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HILL NEWS

Missing PCT hiker
 Nicolas Rados, a veteran with PTSD, is the second missing PCT hiker in this area in less than two years ...
PAGE A2

Flowers of the forest
 Idyllwild loses Lee Ralstin, 102, (correction on birth year) Donn Schoenmann ...
PAGE A3

IFPD resignation
 Idyllwild Fire commissioner Jeannine Charles-Stiggall resigns for health reasons ...
PAGE A3

Prescribed burn
 Signs explaining a prescribed burn were placed along Highway 74 in Garner Valley early this week. The burn focused on the Thomas Mountain area ...
PAGE A2


HAPPENINGS

Eye of the Artist
 Art Alliance of Idyllwild's annual judged art event to be held at Town Hall this Saturday. Judge Jean Bradley (shown) of Palm Springs ...
PAGE B1

Business changes
 Idyology shakes things up with new menus and hours, and a new arcade and home-work lounge, Mountain Mania, opens in The Fort. Also read about the happenings and changes at the Historic Hemet Theatre ...
PAGE B3

Member-supported
 TC updates and continues the appeal ...
PAGE A4

Member Supported



Idyllwild Town Crier \$1

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VOL. 73 NO. 14 **IDYLLWILD, CA** **THURS., APRIL 5, 2018**

A&E Calendar.....B7 Classifieds.....B4 Games.....B5 Past Tense.....B7 Service DirectoryB6
 Churches.....B8 Community Calendar.....A7 OpinionA4 Public Notices.....A6 Weather.....A2

Helter-skelter prices at the pump provoke mixed reactions

BY DEBRA VARNADO
 CORRESPONDENT

Californians already pay more on average for gasoline than motorists in other states. Now they're watching as prices spiral upward to levels not seen in three years.

Figures released by the state Energy Commission show that the price paid by Southern Californians is dramatically higher than the national average of \$2.65 for a gallon of regular gasoline.

In the Los Angeles-Long Beach area, the Auto Club of Southern California reports the average price for self-serve regular was \$3.56 as of

March 29. The statewide average was \$3.49. "The upward price pressure is building," analysts wrote.

Riverside County drivers paid \$3.47 a gallon, just under the statewide average.

The Idyllwild Town Crier reporter recorded local gas prices March 22 to 27. In Idyllwild, a gallon of regular sold for \$3.70; in Pine Cove and Mountain Center, \$3.30. Prices moved upward toward the Easter holiday at some local stations.

"California is usually number one or two in the country [in terms of gas prices]," Auto Club Communications Manager Jeffrey Spring said. "Drivers

See Pump, page A8



Gas being pumped at a station on the Hill.
 PHOTO BY DEBRA VARNADO

Does county risk injured lives ignoring IFPD's medical response capability?

Fire commission thinks so

BY JP CRUMRINE
 NEWS EDITOR

Idyllwild Fire Chief Patrick Reitz and the fire commission are concerned, actually upset, over Riverside County's inability, perhaps unwillingness, to employ the "closest-available unit" policy.

The intent of this policy is to send the closest-available medical unit whenever a medical incident occurs that requires first responders. Reitz has stressed that the American Medical Response unit in Pine Cove is the closest for Pine Cove residents. If it is already responding to a call, Idyllwild Fire may be summoned.

The Idyllwild Fire Department has served the district since before 1981 when the state enacted medical-emergency-service laws. Consequently, the fire department has an exclusive right to serve this district. But its ex-

clusivity does not apply to the rest of the Hill.

AMR bid and won the contract to serve Riverside County. Pine Cove is outside the IFD exclusive zone, which is why the county has AMR providing ambulance service to that area.

However, areas to the east and south, such as Mountain Center and Garner Valley, are outside the IFD exclusive area, and are considered non-exclusive. Consequently, IFD may be the closest-available unit when a medical emergency occurs, and the chief and commission argue they should be dispatched to those calls.

If time is critical in an emergency, then the closest unit could be vital for the patient's or victim's survival. And the unwillingness or failure to employ this policy is an issue the commission will take up with the Board of Supervisors.

Reitz told the commission that twice last week, a traffic collision on Highway 74 resulted in injuries that required medical response.

Both times, IFD was the closest unit, drove to the scene and was told to "stand down, this isn't your jurisdiction," Reitz said.

"This has got to stop, it makes no common sense," he lamented to the commission.

The commission agreed with Reitz and directed Commission President Rhonda Andrewson to send the supervisors a letter objecting to these actions.

"We're not replacing AMR in Pine Cove," said Commissioner Jerry Buchanan. "We're often the closer unit, but we can't help if dispatch doesn't tell us. The patient could be a good citizen of Idyllwild, or family or friends.

"If they don't look at human life, it's a problem and I'm appalled," he added.

Then Commissioner Jeannine Charles-Stiggall summed up the issue to the commission, "This not about money, but about people's lives."

JP Crumrine can be reached at jp@towncrier.com.

Fire commission to hold workshop on possible parcel-fee increase

Reserve fund created

BY JP CRUMRINE
 NEWS EDITOR

During its March 27 meeting, the Idyllwild Fire Protection District commission set a workshop next month to look at revenue sources, approved two new policies and revised an existing policy.

Reporting for the commission's ad-hoc committee on parcel fees and a possible tax measure, Commissioner Henry Sawicki provided his colleagues with a brief summary of the committee's thoughts and findings.

"[These are] suggestions on what might be beneficial to get a parcel fee approved," he said.

