our region's biggest political corruption scandal. We don't need someone who will sell access to the highest bidder."

Hall then reiterated Chabot's call for Gooch to "withdraw from [the] race."

In mid-April a spate of emails attacking Gooch went out, this time origi-



Lesli Gooch

nating from sources ostensibly unconnected to the Chabot campaign. Subsequent events, however, suggested they were connected to the Chabot elective effort.

On April 15, an email from Steve Gutierrez of the San Bernardino Citizens for Public Integrity dwelled upon Gooch having resided in Alexandria, Virginia while working as a congressional staffer. An attachment to one of those emails was a letter Gooch had written to local Virginia officials regarding a land use issue there in which she advocated against approval of a proposal to allow an ethanol trans-loading facility. The clear implication of the email was that Gooch,

who had grown up in the Inland Empire and had attended UC Riverside, had abandoned the local area for bigger and better things in and around the nation's capitol

On April 16, an email from Sabrina Wooten-Smith informed recipients that "Lesli Gooch, a volunteer community representative in Alexandria, Virginia running for Congress in California, has quickly racked up \$113,000 in campaign debt, according to a Wall Street Journal article printed today."

On April 25, an email from Trevor Bird of the organization CA 31 Clean Slate stated "Lesli Gooch is a phony weasel," charging she had not made her position on several issues such as abortion, Afghanistan, marriage, gun rights, minimum wage, security, or government spending clear.

Like the Gutierrez and Wooten-Smith emails, the provenance of the email was not clear. Verbiage in the attack piece indicated that CA 31 Clean Slate supported Tillman, suggesting but not stating the email was emanating from the Tillman camp.

The Gooch campaign's initial responses to Chabot's attacks were relatively mild and low key, with Gooch campaign spokesman Jeff Corless saying merely that Chabot had become "unhinged" over the cen-

tral committee endorsement going to Gooch.

In May, however, the Gooch campaign sent out a mailer to high propensity Republican voters in which Chabot was lambasted as a "failed lobbyist" who was "a political bureaucrat for Bill Clinton." The mailer went on to accuse Chabot of misrepresentations and misuse of governmental grant money utilized by his non-profit foundation "Partnership For A Drug Free California."

"Paul Chabot pocketed nearly \$1million of taxpayer money funneled through non-profits on failed government programs and government salaries. We can't afford Paul Chabot's costly decisions," the mailer stated, further tagging Chabot with "A history of reckless decisions costing taxpayers millions."

This prompted a response from the Chabot campaign in which an email went out from Ryan on May 28 stating "Gooch violates campaign disclosure laws with last minute smear mailer."

In the June 3 election, of the 51,972 votes cast in the 31st Congressional District, 13,868 or 26.68 percent went to Chabot. Gooch came tantalizingly close to second place, with 8,842 votes or 17.01 percent, but was edged out by Aguilar, who polled 9,023 or 17.36 percent.

Typically, after hard fought primary elections, Democrats and Republicans alike close party ranks and support the primary victor against the rival party's candidate. Moreover, the Democratic and Republican national parties normally offer monetary and other resource support to their respective party's standard bearer in the November contests. Chabot and his team, who continue to celebrate his first place finish in the primary as an absolute indicator of his front running status in the November contest, represent that they fully anticipate being the

Continued on Page 9

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Twentynine Palms Fire Department At A Crossroads

from front page

authority over the fire department.

Over the years, there had been suggestions to that effect, leading to some preliminary discussions, the most serious of which took place in 2007, when the city and the district began earnest discussion of annexing the fire department to the city, and formed what was dubbed the Joint Agency Fire Department Committee to look into the matter. On June 9, 2009, then-city manager Michael Tree told the council that if the transfer were to be made it would be best to do it totally and in one fell swoop rather than in stages. But because of complications with regard to the authority for the special tax that sustains the fire department and the formula for the distribution of tax revenues, as well as the discrepancy between the city limits and the district's service area, the city elected to forego the takeover.

Efforts to beef up the fire department in a way that was independent of the city were made. In 2012, for example, a ballot initiative, Measure H, was offered to the voters for approval. Measure H would have increased the special tax customers of the Twentynine Palms Water District pay from the current \$80 per unit to \$120 per unit with an additional \$6 per year increase for the next 10 years to provide en-

hanced fire protection and emergency medical aid to the community. Voters nixed the initiative, with 850 votes of endorsement, or 48.27 percent, and 911 in opposition, or 51.73 percent, during the mail-in balloting concluded on April 17, 2012, in which 1,761 voters, or 32.93 percent of the 5,421 eligible to participate, returned ballots.

