

War on drugs intensifies

San Bernardino County steps up drug enforcement - Part I

S. E. Williams
Staff Writer

Earlier this month, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors reauthorized participation in the Southern California Drug Task Force as part of the Los Angeles High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area.

The Los Angeles High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (LA-HIDTA) includes Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The task force is aimed at disrupting drug traffic.

Combined, these four municipalities make up the 12th largest economy in the world. This fact, in conjunction with the geographic, cultural, social and economic

diversity of the area, makes the LA-HIDTA one of the biggest markets for drug use and distribution. Task force officials point out that these facts, when considered in light of the area's highly developed transportation routes and proximity to the United States/Mexico border, have made the LA-HIDTA a primary distribution, storage, and supply hub for illicit drugs destined for all the major metropolitan areas in the United States—a situation that is further exacerbated by the large rural (including local mountain communities) and desert areas that fall within its jurisdiction.

San Bernardino has provided resource support to the organization each year since 1992 at a cost of just under

\$100,000 per year. The LA-HIDTA, as well as the salaries of support resources provided by the individual counties, is funded by the United States Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). It targets, investigates and prosecutes major drug trafficking organizations throughout the greater Southern California area. According to officials, the county's continued participation in the program has not only resulted in better coordination with other

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A dump truck used by B. R. Tree Service to dump tree debris and chips on Jeff Altmeyer's property (Photo provided by Jeff Altmeyer)

FOREST BEING POLLUTED

Illegal dumping is destroying forest habitats

Gail Fry
Staff Writer

Deer Lodge Park resident Jeff Altmeyer alerted *The Alpenhorn News* of his discovery that local tree contractors had been caught on videotape dumping tree waste onto his property and the neighboring property, land belonging to the United States Forest Service.

According to Altmeyer the tree companies involved are B.R. Tree Service and Hammer's Mountain Services, whose personnel claimed Steve Montoya directed them to place the material on the property because "the property owner needed the chips for weed abatement." Altmeyer claimed the actions of these

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Water company in shambles

Annual shareholders meeting is called a "circus"

Douglas W. Motley
Senior Writer

Cedarpines Park property owners are steaming mad over what they call excessively high water bills, mismanagement and outright fraud perpetrated by the Cedarpines Park Mutual Water Company.

That anger, festering for nearly two decades, finally reached the boiling point in October 2011, when longtime property owners James Morrison and Cheryl Turpin filed a civil lawsuit against their local water purveyor. The suit alleges that the private utility's board of directors, by maintaining a nearly impossible to achieve 50 percent plus one quorum requirement to elect new board members at the company's annual shareholders' meeting, has denied other shareholders an opportunity to be elected to its board.

One person attending the company's Aug. 3 annual

shareholders meeting, who wishes not to be identified, called it a "circus-like atmosphere." According to this person, the meeting turned into a shouting match, with shareholders and members of the company's board of directors trading accusations and insults. "Not true," recently re-appointed board Director Ron Albright told *The Alpenhorn News* Monday. "It wasn't disruptive, although some people (reportedly James Morrison) wanted to videotape the meeting and the board said no. Over 45 minutes was wasted over that."

In the absence of a quorum, say angry shareholders, current board members are able remain in control of the private utility. Though company officials claim that a majority of shareholders can initiate and conduct a shareholder meeting to appoint new board members at any time, Turpin told *The Alpenhorn News* Monday that this has never occurred since prior to

1984, when the previous 20 percent plus one quorum requirement was replaced by the current 50 percent plus one requirement.

The suit also alleges criminal fraud in the company's application some 20 years ago for a \$1.6 million, 40-year federal loan, payments on which have been added to shareholders' water bills.

Regarding the ongoing civil lawsuit Turpin said, "There is no financial gain involved. All we are asking for is to have the quorum lowered to 20 percent, but the board refuses because they would lose control."

Acknowledging that a 20 percent quorum requirement had been in effect from 1966 to 1984, when it was changed back to 50 percent Turpin said, "It looks like, if we want to lower the quorum, we'll just have to talk to the judge." In response to

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Run Through the Pines draws 350 racers

Rhea-Frances Tetley
Staff writer

The 34th annual Run Through the Pines had a slightly altered course this year. Removing the extreme hill around Mountain High School near the finish line, which, although the distance was the same, resulted in the 5k and 10K runners having swifter times than in previous years. Some runners even claimed they had bested their own best times.