For example, the committee recommended that to achieve a successful tax measure, efforts such as public

See Parcel-fee, page A7



As dawn arrives on Easter morning, Idyllwild's annual Sunrise Service begins. Community members, from various local churches, gather for singing at Inspiration Point.
 PHOTO BY JOHN DRAKE

Idyllwild Town Crier



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Kids' Corner

Automotive Word Find

Find the hidden words in the puzzle.

BRAKE	IGNITION	STEERING
DRIVE	MECHANIC	TIRES
GAS	OIL	TUNE-UP
HEADLIGHTS	ROADS	VEHICLE

E L C I H E V Z I Q T M
 S H E A D L I G H T S E
 Q T C P S C N Y E K V C
 R C E E U I U O K N S H
 E O R E T E I T A M S A
 S I A I R L N R R L Y N
 T W O D E I H U B L P I
 J N R P S G N K T W K C
 D R I V E Z U G E J V P
 F F R G B A I U L S B M
 B C L A V Q U G Y X L C
 I K H S W N O V N A A Y

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

LOI NCAHEG

Answer: Oil Change

New Word

TRAFFIC

vehicles moving on a roadway

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Fuel
SPANISH: Combustible
ITALIAN: Carburante
FRENCH: Carburant
GERMAN: Kraftstoff

THIS DAY IN...

HISTORY

- **1293:** ROBERT WINCHELSEY LEAVES ENGLAND FOR ROME TO BE CONSECRATED AS ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.
- **1891:** THE WRIGLEY COMPANY IS FOUNDED IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.
- **1976:** STEVE JOBS, STEVE WOZNIAC AND RONALD WAYNE FORM APPLE INC.

GET THE PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: HEADLIGHT

PEOPLE FACT!

THESE SAFETY DEVICES ARE NOW WORN BY MORE THAN 84% OF PEOPLE WHO TRAVEL IN CARS, COMPARED TO 14% JUST 30 YEARS AGO.

ANSWER: SEAT BELTS



Above: The Medal Winners — Gold Medalists (top level, center): **Maraja Kelly, Preston Pino, Lilyan Easley and Seth White.** Silver Medalists (right): **Rene Hernandez, Colby Sonnier, Hunter Stewart and Nayla Lopez.** Bronze Medalists (left): **Sivoney Garcia, Eddy Rincon, Skyler Kraemer and Killigan Tschuur.**
 PHOTOS BY JACK CLARK

Maraja Kelly (far left and closeup, below) has good reason to smile. Her teammate **Preston Pino** (right) just scored off her mid-court steal and assist.



Baseball

Mike Holato of Town Hall gave this report on Town Hall Youth Co-ed Baseball.
 Signup for baseball through Friday, April 6, at Town Hall.

Basketball

Mike Holato of Town Hall gave this report on Town Hall Adult Basketball.
 Adult Basketball results:
 White defeated Green 21-18, 21-8, 8-21.
 Red defeated Yellow 4-21, 21-18, 21-12.
 Black defeated Blue 25-22, 21-16, forfeit.
 Yellow defeated Black 21-8, 21-18, 21-17.
 Blue defeated White 21-12, 21-10, 9-21.
 Red defeated Green 21-17, 21-15, 19-22.
 White defeated Red by forfeit.
 Black defeated Green 21-13, 21-14, 19-22.
 Yellow defeated Blue 21-14, 21-16, forfeit.
 Games resume April 9 after spring break.

Standings	Wins	Losses
Brian Yellow	4	1
Buddy Black	3	2
Derrick Blue	3	2
Noah Red	3	2
Colin White	2	3
Matt Green	0	5

Volleyball

Mike Holato of Town Hall gave this report on recent Youth Volleyball games.

Games
 There were no Youth Volleyball games this week, just practice. Games will continue April 10 after spring break.
 Standings: Suburban Propane Tidal Waves 1-0; Village Market Net Ninjas 0-1.



Preston Pino puts one up and in off a break-away during the March Madness tournament at Idyllwild School Tuesday, March 27.

Churches & Spiritual Centers Directory of Idyllwild

Calvary Chapel Idyllwild
 To Know Jesus Christ & Make Him Known
 Meeting at 10 am Sundays at Tahquitz Pines Camp, 55251 S. Circle Drive
 Tuesday Bible Study
 Pastor Earl Somerville: 714-333-7493

Queen of Angels Roman Catholic Church
 54525 N. Circle Dr., P.O. Box 1106, Idyllwild, CA
 Father Charles E. Miller
 Mass Schedule: Tues.-Fri. 8:30 a.m.; Sat. 4 p.m.; Sun. 8 a.m. + 10 a.m.; Confession: Sat. 3:30 p.m. or by appt. 659-2708

Christian Science Church
 25970 Cedar St. at River Drive, 659-2511, Sunday school, 10 a.m.; Service 10 a.m.; Wednesday meeting, 7 p.m.
 Christian Science Reading Room, in church building, open to the public, Wednesday, 6-7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.-Noon.

Shiloh Christian Ministries
 ~ FULL GOSPEL ~
 54295 Village Center Dr.
 Pastors Wayne & LaDonna Slemo 659-2416
 Sunday Worship 10 am - Thurs. - Bible Study 6 pm
 Shiloh Christian Ministries announces the opening of their "Healing Prayer Room" on Dec. 3.

Cross Road 243 Christian Fellowship
 Pastor Wally Boer • 29375 Hwy. 243, Mountain Center
 Sundays at 10:00 am - Worship service
 Children's & Youth Ministries
 Weekly Bible Studies & Home Groups
 951-659-0097

Idyllwild Center for Spiritual Living
 54240 Ridgeview Dr., Ste. 104 (Courtyard Building)
 659-3464
 Classes - Weddings - Memorials
 Sunday service, 10:00 a.m.