Shortly thereafter, the community was given a wakeup call by the county's Local Agency Formation Commission, which oversees jurisdictional issues throughout the county. In its five-year service review of Twentynine Palms delivered on May 7, 2012 stated that the demands of operating the fire district have for some time been outrunning the water district's funding ability. The report, authored by Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) executive officer Kathleen Rollings-McDonald, assistant executive officer Samuel Martinez and project manager Michael Tuerpe, said LAFCO's review of the water district's financial books "identifies a significant deficiency in funding" such that "the water district's fire operations are unsustainable as presently financed."

Rollings-McDonald told the water district's board members that the district would have to overcome the financial challenges facing the fire department, or cede control of the department to another entity by July 1, 2013. She said the water district could either hand the department's

downtown station over to the city of Twentynine Palms and the Lear Avenue station in the unincorporated county area to the county fire division and thereby surrender the special tax to both of those entities or in the alternative invite the county fire division to expand its sphere of influence and annex the water district's territory for the purpose of providing fire service, complete with an arrangement to have the county inherit the special tax.

Consequently, the water district board acceded to cooperating with the county for subsuming the fire department. Before that takeover was effectuated, however, San Bernardino County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig made an analysis of likely staffing levels for the department were it to move under his ultimate command. He proposed reconstituting the seven member Twentynine Palms Fire Department into a four-member force, consisting of one captain and one firefighter/paramedic at Station 421 in downtown Twentynine Palms and two firefighters/paramedics at Station 422 on Lear Avenue, with a total operating budget of \$1 million to \$1.3 million annually. Hartwig considered several other staffing scenarios, eventually determining that the most likely form the department would take would be one captain and two limited-term firefighters composing one engine company which would operate out of one station, most likely the one in town.

The water district board balked at the concept of not only surrendering local control over the department but seeing it gutted as well. The water board, defying Rollings-McDonald's direction that the water district give up control over the fire department by July 1, 2013, elected against allowing the county takeover to proceed.

Instead, the water district board directed Thompson to utilize its annual anticipated revenues of \$1,241,000 and operate within those fiscal parameters.

In fitting his operations within that paradigm, Thompson last year was forced to shut down the Lear Street station and consolidate all operations to serve the entire 88 square mile district out of the downtown Twentynine Palms Fire Station.

Meanwhile, at Twentynine Palms City Hall, officials proved reluctant to take on any more responsibility than is already the city's purview. Former city manager Richard Warne resisted calls to have the city commit any of its resources to assist in fire department operations or contemplate expanding the city's services to include a takeover of the department. In January 2013, Warne gave an unequivocal recommendation against the city taking up the financial burden of operating the fire department, calling the fire department "insolvent," while warning the city council, "The city cannot take on the fire department's open-ended responsibilities."

The city, Warne said, was constrained by the "new reality" of uncertain and diminishing revenue available to Twentynine Palms and government entities throughout California. Inflation and labor costs were making operation of the fire department too expensive, Warne said, while criticizing Thompson and the water board for having "no plan to bring expenditures into line with revenues."

In November 2012,

Cora Heiser had been elected to the city council, displacing John Cole, after a campaign in which she repeatedly stated that city participation in the revamping of the fire department was part of her political agenda. Some of her remarks were interpreted to indicate that she was favorably disposed to a municipal takeover of the fire department altogether.

Warne's January 2013 assessment, however, foreclosed, at least temporarily, further talk of a city takeover of the fire department.

Five months after Heiser was sworn into office and three months after Warne's castigation of the water district's financial management of the fire department, the city council in April 2013 dismissed Warne as city manager, a move seen in some quarters as one that opened the way for city involvement in the funding and perhaps operation of the fire department. A full year elapsed however, with no substantive action in that direction. Late this spring, in response to community activism and statements made by the water district's directors which called into question the city's continuing reluctance to pitch in with regard to defraying the cost of fire department operations, councilman Jim Harris said the city had not taken up the issue because no specific request for assistance had ever been formally made by the water district.

Harris implied with this statement that the city council would seriously entertain working with the water district to ensure the fire department is provided with adequate means to look after its public safety function.

