

Relations Between Newberry Springs Residents & Alfalfa Farmers Fray

By Mark Gutglueck

The long-strained relations between the residents of Newberry Springs and a dozen alfalfa farmers who have flocked to that area and monopolized local water resources over the last three decades have deteriorated into open hostility in the face of the four-year running California drought. That hostility

is trending toward a possible class action suit in which residents of the desert community east of Barstow would seek to ban cultivation of water use-intensive crops in arid zones such as the Mojave River drainage area.

A group of residents numbering more than 200 in the area in and around Newberry

Springs have now lodged objections to the terms of a proposed water usage plan for the Newberry Springs area the Mojave Water Agency will soon place before the Riverside Superior Court. The plan, the residents maintain, will squander what remains of their commonly held supply of highly overdrafted groundwater through

the continued use of "pivot sprinkling" and alfalfa farming.

Pivot sprinkling is a method of watering crops from above using giant rotating sprinkler arms radiating from a central electrically powered pivot. Residents claim that this method uses water inefficiently because of the amount of water that evaporates

in the air and on the surface before ever entering the crops' root systems. Additionally, they claim that alfalfa is a water-intensive crop that requires heavy irrigation to thrive. Meanwhile, compounding the problem, residents of the Newberry Springs are asserting, is the Mojave Water Agency's proposed Baja Areawide Sus- See P 2

Warren Quits As Upland Public Works Assistant Head



Acquanetta Warren

Acquanetta Warren, the Fontana mayor who has for the past several years been serving as the city of Upland's assistant director of public works, abruptly resigned her post with the City of Gracious Living Thursday.

Warren's leaving comes as the city council and city manager Rod Butler appear to be girding themselves for a round of staff reductions, including the termination of some city department heads and/or higher ranking members of those departments.

Warren's exodus comes as she was approaching an acceptable retirement age but while she was yet young enough to remain at her post for another five to ten years.

Her departure came as something of a surprise, in that the rumor mill in Upland suggested that the council had a higher priority in shedding the services of community development director Jeff Zwack and city clerk/administrative services director/human resources manager Stephanie Mendenhall than Warren. Mendenhall has announced that she intends to depart in July, though at least two members of the city council seem intent on foreclosing her tenure with the city prior to that.

Warren grew up in South Cen- See P 7

County Set To Replace City As SB Waterman Garden Val 9 Renewal Project Underwriter

The county of San Bernardino is on the verge of leaping into the funding guarantee gap that has come about because of the city of San Bernardino's financially disadvantaged state, and serve as the guarantor for a federally subsidized improvement project at the Val 9 Apartments in San Bernardino.

On Tuesday, the board

of supervisors considered but held off on a recommendation by Dena Fuentes, the director of the county's community development and housing division, to approve a "sub-recipient revenue agreement" between the city of San Bernardino and the county of San Bernardino in the amount of \$834,999, pursuant to the federal

HOME Investment Partnership Program.

Essentially, Fuentes called upon the county to put up an \$834,999 loan to the developer that otherwise would have been provided by the city.

"A HOME Investment Partnership Program Sub-Recipient Agreement is a revenue agreement between the city of San Bernardino and the

county of San Bernardino," said Fuentes. "Because the city is in the process of restructuring its financial position, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) asked the county to assist the city in investing its Fiscal Year 14-15 HOME funds towards a project that meets HUD's national objective of pro-

viding low and moderate income housing. The agreement provides the formal mechanism between the county and the city to ensure the continued access of affordable housing funding opportunities will exist for the city's low and moderate income residents. Per the agreement, the sub-recipient (the county) is designated to See P 3

Hagman Chooses Graham As Fourth District Director

Now that he has assumed county office, Fourth District Supervisor Curt Hagman has made it two for two, appointing a second staff member who had served in the capacity of one of his field representatives when he was state assemblyman to the position of district director.

Hagman, assemblyman in the 55th District from 2008 to 2014, successfully vied against



Ed Graham

Congressman Gloria Negrete-McCleod last November to replace Gary Ovitt as San Bernardino County super- See P 4

SBIAA Ups Lease For Sheriff's Aviation Facility At Shuttered Norton AFB By \$2.72M

The San Bernardino International Airport Authority has increased by \$2.72 million the amount of money it is charging the county for a 25-year lease on hangar space for the sheriff's department aviation division.

According to a report to the board of supervisors from Terry Thompson, the director of the county's real estate services department, his division received notice

that the authority was experiencing cost increases that necessitated "increasing the contract price from \$9,600,000 to \$12,320,000 for the construction of the Sheriff's Department Aviation Facility."

Word of the increase came nine months after the closure of Rialto Airport, where the sheriff's aviation division has been located for the last several decades, and some three months

before the aviation division is set to leave Rialto itself.

The sheriff's Aviation Division is the last hangar tenant scheduled to relocate out of Rialto, with a projected departure date of April 15, 2015. At that point, the entirety of the sheriff's aviation division is to be transferred into a 61,640-square-foot aviation facility now under preparation at San Bernardino Inter- See P 8

Needles To Get Fire Headquarters Cloned From Spring Valley Lake Fire Station

The county this week took a major step toward constructing a new fire station in Needles, a project for which it has budgeted slightly more than \$3 million.

The board of supervisors on Tuesday awarded a design contract on the project to STK Architecture, Inc., in the amount of \$230,458. That contract covers the provision of design and

construction administration services for the undertaking. According to Carl R. Alban, the director of the county's architecture and engineering department, the cost breakdown of the Needles fire station project includes \$149,200 for the purchase of the site, \$26,430 for preliminary site investigation, an estimated \$16,520 for conceptual design,

\$230,458 for design and construction administration, \$240,000 for project management, testing and inspection, \$20,000 for permits, \$2,066,175 for construction, backed with a construction contingency of \$206,617 and \$50,000 for furnishing, fixtures and equipment.

Thus, the total project budget has been set at \$3,005,400, though it is likely the actual cost will

exceed that amount.

According to Alban, "The current budget for the Needles Fire Station is based on the construction cost for the Spring Valley Lake Fire Station which was the same design. It is expected that the construction cost for the Needles Fire Station will exceed the current budget based on an escalation of costs for the passage of time, rural

nature of the Needles location, and a higher construction cost estimate recently prepared by an outside consultant. Award of a construction contract is expected in July 2015."

The established and anticipated funding sources for the project include discretionary general funding of \$1,962,316 and federal Com- See P 7

Drought Creates Hostility Between Residents & Alfalfa Farmers In Newberry Springs *from front page*

tainability Plan, which is now in draft form. This new plan, they say, ignores immediate sustainability issues and imposes unreasonable water use limitations and restrictions on the area's residents and small scale farmers while doing nothing to forbid future alfalfa farming.

The problem besetting Newberry Springs has occurred within the context of a now 23-year-long effort to adjudicate water rights in the Mojave Desert that began when the city of Barstow sued the city of Adelanto and a host of other water users upstream on the Mojave River.

The headwaters of the Mojave River lie at the north base of the San Bernardino Mountains near Summit Valley and Hesperia. The Mojave River then winds into

the Mojave Desert past Apple Valley, Victorville and Adelanto before reaching Barstow. It was Barstow's contention in the lawsuit that the upstream users were over-pumping from the basin and overdrawing water from the river, thereby depleting the water supply that historically had reached Barstow.

Barstow pursued its lawsuit in the Riverside Superior Court, to which the case was removed from the local Superior Court venue because of concern that cities such as Victorville, Hesperia and entities such as the Apple Valley Ranchos Water Company and the Baldy Mesa Water District might overwhelm Barstow through political influence. Then-Riverside Superior Court Judge J. Michael Kaiser heard the case in which the Mojave Water Agency, which had been in existence since 1964, sought to adjudicate the water rights throughout the portion of the Mojave Desert lying within

its jurisdiction.

