



Sewer plant forced to play catch-up

Cities inspect deeper after mismanagement comes to light

By **TATIANA PROPHET**
Staff Writer

VICTORVILLE — After mismanagement had come to light at the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority, the agency is playing a seri-

ous game of catch-up to avoid a real threat to the quality of life in area.

And the cities who belong to the agency are paying much greater attention.

In the most recent development, interim General Man-

ager Logan Olds has been appointed general manager by the agency's board, consisting of elected officials from the Victor Valley's cities and the county, in what is generally considered as a vote of confidence for his leadership since

he came on in late April.

But not everyone is confident about the decision.

"I think it would have been more prudent to wait to appoint someone as GM until all the issues are resolved," said Bob Hunter, a Victorville councilman who is an alternate representative to the VVWRA. "I think it was rushed through."

Councilman Rudy Cabrales, Victorville's representative to the agency, was unavailable for comment.

Speculation about whether Olds was appointed after a proper executive search has been addressed by the agency's attorney, Piero Dallarda, who said an executive search was conducted. There were also

15 separate advertisements in 2006 that ran in the Daily Press calling for candidates.

The amount of sewage processed through the VVWRA has ballooned since the beginning of the decade.

In Victorville, average daily flow of sewage has gone up by

SEWER/B5



Photos by James Quigg / Staff Photographer

Cynthia Milton of England rides through Victorville on the I-15 on her way to Las Vegas, the next stop on her two-year world tour. So far she's ridden through more than 30 countries and is making her way to Canada. Below, Milton is preparing her things outside of the Hilton Garden Inn on Mariposa Road.

Motorcyclist Cynthia Milton tours the world on her 1985 BMW

By **MATTHEW C. DURKEE**
Staff Writer

Her face is red and weathered from years of exposure to sun and wind, but Cynthia Milton's easy smile makes it clear that for her it has all been worth it.

Two and a half years ago her father died, her job in the tech sector "became redundant" and Milton decided to fulfill a 30-year dream to travel around the world.

On a motorcycle.

Her ride is a 1985 BMW R80 G/S Paris Dakar, named after the annual cross-country race between France and North Africa. Milton headed back out on the road Wednesday after spending the night at the Hilton Garden Inn.

It's a sturdy bike built for rough travel, and it has received more welding repairs than she can count. Her engine had to be rebuilt in Panama City. The tires are her 12th set, and a can of oil is always at the ready, strapped to her bike.

In 2004, she set out from her home



in England and zipped across Europe and Asia to Vladivostok, Russia. Milton drove through Japan and Taiwan and much of southeast Asia.

One of the strangest sights was an 8-year-old monk in Laos holding up traffic on a little Day-Glo pink bicycle.

One of her most exciting encounters was also in Laos — a fellow motorcyclist honked and pulled up from behind on a street in Vientiane. He

was the mission chief in Laos for Doctors Without Borders — and he competed for the Honda team in the 1978 Paris Dakar Rally.

MILTON/B7

CYNTHIA, ON THE WEB:

<http://www.VVDailyPress.com>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/cmmRTW>
<http://cynthia.boxerman.co.uk>

"The further I get from home, the smaller the world becomes."
CYNTHIA MILTON

Jurors get glimpse of McKinley's computer

Prosecution rests in teacher's sexual assault case; defense opens case this morning

By **AARON AUPPERLEE**
Staff Writer

BARSTOW — Deputy District Attorney Barbara McClanahan gave jurors a glimpse at the innards of the personal computer of James William McKinley, a former Cameron Elementary teacher accused of sexually assaulting his students during the final day of her case.

The defense will begin to call witnesses today.

As McClanahan displayed printouts of pornographic Web sites to the jury, detective Brian Snow of the San Bernardino Sheriff's Hi-Tech Crime Detail identified them as sites he found while examining McKinley's computer.

Disclaimers on the Web sites stated that all models were over 18.

Authorities seized the computer while serving a search warrant at McKinley's house in Apple Valley. Snow said he found evidence of cookies on McKinley's computer. A cookie is a file created and stored on a computer's hard drive when a Web site has been accessed.