Water district board members took this as their cue to seek a formal dialogue with the city, i.e., an open public meeting, where just such an eventuality could be discussed.

The night before the water board's May 28 meeting, the Twentynine

Palms City Council took up the issue of a joint city council/water district public hearing related to fire department operations. Councilman Jay Corbin indicated reluctance to begin any form of public dialogue with the water district until the city is given an exhaustive profile on the water district's financial condition as pertains to fire department operations. Specifically, Corbin said he wanted to know what economies the water district has imposed upon the fire department since the failure of Measure H in 2012. Corbin said he wanted the district to outline how it intends to use any money the city would supply to the district. Moreover, Corbin said he wanted to know if the money would be used for covering the department's current operational shortfalls. If so, he said, he wanted the district to specify how it proposes to make up for continuing shortfalls in future years. Corbin also said he wanted the water district to spell out if the city would have control over fire department spending if city money were made available to the district.

Corbin's questions were augmented by one from councilman Joel Klink, who wanted to know whether the water district is still collecting the special fire tax from the Desert Heights area even though the fire station is closed.

At issue is the share of

Continued on Page 8



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29 Palms Fire Department

from page 7

the general property tax levy both the city in its 55 square mile jurisdiction and the county in the 33 square mile portion of the water district in which it has jurisdiction receive. Citizens have been calling upon the city to participate in the financial sustenance of the fire department based upon at least two considerations. One is that the city of Twentynine Palms has the most favorable arrangement of all of the county's 24 cities for the pass-through of property tax revenue - 26 percent. Property tax pass-throughs vary city to city in San Bernardino County, with some cities receiving as little as 7 percent of the property tax collected. The second issue is the consideration that of the county's 24 cities, 23 of them, i.e., all except Twentynine Palms, participate directly in some or all of the financing of their respective fire departments' operations.

Corbin was able to delay the joint meeting between the city council and the water district board that many were anticipating could take place as early as the middle of this month when on May 27 he convinced council members Klink and Heiser to support his motion to postpone the joint meeting until the district provided answers to the questions he and Klink had posed.

Members of the water board took umbrage at the delay, with several expressing what ranged from disappointment to anger to outrage to disgust at the council's unwillingness to initiate what they consider a long overdue dialogue between the city and the water district.

While Harris and Mayor Daniel Mintz were amenable to facilitating a joint meeting, some members of the community were taken aback by Heiser having sided with Corbin and Klink in insisting upon preset conditions for the powwow.

Two weeks later in a

free-ranging conversation with the Sentinel, fire chief Jim Thompson struck a diplomatic tone in assessing the viability of the city and district coming together to advance the effectiveness of the agency he heads and ensure its future viability.

"I believe this meeting will eventually happen," he said. "I think it's just going to take a couple more weeks. Obviously, the water board directors are willing to sit down in a joint meeting. It is getting the council to agree to that sit down that is required. Both sides represent the same citizens, so there is a common interest there."

Thompson indicated part of the reluctance on the city's part logically derives from the consideration that the water district/fire department service boundaries are not coterminous with the Twentynine Palms city limits. He acknowledged that city officials had a legitimate concern about preventing city money from being utilized in that part of the district

beyond the city limits. He hinted that once the dialogue begins, efforts to get the county to make a similar contribution as the city to the fire department's operations could be undertaken as well.

The department boasts two fire stations, its headquarters, Station 421 located at 6560 Adobe Road in the city, and Station 422, located at 3834 Lear Ave. in the unincorporated county community of Desert Heights.

Previously, the each station was staffed 24-hours a day by a three-person engine company consisting of a paid company officer and two volunteer reserve firefighters. Last year, the Lear station was shuttered and now all fire department operations are run out of the Adobe station. The professional personnel in the department are now limited to Thompson, captain Matt Helmkamp, captain Robert Marquez, engineer Tim Cole, and engineer Lee Martin. The district also has a single person clerical

staff position that has been vacant through attrition since March 2013. These are augmented by 28 reserve/volunteer firefighters, all of whom have attended a fire academy. Four of those are local volunteers. The others are aspiring firefighters from more distant areas in San Bernardino County, or Los Angeles, Orange or Riverside counties. Each serves a one-day 24 hour shift per week in Twentynine Palms. The 24 who do not reside in or near Twentynine Palms return to their distant abodes upon the conclusion of their shifts. Thompson said the assistance being sought from the city of Twentynine Palms would be utilized only within the city and for operations relating to fire protection and emergency medical response within the 55 square mile confines of Twentynine Palms.