The Mojave Water Agency undertook a survey of water usage by all entities in the Mojave Basin during the five-year period running from 1987 to 1991, inclusive. After establishing what the maximum annual amount of water utilized by each of those entities were, the Mojave Water Agency then declared that amount to be each respective heavy pumping well owner's base annual pumping rate. That base annual pumping rate was then subjected to a five percent "rampdown," reduction each year for five years, so that at the end of the rampdown period, the pumpers would be allotted 75 percent of the water each had pumped during their heaviest water use year during the survey period. That allotment became each pumper's free water allotment, such that any water use beyond that amount was deemed excessive, and the user was required to pay the Mo-

jave Water Agency a per-acre foot surcharge for that excessive use. The Mojave Water Agency was to use the money achieved in this fashion to purchase replacement water from the State Water Project, conveyed to the Mojave Desert in the California Aqueduct.

The Mojave Water Agency was simultaneously pursuing other efforts, including both water conservation and water reuse, to maintain the level of water within the various aquifers within its jurisdiction and prevent them from falling into a state of overdraft.

Among these efforts were a series of water sustainability plans for the subareas within the entire Mojave Water Basin. Those sustainability plans were intended to map out how the locally available water would be allotted, both in terms of type of use and to which particular users.

In the area around Newberry Springs,

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known as the Baja Sub-area, the water table lies relatively close to the surface of the desert, allowing the construction of ten man-made lakes – Calico, Cheyenne, Crystal, Great Lakes, Horton, Jody, Silver Dunes, Sundown, Wainani and Wet Set that utilize more than ten acre-feet of water annually.

Beginning in the late 1970s, alfalfa farmers growing their crop for use by dairy farms began relocating into the High Desert. Some were

attracted to the area near Newberry Springs because of the availability of water near the surface, which reduces the cost of irrigation since it does not entail drawing water from deeper in the water table. When the agricultural preserve zone in the Chino/south Ontario area was lifted in the late 1990s, and land there was opened up for residential development, dairy land was bought out and many dairies relocated, with some moving their operations to Tulare and Kern counties, as well as to Idaho. As a result of this dairy migration, alfalfa farmers formerly located in the Chino Valley relocated to the High Desert.

Newberry Springs residents, who have never been overjoyed at the prospect of alfalfa farmers setting up operations in their neck of the woods, have had their discomfiture grow ever greater with the now-four-year-persisting drought. In Riverside County Superior Court, where authority over the Mojave Water Agency's water rights adjudication process remains ongoing, Judge Gloria Trask has inherited the case from Judge Kaiser. One of the continuing issues in that litigation is the approval of the Baja Areawide Sustainability Plan, now in draft form.

In the view of many local residents, the proposed Baja Areawide Sustainability Plan is far too accommodating of the dozen major alfalfa farmers operating in and around Newberry

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County Taking Lead On SB City Urban Renewal Project
from front page

carry out all actions necessary to implement the city's HOME Program objectives, comply with all HOME federal regulations and ensure the funds are invested in a project that results in the development of affordable housing to eligible low and moderate income individuals and households. As a HUD HOME entitlement jurisdiction, the county manages its own HOME affordable housing development program and is familiar with the federal regulations, financing of affordable housing along with the affordable housing monitoring requirements."

The developer involved in the Val 9 Apartments rehabilitation is National CORE, I.e., National Community Renaissance, a non-profit corporation founded by Jeff Burum to provide affordable housing to low and moderate income home buyers. Steve PonTell is currently serving as its president and chief executive officer.

"In October 2014, Na-

tional Core Renaissance and its development partners received an allocation of \$1,139,951 of 9% low income tax credits over a ten-year period from the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee to assist in financing the development of the Val 9 Apartments," Fuentes said. "The project consists of 70 affordable housing units on 4.65 acres at the corner of Valencia Drive and 9th Street in the city of San Bernardino. This project is the initial phase of the Waterman Gardens revitalization effort sponsored by the Housing Authority of the county of San Bernardino. The total construction budget for this development is \$23 million. Currently the developer is securing all funding resources in order to commence construction in February 2015."

Fuentes said the participation of Community Renaissance in the project could yet fall through.

"The department of community development and housing will be negotiating a HOME Loan agreement between the county and the developer to invest the city's HOME funds to finance

the project. It is anticipated that the HOME Loan agreement between the developer and the county would be considered by the board of supervisors in January 2015. If the county is unsuccessful in the negotiations with the developer for the project, the department of community development and housing would undertake a notice of funds availability to identify other potential multi-family affordable housing developments located in the city of San Bernardino that meet the city, HUD and county objectives. The board of supervisors is being asked to approve

the \$834,999 HOME investment partnership program subrecipient agreement between the city and the county. This unique solution among HUD, the city, and the county will ensure that limited affordable housing resources are retained in the county and invested in the city, in compliance with the Federal HOME regulations."

The item was taken off calendar on a motion by supervisor Robert Lovingood. Fuentes' report indicated the matter will come before the board some time later this month.

Forum... Or Against 'em
Observations from a Decidedly Continental Perspective

By Count Friedrich von Olsen



Years ago I had a friend who would periodically blurt out, "They have the wrong people in charge!" I had reason to think of him this week when Judith Oakes, the one time accountant for the Rialto Unified School District who stole either \$1.8 million or \$3 million - no one seems to know for sure - was finally sentenced for her misdeeds...

As I understand it, Judith Oakes went to work for the school district in the late 1990s and was given a position of some trust and responsibility, overseeing the district's school lunch program, counting the money and depositing it. Video cameras had been installed in the counting room but had not been operating for many years...

Sometime in the late spring or early summer of 2013, someone became suspicious and, apparently without the knowledge of the district superintendent or Judith Oakes, the video cameras were repaired, including one that was placed directly over the counting station Judith Oakes utilized. Just after the 2013-14 school year began, on August 5 and August 6, she was caught on camera slipping handfuls of bound bills into her bodice...

She was arrested the following day and resigned thereafter. She initially maintained her innocence in the face of the charges against her. The superintendent and assistant superintendent were placed on paid leave the following month and the superintendent chose to resign seven months later...

The inference I have drawn is that it was the district's assistant superintendent for financial affairs, a fellow by the name of Mohammed Islam, who had discovered the pilfering. Mohammed Islam had previously served as the financial services director with the San Bernardino City Unified School District before coming to Rialto in the 2012-13 school year. I draw this inference because it was Mohammed Islam who was immediately elevated to the position of acting superintendent when the superintendent and acting superintendent were placed on leave...

Indeed, it was the hiring of Mohammed Islam and his promotion that appears to be the only thing the Rialto Unified School District did right during this entire debacle...

When the district, the investigator it hired and the police department requisitioned district records pertaining to Oakes, they were missing. It seems the precaution Mohammed Islam had taken in seeing to it that the video system was returned to operational status without alerting anyone at the district's administrative level was a wise one...

The district then moved to fire its auditing firm, Vavrinek, Trine and Day, a not unreasonable development. A new firm was brought in, which ascertained that in the five year period before she was caught and resigned, Judith Oakes had embezzled \$1,845,137.81. How it was that she had taken the 81 cents in change on top of the paper cash was never explained, at least to my satisfaction. The exactitude of that finding was not replicated in the other forensic examination of her perfidy. Rather an estimate of over \$3 million was given with regard to the total amount of money she had taken out of the fund intended to provide food

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Hostilities Between Alfalfa Farmers & Residents In Newberry Springs from page 2

Springs. As water becomes less and less available with the continuation of the drought, the alfalfa farmers continue to use the same amount of water in their agricultural operations to grow one of the most water-intensive crops in California. This situation has led to a widespread local perception that the water rights of domestic users are not being protected under the current water adjudication regime administered by the Mojave Water Agency and overseen by Riverside Superior Court.