Racers came from all over Southern California and one from Kansas for this year's run. Reggie and Deborah Jackson Pickett from

Sara Taylor, 20, won both the 5K and 10K for women in this year's Run Through the Pines at Lake Gregory. (Photo by Rhea-Frances Tetley)

Los Angeles told *The Alpenhorn News* they have raced the course several years now. "It is so beautiful and exciting to run this course. I enjoy coming here to run," said Deborah, who runs the 5K in the 50-60 age category.

The overall 10K winner was 46-year old Rick Herr from Corona, who ran the 10K at 31.41. Second was Martin Santillan, 20, from Amboy with a time of 33.38, with Pedro Castro, 22, from Hesperia at 34.32 coming in third. The first women, all from Victorville, were Sara Taylor, 20, at 38.34; second was Breanna Stratton at 43.40 and Holly Abundez at 44.41 came in third. The first mountain resident to cross the finish line in the 10 K was Tim

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Dumping from page 1

tree companies, "put the community at risk." Altmeyer told *The Alpenhorn News* the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department was called to the scene and "let the guy go," over his objections. Altmeyer explained the dumping was ongoing for two months and they created a road onto his property and expressed concern about liability if they took the chips elsewhere and disposed of them improperly. Altmeyer concluded, "It's a much bigger problem than they want to admit explaining tree contractors sometimes dispose of their oil waste in the chips."

San Bernardino County Code Section 37.0201 provides criminal penalties for illegal dumping and that "anyone caught committing the act of illegal dumping faces citation and arrest."

When contacted by *The Alpenhorn News*, Forest Care Director Julie Crick described the incident as an "accident; it was a mistake, no intent to deface, just a misunderstanding." Crick further explained there was a request for chips for a neighboring property and "it was a misunderstanding on where they should be placed."

When asked about the logs, Crick explained the timber operator was staging to place more chips out of the material. Crick confirmed neighboring property owners asked for chips, explaining chips help keep the weeds down, help the ground retain moisture and prevent erosion. Crick voiced, "There have been numerous offers to Altmeyer to rehabilitate the site at no cost to him."

The owner of Hammer's Mountain Services told *The Alpenhorn News* that B.R. Tree Service had borrowed one of his trucks, claiming not to have been involved and stated, "We take our material to the dump and we don't have a chipper." Owner of B. R. Tree Service Brian Linden offered, "I got hired by Steve Montoya to bring landscape chipping to Millpond Ranch for groundcover and landscaping."

Linden explained they were dumping the material and spreading it to help control erosion and "basically the chips got dumped at the wrong location." As to the logs, Linden explained it was firewood to heat his house. Linden voiced numerous offers were made to Altmeyer to clean up the site with Altmeyer refusing and wanting to take it to court.

Linden voiced he contacted the United States Forest Service (USFS) about the incident and was told to spread the chips as ground cover and fire prevention. "Altmeyer was just being extremely difficult," Linden concluded adding, "It was 100 percent accident, just trying to landscape someone's property."

USFS Public Information Office John Miller told *The Alpenhorn News* trash dumping is a big ongoing problem and they "commonly try to find out who it is and make them come out and clean up their own mess." Miller explained dumping is usually done due to greed and not wanting to pay for the proper disposal of waste. Miller concluded, "If we can catch people, we will prosecute them, as well as have them clean it up."

As to the Forest Care courtesy list of contractors, CalFire Unit Forester Glenn Barley claimed, "The courtesy list is just a list of those tree contractors that meet the minimum standards to do work for Forest Care." A call to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department was unreturned as of press time.

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Turpin's demand, Albright said, "She's offered to dismiss the lawsuit if we lower the quorum, but we can't change it because it's in our articles of incorporation that were drawn up in the 1920s. It was changed to 20 percent 20 years ago, but the Department of Corporations said it was illegal, so it was changed back to 50 percent."