"We won't be opening the Desert Heights station until we get the ballot measure passed and increase the fire tax," he said. "What we want is

to get together with the city and at least start a conversation about fire protection. The Adobe fire station was built 44 years ago and the living quarters has not been upgraded. Legally, the water district has responsibility for the fire department. Legally, the city is not responsible for maintaining the fire department. But cities have an ethical and moral responsibility to ensure public safety. In the case of Twentynine Palms, it is a confirmed fact that you have a city that is getting a higher percentage of the general tax levy than any other city in the county. It is also the only city in the county where none of that general tax levy or any city general funds go to fire protection. To be fair, in the county area, Desert Heights, no portion of the general tax levy goes toward fire department operations either. The county receives a good percentage of that tax levy. So there is an issue there where the city

Continued on Page 12

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Chabot's Victory A Pyrrhic One? *from page 6*

recipients of GOP support and bonhomie in the present circumstance.

Given both the circumstances of the primary race and the Chabot team's willful attacks upon his fellow Republican in a race which necessitated partisan cooperation rather than intraparty acrimony, the Republican support that Chabot will absolutely need to defeat the well-funded Democrat Aguilar in a district that leans Democrat in party registration by 6.6 percent is not guaranteed and, in fact, probably unlikely given that there are races elsewhere in which the GOP has better prospects of victory.

This week, the Chabot camp was carrying on as if the just concluded battle royal with Gooch was nothing more than a minor squabble between brother and sister. The campaign team maintained its ebullience over its 9.32 percentage point margin over Aguilar and was unapologetic about having curtailed the pos-

sibility of a Republican vs. Republican runoff in November in which the GOP would have been guaranteed to hang on to the seat.

"We ran a clean campaign," Hall told the *Sentinel*. "We handily won. We're moving forward. We are going to use the same message of public safety and job creation in the general campaign. We're not worried about who gets second place, Aguilar or Gooch. Our message definitely resonated with the voters. We think that message will continue to resonate not just with Republicans but Democrats and independents. We won by ten percent. That is a big number. We know we won't get most of the Democrats in November, but we will get some and we will do well with the independents.

Paul is not an establishment candidate. People don't want a candidate that is in with the establishment. People wanted Paul Chabot. The voters overwhelmingly supported him in this election. Paul's numbers far exceed the other candidates from both par-

ties. Everyone had the same amount of time. Lesli had more money to spend and we still have these results. People want someone who represents the community. He is a Navy combat veteran and a sheriff's officer who is helping kids get off drugs. He is going to high schools and giving presentations. His whole life has been focused."

Hall downplayed any lingering animosity over the tenor of the campaign and Chabot's torpedoing of another Republican.

"I think that when everything shakes out, we're hoping Lesli will endorse Paul when it comes to that point. I don't think there was any animosity. That is what politics is about. The minority whip supported Paul a few days ago. The tide is turning in that direction. We hope for more endorsements. We are going to continue to stick to our message. Paul is a strong candidate with a strong message. Lesli Gooch attacked Paul. We are not going to sit idly by but try to set the record straight."

With regard to calling Gooch a lobbyist who had advocated on behalf of someone who had been indicted, Hall said the Chabot campaign was merely pointing out what Gooch did for a living.

"Arguing about her being a businesswoman and lobbyist wasn't negative or positive. Being a lobbyist was what she had done in the past. That's not a bad thing. Paul is proud of the work he does," Hall said. "She should be proud of the work she did. That is all we were saying."

As for the slew of mailers attacking Gooch that went out in April from nebulous sources, Hall attributed them to Tillman.

"Those were from Dan Tillman's supporters," he said.

The *Sentinel* contacted Tillman to confirm that assertion.

"I didn't do anything negative during the campaign at all," Tillman said. "The whole thing was focused on telling people about myself and that was it."

Hall sought to extend an olive branch to

Gooch.

"We're over this first part and we would like everyone to get behind Paul. Paul is a gracious man and would be honored to have those who ran against him endorse him. He would do the same for her [Gooch] if the situation were reversed. If the people spoke and wanted Lesli to represent them, Paul would endorse her."