Beginning in November, local residents Linda and Wayne Snively began circulating a petition which, as of this week, had garnered the signatures of 218 residents in the Newberry Springs area. The petition states: "We the undersigned are greatly concerned with the crisis situation currently happening in our neighborhood. The health aspect of water availability, safety of emergency applications, and the economic survival of the individual citizens of this area are impacted by declining aquifer water levels. The average person cannot afford a new well in order to be able to pump clean water to exist. Example: The 1,000 private water wells no longer in production since the year 2000. This has been a contributor that negatively resulted in lower property values, and loss of local business income in the area. We live here and we want to be able to continue to live here. The time is now to define and control this situation with a workable sustainable plan that protects us all."

Meanwhile, a group concerned about the local water situation has formed, known as the Newberry Springs Community Alliance. The alliance has created a website, the Newberry Springs Community Alliance Blotter, at which

information relating to the ongoing water rights adjudication process, including the Baja Area-wide Sustainability Plan and state legislative and regulatory efforts relating to water issues, are posted, together with the comments of local residents. Before posting, the blogs are passed around among the alliance's members before one of the group's more technically savvy participants, Ted Stimpfel, mounts them on the web.

Postings on the blog with regard to the Baja Area-wide Sustainability Plan suggest the Mojave Water Agency and Judge Trask have demonstrated favoritism toward the alfalfa farmers.

According to the Blotter, Trask has "taken a soft approach to coddle and minimize the financial impact upon the alfalfa farmers as the water table in the Baja Subarea have continued to drop with the draconian financial impact being placed upon the residential pumpers, a few of which may face the devastation of having to abandon their homes due to the lack of financial means to drill new wells. A new residential well that chases the ever declining water table is now costing about \$30,000, far more than many on a fixed income can afford. The power costs of pumping water from deeper depths, the increased maintenance costs of replacing deep underground water pumps that have to work harder, and the degradation of the quality of deeper water, are residential damages resulting primarily from alfalfa farming."

According to the Blotter, "When land parcels depend upon groundwater, the land is near worthless without the water. Alfalfa farmers are devaluing the value of the land of others by removing the water without care or consideration of the damages. The Baja Area-wide Sustainability Plan offers residential pumpers lip-service, and, as it currently stands, is a kiss-up to alfalfa agri-

culture. It is a proposed 10-year (2015-2025) free pass to heavy pumping alfalfa farmers that is flawed and won't work."

In this way, according to the Blotter, the residents of Newberry Springs are being caught in a squeeze as the usability of their property diminishes and their property values plummet while the Alfalfa farmers prosper, which leaves them in a stronger position financially to take advantage of the holders of the remaining water rights by buying them out at rock bottom prices.

"With alfalfa farmers

purchasing dormant water rights, and with new and fallow alfalfa fields being activated, unsustainable water pumping will continue despite the proposed plan," according to the Blotter "To add insult to the massive residential injuries of unsustainable alfalfa farming, the draft plan recommends that some water rights of alfalfa farmers be purchased with tax dollars and the water rights be retired. Here we have a situation where greedy farmers established inappropriate alfalfa fields, that require a tremendous amount of water, in an arid desert

of only 4-inches of average annual rainfall, and they have knowingly and maliciously damaged the residential groundwater. The retirement of water rights may sound good; but it will do little good. The alfalfa farmers have purchased and hold a huge surplus of base annual yield rights. Currently, water rights are inexpensive, some selling in the neighborhood of \$400 per acre foot, or being leased on a per-year basis for \$25. Some have been leased for as little as \$5 because water cannot be transferred outside the water basin."

Sentiment within the

community is that the growing strength and domination of a relative handful of alfalfa farmers who have commandeered the lion's share of the area's water rights are threatening to put farmers who cultivate less water-intensive crops out of business.

"Pistachio farming is in harmony with the community," according to the Blotter. "Koi farming is in harmony. Other crops that also require little water also fit well. But industrialized pivot farming of alfalfa that pumps out crop after

Continued on Page 6

Graham Hired As Hagman's District Director from front page

visor in the Fourth District.

Immediately, Hagman moved to hire Mike Spence, who had served as his chief of staff during his tenure as assemblyman, as his chief of staff in the Fourth District. This week, the board of supervisors approved his hiring of Ed Graham as the Fourth District director.

Hagman, Spence and Graham are Republicans. Spence and Graham are currently serving city

council members, Spence in West Covina and Graham in Chino Hills. Graham and Hagman served together on the Chino Hills City Council from 2003 to 2008. Hagman shook off criticisms of his having chosen institutional government employees as staff members.

"The particular person we are talking about worked outside government for thirty years in addition to being an educator and administrator, so he has long time experience in the private sector as well. He covered constituent services on my assem-

bly staff and he is well connected to the district as an elected official in one of its cities, where he puts in voluntary service as an elected official that far exceeds the \$600 a month he makes in that capacity. He is a good fit for the position."

Spence has been a fixture in Sacramento for two decades as a consultant and legislative staff member, including a spell as the chief of staff for then-assemblyman Joel Anderson (R-El Cajon), and lobbyist. Graham was a high school teacher for a portion of his professional career.

The district director

position pays \$71,480 in annual salary, with an additional \$39,111 in benefits for a total annual cost of \$110,591.

Hagman noted that "Staff services to members of the board of supervisors are provided through contractual arrangement, as required by the county charter. Approval of this item will authorize an employment contract with Edward Graham to provide support services to the Fourth District Supervisor as a district director."



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Glimpse Of SBC's Past

Jefferson Hunt - The Father Of San Bernardino County

By Mark Gutglueck

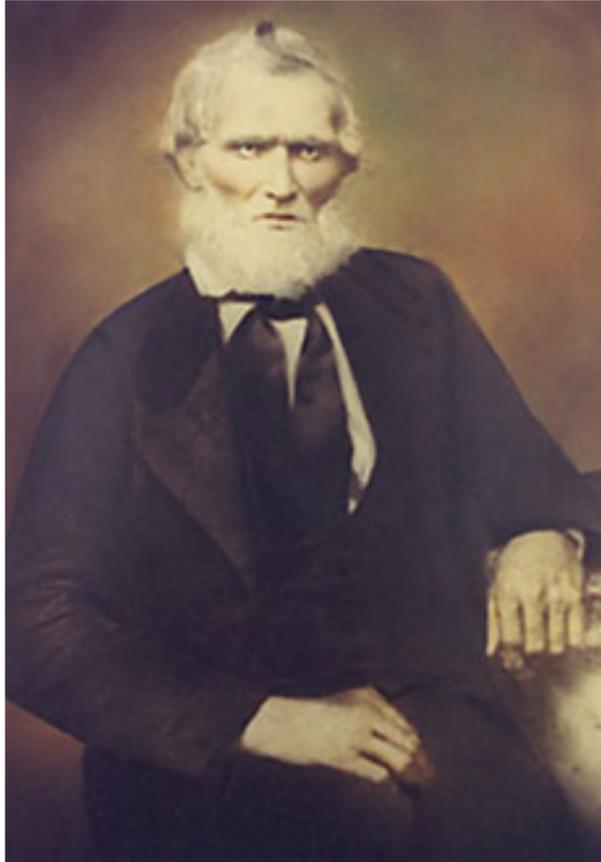
Jefferson Hunt has a legitimate claim to being the father of San Bernardino County. As an officer in the Mormon Battalion, he traveled to California before it was a state. A few years later he was an original pioneer of the Mormon settlement at San Bernardino. He twice led parties from Salt Lake to California by way of the southern route through the Cajon Pass and was at one time the American most thoroughly acquainted with the area in and around San Bernardino County and its inhabitants.