Much of Snow's testimony focused on how the sites could have been accessed. Snow said the sites could have been deliberately searched out and clicked on or appeared on the screen as pop-ups due to spyware or adware also found on McKinley's computer. A computer infected with adware or spyware has no control over the content that appears on the screen.

Another question posed in Wednesday's testimony concerned who accessed the sites. Defense attorney Stanley Hodge said he plans to call McKinley's son, who will testify that he accessed pornographic Web sites on the home computer.

The Web sites displayed in court were accessed during a time when, according to testimony from McKinley's sister, the son was not in the house, McClanahan said.

"If they looked like students, then I bookmarked them."

BRIAN SNOW
Detective, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

MCKINLEY/B2

MEGAN'S LAW REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

	NAME: Harris, Danny Wayne Last known address: Unknown Apple Valley, 92308 Date of Birth: 12-15-1949 Sex: Male Height: 6'1"	Weight: 265 lbs. Eye color: Brown Hair color: Gray Ethnicity: White Known Aliases: Deorge Wayne Harris; George Wayne Harris	OFFENSES Offense Code: 288(c), f289(e) Description: Lewd or lascivious acts with child 14 or 15 years old; sexual penetration w/foreign obj; victim drugged/etc.
	NAME: Hipsher, Thomas Last known address: Unknown Hesperia, 92345 Date of Birth: 04-08-1967 Sex: Male Height: 5'10"	Weight: 240 lbs. Eye color: Brown Hair color: Brown Ethnicity: White Known Aliases: Tom Hipsher	OFFENSES Offense Code: 288(a)(b)(2) Description: Oral copulation with person under 16 years
	NAME: Allen, Terry Keith Last known address: 13300 block of Riverview Victorville, 92392 Date of Birth: 04-18-1943 Sex: Male Height: 6'0"	Weight: 185 lbs. Eye color: Blue Hair color: Gray Ethnicity: White	OFFENSES Offense Code: 288(a) Description: Lewd or lascivious acts with child under 14 years

This information on registered sex offenders is prepared by the California Department of Justice as required by state law. For more details, visit MegansLaw.ca.gov. Offender profiles appear every Tuesday and Thursday.

IN BRIEF

SVL election registration deadline is next Wednesday

SPRING VALLEY LAKE — The deadline is Wednesday to run for the Spring Valley Lake board of directors in April.

This year, three seats are up for election, those held by Kevin Kane, Mike Sandell and Cliff Bandringa.

Owners of property in the community may complete a Notice of Intent to Run form that appears in The Breeze magazine and sent it to the association office, 13325 Spring Valley Lake Parkway, or SVL Box 7001, Victorville, CA 92395, along with a resume listing qualifications, goals and objectives.

There will be a seminar for potential candidates on March 7 and a candidate forum April 8. The election will be April 28.

Local Western Financial Bank becomes Wachovia

One of the nation's largest bank-

ing firms has entered Victorville with its purchase of the Western Financial Bank portfolio.

Wachovia Bank, based in Charlotte, N.C., bought Westcorp, Golden West and Western Financial in 2006, gaining 9,700 California employees.

By Wednesday, the Western Financial Bank branch on Hesperia Road near Silica Road will become a Wachovia Bank. Signs on ATMs and banks throughout California will begin to change today, including the branch in Victorville.

Account holders will be able to use their checks and deposit slips until they run out, and their account numbers will change to 13 digits.

For more information, call (800) - WACHOVIA beginning Tuesday.

Daily Press seeks stories from L.A. Marathon runners

VICTORVILLE — The Daily Press is looking for residents who are running in the Los Angeles Marathon

this year and would like to share their stories, tips and inspiration.

Please call Gretchen Losi at 951-6233 or e-mail her at gretchen_losi@link.freedom.com.

Mojave River Bridge project to be focus of meetings

VICTORVILLE — Caltrans officials will present a pair of meetings to inform people about the Mojave River Bridge project on Highway 18.

The first meeting — scheduled from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Feb. 13 — takes place in Training Room B of the city of Victorville building at 14343 Civic Center Drive. The second meeting will be on Feb. 15 also from 6:30 to 8 p.m. It will take place in the Council Chambers at Apple Valley City Hall — 14955 Dale Evans Parkway.