Idyllwild Assembly of God
 Every Sunday at 10am
 Idyllwild Town Hall, 25925 Cedar Street
 (951) 581-0012 • Everyone is welcome!
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Idyllwild Bible Church
 25860 Highway 243, Pastor Tim Westcott
 A Family Friendly Bible Based Fellowship.
 Sunday Worship & Nursery Care, 9 a.m.
 Sunday Worship, Nursery Care & Sunday School, 10:45 a.m.
 Mid-week Bible Studies & Youth Groups
 Call Church Office for Information. 659-4775

St. Hugh's Episcopal Church
 An Anglican House of Prayer for all people
 Rev. Daniel Rondeau • Sunday Service, 10:00 am
 25525 Tahquitz Dr. (in Fern Valley off South Circle Dr.)
 Phone (951) 659-4471

Temple Har Shalom of Idyllwild
 Rabbi Malka Drucker
 Erev Shabbat: Friday April 13th, 6 PM
 Bar Mitzvah of Brenden Jackel
 Shabbat morning study session April 14th, 9:30 AM
 Services at St Hugh's - 951-468-0004 • Templeharshalomidyllwild.org

Obituary

Laveda "Lee" Ralstin
1915-2018

Laveda "Lee" Ralstin, 102, died Monday, March 5, 2018.

Born in Sulphur, Oklahoma, she made the journey to California with her father and eight siblings.

In her long lifetime, she saw the country go from horse and buggy to electric cars, from "snail mail" to email, airplanes to spaceships. Mother to Robert and James Myers, she worked at North American Aviation.

Lee was preceded in death by her son Robert, and her husband Lafe Ralstin.

Lee's roots were firmly planted on "The Mountain," having lived here for 56 years.

The family would like to invite you, her Idyllwild community, to join us in celebrating her life with a party at Fratello's from 2 to 4 p.m. Friday, April 6. Grandma loved their pizza and pasta, so help us raise a glass of wine, eat some great Italian food, and tell stories about this fabulous woman who has been so special to all of us.



Obituary

Donn Roderick Schoenmann
1937-2018

Donn Roderick Schoenmann of Mill Valley and Idyllwild passed away the morning of Thursday, March 22, at Marin General Hospital. Born Aug 2, 1937, in Glendale, he lived his life in both Southern and Northern California but kept strong ties to Iowa where his parents and generations before had settled.

Donn spent most of his professional career at Merrill Lynch in Los Angeles and San Francisco where he worked for 30 years until his battle with cancer forced his retirement. Faced with a daunting prognosis, with doctors predicting a remaining lifespan of six months, he survived another 25 years with his typical strong-willed determination.

During those years, he devoted his life to family and public service, serving in many philanthropic capacities — a trustee of the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles, the California Historical Society, the San Francisco Historical Society and the California Missions. He also spent many years actively supporting the Idyllwild Arts Academy as a trustee and governor of the Idyllwild Arts Foundation.

In the end he lost his battle with cancer, but only after many productive years that many said he wouldn't see.

He is survived by his wife Lynn; children Stuart (Charlotte), Celeste (Mark), Beth, Anna and Jason; brother Nick (Monica); and grandchildren Colette, Valerie, Evan, Genevieve and Gabriel; and was predeceased by daughter Valerie and granddaughter Christina.

Memorial services will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, April 7, at the Church of our Saviour in Mill Valley, and at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 12, at St. Hugh of Lincoln Episcopal Church in Idyllwild.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to any of the worthy causes Donn supported in his lifetime, including the Idyllwild Arts Foundation or the American Cancer Society.

Freedom from smoking clinic

The Hemet Unified School District is sponsoring a clinic to help attendees quit smoking at the Idyllwild Yoga Studio, 54445 North Circle Drive.

For questions about this free clinic, contact Valerie Velez at 951-765-5100, ext. 3509, or vvelez@hemetusd.org.

Collisions

Continued from page A2

A solo vehicle collision occurred on Highway 74, east of Bee Canyon Truck Trail, at 10:15 p.m. Thursday, March 29. This collision involved a 2017 Nissan Sentra. The driver is suspected to have been under the influence of alcohol and the investigation is ongoing.

There does not appear to have been any passengers and the driver, Sabrina Garcia, 25, of Hemet, was transported by American Medical Response to Riverside University Health Systems Medical Center with moderate injuries.

Idyllwild Fire Department responded to a solo-vehicle traffic collision on Saunders Meadow Road near Astrocamp reported at 2 a.m. Monday, April 2. According to witnesses, two occupants fled on foot from the VW Jetta before emergency personnel arrived on scene.

Charles-Stigall
resigns from IFPD
commission

By JP CRUMRINE
NEWS EDITOR

Another Idyllwild special-district director has stepped down from office because of health reasons.

Jeannine Charles-Stigall, commissioner of the Idyllwild Fire Protection District since 2009, submitted her resignation at the March 27 meeting, effective at the end of the meeting.

Charles-Stigall was elected to the commission in August 2009. She and Dr. Charles "Chip" Schelly and Ben Killingsworth easily defeated three incumbent commissioners. She was re-elected in 2013.

At the time, the community was concerned about the district's finances, especially the failure to do audits for five years.

Speaking at last week's meeting, Charles-Stigall expressed both her sadness in leaving the board, which her colleagues clearly shared, as well as her pride in the commission's accomplishments during her eight-year tenure.

"We've gone through a lot and come so far since 2009," she said.