Hall dismissed the suggestion that the Democratic registration advantage in the district and Aguilar's larger campaign war chest would be major factors in the November election and said neither he nor Chabot nor the strategist Thomas believed heavy Republican Party support was needed to overcome those Democratic advantages.

"The public is weary of all the political infighting and so is Paul," Hall said. "He is someone who is not part of that system. Gooch and Aguilar are establishment candidates. Paul is not an establishment candidate. He was ten percent ahead of both of them. The public is

weary of establishment candidates. They are not happy with the status quo. The other candidates are part of that status quo. The voters wanted someone more like Paul, who is working in a different sense and not in a way the establishment wanted him to. Paul has conservative values. He is going after the support of people who matter, like local politicians. Pete Aguilar has support in Redlands and from the national Democratic Party. Paul wasn't getting fundraising dollars coming from other groups. Our support was from regular people. Lesli outspent us eleven to one. We were outspent and still did what everyone said he could not do. He wasn't just sending out mailers and flyers and hit pieces. I am not saying this is not an uphill fight to win but we expect to be on top. No one expected us to be on top in the primary and we showed everyone. We did it handily. We will do the same in November."



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San Bernardino County Coroner Reports

Coroner Case #701404472 — On 06/11/2014, at 12:25 A.M., Willie Deon Loyd III, a 31 year old resident of Victorville, was traveling westbound on Palmdale Rd. in Victorville on a 2003 Suzuki motorcycle. The motorcycle collided with a 2013 Lexus, which had been traveling southbound on Cantina St. Loyd was pronounced dead at the scene. The San Bernardino Sheriff's Department is investigating. [061114 0913 SY]

Coroner Case #701404425 — At approximately 11:15 AM on 06/09/2014, The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department began receiving 911 calls of an aircraft down at The El Mirage Dry Lake recreation area. When rescue personnel arrived on scene they found Brian Lee, a 47 year-old resident of Saugus, CA, who was the pilot of the aircraft, with severe injuries. Lee was transported to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center via air ambulance where he later died from injuries sustained in the crash. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Aviation and Coroner's Division, along with members of the National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the crash. [061114 0904 SY]

Coroner case 701404362 — On 06/06/2014, at 9:54 PM Rialto Fire Department responded to a 911 call for a child drowning in the 100 block of S. Eucalyptus Avenue in Rialto. Paramedics arrived and found Ivan Turrico, a 10 year old resident in full arrest. Turrico was transported by ambulance to an area hospital where he was pronounced dead at 10:40 PM. An autopsy will be conducted to determine the cause of death. The Rialto Police Department is investigating the incident. [060714 1130 TC]

Coroner case 701404355 — At 1:57PM on 06/06/2014, a shooting was reported in the 2900 block of Mountain Ave., in San Bernardino. Police and paramedics arrived to find Terrance Jamal James, a 31 year old resident of San Bernardino, with injuries. James was transported to St. Bernardine Medical Center where he was pronounced dead in the emergency room at 2:36 PM. The incident is under investigation by San Bernardino Police Department Homicide Detail. [06072014 2255 CN]

Coroner Case #701404335 — At approximately 9:30 PM on 06/05/2014, a 28 year old black male pedestrian, Dijon Jerome Hubbard a 28 year old resident of Colton was struck by a vehicle in the number one lane on the westbound I-10 at the I-215 transition. He was transported to Loma Linda University Medical Center by ambulance where he was pronounced dead in the emergency room. The San Bernardino CHP is investigating this collision. Name is being withheld pending next of kin notification. [06062014 0649 CN] [06062014 1218 SY]

Coroner case 701404327 — At 7:18 PM on 06/05/2014, the CHP responded to a single vehicle collision on Interstate 10, just east of Interstate 215. Officers found that a 1998 Acura traveling westbound along Interstate 10 left the right shoulder and struck a tree west of Waterman Ave. Myles Edward "Eddie" Scott, a 17 year old resident of Rialto, was a passenger in the vehicle and pronounced dead at the scene. The accident is under investigation by the California Highway Patrol. [06062014 0530 CN]

Coroner case #701404253 — On 06/02/2014 at about 8:15 PM, two-year-old Armando Rodriguez was at his home in the 11500 block of Barbet Road in Phelan with family when he was found unresponsive. Paramedics responded and transported him to Desert Valley Hospital where he was pronounced dead at 8:23 PM. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is investigating the incident. [06032014 1300 JK]