The project is being done to retrofit the bridge to make it safer in the event of an earthquake.

— Compiled from staff reports

Lamar Muse, a 'Promethean figure' in aviation, dies

By **TREBOR BANSTETTER**
McClatchy Newspapers

FORT WORTH, Texas — Some of the legendary stories surrounding Southwest Airlines — the free bottles of booze to passengers, the hot-pants-clad "hostesses," the launch of a rival many dubbed "Revenge Air" — had their origin in the tenure of M. Lamar Muse.

Muse, the fiery and outspoken former chief executive of Dallas-based Southwest who helped shape the carrier's industry-transforming business model that couples low costs and low fares, died Monday of lung cancer. He was 86.

Muse was hired in 1971 by Herb Kelleher and Rollin King to be the chief executive of fledgling Southwest, and he was a pivotal figure in the launch and first years of what was to become the nation's largest and most successful low-fare airline. He also was at the forefront of the bruising legal and competitive battles with other airlines that threatened to shut Southwest down or run it out of business in its early days.

He was well known for his strong opinions and no-holds-barred approach to competition and management. He remained interested in Southwest until his final days, and last year met with Dallas Mayor Laura Miller and officials at Dallas/Fort Worth Airport and Southwest to discuss his views on the Wright Amendment controversy.



BIVENS

CAROLYN BIVENS

Phelan resident Mrs. Carolyn Bivens, 86, passed away Feb. 4, 2007.

Born April 3, 1924, in Brownwood, Texas, Carolyn was a 50-year resident of the Victor Valley, and retired from the Post Office as a postal worker after 25 years. She was a member of the Hesperia Elks, Moose Lodge and the DAR. Carolyn was also born into the first families of Texas.

She loved to paint and was a very good artist. Carolyn also loved music. She was a great bowler and would bowl at Victor Bowl for a number of years.

Carolyn was a wonderful mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend.

She is survived by her husband, Bobby Bivens of Phelan; children Larry Ison and his wife, Susan, of Valley Center and Steven Ison and his wife, Kelly, Don Ison and his wife, Mabel, and Cindy Lyons and her husband, Tom, all of Phelan; brothers David Emison of Texas, Larry and Bert Emison of San Diego and Dan Allison of Cali-

fornia; 12 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Services will be held at noon Saturday at Victor Valley Mortuary. Burial will follow at Victor Valley Memorial Park. A celebration of Carolyn's life will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Hesperia Moose Lodge.

MERLE HARPER

Merle E. Harper was born in Topeka, Kan., Dec. 28, 1913, and left his earthly body and went to his heavenly home Feb. 4, 2007.

He was preceded in death by his son Monty Harper, who died in Vietnam; daughter Phyllis Hamby; grandson Jimmy Hamby; four sisters and three brothers.

Merle is survived by his wife of 30 years, June L. Harper; daughter Tracy Brawley, her husband, Mike, and their two children, Megan Brawley and Dannea Broskey, her husband, Toney, and their daughter Mackenzie; son Jay Harper, his wife, Dessa, and children Christi, Shelby, Samantha and Dakota Sky; stepdaughter Anita Sullivan, her husband, Joe, and their son and daughter Jonathan and Hannah; stepson James Smith, his wife, Shannon, and their son Cameron; granddaughter Janet Barnes, her husband, Percy, and their son and daughter Jeremy and Staci; granddaughter Paula and sons Glen and Luke; along with several great-great-grandchildren.

Merle accepted the Lord in September 2002 at the age of 88 and was baptized. He was a member of the Temple Baptist

OBITUARIES



HARPER

Church.

Merle was a retired carpenter and held many jobs: fireman on the railroad, several riding stables, chicken and egg rancher in Palmdale and welder who built many horse trailers in Missouri.

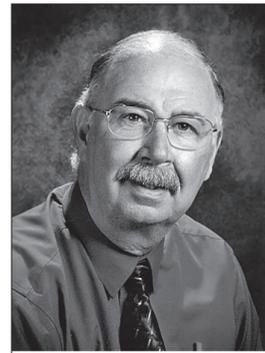
Merle was a 17-year resident of Gold West Mobile Home Park. He had many friends and much love for his family.