One of her proudest efforts was the appointment of Chief Patrick Reitz in 2012. "I'm grateful for the changes he made," she said. Then speaking directly to him, she added, "Your mind is always going. The district will flourish under your leadership."

Her colleagues and the chief all praised her contributions to the commission. She is currently serving as secretary and served twice as president. She was first elected president in January 2010, but resigned as president in November yet remained on the commission. She was again chosen president in November 2011 and served through December 2013.

The commission plans to appoint a replacement for Charles-Stigall at its April 27 meeting.

Reitz stated that interested applicants should submit both letters of interest and résumés by Wednesday, April 18. Applicants must be residents and registered to vote in the IFPD.

The commission will review the applicants at its April meeting and those applying should plan to be present to be interviewed and answer questions from the commissioners.

Charles-Stigall's term ends Dec. 7. Whomever the commission appoints must stand for election in the November election for a full, four-year term.

JP Crumrine can be reached at jp@towncrier.com.



File photo

'Waldenwild' performance/discussion

Independent recording artist Darien Martus of Idyllwild will perform all of the songs from his Grammy-nominated 2017 album "Waldenwild" starting at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 10, at the Idyllwild Library. The album, released in July 2017, charted at no. 5 Amazon Hot New Release in Folk and was Grammy-listed Best Folk Album in the 2018 Grammy Awards. All of the songs are performed with only acoustic guitar and vocals.

The songs, with music by Martus, are settings of words taken directly from "Walden" by Henry David Thoreau.

Following the 45-minute performance, Martus will host a discussion with focus on the relevance of "Walden" to contemporary society. The event is free and open to the public.



Under the direction of **Nochella Hunes**, forestry assistant for Cal Fire, **Bautista** crews and Caltrans worked together to remove trees and reduce the volume of other fuels along Highway 243 just south of town recently. Traffic was limited to one lane during their efforts.
PHOTO BY STEVEN KING



At about 10 p.m. Easter night, a 75-foot-by-75-foot vegetation fire in heavy brush broke out on Saunders Meadow Road, south of the Idyllwild Transfer Station. The Idyllwild Fire Department quickly contained it, said Chief Patrick Reitz. The U.S. Forest Service responded to the scene and the two agencies controlled the Saunders Fire. The Forest Service is investigating the cause of the fire.

PHOTO BY JENNY KIRCHNER

Mendoza, Argentina. Chad will have been in Argentina for 24 months in July. He has had 9 different missionary companions, from Peru, Ecuador, New Mexico, Brasil, Chile, Las Vegas, (Peru and Chile again) and Vista, CA. They have served in 5 different areas in Mendoza. We haven't seen or spoken to him except skying on Mother's day and Christmas. We do exchange emails once a week. The sacrifice has been worth it. He has focused all of his time serving the good people of Argentina and inviting them to come unto Christ. It changes and blesses families. When his service as a fulltime ordained Elder ends in July he plans to be in Idyllwild for a month before returning to his University studies at BYU Provo.

Chad was able to work before his mission to save all his expenses totaling over \$10,000. As his parents we couldn't be more pleased. He is a wonderful young man, this experience has strengthened his testimony and faith in Jesus Christ (ours as well) and increased our love as a family. He has made lifelong friends in Argentina and expanded his understanding of humanity half a world away. It is a knowledge that will shape the rest of his life and influence the most important decisions he will ever make. We appreciate all those who have wished him well. He will write again himself but we thought to sneak this in. If you would like to hear him speak at church or the library when he returns home please let us know.

Happy Easter from Charles and Leslie Schelly



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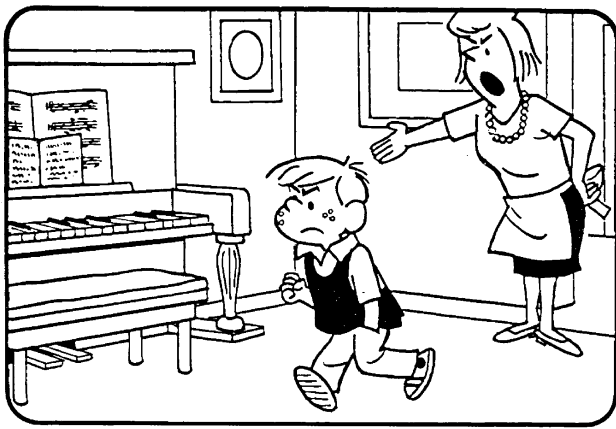
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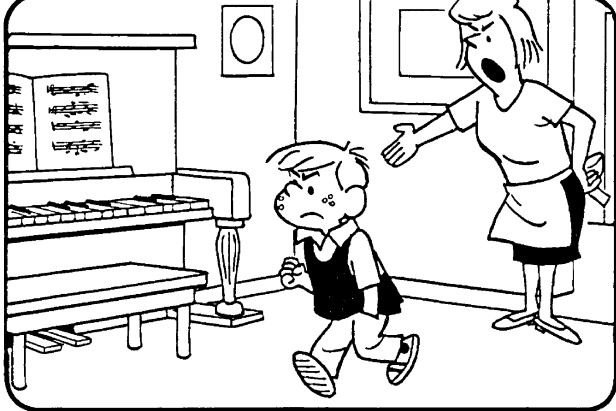
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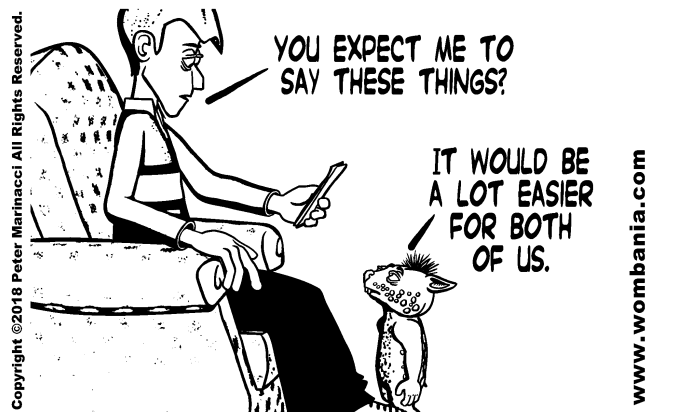
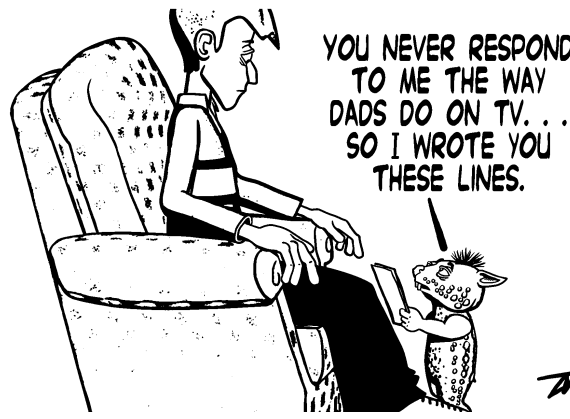


Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Songbook is missing. 2. Cushion is missing. 3. Picture is different. 4. Arm is moved. 5. Leg is shorter. 6. Beads are missing.

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by PETER MARINACCI

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By COLLEEN TRESSLER
CONSUMER EDUCATION SPECIALIST
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION



By BOBBIE GLASHEEN

They're at it again... tax scammers scheming new ways to steal personal information and money.

In the first scenario, identity thieves file a fake tax return and have the refund deposited into your bank account. The thieves then contact you, often by phone, and — posing as the IRS or debt collectors for the IRS — demand you return the money to the IRS. But following the thieves' instructions actually sends the money to them.

In another version, after you get that erroneous refund, you get an automated call, allegedly from the IRS, threatening you with criminal fraud charges, an arrest warrant and "blacklisting" of your Social Security number. The caller gives you a case number and a telephone number to call to return the refund.

Don't take the bait. If you or someone you know gets an unexpected tax refund, follow the guidance outlined by the IRS for how to return the funds to the agency at www.irs.gov/newsroom/scam-alert-irs-urges-taxpayers-to-watch-out-for-erroneous-refunds-beware-of-fake-calls-to-return-money-to-a-collection-agency. The steps for returning paper checks and direct deposits differ.

In a different scam, criminals are using imposter tax preparation sites and phone numbers to steal peoples' personal information. Here's how this scam works: You go online to find a tax preparation service to prepare and e-file your tax return. But instead of landing on a legitimate site, you misclick to a look-alike site created by scammers. The site looks real, and it's set up to collect personal information that can be used to commit fraud, including identity theft.

The FTC has these tips to fight tax identity theft:

- File your tax return early in the tax season, if you can.
- Use a secure internet connection if you file electronically, or mail your tax return directly from the post office.
- When using an online tax preparation service, look for the tax preparer identification number. The IRS requires all paid tax preparers to have one before filing any returns.
- To determine if a website is encrypted, look for https at the start of the web address (the "s" is for secure). Some websites use encryption only on the sign-in page, but if any part of your session isn't encrypted, your entire account could be vulnerable. Look for https on every page you visit, not just when you sign in.
- Ask tax preparers about their data security policies, and how they protect your information.
- Respond to all mail from the IRS as soon as possible.
- If tax identity theft happens to you, visit IdentityTheft.gov to report it to the FTC, file an Identity Theft Affidavit with the IRS electronically, and get a personal recovery plan.

For more information, check out our imposters webpage at www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0037-imposter-scams.

If you spot a scam, report it at ftc.gov/complaint. Your reports help the FTC and other law enforcement investigate scams and bring crooks to justice.

- Gradually increasing carbon prices will encourage people to produce and use more clean energy. In turn, clean energy will become cheaper as it is mass-produced, giving our society a gentle way to phase out carbon fuels.
- It will decrease our dependence on foreign oil, substituting low-carbon energy made in the U.S., and create an estimated 2.8 million jobs.

See Climate, page A7

Thank you, all!!



Citizens' Climate Lobby

Editor's note: This column will appear periodically and may be written by various residents.

By MELANIE LAMAGA

What if instead of worrying about all the problems climate change is creating, we focused on a simple solution?

What if instead of arguing, there was a way for people from across the political spectrum to work together to empower our representatives to act?

Personally, I'm tired of worrying, and I don't want to waste energy arguing. I just want to help solve this problem.

That's why I was glad to learn about Citizens' Climate Lobby. It has a legislative proposal for Carbon Fee and Dividend, and a proven methodology for working with Congress. CCL has also created the bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus, with 36 Republicans and 36 Democrats joining so far.

Why Idyllwild?

Idyllwild is in the 36th Congressional District, which also covers Hemet and the desert communities. Our congressman, Dr. Raul Ruiz, has not joined the CSC yet — perhaps because there hasn't been a CCL chapter in his district to ask him. That's where we come in. Together, we will work to show Rep. Ruiz that his constituents support him in making climate change solutions a priority.

Why Carbon Fee and Dividend?

A carbon fee would be imposed on producers and importers of carbon-based fuel. The fee starts very low and then gradually increases. One-hundred percent of the fee (the dividend) will be returned to each household in America. This plan is simple and inexpensive to implement.

