

**Idyllwild  
Town Crier**

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Phone: (951) 659-2145  
or toll-free: 1-888-535-6663  
Fax: (951) 659-2071  
E-mail: itc@towncrier.com  
Web site: www.towncrier.com

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**Contributors:**  
Betty Bailey • Chris Fisher  
Dick Hadik • Steve Hudson  
Cihan Sesen • Marshall Smith  
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## OUT LOUD

### Suspicious ...



I'm suspicious about Idyllwild Fire's (IF) secretive pact with Garner Valley (GV) to provide back-up ambulance service. Not that GV deserves poor ambulance service, but IF's agreement with GV might dilute its medical services to other Hill residents.

Idy/PC homeowners pay property taxes for ambulance service. IF agreed with GV residents (who don't pay property taxes for IF services) and the county to provide back-up ambulance service to that community without telling its primary customers.

Here's how the deal works: GV's primary ambulance service, American Medical Response (AMR), comes from Anza. AMR covers a wide area, so if AMR responds to a call near Temecula and GV calls, IF responds to GV.

Who do you think takes first priority if IF gets a call from PC at the same time as from GV? I think it's GV. Here's why: If you ever need emergency and/or ambulance services, you also get billed for those services, along with paying property taxes. But bill collection in Idy/PC has been challenging at times. Since GV is a wealthier community than Idy/PC, successful collection in GV is more likely. Revenue vs. needs-driven.

Let me add to this vat of suspicion a conflict of interest muddled in secrecy: What actually went on at the GV negotiating table? Who knows since the clandestine talks resulted in a supposedly still-unsigned agreement floating around somewhere in county muck. One of those wealthy GV residents, Mark LaMont, not only sits on the GV Property Owners Association (GVPOA) board and helped negotiate the pact, but also is a full-time IF employee.

Why this pact's omission at any recent IF meeting? Luckily, we found out at a GVPOA meeting just before our reporter was ejected. Why was he ejected? Does it have something to do with the public knowledge now of IF's negative tactics and a paramedic who harnesses power in GV to remove the press so the public remains in the dark?

BECKY CLARK, EDITOR

## READERS WRITE

### Helpful tips

**EDITOR:**  
Ruth Radlauer's letter ("Water conservation," June 26, 2008), was one of the most helpful, succinct and encouraging items I have seen in any paper recently. I now have a bucket in my shower stall and a huge bottle in my kitchen sink.

Our water bill is normally shocking, and I know it's largely my letting the water run to get hot water or flat wasting water in some other unnecessary way.

Because I'm 100 years old and forget a lot, my wife, Penny, has me doing a walk around before bed to check all garden water and all lights off. Ruth's list might well be one of your "Sustainable Idy tips," periodically.

COL. BO BOTTOMLY  
PINE COVE

### Don't wall up Garner Valley

**EDITOR:**  
Editor Becky Clark was right on target with her recent editorial about the secrecy the new Garner Valley Association president is trying to create when she excluded the Town Crier reporter from our new board's first meeting.

By the president's pronouncement, she will arouse more suspicion about our community than the presumed value of trying to conceal our problems and differences from others nearby.

When neighbors build a fence or wall that is higher than normal, invariably people become curious and try to find out why. That's just human nature.

What have we got to hide? What are we scared of? I say nothing.

We're like any other community or group with concerns and problems we are trying to address and resolve. And when we do solve them, we'll undoubtedly have some new ones with which to

deal. Perhaps by then we will have learned that trying to build a wall to stifle and block information just doesn't work. Like the Berlin Wall, it will crumble.

VIC HOCHEE  
GARNER VALLEY

### The biggest water producer

**EDITOR:**  
I've read letters about saving water. Not only do we need to do this in our drought-ridden Idyllwild, but around the world and for the world.

The single most powerful thing we can all do is to stop eating animals and animal products. Here are some facts from John Robbins' book, "The Food Revolution." Here is the amount of water required to produce 1 pound of the following foods: for 1 pound each of lettuce and tomatoes, 23 gallons of water; potatoes, 24 gallons; wheat, 25 gallons; carrots, 33 gallons; apples, 49 gallons; chicken, 815 gallons; pork, 1,630 gallons; and beef, 5,214 gallons.

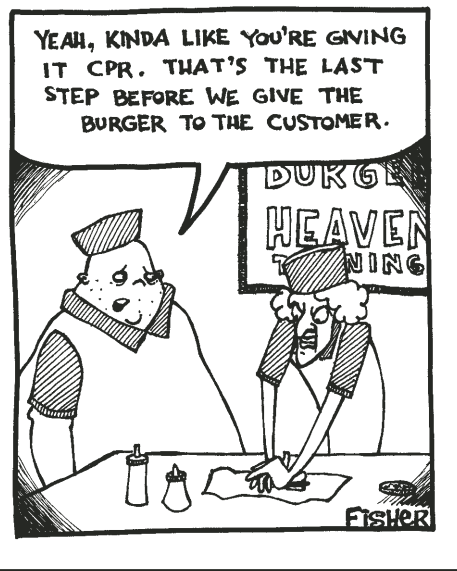
Marc Reiser, in "Cadillac Desert," says, "In California, the single biggest consumer of water is not Los Angeles. It's not the oil and chemical or defense industries. Nor is it the fields of grapes and tomatoes. It's irrigated pasture: grass grown in a near-desert climate for cows ... The West's water crisis — and many of its environmental problems as well — can be summed up, implausible as this may seem, in a single word: livestock."

Not only does not eating dead animal flesh, eggs and milk products save water, it saves our health and our lives. The leading killers of Americans are diseases caused by eating animals and animal products.

Of course, if we love animals, we don't want to have them suffer the way animals do who are killed for

## Mr. Funny Guy

by Chris Fisher



*In memory of John Marshall who died July 3, 2007, the Town Crier's cartoonist from 1996 to 2007.*

meat — in both the cruelty inflicted on them while they are being raised for these products and in the pain and terror they feel when being killed for them. Quitting animal products also makes it more likely that starving people all over the world can be fed, because water and grain can be used to feed them, rather than feeding animals who will be killed for meat. And raising and killing animals to eat their products and their bodies is a huge polluter of our air [See Letters, next page](#)

### How to get a letter published

The Town Crier welcomes letters reflecting all opinions. Letters should be concise and to the point. They should be no longer than 400 words. Letters must be typewritten, double-spaced and in upper/lower case (not in all caps). Letters must be signed (unless e-mailed) and must be identified with the writer's name, address and weekday phone number.

Exceptions: Anonymous letters will not be accepted. Let-

ters of thanks are not accepted. A special advertising rate is available for thank-you letters. Political letters cost 10 cents per word.

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