Visitation will be from 1 to 3 p.m. today at Kern Memorial Chapel. Funeral services will immediately follow at 3 p.m. Private interment will take place at Desert Lawn Memorial Park in Palmdale.

KENNETH PRICE

Spring Valley Lake resident of 15 years Kenneth Guy Price, aka "Coach" and "Ken," 54, passed away from natural causes Feb. 5, 2007.

Born April 13, 1952, in Los Angeles, Ken graduated from Wilson High School in Hacienda Heights in 1970. While in high school, Ken was two-time



PRICE

Athlete of the Year. He graduated from Whittier College in 1974, with a bachelor of arts.

With a total of 30 years in the field of education, Ken was an English teacher at Hesperia High School for 10 years and spent his last 10 years at Sultana High School as an English teacher. He coached freshman football and basketball and varsity basketball at Hesperia High School. Ken was loved and will be missed by the students and staff at Sultana High School.

He is survived by his parents, Ralph and Donna Price; brother Don Price; sister-in-law Leslie Price; nephew John Price; niece Carolyn Price, all of the Sacramento area; and soul mate and constant companion, Kathy Peach of Apple Valley.

Services will be held at 1 p.m. Friday at Sunset Hills Mortuary, 24000 Waalew Road in Apple Valley. Dr. Bob Ness will be officiating.

Sunset Hills Mortuary is

handling arrangements.

WILLIAM CHENEY

Apple Valley resident of two years William W. Cheney Jr., 85, died Feb. 2, 2007.

Memorial services will be held at noon Saturday at Full Gospel Ministries, 16170 Walnut St. in Hesperia. Pastor Ellsworth will be officiating.

Memorial donations may be sent to Full Gospel Ministries, Attn: David Cheney, 16170 Walnut St., Hesperia, CA 92345.

Desert View Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

ELIZABETH GORMAN

Apple Valley resident of 18 years Elizabeth Louise Gorman, 94, died Feb. 4, 2007.

Visitation will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday at Church of the Nazarene, 12935 Central Road in Apple Valley. Services will follow at 3 p.m. Burial will at Riverside National Cemetery.

Victor Valley Mortuary is handling arrangements.

Some obituaries in this section are paid for by families of the deceased, who also provide the information. The Daily Press is not responsible for the accuracy of the information published in paid obituaries. Short death notices are also offered, and these are free of charge.



McKinley: Other pictures found on PC

FROM B1

Snow also identified a series of photos of clothed girls found on McKinley's computer. He could not identify the young girls but told the court he selected the photos for a reason.

"If they looked like students, then I bookmarked them," he said.

According to previous reports, Barstow police arrested McKinley on Jan. 24, 2006, on suspicion of sexually assaulting a 9-year-old student.

The student, according to police reports, reported to school resource officer Albert Toro that McKinley sexually assaulted her at school. Shortly after the arrest, more students came forward to report similar assaults. McKinley pleaded not guilty to all charges in an arraignment in May 2006.

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Aussies reject Monopoly

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Plans for a new Down Under version of the popular board game Monopoly could go straight to jail after voters from Australia's two biggest cities failed to show any interest in a place on the board.

Game manufacturer Hasbro had asked Australians to vote via its Web site on what real estate spots should fill the board of the Australian edition of "Monopoly: Here and Now," with Sydney's plush Vaucluse and Point Piper harbor suburbs tipped for prestige slots.

But as a February 10 deadline for voting loomed, almost 75 percent of votes lodged had come from people living in the far-flung outback states of Western and South Australia.