Yes, carbon producers will raise their prices, but your dividend will offset the higher prices. Low consumers of carbon can even come out ahead. According to a study by Regional Economic Models, this system would enable us to reduce carbon emissions to 50 percent below 2012 levels over the first 20 years, and would have strong positive effects on the nation's economy and health.

Other benefits of Carbon Fee and Dividend:

Town Crier Membership Application:

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Sustaining Readers: \$100+ annually – \$ _____

All Memberships may be paid for by the month, if you wish, by using a pre-submitted credit card, debit card, or PayPal account with the addition of a 3% fee. Contact Becky at the Town Crier office to make arrangements. 951-659-2145.

PLEASE NOTE: The Town Crier is NOT an official "nonprofit organization." (For practical reasons involving the likelihood of local factional efforts to dominate a nonprofit's board so as to gain editorial control of the paper, it could not be.) Therefore, your Membership contributions are NOT tax deductible.

And we know our Members appreciate that we cannot allow the fact of their Memberships to control the paper's ongoing editorial policies and decisions.

If you previously had an uncompleted subscription before we went "free on the Hill," or if you have an off-Hill subscription now, you may contact Becky for credit against or an extension of your new Membership. But she currently is extending Memberships for subscription holders without being asked.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- ▶ Subscriptions to both printed and online issues of the Town Crier.
- ▶ Nice-looking "Idyllwild Town Crier Member" car-window decals, which we very much hope you will display so as to encourage others to join us.
- ▶ Recognition of your Membership in the Town Crier, unless you request anonymity.
- ▶ Occasional offers, special to our Members, from local businesses.
- ▶ Invitations to what we hope will be the annual Town Crier Membership Party.
- ▶ And most important and valuable of all: You will receive the satisfaction and pleasure of knowing that you are doing your part to support a real newspaper on our Hill for the benefit of our entire community.

Send completed form to Idyllwild Town Crier, P.O. Box 157, Idyllwild, CA 92549.
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On the Town

Local Dining, Arts & Entertainment

B SECTION IDYLLWILD, CA THURS., APRIL 5, 2018

Art Alliance of Idyllwild presents Eye of the Artist this Saturday

By DEBRA VARNADO
CORRESPONDENT

Art Alliance of Idyllwild members are still buzzing with excitement after last month's successful grand opening of their Art Visitors Center in the Courtyard Gallery located in the center of town at The Fort.

"Renting that space provides an affordable opportunity for members to have a 'home,'" AAI President Donna Elliot said, "and a place for visitors to learn what's happening in Idyllwild, and pick up maps, local magazines, brochures and cards from local businesses."

Now the artists are geared up for the Eye of the Artist crowd-pleaser from 5 to 9 p.m. Saturday, April 7, at Town Hall.

The Eye is not only one of AAI's largest fundraisers, — second only to the annual Art Walk and Wine Tasting in October — "It's more of a community party where locals enjoy the opportunity to meet the artists, win stunning artwork, socialize and support the arts," Elliot said. "Visitors from off the Hill and patrons of our local inns come, too, because of the event's reputation."

The Eye will feature the artistic magic of more than 50 artists who donated work to the silent auction, or to the raffle, which artwork will be judged. More than 60 pieces will be on display.

"Through the generosity of our artists, we hope to raise at least \$5,000, but hopefully more," Elliot said. "Over the last five years, our raffles have provided at least \$20,000 in funding to beneficiaries."

Among the grantees are the Associates of Idyllwild Arts and Idyllwild Arts Foundation; Idyllwild School PTA smARTS program; Idyllwild Arts Children's Dance Project; Home Schoolers Art Classes; the Tree Lighting Ceremony; the Ernie Maxwell collection at the Idyllwild Area Historical Society; theater projects; and local scholarship students.

"According to raffle regulations, 90 percent of what we earn from it will be given away in grants," Elliot said. "In addition to awarding grants, we fund artist workshops, art shows and public art projects; publicize alliance galleries and art hot spots; and support local organizations that actively encourage art-related projects."

AAI also promotes its patron inns through the Eye. Some Idyllwild restaurants donate food to it, and local musicians avail themselves of opportunities to perform. Other nonprofit recipients of grants are invited to help stage and to attend the event.

"Saturday's event will transform Town Hall into

an art gallery and warm, comfortable place where artists and guests will mingle, nibble delectable treats, sip wine or enjoy a craft beer," Elliot said. "And the mayors of Idyllwild may attend, too." Eric Yandell, Mark Lawrence and Jeff Watson of Stones Throw will treat guests to live music.

Art in various media, including watercolor, acrylics, oil, mixed-media, digital, leather, marble, wood and more, will be available.

Professional watercolor artist Jean Bradley of Palm Springs will judge the work included in the raffle, awarding first-, second- and third-place ribbons in four categories of art: 2-D; 3-D; wearable; and photography and digital.

Bradley has exhibited her paintings in one-person shows in New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Hawaii and California. International Artist Magazine published a 10-page feature article on her "Rhythm and Light" series. Her "Voluptuous Papayas" is on the Feb.-March 2006 cover.

"I have been painting practically my whole life," she said, "and I've been teaching for about 30 years. I love being inspired by art that is done well."

Elliot said AAI welcomes the generosity of non-members who donate items for the silent auction or to the raffle, but, "Their pieces will not be part of the work that Bradley will judge."

AAI owes its operating funds and philanthropy to a chance encounter with an "egg" almost 20 years ago. Co-founder Chris Trout attended a unique event in Waimea, Hawaii, where artists, architects and designers got together once a year to paint/decorate an egg.