Coroner case #701404229 — On 06/02/2014 at 0514 hours, the California Highway Patrol received reports of a traffic collision on Fort Irwin Road, outside of Fort Irwin. Fort Irwin Police Department and Fort Irwin Fire Department arrived on scene to find Dail Lee Keiper, Sr., a 62 year old male resident of Barstow, with fatal injuries and he was pronounced dead at 5:35AM on the scene. Fort Irwin Police Department is investigating the accident. [06022014 1500 JK]

Coroner Case #701404209 — On 06/01/2014 at 1:58am, Freddie Lee Bell, a 64 year old resident of San Bernardino, was pronounced dead at 2:09am in a residence located in the 1300 block of N. Sierra Way in the city of San Bernardino. The San Bernardino Police Department Homicide Division is investigating the incident. An autopsy is pending. [06012014 1740 JK]

Coroner Case #701404201 — On 05/31/2014 at 10:46pm, Mitchell Wayne Davis, a 23 year old resident of Rialto, was shot while standing on the southeast corner of Victoria Street and Rosalind Street in Rialto. He was transported to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center where he was pronounced dead on 06/01/2014 at 12:01AM. The San Bernardino Police Department is investigating. [06012014 0620 CN]

Coroner Case #701404190 — On 05/ 31/ 2014, at 3:47 PM, San Bernardino Police Department (SBPD) responded to State Route 18, near mile marker 10, in San Bernardino, for a two vehicle traffic collision. James Thomas Warren, a 21 year old resident of Claremont, was the driver of a 2000 Hyundai that was southbound when he was struck by a 2003 Dodge SUV. San Bernardino Police Department personnel stated that the initial investigation indicated that Warren was declared dead at the scene by San Bernardino Fire Department personnel at 1603 hours. The San Bernardino Police Department Major Accident Investigation Team is investigating the incident. [05312014 2344 CN]

Coroner Case # 7 0 1 4 0 4 1 5 2 — On 05/30/2014 at 11:49 AM, a 911 call was received from a residence in the 2600 block of N. Mercedes Ave. in the city of San Bernardino for a drowning. 4 year-old Highland resident Cameron Nunez had been playing in the residence's in-ground spa when his hand was caught in the uncovered spa filter. Nunez was transported to St. Bernardine Medical Center by emergency personnel and pronounced dead at 12:55 PM. The San Bernardino Police Department is investigating this incident. [05302014 1641 SY]

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Grand Terrace from front page

the city's geographical setting, but does ponder the several disadvantages that reality has created.

In 2007, with the advent of the recession that has gripped the nation, state and region for more than a half decade, Grand Terrace initiated the first of a series of economies, including drastic cuts to the city's work force and service levels. In 2011, the state of California's dissolution of all municipal and county redevelopment agencies was a particularly tough blow to Grand Terrace. Past councils and management had placed the entirety of the 3,502 square mile city in one of two redevelopment project areas and put a number of city employees on the redevelopment agency's payroll. This accelerated the already-begun slashing of City Hall.

So severe were the cutbacks that there was talk of deincorporating the city altogether and Grand Terrace once again having all of its governmental functions administered by the county of San Bernardino or, in the alternative, being subject to annexation by the city of Colton.

The strategic plan identified "insolvency/uncertain revenue stream [and the] redevelopment agency dissolution" as major threats to the city's ongoing viability as a municipal entity. Further threats were outlined as the California Department of Finance's rejection of the city's plan to convert the redevelopment funding that was previously available to civic programs and projects, as well as actual or potential litigation the city is facing and the financial liability this re-

resents.

Also listed as disadvantages to city operations were the "temporary" status of senior staff in the wake of former city manager Betsy Adams' departure, what the plan referred to as the "total loss of institutional memory" the departure of city staff has imposed on the city, which has resulted in the "lack" loss of staff to address/skills to address key issues."

The staff turnover and attrition has led to "staff insecurity," according to the plan, and "no clear vision." The plan asserts that Grand Terrace is further hampered by a "vocal minority opposition to development" within the community that has led to a "perception of an 'anti-business' climate."

The report sums up what is perhaps the city's major challenge/disadvantage with three words: "lack of revenues."

Furthermore, the plan states the city suffers from a "lack of training/cross training/clear policy/procedures guide for staff."

The city further needs to overcome a "lack of public understanding of the city's form and function" and needs to redress infrastructure needs to allow development to take place and must gain "access to current technology," the plan says.