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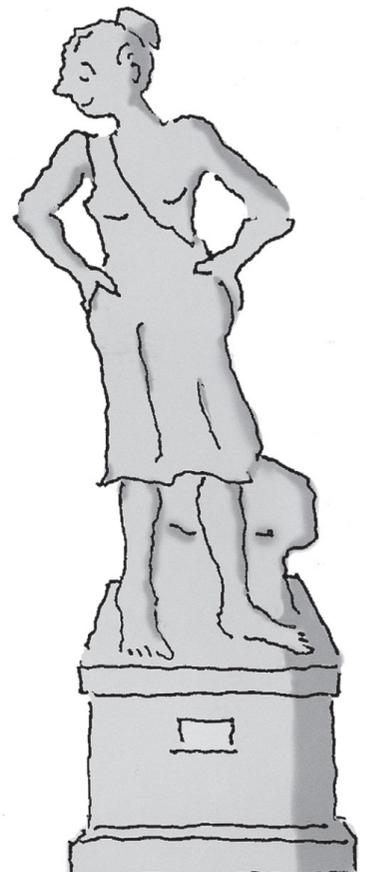
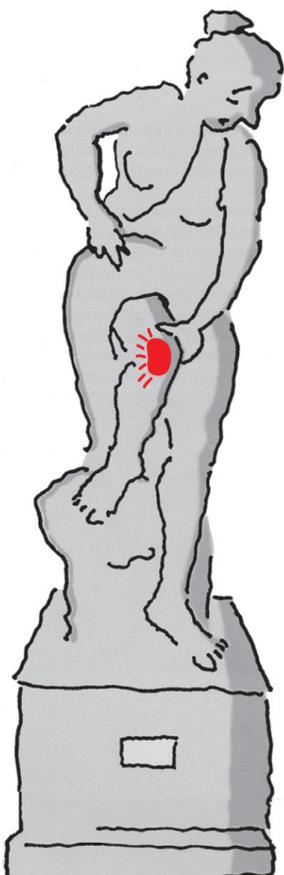
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Attorneys point fingers in fight between O'Neal, son

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A battle between Ryan O'Neal and his son Griffin that led to the veteran actor's arrest at his Malibu home last weekend turned into a war of words in law offices Wednesday as their attorneys each charged that the other side was responsible for the fight in which a fireplace poker was swung and a gun fired.

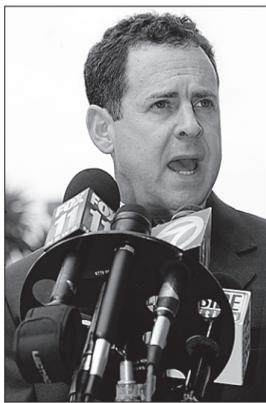
Griffin O'Neal, 42, and his pregnant girlfriend, Joanna Berry, who had bandages around a bruised and swollen left eye, appeared but did not speak at a press conference by attorney Gloria Allred.

"We vigorously reject any assertion that the injuries suffered by Joanna and Griffin were as a result of Ryan O'Neal's acting in self defense," Allred said in a prepared statement.

The actor's attorney, Mark Werksman, countered quickly.

"Ryan O'Neal is the victim and was attacked by his own son, with his own poker," said Werksman, who noted his client had a cut on his hand and bruises on his arms and legs as a result from the dispute. "It's regrettable that Griffin is trying to make a public spectacle out of this family tragedy."

Werksman said O'Neal's other son Redmond was in the house at the time and the fight occurred over how Griffin has treated Redmond. Werksman



The Associated Press
Attorney Mark Werksman comments on allegations against his client actor Ryan O'Neal during a news conference outside his law office in Los Angeles on Wednesday.

said Redmond is currently in drug treatment.

Werksman called the incident "another chapter in his (Griffin's) chaotic and turbulent life."

Berry, who is expecting a baby boy at the end of March, suffered facial lacerations that took eight stitches to close, as well as head trauma and a corneal abrasion during the confrontation, Allred said. Berry told Allred she can't see out of the side of that eye.



The Associated Press
A sign for a private security firm marks the driveway entrance of the home of billionaire businessman Ernest Rady in the La Jolla Shores area of San Diego on Wednesday. A man posing as a delivery person forced his way into Rady's home Tuesday, holding Rady's wife and housekeeper hostage while demanding cash, then shocking the billionaire with a stun gun before fleeing with a small amount of cash, police said.

Robber poses as delivery man, heists billionaire

SAN DIEGO (AP) — There are no locked gates, security guards or menacing dogs shielding the home of billionaire Ernest Rady.