Noting that Cedarpoint Park is a resort community Albright said, "We don't want people who don't live here to govern us, and that's why we have the 50 percent rule." Characterizing Turpin as a "troublemaker all over the mountain," Albright reminded that the company's customers are also shareholders in the firm. "They're actually suing themselves. This has put a big hole in our operating budget."

That "hole in the operating budget" includes over \$125,000 in legal fees paid to the Best, Best and Krieger law firm to defend the water agency in court since the civil suit was initiated on October 17, 2011. To offset those expenses, water company officials recently tacked-on

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Parcels, 36, from Running Springs, who also claimed the first place trophy in his age category. Jonathan Marin from Crestline was third in his age category, while Lavinia Downey from Running Springs and Brenda Olson and Stacey Barnes, both from Crestline, were all first in their age categories, and Chad Barnes was third in his age category of the 130 finishers in the 10K race. "We love being able to run in our own hometown," said Stacey Barnes.

In the 5K walk, Art Marrow, 49, from Palm Desert came in first; Lynne Lonberg, 63, from Eastvale second and Yvonne Weber from Rancho Cucamonga came in third. Crestline walker Diane Hultsie, 53, came in first for her age category.

There were 178 finishers in the 5k run around Lake Gregory. Coming in first was Javin Singer, 16, with a time of 16:49, while second went to Michael Stone, 17, of Hesperia at 17:04 and third place went to Peter Neidhart, all the way from Dodge City, Kansas with a

Nightmares from page 2

people. In reading the San Bernardino County Code on occupancy of short-term rentals, LAMAC member Voni Saxbury exclaimed, "One person per 100-square-foot of building area, that's unbelievable." Murray assured Saxbury the county was going to change to one person for 200-feet of building, while confirming maximum occupancy of 10-people.

San Bernardino County Code Section 84.28.030 provides requirements for short-term private home rentals within the mountain region. Murray assured he would look into code enforcement.

The LAMAC directors then heard from Lake Arrowhead resident Ryan Reisbord with regard to a location on North Bay Road where he claims Above It All Treatment Center (Above It All) has a detoxification center. Reisbord claimed to have an eight-hour videotape showing 150 cars coming to and from the property. Reisbord expressed concern for children waiting for the school bus nearby, explaining there is no security guard. With regard to the school bus stop, Murray explained, "That's up to the school district."

Reisbord believes Above It All has 8-10 employees at the location, recalling parking problems, car accidents, car alarms, trash and

an additional charge of \$142 to each of its approximately 800 customers'/shareholders' bi-monthly water bills. This is on top of a yearly assessment of approximately \$195 to cover the company's payments on a 40-year \$1.6 million federal loan the company took out over 20 years ago for infrastructure improvements.

"They keep coming to me for more and more money. I don't like it," Cedarpoint Park resident Daniel Malmuth complained to *The Alpenhorn News* on Monday. To back-up his complaint, Malmuth presented this newspaper with a copy of his current billing statement showing \$258.70 due for the use of 1,000-cubic-feet of water. Those charges include \$8.17 for water consumption; \$44.64 for resident member fee; \$48.93 for resident meter charge and miscellaneous fees of \$156.56.

Malmuth has some thoughts and ideas about settling the long-festering legal dispute before it is adjudicated in a court of law. Those thoughts and more will be revealed in a future edition of *The Alpenhorn News*. In the meantime, a non-jury trial is slated to begin on Nov. 4 in San Bernardino Superior Court.

time of 17:20. Second place finisher Michael Stone told *The Alpenhorn News*. "It was fun and a great course. I do like running hills."

Sara Taylor, who placed first in the 10K, also was the fastest female in the 5K with a time of 20:15, followed by Ingrid Barrientos, 20, at 20:53. Third place went to Hanna Laue, 18, from Redlands at 20:55. The first mountain finisher was Crestliner Karl Stone, who placed first in the 51-55 age category at 22:03.

Race Director, Bob Kinzel, from the Rim Recreation and Park district said, "The change to Goodwin's Market parking lot for the finish line made the location more accessible for the out of area runners and made the parking availability closer to the route. The elimination of the big hill just before the finish line allows the runners to achieve better race times as well."