Other city shortcomings listed are inconsistent code enforcement and an imbalance in service levels.

Upon accepting the strategic plan, the city council resolved to strive toward fiscal sustainability, maintain public safety, promote economic development, develop and implement successful partnerships and engage in proactive communication.

By Diane Dragotto Williams

My first introduction to a Northern Flicker was when a red-shafted male flew into my high A-frame windows and



knocked itself unconscious. With a wingspan 19 to 21 inches and 12 to 14 inches in length, this large woodpecker is often found in open spaces. However, it spends considerable time on the ground foraging for ants and insects in summer, and berries and seeds in winter. Flickers often go after ants underground, hammering at the soil the way other woodpeckers drill into wood. Their tongues can dart out 2 inches beyond the end of the bill to snare prey! They are found in woodlands, forest edges, and open fields with scattered trees, as well as city parks and suburbs. In the western mountains they occur in most forest types, including burned forests, all the way up to the treeline. You can also find them in wet areas such as streamside woods, flooded swamps, and marsh edges.

As I held this beautiful creature, seemingly lifeless, my heart sent prayers for life to flow back into its body. Admiring its striking colors and patterns, I reflected on his beauty, including a gray face, a red moustache (males only), and a brown forehead, crown and nape, and a black crescent bib surrounded his head. Buff to grayish feathers filled his body underparts with heavy spotting, ending in a white rump patch. But the most amazing surprise under the brown back, and dark barred wings, was bright salmon-red to red-orange underwings and undertail! What a brilliant sight it must display in

flight, as I learned later. Holding this handsome, black-scalloped plumaged bird for nearly an hour, I kept hoping for revival, and studied its habits in a book. In breeding season, you can hear the "wick-er", "wick-er" notes, but year round, the flicker makes a single, loud "klee-yer" or "clearr" call. Spring



courtship brings noisy, animated behavior. Rivals face off in a display called a "fencing duel," while a prospective mate looks on. Two birds may face each other on a branch, bills pointed upward, and bob their heads in time while drawing a loop or figure-eight pattern in the air, calling with a rhythmic "wicka". Solitary nesters, they're monogamous and lay 3 to 12 white, oval eggs in snags, nest boxes, and even buildings. Couples excavate nest holes in dead or diseased tree trunks, or large branches in a cavity 6 to 20 feet above the ground. The entrance hole is about 3 inches in diameter, and the cavity is 13-16 inches deep. The cavity widens at bottom to make room for eggs and the incubating adult. Inside, the cavity is bare, except for a bed of wood chips for the eggs, and

chicks to rest on. Once nestlings are about 17 days old, they begin clinging to the cavity wall instead of lying on the floor. Unlike many woodpeckers, flickers often reuse cavities that they or another species excavated in a previous year. Like most woodpeckers, Northern Flickers drum on objects as a form of communication

and territory defense. In such cases, the object is to make as loud a noise as possible, and that's why woodpeckers sometimes drum on metal objects.

Waiting for the rise and fall of breath to return to his body, the improbable happened, and his head that at im-



grew taut, and he opened his eyes, and stared up at me. Wobbly at first, he perched on my deck railing, overlooking the forest floor. As a wildlife artist in oils, I went back to my studio, leaving the bird to rest on its own, so it could fly back to its family. What happened next in that following hour was a gift, as my new friend, flew to a nearby tree, climbed deftly up it, and gazed intently at me, through my third-story window. With a gentle expression, he remembered me, and in his own quiet way, came back to let me know he made it. I'll never forget that special moment in time when an animal being and human being shared a celebration of life!

Wildhaven Ranch is a wildlife sanctuary in Cedar Glen that gives programs to the public by appointments only. Bears, Bobcat, Coyotes, Deer, Eagles, Falcon, Hawk, Owl and Raccoons are seen "up close and personal" in guided tours. For reservations, call (909) 337-7389.