That meant there was nothing to stop a phony deliveryman from forcing his way into the house and keeping Rady, his wife and a housekeeper bound with duct tape for hours before making off with a few hundred dollars, police said Wednesday. Investigators say the intruder

specifically targeted Rady, a financier ranked No. 140 last year on Forbes magazine's list of the 400 richest Americans.

Rady, 69, wasn't home when the suspect arrived at the La Jolla residence Tuesday afternoon, said San Diego police Capt. Mary Cornicelli.

The intruder buzzed the intercom and asked for "Mrs. Rady" to sign some documents, Cornicelli said. After Rady's wife, Ev-

elyn, and a housekeeper opened the door, the suspect pulled out a handgun and stun gun and forced his way in, police said.

The women were marched through the house at gunpoint as the robber demanded cash, then were taken to the master bedroom and bound with duct tape, Cornicelli said.

Less than two hours later, Rady arrived and was stunned and bound by the intruder.

VICTORVILLE

An assault was reported at 12:21 p.m. Monday in the 15400 block of Culebra Road. The caller said that 15 adults were fighting and many were wearing all blue. It was unclear if the incident was gang related.



A domestic battery was reported at 12:45 p.m. Monday in the 15100 block of Kimberly Drive. The victim said she was slapped in the face by her husband.

A commercial burglary was reported at 1:10 p.m. Monday at a school in the 16500 block of Mojave Drive. A suspect is said to have entered classrooms using stolen school keys. The thief stole a golf cart and numerous cameras.

An attempted robbery was reported at 2:43 p.m. in the 12500 block of Amargosa Road on Monday. A suspect was in Best Buy stealing things but the security system worked and the suspect dropped the items and ran off.

A robbery was reported at 6:59 p.m. Monday in the 17100 block of Bear Valley Road. The victim reported that a man approached and said he had a gun and stole \$500 from the victim.

A residential burglary was taken in the 14100 block of Auburn Court around 8:05 p.m. Monday. The reporting party said that the ex-tenant broke into the residence through a window and stole a television and a DVD player. The ex-tenant was driving a silver PT Cruiser with Nevada plates.

A miscellaneous incident was reported from the Food 4 Less parking lot at 9:15 p.m. Monday. A man set off the security sensors at the store and a security guard tried to stop the subject, who refused to allow the guard to check him for merchandise. The man was seen giving the guard "the finger" and repeatedly shouting profanity at the guard. Eventually, the security guard said he felt threatened and pepper-sprayed the man. Medical aid was refused.

Sewer: Agency had 79 violations between Jan. 1 and April 11 in 2006

FROM B1

66 percent since May 2000, from 5.268 million gallons a day to 8.756 million gallons a day, according to the VVWRA budget. Apple Valley's contribution has gone up by 40 percent and Hesperia's by 45 percent.

Repercussions of sewage overflow can be serious, ultimately resulting in ground water contamination.

Currently, the ground water is at or slightly above the drinking water standard of 10 parts per million of nitrate, said Jehiel Cass, a water resources engineer with Lahontan, the agency's oversight body. Lahontan is currently working with Olds to resolve future nitrate levels.

In April 2005, under the leadership of former General Manager Dan Gallagher, the VVWRA had an 8.72 million-gallon spill of undisinfected, secondary-treated wastewater into the Mojave River, resulting in a \$500,000 fine. The river water eventually percolates into the ground water.

"We have about \$80 million of net assets, capital assets, the plant and equipment. If you take a reasonable number for depreciation ... like 5 percent, that comes up to about \$4 million a year."

HENRY ROY

Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority finance manager

"The discharge was a result of inadequate management oversight causing a wastewater infiltration pond to be over-filled and the pond levee failing," according to a Lahontan press release.

The agency had 79 total violations between Jan. 1 and April 11, 2006. But the agency has had only had one violation since then, which, according to Olds, resulted from a mechanical failure of two sodium bisulfate pumps for 40 minutes on Sept. 9.

"We have dramatically changed the operation of this facility," he wrote in an e-mail to the Daily Press.

By the numbers, the plant has had to process 12 million gallons of solids since April

2006, he said, amounting to the size of a football field 37 feet high.