Hunt was born in Kentucky in 1805. He married Miss Celia Mount, and in 1835, he and his wife were baptized into the Mormon church by Sidney Rigdon. They had moved to Missouri and Jefferson Hunt at once took an active part in the church, becoming an elder and being employed by Joseph Smith, both in the religious and secular affairs of the community. He was a prosperous farmer and businessman during his stay in Missouri, and when the call from Brigham Young came to move westward, he was able to equip his own family comfortably and also to aid many of the less fortunate Mormon brethren in their outfitting.

Hunt was an officer of the Mormon Battalion, in which capacity he had first become familiar with the advantages of Southern California.

The Mormon Battalion was the only religiously based unit in United States military history, and served from July 1846 to July 1847 during the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848. The battalion was a volunteer unit of at least 534 and perhaps as many as 559 Latter-day Saints men led by Mormon company officers, who included Hunt, and commanded by regular US army officers. Dur-

ing its service, the battalion made a grueling march of nearly 2,000 miles from Council Bluffs, Iowa, to San Di-



Jefferson Hunt

ego.

The battalion's march and service proved instrumental in helping the United States secure much of the American Southwest, and opened a southern wagon route to California. When the Mormon Battalion was mustered into volunteer service on 16 July 1846 as part of the Army of the West, Hunt and two of his sons, Gilbert and Marshall, were among the first to enlist. The battalion arrived at Fort Leavenworth on 1 August 1846 under the command of Lieutenant Colonel James Allen. Allen ordered the battalion forward along the Santa Fe Trail, but on 23 August, Allen died. Captain Jefferson Hunt at that point took command of A Company, serving as acting commander until he was relieved by a regular U.S. Army officer dispatched from Council Grove, Kansas in response to a message that Allen had died.

The Mormon Battalion arrived in Santa Fe in October. On 16 December 1846, the battalion engaged with a small

detachment of provisional Mexican soldiers in the Battle of Tucson. Thereafter, the Mexicans retreated and Tucson

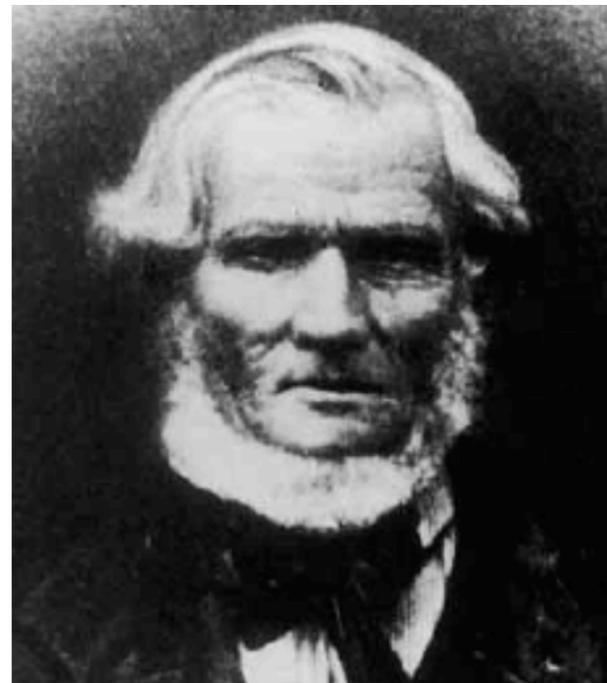
fell to the Americans. The battalion continued westward, crossing into California. On its sojourn to its southwestern terminus in San Diego, the Battalion passed through Temecula, in the aftermath of the Temecula Massacre, a conflict between the Californios and the Luiseño tribe. The Mormons stood guard to prevent further slaughter while the Luiseños gathered their dead and interred them into a communal grave.

The Mormon Battalion arrived in San Diego on 29 January 1847, having covered more than 1,900 miles since departing Iowa. In California the battalion carried out occupation duties for five months, and was ultimately discharged on 16 July 1847 in Los Angeles.

When the company was discharged, Hunt and his sons went north to the gold fields near Colima. They were very successful in their mining operations, and when they went on to Salt Lake City, they carried a considerable amount of gold dust with them. Here

Captain Hunt found his family, which he had left at Santa Fe in 1846, when the battalion started for California. They had come on to Salt Lake City with the other Mormons and were now in almost destitute circumstances. Very soon after his return, Captain Hunt organized a party to return to California by a new Indian trail which had not been hitherto traveled by white men. This led southward and through the Cajon Pass. He purchased 300 head of cattle from the Lugos at San Bernardino Valley, and bought horses at Puente and supplies in Los Angeles; then returned to Salt Lake by the northern route.

In 1849, Captain Hunt, together with Mormon Missionary Addison Pratt, blazed a route from Salt Lake City southward through present-day Las Vegas and San Bernardino, and then northward to Sacramento. The trail they carved would be fol-



Jefferson Hunt

lowed by many settlers and Forty-niners. For much of its distance, that route is now traced by the I-15 Freeway.

The Hunt and Pratt Party discovered gold and silver in Southern Nevada, sending back to Brigham Young a recommendation that Southern Nevada, including Las Vegas specifically, be colonized. Accompanying the Hunt and Pratt Party were a

group of pioneers from the Eastern United States, later identified as the infamous Death Valley Party. Many of them became impatient with the slow progress of the Mormon leadership, as Hunt insisted that they collectively travel only as fast as the slowest wagon. They chose to set out on their own from the larger group. After these malcontents split with Pratt's and Hunt's leadership, they tried to cross the Sierras farther north. They encountered great difficulty on their own, eventually arriving at Death Valley, narrowly avoiding death. Those remaining with Hunt made the sojourn safely and without serious incident. Later, some members of the Death Valley party rejected their new leaders and rejoined the Hunt party after one of Hunt's scouts discovered them nearly starved to death.

In 1851, as he was transiting through Iron County as elections were

and assisted Amasa Lyman and Charles Rich in their prospecting for a permanent place of residence for its members. He took a prominent part in the building of their fort in San Bernardino, and was the leader of their military organization. Under his direction the road through Twin Creek Canyon to the timber district was constructed and he was one of the first to engage in the lumber industry. In 1852 he was chosen as assemblyman for Los Angeles County, which then included the expanse that later became San Bernardino County, and it was he who presented the bill for the formation of San Bernardino County. He represented San Bernardino County in the legislature from the time of its organization until his departure in 1857.

A Democrat, Hunt in 1855 was commissioned as a brigadier general in the state militia by Governor John Bigler.

Soon after coming to San Bernardino, he secured a contract for carrying the mail from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City via San Bernardino and he held important mail contracts throughout his stay in the state.

According to San Bernardino County's foremost historian, Luther Ingersoll, "Captain Hunt was a man of strong character. Deeply pious by nature, he believed with all his heart in the divine revelation of the Mormon doctrines, although he found many of them a sore trial to his faith. Energetic, clear-sighted and indomitable in will, he was especially fitted for the leadership which he always acquired, in whatever position he was placed. Generous to a fault, his home was always open to the less fortunate brethren, and he gave a helping hand to many a needy man, Saint [i.e., Mormon] and Gentile [i.e.,

Continued on Page 11

Alfalfa Farmers On Outs With Newberry Springs Residents *from page 4*

crop, month after month, year after year, sucking dry the community's water supply is a parasite."