"It had such a profound effect on her that she and Grace Songolo, the other alliance co-founder, adopted the concept and tailored it to Idyllwild," Elliot said. "Local artists were invited to decorate an egg — be it ostrich, emu, rhea, clay or other materials — and to donate their artwork to the event."



Watercolor artist Jean Bradley, judge for the Art Alliance of Idyllwild Eye of the Artist event.

PHOTO BY DEBRA VARNADO

"They were displayed in nests, voted on, raffled off and treasured by those who won them. Even the food was about eggs ... deviled, chocolate ..."

"Prior to the Eye, funds for artist member activities were non-existent," Elliot added. "The event was born out of creative inspiration, but it was also financial necessity that drove Chris and Grace to stage it."

For the price of a raffle ticket, art lovers may win a beautiful, original piece of art worth hundreds of dollars. The winning tickets will be drawn starting at 8 p.m. Highest bidders on silent auction items become

winners when the auction ends at 8 p.m. The theme of this year's event is "Visions of Unity," which may have a more societal impact as we consider environmental and political upheaval, Elliot said. "The theme is optional, but most artists enjoy the challenge of creating a new piece of art inspired by the theme."

AAI is dedicated to seeing Idyllwild become a nationally recognized fine arts center for education, creativity and exhibition. "We grow 'from strength to strength.' The current board is forward-thinking, always looking for opportunities for our members," Elliot said.

On May 6, AAI will offer mothers and daughters, fathers, sons and others the opportunity to create a scarf for each other in time for Mother's Day. Afternoon tea will be served.

The painted deer herd is being expanded and a "Herd Gathering" will be staged June 16 where all the painted deer may be seen together for the first and only time. Elliot urges the Idyllwild community to mark their calendars, and to buy a raffle ticket for a full-size, bronze-colored buck, which may be seen from time to time, "bounding around" the post office or the Art Visitors Center. The raffle winner will be drawn at the "Herd Gathering."

The Arts Visitors Center is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday to Monday. See event details at www.artidyllwild.org.

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Easter bunny visits the Hill



The kids are off across the field for this year's Easter Egg Hunt. The attraction to find Easter Eggs is competitive and many are seeking the "special golden egg" hidden on the Community Center playground. PHOTOS BY JOHN DRAKE



Hundreds of children, from toddlers to teens, joined Idyllwild's annual Easter Egg Hunt Saturday morning at the Community Center site.

On April 2, a film crew musters at Lake Hemet for filming of a commercial. The film crew utilized Idyllwild lodging and dining while working in the area. PHOTO BY STEVEN KING



The works of 15 artists, including chairs and artwork depicting chairs, were on display at an opening reception at Middle Ridge Winery Tasting Gallery on Saturday, March 31, and will continue through April 8. Some of the artists are students and faculty members at Idyllwild Arts. All proceeds will go to the Associates of the Idyllwild Arts Foundation for the benefit of the school. Collectors may view photographs of each of the items and bid on or purchase them at associatesofiaf.org/chairsforcharity. PHOTO BY TOM KLUZAK



On April 2, Mary Zimmerman read about caterpillars and butterflies to children at the library during the Monday storytime. PHOTO BY STEVEN KING



On March 30, the Great Suspenders performed at Idyology. Members of the group are (from left) Brian Goodhead, Laree Gibson, Erik Lingren and Roger Dutton. PHOTO BY STEVEN KING

Marshall Hawkins to speak

Idyllwild Arts Jazz Director Marshall Hawkins is the Spotlight on Leadership speaker at 10 a.m. Monday, April 9, at the Associates of Idyllwild Arts Foundation monthly meeting. The free event is open to the public and is in the Fireside Room in Nelson Dining Hall on campus.

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Breaking bread at Idyology

And new kids' arcade and homework lounge in the Fort

By HOLLY PARSONS
STAFF REPORTER

True to their promise, Idyology owners Kelli Cooper and Agatha Frank, in concert with Chef Jason Ramos, debuted three new menus Saturday, March 31. "From the Garden" and the new weekend breakfast menus include multitudes of gourmet and eclectic choices designed to entice culinary pilgrims.

An inaugural "Signature Cocktails" menu designed to add a little kick to the Hill beckons as well.

Spring menus will feature many fresh organic and unique selections such as a Summer Shrimp Salad and Gazpacho soup. "We always intended to offer seasonal options for our guests and since breakfast is boss on weekends, this menu is only available Saturday and Sundays from 8 a.m. to noon. Our homemade gourmet donuts are designed to entice guests to dive deeper into our traditional or decidedly nuevo breakfast choices," said Cooper. Luxury eats include a morning splash of Grits with Shrimp, Crab Benedict or Pork Belly Banh Mi.

Specialty drinks blend a broad range of popular mainstays into ultimate thirst quenchers such as Lemon Dropology or

Strawberry Mule. Cooper added, "Our staff are the heart and soul of everything we do and, frankly, our offerings couldn't rock without them." Summer hours begin Tuesday, April 10, with dinner served until 10 p.m. and appetizers until midnight, six days a week, closed Mondays.

"In addition to our policy of offering fresh organic ingredients wherever possible, finding ways to bring value to the community remains very important to us," said Cooper. "On Wednesday mornings, we open the premises to Idyllwild Art's film students for creative projects. Idyology is home to all of us and we want it to be a home to locals and guests alike."