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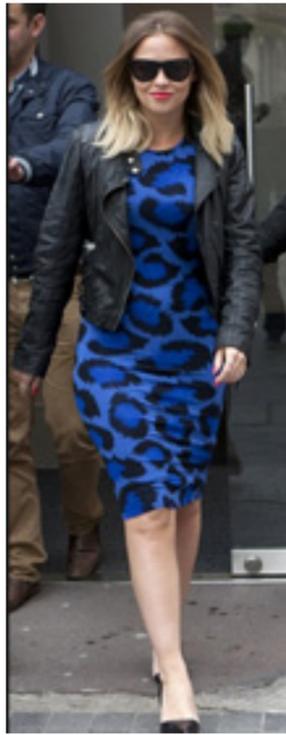
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California Style Le Biker

By Grace Bernal



is worn with beautiful dresses and it looks elegantly cool. This is a definite reality of a new generation that isn't into formal evening clothes all the way. The

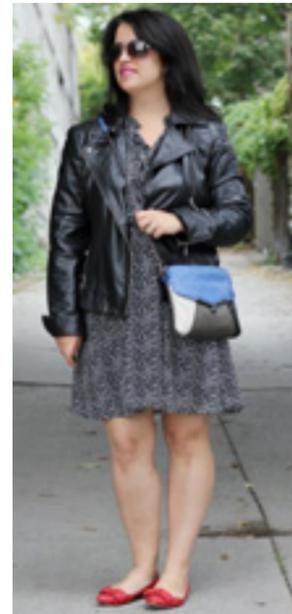


Something is definitely happening with regard to evening wear and it's the roar of the biker. It's being adopted for evenings and being worn over dresses. The leather or biker jacket



These jackets are about letting loose and showing your rough jacket with your soft clothes. This captures the mood of a new generation creating its own language

jacket looks marvelous and it plays up tough in a very feminine way.



coming with new refreshed ideas. Don't be afraid to mix your jacket around with an evening piece. Have fun wearing it wherever you go.



"I got my motorcycle jacket but I'm walking all the time."

— The Clash

As always, if there's anything you need, I'd love to hear from you: Greygris@aol.com or visit my page I Love Your Style on Facebook Copyright Grace Bernal all rights reserved

29 Palms Fire Department from page 8

rightfully would want to make sure the county is included in this discussion. We would like that, too."

Thompson continued, "When you put all those financials together, you have to ask, 'Why did this occur? How is it that they could just short-change the fire department this way?' I think the likely answer is this was an unintended consequence of Proposition

Decertification Try from front page

fund be paid out in full to the county's employ-

ees in July 2014 rather than in installments over two years. Hart also proposed that an additional promotion, known as a

ment provides merits augmentation through an assessment regime will be a linchpin in ensuring the fire department's viability. He said that in "two to three years" the department will need to replace its quick attack 250 gallon tank primary response vehicle and in "five to seven years it is going to be time to look at another engine if we don't want to get too be-

hind the curve on our replacement cycle. Today we don't have money to put into an apparatus reserve."

He bristled at the suggestion that the fire department was being profligate with the funding entrusted to it. "Show me another fire department in California that has 24-hour daily staffing of five that runs on \$1.2 million a year," he said. "That isn't payroll. That is payroll and operations, electricity, equipment, fuel, all costs."

The *Sentinel* has learned that water district president Sam Moore is lobbying Mayor Daniel Mintz to use his influence with the council to convince it to expedite the aforementioned joint meeting and resurrect the Joint Agency Fire Department Committee.

Hart called for a re-opening of bargaining in September 2015 and threw in the county's provision of \$2.3 million in add-ons to the contract known as equities be provided in September 2014, with another \$2 million of the equity pool be implemented in July of 2015.

The remainder of the contract as was offered in April and rejected by all but the bargaining units for nurses and nursing supervisors last month is to remain the same.

Almost simultaneous with the offering of the new contract, mailers sponsored by the Service Employees International Union were sent to SBPEA members along with decertification signature cards.

The mailer bears the heading "More Than 5,000 Reasons To Vote No" and states: "SBPEA can't fool us. They are sending another bad proposal back to us that will cost each county employee an average of \$5,173. Respect our no vote. Join SEIU."

The mailer further states "We have already spoken. Two weeks ago we voted no to a tentative agreement negotiated by SBPEA. Instead of listening, SBPEA is asking us to vote again on a contract that has not improved. We must vote no again.

Six bargaining units - nearly 12,000 employees - made their voices heard by rejecting the first SBPEA tentative agreement. Now we want our no vote respected and the opportunity to join SEIU 721."

The signature cards began arriving in the mailboxes of SBPEA members on June 9. If a sufficient number of cards are signed and returned to SEIU, that union can use them to trigger an election of the full SBPEA membership to determine whether they want to transfer their collective bargaining representation to SEIU.

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