"They did so while working round-the-clock short staffed, with very, very few spare parts and equipment and with two major construction projects going on at the same time," Olds wrote.

Financially, the sewage game of catch-up can have serious impacts on high-volume users in the valley, such as hotels. And it is causing enough of a political headache that the board has revised its proposal to nearly double user fees to a 70 percent user fee hike for 2007-08 and a 20 percent rate hike for the following year.

"We have to go back to our councils and talk to them," said

Ed Pack, a Hesperia councilman who sits on the board. "It is going to be a healthy rate increase, there's no doubt about it."

The agency board kept user fees flat since 1992, the year George Air Force Base closed, with only a 1.8 percent increase in 2001 that remains in effect today. The fees, which go directly to plant maintenance and operation, have resulted in hardly any repair and replacement taking place, said Henry Roy, the agency's finance manager.

"We have about \$80 million of net assets, capital assets, the plant and equipment," Roy said. "If you take a reasonable number for depreciation ... like 5 percent, that comes up to about \$4 million a year."

The agency's budget for repair and replacement is \$2.3 million for 2006-07. Other costs are the addition of nine new staff members at the plant since 2003-04, or a 26 percent increase. With the plant going from 9.5 million gallons a day

to 13.5 million gallons a day, or a jump of 42 percent, Roy does not see the staff increase as inordinate.

Another cost is the \$325,000 in consultant fees for the plant's expansion, which is 26 percent of the administrative budget. The expense is a five-time increase from the budgeted amount for the previous year, but only \$22,000 more than what the agency actually paid out in 2005-06.

The next board meeting of the VVWRA is Feb. 26. A public hearing will be called later to discuss the rate hike, although the public is welcome at the February meeting, Olds said.

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James Quigg / Staff Photographer

Cynthia Milton of England prepares her BMW R-80 before leaving Victorville on Wednesday morning. Milton stopped in Victorville between San Diego and Las Vegas while touring the world.

Milton: Crosses oceans aboard cargo plane

FROM B1

"The further I get from home, the smaller the world becomes," she wrote in a blog chronicling her adventures.

Milton crosses oceans on cargo planes. The bike costs 50 percent more to send than she does. On one flight, her fellow passengers were a large shipment of flowers.

Her journey has taken her to Australia and then on to South America, where she has experienced her greatest adventures and worst setbacks.

Her favorite place: Argentina. "Best steaks. Great wine — and cheap. The scenery is stunning and it's not too crowded. You can go 500 miles and see only three people."

The worst roads: Argentina. "Southern Patagonia was the toughest. The roads are corrugated, covered in an impassable gravel of large round stones, and there's a 50 mph crosswind."

Her biggest scare: Argentina. Milton lost control on one of those gravel roads and crashed, breaking a collarbone and puncturing her lung. She was overwhelmed by the generosity of a doctor and his wife who took her into their home for two month's convalescence.

Her strangest moment: Colombia.

She hit a rude border guard and he dropped his gun. "He was only about 13."



James Quigg / Staff Photographer

Cynthia Milton's BMW R-80 is loaded with stickers from the countries she rode through, including Russia, Poland, Laos and Japan.

Ironically, the United States has been one of the more difficult places to travel. Internet cafes and free WiFi networks are much scarcer, making it more of a challenge to keep her friends and fans updated on her journey.

"Halfway up a dusty mountain in Cambodia there's high-speed Internet in a bamboo shack."

Milton thought it would take her a year to see the world. Two and a half years later and 35 pounds lighter — "this is better than diet pills," she says — she has yet to see most of the United

States or Canada. And eventually she will board a cargo plane in Jacksonville, Fla., that will fly her and her motorcycle to Cape Town, South Africa, where she'll finish off her last continent.

The key to pulling it off, she says, is to bring a sense of humor: Two-hour wait to cross a border? No problem, she says. Have a seat in the shade and relax, she says. She'll get there eventually.

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Prison medical workers called back

SACRAMENTO (AP) — At least 40 state prison medical workers have been receiving full pay while they've been on disciplinary leave for as long as four years, corrections officials said Wednesday.

They promised to bring the employees back to work even as the state tries to fire them.