Added to this is the consideration that alfalfa farmers have been importing massive amounts of sewer sludge compost to use on fertilizing their crops.

The *Sentinel* has obtained a signed statement from two Newberry Springs residents, Robert Berkman and Fred Stearn, which proclaims, "Since about 2005, thousands of tons of raw sewage sludge initially, and then sewage sludge compost, has been dumped at various agricultural fields in Newberry Springs. Anyone making a complaint regarding the dumping or spreading of sewage sludge compost in Newberry Springs is advised by county staffers that there is no violation in regard to the county's health & safety code regulations for sewage sludge or in the public nuisance regulation. If all this sludge compost was being dumped in a high-income community, the county would locate some regulation to control or abate it."

"Most Newberry

Springs residents are pro-rural living but not necessarily pro-farming," states the Blotter. "Many are pro-ranching, with horses and livestock. We can live better without the water overdrafting, the contamination of the soil, and the aroma and illnesses caused by the pathogens from freshly spread urban toxic sewer waste that go airborne for miles in the wind and permeate our homes."

According to many Newberry Springs residents, the Mojave Water Agency and Judge Trask are perpetuating a water rights adjudication regime that is patently unjust and environmentally insensitive, rewarding profligate users of water who waste the precious elixir of life, while punishing those who are more responsible in their stewardship of the resource. "The problem appears to be the state sanctioned water rights that the farmers claim are historically theirs," the Blotter states. "The rights are highly inequitable. Thereby, the inequitable pumping of large quantities of water for a good cause, such as agriculture, may violate the federal constitution as such heavy pumping depletes the water table under innocent others who have a historical higher

residential priority right to the water under their property."

Newberry Springs residents have expressed the belief that the Mojave Water Agency and Trask have been overly sympathetic to the alfalfa farmers.

"The court and watermaster have previously been listening to a dozen major alfalfa farmers whine of lesser profits," states the Blotter. "It is now time that they listen to the approximate 4,700 residents who live in the Mojave Valley and depend upon the basin's water to live. Over 2,200 live in Newberry Springs. Homeowners deserve restitution for damages."

Among the 218 signatories of the petition are those who have made several proposals aimed at alleviating the Newberry Springs water crisis. One of those proposals is that the Mojave Water Agency's watermaster recommend, and the Superior Court acquiesce in, calling upon the county board of supervisors to enact a ban on alfalfa and all other water-intensive crops being grown anywhere within the Baja Subarea.

"An unnatural, water-intensive crop such as alfalfa simply has no business being grown in the arid Mojave Valley," the

Blotter states. "Banning all alfalfa would address the new proliferating alfalfa fields that are not under the stipulation and would establish a precedent of uniformly addressing water-guzzling crops that are at the heart of the water overdraft problem. Farmers in the Mojave Valley's arid desert need to switch to sustainable low water crops. The only real solution is obvious: a ban on alfalfa and other water intensive crops being farmed. Alfalfa farmers could still farm other crops."

The Blotter states, "The Baja Areawide Sustainability Plan, a water plan that will be placed before the Mojave Water Agency's Watermaster for approval before submission to the Superior Court, is currently weak in its resolution to seriously address the overdraft."

In a letter dated December 5, 2014 from Robert Berkman to Mark Cowin, the director of the California Department of Water Resources, Berkman, writing on behalf of a Newberry Springs activist group called California Environmental Quality Act NOW, asserted "For many decades our Baja Subarea basin has been seriously overdrafted by less than one dozen wealthy alfalfa farm-

ers, most of whom live elsewhere. In the 1990s, the city of Barstow sued the Mojave Water Agency and all heavy water pumpers in the Mojave River System. The alfalfa farmers, though small in number, were large in political power, and had controlled that agency for many years. The lawsuit brought by the city of Barstow was heard outside this county, in Riverside County, with the idea that that would eliminate local politics, but that wasn't successful. Judge Kaiser had the case for a number of years, and was very accommodating to the alfalfa farmers' interests. The judgment after trial was filed in Riverside Superior Court on January 10, 1996. It was a stipulated judgment wherein all heavy pumpers agreed to its terms in writing, except for a handful that sought additional rights outside the stipulated judgment, known, we believe as the Cardoza Group. The main condition of the judgment, vis-à-vis the Baja Subarea, was biological resource mitigation. It was designed to protect the groundwater levels at the Camp Cady Fish & Game (now Fish & Wildlife) Preserve, which consists of 1,870 acres along the Mojave

River in the Baja Subarea, in Newberry Springs. If the groundwater fell below the "trigger" level established, then 5 percent annual rampdowns in the Baja Subarea were to continue annually, until the ground water rose. This condition of the stipulated judgment has not been strictly enforced. Whether the fault lies with the judge or the Mojave Water Agency for this delinquency, we are not sure."

Berkman's letter continues, "The Fish & Wildlife Agency is experimenting with recovery plans for its property, but in our opinion, its efforts are too late. The vegetation is dying off and sand dunes are taking over. Had the Mojave Water Agency and the court taken their responsibilities more seriously, this state preserve probably could have been saved. As part of the stipulated judgment, the Mojave Water Agency handed out base production allowances (rights to pump water based on historical use over a five year period) like candy, without any regard as to legitimacy. This is causing problems now because all those illegitimate water rights are available for lease for about \$25 per acre-foot per year by the alfalfa farmers, who use those leased (and largely bogus) rights to continue overdrafting the Baja Subarea. Complaints to the Mojave Water Agency regarding parties pumping over 10 acre-feet of water annually without any right to do so have reportedly been entirely ignored, with a comment that they are 'not an enforcement agency.'"

Furthermore, according to Berkman, "We believe, based upon a legislative counsel's opinion, that the Mojave Water Agency has the authority to impose a pump tax on heavy water pumpers in the Baja Subarea, to purchase replenishment water, without the permission of the Riverside Court, but they show no inclination to do so."

Continued on Page 11

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Warren Resigns As Upland Assistant Public Works Director from front page

Los Angeles and attended Locke High School. She graduated from Occidental College with a degree in political science and urban studies. She began working for the city of Upland in the 1990s, while living in the city of Fontana, where she was a member of the Village of Heritage Citizens Landscaping Committee and was later a member of the city of Fontana General Plan Advisory Committee. She was appointed

to the city council in Fontana in 2002 and elected in her own right to that position twice. She has been Fontana mayor since 2010.

Her political position in Fontana did not hurt her professional advancement in Upland, where she acceded to the assistant public works director. A Republican, she became an ally of former Upland Mayor John Pomierski, endorsing him in his reelection bids and receiving his endorsements in her political efforts. She played a central role in the 2009 effort by Pomierski to censure then-Upland city councilman Ray

Musser when he made remarks about the good behavior of the crowd at the first Barack Obama inauguration which were deemed insensitive and insulting to African-Americans by some. Both Pomierski, who had been opposed by Musser in the 2004 and 2008 elections, and Warren suggested that Musser had disgraced himself and the city and that he should resign. The tables turned, however, when Pomierski was indicted by a federal grand jury on political corruption charges in 2011. Musser was chosen by his colleagues to replace Pomierski after his resigna-

tion.

Warren survived Musser's elevation to mayor, but there were recurrent calls for her termination, fueled by suggestions that she had been given the assistant public works director post on the basis of her standing as an elected official and her association with Pomierski rather than her ability.

Last year, with grumblings throughout the Upland community suggesting that a thorough housecleaning at City Hall would soon be under way, Warren began exploring her various options and gauging what the city would do

to help her in leaving the city's employ, in particular by providing her with an enhanced severance package. This was prompted in part by the consideration that the city was making cuts in the public works department that were increasing the work load on remaining staff. According to one knowledgeable City Hall source, Warren was informed that the city was not in a position to provide any early retirement inducements, leading to her making a "decision to go out on her own terms."