Second place 5K finisher, Ingrid Barrientos, 20, who now lives in Philadelphia, ran this race for many years while running track in high school and made it to state track finals. "I so love this beautiful course. Although I haven't trained in years, I am glad to get to run it again today."

cigarette butts.

The LAMAC then heard from Sky Forest residents regarding the impact to their community when Above It All relocated to several commercial buildings on the corner of Highway 18 and Kuffel Canyon Road, as well as the Storybook Inn.

One Sky Forest resident, Kim Foltz, was brought to tears of frustration when describing she had unknowingly purchased a property right next door to Above It All and how there are 150 people all day long at the location. "It's nuts, smells like an ash tray, nightmare, encouraging the county to "hire more code enforcement officers."

Sky Forest Water Company President Keith Binkley spoke of impact to its water company and purchasing water from CLAWA at a high cost to handle increased water usage from Above It All. Binkley also expressed concern about the impact on property values.

Murray assured the LAMAC the county had inspected the properties operated by Above It All, found no violations and found adherence to county code. The county is currently working on revising its ordinance on group homes.

A recent investigation by CNN into California drug rehab centers submitting false billings has initiated a review of all drug rehab facilities, statewide.

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Thu, 29 Aug, 2013

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8-29-13

Cedarpines Mutual Water Company

Cedarpines Park Mutual Water Co. is a MESS!...8/22/2013 just got RATE INCREASE of \$5 today, (that's what my consumption is) on top of that a \$150 assessment for THEIR legal fees (before we lived here)...the government needs to step in & check this out ...ALL is NOT RIGHT...been here 6 months, ready to MOVE...CPMWC is RUINING the community/hurting the real estate...needs HELP!

To the residents of Cedarpines Park: I am a local mountain real estate agent, and I will not show any homes in Cedarpines Park. I do not accept listings out their either. You folks need to get your water issues resolved before it destroys your property values more.

Dead Skunk In The Middle Of The Road

Mr. Motley, you are right on with your observation on politicians. Has your fine nose detected any local odor? Last Sat. CPP had its annual shareholder's meeting. It was verry interesting, but a little bit stupid! The gross mismanagement that has been on-going for years should have merited the attention of a proper newsman. The meeting was a three-ring circus, with the clowns in charge.

Mountain's most wanted

I would like to express my strong disagreement with the publication of this past week's Mountain's Most Wanted article. Rose had been in communication with the Twin Peaks Sheriff's department on Monday, August 12th, when he made arrangements to, and did, turn himself in at 4 pm that same evening. This was 3 days before the article was published and he was no longer a wanted man. I do believe in freedom of speech and the public's right to know, but that should not have been the article that ran!

Lake Gregory bathrooms

I just want to know why we can't have doors on the bathrooms by the lake, when you really have to stop and use them it would be so nice to be able to close and lock a door

Crestline Smog

I would like to know if the amount of bad readings at the AQMD SMOG STATION at the lake is also counting the amount the fine dust particulates that are in the air from the tractor dragging of the beach every day for three months while the lake is open. I know we have smog and I can see it at the lake from my house up on Crest Forest Dr. for the last 34-years, but to report that Crestline has the worst smog in all of California and most of the country seems far fetched.

I think a newspaper like yours is a great way to get the actual statistics from the AQMD. You seem to be on top of real news here and more willing to find out the real facts. Thank you for your time

Government: Home of the Feudal Lords

Your editorials, information are always 100% correct!!!! re: government(s) as you alluded to in you editorial European feudal lord theocracy has existed for centuries controlled by titular sovereign heads in countries around the world as happens in our present day governments. Question being will uneducated brain washed citizens agree with your editorial???

Man arrested for beating two people with a stick

They should lock this guy up and throw away the key. He is dangerous and this is not the first time he has hurt people.

Twin Peaks Sheriff's Department

I had a physical assault on my person and was being forced t o write a check from my personal checking account last Thursday and they are not making a report. I have had things stolen from the two people.

I am a senior citizen and highly distraught over this matter, angry and scared of the people involved and the sheriff's department lack of concern.

Sheriff McMahan, the wrong choice

Well written, very accurate.

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