"The vision was simple" said Mountain Mania Manager Juls Phillips. "We wanted to provide a safe, clean, dry, warm, stimulating, multi-purpose experience for kids." Mountain Mania is all that and more. Located on the ground floor of The Fort, this recently opened kids zone includes a classic ticket arcade with 20 interactive games and a prize-redemption area, plus a hang-out lounge to do homework with free Wi-Fi so kids can easily contact their parents.

"Special event offerings are in development for birthday parties and child-appropriate movie screenings; sitcoms and TV theme nights, and a live broadcast by Radio Idyllwild are also in the works," said Phillips.

"Fundraising for local children's programs will also find a home at Moun-



Thomas S. Thomas, 6, of Idyllwild, son of Greg Thomas, is a winner on Saturday at Mountain Mania. PHOTO BY HOLLY PARSONS

tain Mania," said Phillips. Organizations such as Thrive, owner Julie Steiger, are planning focused events to support Idyllwild children.

Perhaps the most dynamic element in the array of offerings is the manager herself. Phillips, a life-long Idyllwild resident, is intimately aware of the importance of providing local kids with safe, structured environments. A singer-songwriter by profession and a volun-

teer for Thrive, Phillips' passion for providing interactive support systems for kids is evident in the care she conveys for Idyllwild's future leaders.

The arcade and lounge are currently open after school Wednesday through Friday and weekends. Parents are invited to stop in for a tour and play a few games to soothe their inner child.

Holly Parsons can be reached at holly@towncrier.com.

A new century for the Historic Hemet Theatre

Built in 1921, the Historic Hemet Theatre is one of the oldest surviving movie houses in the country, according to CEO Susan Carrier. The first movie house in Hemet was built in 1913 across the street from the current theater where the Strawberry Bike Shop building stands. The theater was a vibrant cultural center of the community, bringing sights and sounds from around the world to a small farming town.

Then in 1918, a 6.8 magnitude earthquake shook downtown Hemet, devastating the commercial district. Owner William Martin rebuilt his beloved theater on the north side of Florida Ave in 1921 — this time with reinforced concrete to protect it

from another disaster.

Through the decades, movie houses across the country have fallen by the wayside, victims of an age where multiplex theaters, television and the internet battle for entertainment dollars. In the valley, the downtown movie house closed down for decades, then struggled as a discount ticket theater and survived a fire that destroyed the adjacent store fronts.

In 2012, a foundation attempted to revitalize the theater, but a board of directors scandal crushed the project, scattering the board members, volunteers and donors. Still, a small group of dedicated volunteers saw a unique opportunity to utilize this old movie house to put a spark back into the

community with a performing arts center, while preserving a charming art deco piece of valley history.

Operating under a lease-to-purchase agreement, the foundation began hosting concerts, movies, educational programs and nonprofit fundraisers. The start was slow, but hopes were high. In 2015, the members of the Hemet San Jacinto Chamber awarded the theater its Nonprofit of the Year Award.

Since then, the foundation has hosted more than 500 events with more than 35,000 patrons. The regular Saturday night "Tribute Mania" concerts now draw fans from across Southern California. "Unexpectedly, this cozy little venue has gained a reputation as one

of the best venues in the region. Patrons are thrilled by the great bands, wonderful acoustics and a big dance floor to rock the night away," according to Carrier. "Visiting bands are stunned by the enthusiasm of the Hemet audiences — cheering, clapping and dancing more than anywhere else they perform."

The HHT Foundation has now raised enough to purchase the venue, with an eight-year mortgage provided by the building's owners. With the purchase begins a project to renovate the facility in time for its 100th birthday in 2021.

Renovation plans include a nostalgic auditorium, stylish art deco lobby and improved handicap facilities. The front of the building will include a pointed

marquee similar to the 1940s facade, with classic neon lights. Updated lighting and sound equipment and a removable stage extension will broaden the programming that can be accommodated.

To fund the improvements, the foundation has created a "Century Club" fundraiser that hopes to raise more than a million dollars in donations/pledges by April 30. A permanent plaque in the lobby will commemorate those who made possible HHT's transformation.

For more information on the theater, visit www.HistoricHemetTheatre.com. Information on the "Century Club" and all theater events are available there or by calling the ticket office, 951-658-5950.



Patrick Moloney (left), archeologist with Applied Earth-Works, spoke to members and guests of the Idyllwild Rotary Club at its March 28 meeting. As thanks, President Roland Gaebert gave an official Rotary mug to Moloney. He brought some of the artifacts, objects older than 45 years, he has found on his many searches across Southern California as part of the cultural resource management his company undertakes prior to building projects such as Diamond Valley Lake or solar farms. Artifacts pictured in the foreground include power-line insulators and various primitive tools made from obsidian and granite. PHOTO BY TOM KLUZAK



Diane and Terry Kurr of Idyllwild just returned from the Colorado Plateau with their Town Crier. PHOTO COURTESY KURRS



Chris and Gigi Kramer demonstrate tourniquet techniques on a "wounded," but fake, arm at the Mountain Disaster Preparedness' "Stop the Bleed" presentation Thursday night, March 29, at Town Hall. PHOTO BY JOHN DRAKE



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Town Crier Contacts (951) 659-2145

Becky Clark
Co-Publisher-Editor
becky@towncrier.com

J.P. Crumrine
News Editor
jp@towncrier.com

Lisa Streeter
Advertising Sales
lisa@towncrier.com

Holly Parsons
Staff Reporter
holly@towncrier.com

Samantha Hallburn
Bookkeeping
accounting@towncrier.com

Halie Wilson
Operations Manager
halie@towncrier.com

Mandy Johnson
Classifieds, Service Directory & Public Notices
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