Former Upland City Manager Stephen Dunn told the *Sentinel* "Acqua-

netta was a vital resource for the operations of the public works department. Her know-how, some of which was a result of her having served as an elected official in Fontana, proved valuable and she used her knowledge to do whatever it took for Upland. There were people who were critical because she held two government positions and was wearing two hats, but I know that while she was serving on regional government boards in her capacity as mayor of Fontana she would put a good word in for Upland at the same time."

Frank Guzman

Attorney at Law

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Needles Fire Station To Be Built Using Spring Valley Lake Station Template from front page

Development Block Grant funding of \$1,043,084.

Alban said, "If additional funding is required, it is anticipated that Community Development Block Grant funding will be requested. Necessary budget adjustments will

be requested at the time of the award of the construction contract and included in a future quarterly budget report presented to the board of supervisors for approval."

The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District provides emergency services to the unincorporated region surrounding Needles, including the Interstate 40 and State Highway 95 corridors, Park Moabi, and the Colorado River recreation area. The San

Bernardino County Fire Protection District contracts with the city of Needles to provide emergency services and currently leases the facility located at 633 Front Street from the city for use as Fire Station No. 31. Built in 1953, the fire station is in need of updating and repair and is no longer adequate or large enough to support the needs of The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, according to Alban.

"A modern facility

with room for expansion of current and future services is needed in order to better serve the community," Alban said. "Completion of the new, larger and better equipped Needles Fire Station will enable County Fire to provide emergency services and maintain public safety to the expansive unincorporated region around Needles and fulfill its contract responsibility to the city."

On September 24, 2013, the board of supervisors approved the purchase of property located at 1113 East Broadway Street in Needles for this purpose. On January 24, 2012, the board of supervisors approved a design and construction services contract with STK Architecture, Inc. for the Spring Valley Lake Fire Station Project. The design was a site adaptation of a design that had previously been developed for a future fire station which was to be located in the city of Needles. Included in that board item

was the stated intention of the architecture and engineering department and the county fire division to utilize and adapt the design developed by STK for future fire stations with similar requirements. The design services approved by the board this week will be primarily a site adaptation of the existing fire station design, and will include the necessary civil engineering and landscape design specific to the new site, as well as any code upgrades that have occurred since the last plan review and approval.

According to Alban, "Adapting standard designs and construction processes allows the county to realize substantial savings in the design of future fire stations."

Accordingly, Alban recommended awarding the design and construction administration contract in the amount of \$230,458 to STK utilizing and adapting the design previously de-

veloped and completed by STK for the Spring Valley Lake Fire Station Project.

Agreements for design and construction administration services typically run concurrent with the project timeline. Actual construction of the fire station is expected to commence in August 2015 and is anticipated to be completed in late summer 2016.

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SBIAA Ups Lease Cost For Sheriff's Aviation Facility *from front page*

national Airport.

San Bernardino International Airport is located on the grounds of the former Norton Air Force Base, which is located at the confluence of the San Bernardino, Highland, Loma Linda and Redlands boundaries. The San Bernardino International Airport Authority is a joint powers agency, made up of the cities of San Bernardino, Loma Linda, Highland and Colton and the county of

San Bernardino, which is committed to the conversion of the facility to civilian aviation use.

On February 25, 2014, the county board of supervisors approved a \$9.6 million, twenty-five year lease with the San Bernardino International Airport Authority for a new aviation facility for the sheriff consisting of approximately 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 the San Bernardino Inter-

national Airport based on the need to relocate from the now closed Rialto Municipal Airport and to provide additional hangar and office space to accommodate the expanded aviation needs of the sheriff's department.

According to Thompson, "On November 7, 2014, the San Bernardino International Airport Authority received construction bids for the project. The San Bernardino International Airport Authority (SBIAA) indicated that the bids reflected increased costs that resulted from additional requirements by the city of San Ber-

nardino related to the fire suppression systems; and additional requirements required by the Federal Aviation Administration related to the heliport designation. SBIAA and county staff reviewed the bids and the projected soft costs, and recommend that the project construction budget (including a contingency allowance) be revised as follows: construction \$9,750,000; construction contingency \$975,000; and soft costs (design, permits and inspection) \$1,595,000, for a budget total of \$12,320,000.

On December 17, 2014, the SBIAA board

approved the amendments to both the lease agreement and the work letter agreement based on the revised project budget.

The total rent for the initial twenty-five year lease term for the sheriff's department aviation facilities to be leased from San Bernardino International Airport Authority is \$12,320,000, and will be paid in full, for the entire lease term, upon completion of the construction of the facilities. The funding sources are \$4,121,878 from the city of Rialto; \$1 million from the sheriff's state asset seizure

funds; \$7,198,122 from discretionary capital in the county general fund, from which \$4,478,122 was appropriated on a vote of the board of supervisors in the 2013-14 capital improvement program budget, \$1,456,440 was taken out of excess funding from the sheriff's crime lab expansion project, \$1,063,560 was provided from the cancellation of the High Desert Juvenile Detention Center Secondary

Water Source Project, and \$200,000 from savings on the High Desert Detention Center expansion project.

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Bogman Changes Attorney And Seeks Jury Trial In Upland Brown Lawn Case

On Friday January 8, Fernand Bogman, an Upland resident who is being prosecuted criminally for complying with Governor Jerry Brown's suggestion that people should go "Brown" on their lawns during the drought, refused to accept a plea bargain offered by the city's prosecutor which Mr. Bogman and his attorney feel would have compro-

mised his principles.

Until today Mr. Bogman was being defended by the San Bernardino County's Public Defender but discharged them from his case and replaced the Law Office Of Marc E. Grossman as his counsel. Michael P. Vollandt, the Managing Attorney from Mr. Grossman's law firm, will be defending Mr. Bogman when the case

goes to trial.

In a last ditch effort by the City, Upland Prosecutor Mr. Danny Peelman made an offer to Mr. Bogman to pay to the City \$1,000.00 by Civil Comprise (PC 1377) or face trial

Mr. Bogman, who maintains it is immoral to "pour buckets and buckets of water on your lawn during a drought," refused that offer, ex-

pressing confidence in his lawyer's ability to convince a jury that he is acting responsibly and in compliance with the law.

Mr. Bogman is charged with a criminal misdemeanor which could land him in jail for up to six months for not watering his lawn. It goes brown but when the rains occur the lawn is green and then goes brown when the weather chang-

es. Bogman, Grossman and many others do not believe aesthetics should be a subject of a criminal complaint.

"There has been a history of corruption within the City of Upland resulting in other city residents being charged and convicted by crimes we do not believe they were guilty of," said Vollandt. "The City continues to use Draconian meth-

ods of forcing citizens to violate the policies of the State of California, which has mandated reasonable conservation measures intended to alleviate the severity of the three year old drought. The city wants to put his citizens in jail if they conserve water by not watering their lawn. We believe a jury of Mr. Bogman's peers will feel differently if they are given access to the facts of this case."

The Count... from page 3

for the mouths of hungry students, beginning in either 1999 or 2000...

I happen to know that if the district had wanted to do so, it could have insisted on a much more accurate accounting. And achieving a more exact number would have been worthwhile. Judith Oakes was married to Jack Oakes, a former principal of Ramona-Allesandro Elementary School in San Bernardino, who died as the result of injuries he sustained in an off-road accident in 2010. That

Jack Oakes did not have an inkling about what his wife was up to strains credulity. What implication does this have for the San Bernardino City Unified School District?

Oakes at last bowed to the inevitable and entered a guilty plea on December 4, short of going to trial. She has spent the last 17 months in jail and came before Judge Colin J. Bilash, a former deputy district attorney, for sentencing on Thursday...

At that sentencing hearing, Rialto Unified School District Associate Superintendent Tom Haldorsen stated that \$3 million in district

funds are indeed unaccounted for since 2001 and that it is a logical assumption Oakes is the party responsible for that money's disappearance. Needs no ghost come from the grave, My Lord, to tell us this...

Judge Bilash made a determination that she merited a sentence of five years, given that eight of the other charges against her had been dropped as a consequence of last month's plea deal in which she acknowledged stealing the \$1.8 million. Judge Bilash further sentenced her to make \$1.8 million in restitution payments. The catch? Officers of the law have

apparently scoured, to the extent they can, her known bank accounts and other holdings. This apparently entailed some level of cooperation from her, but it is unknown, at least to this observer, how complete that cooperation has been. What is known is that within the last fortnight she has disgorged \$339,002.08, culled from her accounts and holdings. What I do not know, and what I suspect no one knows other than Judith Oakes, is what she has hidden and where it is hidden. Does she have accounts in her own or a different name in any banks or institutions? Does she have

a security deposit box? How many? Where are they? What investments has she made?

Under the terms of what Judge Bilash set down for her, Judith Oakes will be on probation of three years after she leaves incarceration. With time served and credit for good behavior, she could be released as early as July of 2017. If that is the case, she will be 52 years old when she is released. I wish I was 52 again...

Judge Bilash's restitution order further requires that she begin paying down on the \$1,460,997.92 she still owes, starting within 60

days of leaving custody, at no less than \$150 per month. If she stays current on her suit, she will have paid back her debt to society in full in the year A.D. 2853. That does not include interest...

Like my friend said, "They have the wrong people in charge!" Well, except for Mohammed Islam. The Rialto Unified School District still refers to him as the "interim" superintendent. Let me go on record as saying they should drop the "interim" from his title...

LueLLa G. Hairston, Esq.

Family Law Attorney

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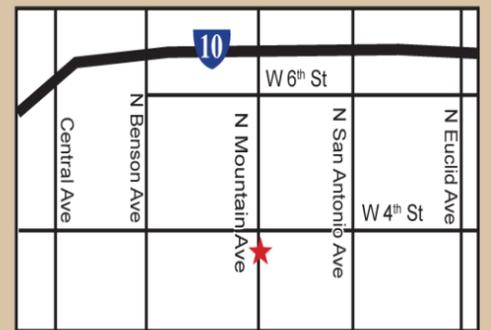
Coroner case #701500235 Lisa Ann Cimbaluk, age 35 years, was last seen at her parent's home in Irvine (Orange County), on Monday morning, December 29, 2014. She was reported missing to the Irvine Police Department the following day. On January 4, 2015, Cimbaluk's vehicle was found parked at a trailhead in the Fawnskin area, on the north side of the Big Bear Lake. San Bernardino County Sheriff Search and Rescue scoured the trails and shoreline of the lake. On Thursday, January 8, 2015, at about 9:38 AM, Cimbaluk was found in the lake, along the south shoreline. Examinations will be conducted in order to determine the cause of Cimbaluk's death. The investigation is being conducted the San Bernardino County Sheriff Department – Big Bear Station. [010915 0729 SY]

Coroner case #70150051 On 01/02/15, at 11:36 AM, the body of an infant boy was found next to a trash container in the 900 block of North 7th Street in Colton. Colton PD is handling the investigation. Anyone with information is asked to call Colton Police Department Detective Wilson at (909) 370-5021 or Deputy Hunter at (909) 387-2978. [01062014 1437 SY]

Coroner Case # 701500119 On 01/04/15, at 6:43 PM, 69 year-old Lucerne resident Alfred Moreau, was walking across Old Woman Springs Road when he was struck by a vehicle. Moreau was transported to an area hospital where he died from his injuries at 7:38 PM. CHP is handling the investigation. [010515 0400 TC]

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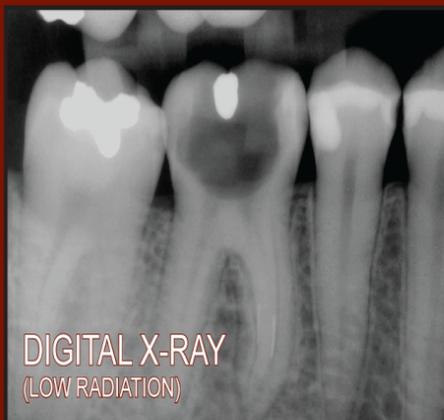
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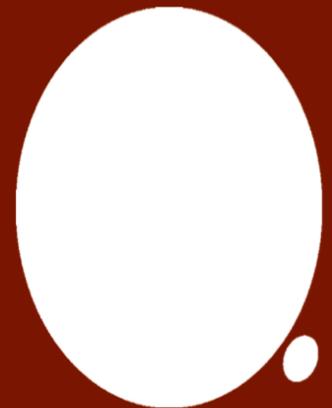
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Jefferson Hunt from page 5

non-Mormon] alike, for he was above petty distinctions. He deserves a large place in the memory of the citizens of San Bernardino, for he filled a large place in the early and vital events of the history of the town and of the county."

After his return with the Mormons to Salt Lake in 1858, Captain Hunt took a mail contract from Salt Lake to Humboldt. He also took up land in Utah and later secured a large ranch in Idaho. In 1860 he founded Hunsville a flourishing agricultural settlement near Ogden, Utah. He died at Oxford, Idaho in the spring of 1866.

Mrs. Hunt survived

him and died in 1897 at the home of her daughter Mrs. Sheldon Stoddard, in San Bernardino. Captain Hunt had eleven children, of whom four were yet living in 1904: Mrs. Nancy Daley, widow of Edward Day, and Mrs. Harriet Mayfield, of San Bernardino, as well as his sons and John and Gilbert of Arizona. Three daughters, Mrs. Nancy Daley, Mrs. Harriet Mayfield and Mrs. Sheldon Stoddard lived for most of their lives in San Bernardino. As of 1904, Hunt's grandchildren numbered 89, and according to Ingersoll, his great grandchildren numbered one hundred forty nine, and his great great grandchildren had reached seventeen as of 1904.

Hostilities Break Out Between Newberry Springs Community & Alfalfa Farmers

from page 6

Berkman then referenced the Baja Areawide Sustainability Plan, stating it "does not address in any serious way many years of basin overdrafting by alfalfa farming, nor does it offer any assurances in regard to water contamination issues from fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides. The Mojave Water Agency has been led down the primrose path by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the interests of their clients, the alfalfa farmers. An environmental tragedy is being played out before our eyes in Newberry Springs. We have lost confidence in the Mojave Water Agency."

On behalf of the California Environmental Quality Act NOW group, Berkman told Corwin, "We hope that you will

think it proper to somehow intercede in behalf of Newberry Springs."

In a letter dated December 31, 2014 from California Department of Fish & Wildlife Regional Manager Leslie MacNair to US. Department of Agriculture District Conservationist Holly Shiralipour, MacNair stated "It has been documented by the Mohave Water Agency as watermaster that groundwater pumping still exceeds the natural yield of the Baja Subarea by approximately 10,000 acre-feet and groundwater levels continue to decline in many parts of the basin."

According to the Blotter, unless the Mojave Water Agency and Judge Trask reverse course, the only recourse for Newberry Springs residents may consist of launching a lawsuit in federal court.

"The alfalfa farmers year-round unsustainable water pumping, and the seizing of the

The Desert Daisy is a flower common to the



Mojave Desert, as it is to much of the Southwest.

Its scientific name is the Chaenactis fremontii



tii, and uses common names such as Fremont's pincushion and the Desert pincushion. These are a species of annual wildflower in the daisy family, of the group Dicot and the family Asteraceae. Both the latter common name, and

the specific epithet are named for John C. Fremont, one of the founders of the state of California.



Chaenactis fremontii grows in sandy and gravelly soils in the deserts and low mountains.

Typically, Chaenac-



tis fremontii grow in patches of long stems which are green when

new and turn red with age. They may branch to extend into a multitude of tall, almost naked stems. These flowers

spread out to cover an area of two feet. The flower rays are narrow and pale in color. They



bloom in the early to mid spring, from March to May.

They crave full sun



exposure and thrive at elevations from 0 - 4,000 Feet. Their typical habitat involves sandy and gravelly soils or hillsides, deserts, and low mountains.

groundwater of others without compensation, is a basic violation of personal property rights that probably should be addressed through a class action in federal court," the Blotter states. "A court may rule that exercising one's state license to pump must be reasonable and that unsustainable pumping that seriously injures the rights of other citizens is not reasonable. In short, while the state's new Sustainable Groundwater Management Act may slowly cause a slowing in groundwater extraction, a federal class action relief may be far quicker in remedying the overdraft and awarding restitution for the harm that alfalfa farmers have done to residential and nonresidential parcels within the Mojave Valley."

U.S. Department of Agriculture district conservationist Holly Shiralipour, whose agency has been accused by some Newberry Springs residents of being too toler-

ant of the alfalfa farmer's intensive water use, told the *Sentinel* that neither she nor Chuck Bell, the president of the Mojave Desert Resource Conservation District, would comment on the drought situation in Newberry Springs or the propriety of limiting crop irrigation in response to it.

Joe Harter, who owns one of the largest alfalfa farming operations in Newberry Springs, said, "There is an adjudication process that is ongoing and I'd prefer not to comment or get involved in making a statement. I would only say that we are dealing with adjudicated rights, so there is a history of alfalfa farming being an acceptable use of water."

Robert Kasner, the single largest Alfalfa farmer in Newberry Springs, told the *Sentinel*, "I do know that there are people who live in the area who have taken up a cause, so to speak, to save the world. Part of the problem is

that if all the farming stopped it wouldn't relieve a thing. The water would not come back to the level it was thirty or forty years ago. It is impossible to go back in time. The neighborhood group is not considering that wells built so many years ago are not as deep and they also tend to get clogged. Because the water table has dropped considerably from where it was, even if we re-

turn to a safe yield, their wells will still be dry because they are not deep enough. Those wells worked a long time ago because water was closer to the surface. That is no longer the case."

Kasner said the crusade against alfalfa farmers was misguided because, he insisted, farming assists in maintaining the ecology of

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Dr. Dean Kerr
Palmer Chiropractor



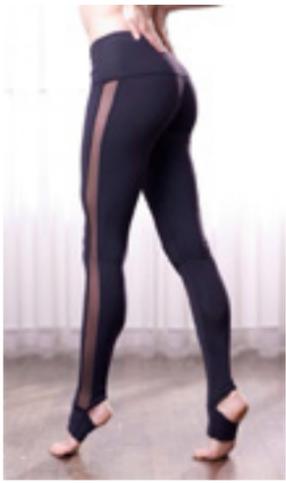
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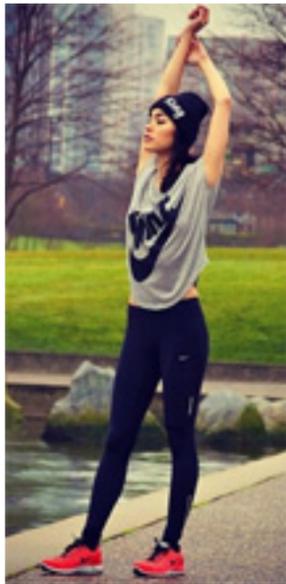
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California Style Style Around The Gym

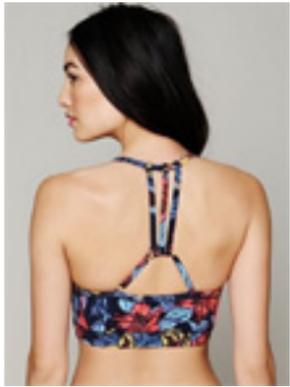
By Grace Bernal



Happy New Year! Now that the holidays are officially over, you are probably gearing up



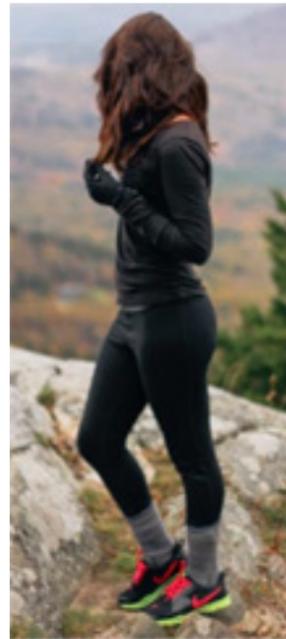
with all the tennis shoes styles, tights, sweaters, and tops. All this helps pep up a workout appetite. You can find cute workout pieces just about anywhere, from Nordstrom to Walmart. My favorite place to score on workout pieces lately is TJMax. They seem to have the best deals on



to burn off the extra calories. First things first: zero in on your workout outfit. Some of the workout outfits nowadays are fun to wear all day long and they're comfortable enough for the weather. The creativity is on point



Yoga pants, riding, and workout pants, along with a variety of color-



ful sports bras, and tops. You can mix and match and come out with a fun outfit each time you go

there. Once you try it, you'll be happy you did. If you're looking to get in shape, now is the time to get your pieces ready because spring will be here before you know it and you want to be ready for the sun. Whatever exercise you're taking on this season, whether its cycling, yoga, zumba, running, or lifting, have fun looking stylish doing it. Get to the gym in



style and work hard to get your body fit. Until next week, have fun and keep moving forward.

"I like wet hair and sweatpants. I like sneakers and ponytails."
~Chris Evans



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

Hostilities Break Out Between Newberry Springs Community & Alfalfa Farmers from page 11

the desert rather than harming it.

"If we stop farming it would create a dust bowl," he said. "The state has looked at the situation in north of us, in the [San Joaquin] Valley. Where farming ended, there was tremendous erosion, the soil was neglected and unanchored

and the top soil blew away as dust. I am not trying to offend anyone but some people think in the most simple of terms and that if the farmers go away the problem will go away. In fact, that would be the worst thing that could happen."

Continued alfalfa farming fits within the economic and environmental context of the Mojave Desert, Kasner said.

"The state water resources board hired hydrologists and engineers

to determine if the desert is being overpumped by a huge amount as has been claimed. The state has indicated there is a happy medium between sustaining water for farming and a safe yield. The state has determined farming is hugely important with respect to the desert."

Kasner said he and the other farmers in the area have played by the rules and now others want to change the terms of the game they have abided by for so long.

"In 1990, the Mojave Water Agency created a water adjudication process," Kasner said. "They did a five year survey and determined water usage among the well owners throughout the Mojave Basin. People were given a water allotment based on their prior

use. Those who got water rights continued to farm and the Mojave Water Agency ramped down on the allotment each well owner had been given to reach what is regarded as a safe yield, so that what is extract is replaced by mother nature. In my case, I waited until after

the adjudication to buy my land. Once you have property rights and water rights and you have bought them fair and square, it is ridiculous that someone wants to take them away from you."



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