As many as 45 prison employees were pulled from their duties in the last few years

because of failures or neglect that sometimes resulted in inmates' deaths, said Robert Sillen, the federal court-appointed receiver who took over the prison medical system in April.

Dr. Peter Farber-Szekrenyi, director of the state Division of Correctional Health Care Services, said that within the next few days he will order the employees to return to assignments that will not put them in

contact with inmate patients.

"I'll put them in the library and let them read books. They're not going to sit at home and rip off the taxpayers on my watch," Sillen told a Senate budget subcommittee.

About half the employees are doctors, and most have been on disciplinary leave for about a year, said Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation spokesman Bill Sessa.

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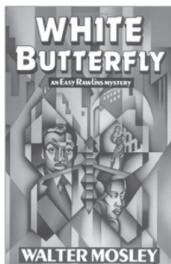
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walter mosley

A popular writer of mysteries expands horizons to examine issues of race in America.

the news as history

Walter Mosley has won acclaim for the way he has drawn on the experiences of African Americans when writing detective novels. Racial experiences can have a great influence on writers. Search the newspaper for a story about the African American community in the city or region. Write out three ideas or issues from the story that a writer might use in a book about the African American community.



Every year Philadelphia's Celebration of Black Writers draws national attention by honoring an African American writer who has made great contributions to the community, African American literature and to culture in general.

In 2005, the popular mystery writer Walter Mosley was honored. Mosley is the author of 19 critically acclaimed books, and his work has been translated into 21 languages.

His mysteries featuring Easy Rawlins and his friend "Mouse" Alexander began with *Devil in a Blue Dress* in 1990. The book was nominated for an Edgar Award for mystery writing and was made into a film starring Denzel Washington and Jennifer Beals.

Little Scarlet, an Easy Rawlins novel set five days after the 1965 Watts riots in Los Angeles, came out to rich praise in July 2004, building on the popularity of such previous titles as *A Red Death*, *White Butterfly*, *Black Betty*, *Bad Boy Brawley Brown* and *Six Easy Pieces*.

In 2004 Mosley also published *The Man in My Basement*, a novel of ideas set in a

contemporary Long Island community, and in 2005, he published his first book for young adult readers, a novel titled *47* that is a mix of history, science fiction and adventure.

Walter Mosley was born in southeastern Los Angeles in 1952 and grew up in Watts. His father was from the deep South, and as an only child, Mosley heard a great deal about the problems endured by African Americans in the Southern states.

Mosley soaked it all in as he listened, and many characters he has created in the Easy Rawlins novels are based on the experiences of his father.

After earning a bachelor's degree at Johnson State College in 1977, Mosley tried a number of jobs, settling into a career as a computer programmer in New York City in the 1980s.

He didn't much like the work, so he channeled energy into reading, especially mysteries by writers like Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett and Ross MacDonal.

After reading *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker,

he decided he wanted to write, he once recalled in an interview with *People* magazine. He began writing whenever he could and enrolled at The City College of New York.

In 1989 Mosley showed *Devil in a Blue Dress* to his writing teacher. The teacher showed the book to his agent, who sold it to the W. W. Norton publishing company.

In the fall of 1997, Mosley branched out from Easy Rawlins and introduced a new character, ex-convict Socrates Fortlow, whose move to contemporary Los Angeles injects ethics and politics into Mosley's storytelling. One of the stories in *Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned: The Socrates Fortlow Stories* was an O. Henry Award winner for 1996 and the collection later was made into a film starring Laurence Fishburne, Natalie Cole, Cicely Tyson and Bill Cobbs.

In 2001 Mosley expanded his mystery world with the debut of the Fearless Jones series. Set in 1950s Los Angeles, the series features second-hand bookstore owner Paris Minton

and his best friend, war veteran Fearless Jones.

In his career, Walter Mosley has won numerous awards, including the Anisfield Wolf Award, an honor given to works that increase the appreciation and understanding of race in America.

He was a finalist for the NAACP Award in Fiction and won the 1996 Black Caucus of the American Library Association's Literary Award (for *RL's Dream*).

In 2001, a year-long serial of short fiction called "The Tempest Tales" was published in *Savoy* magazine in homage to the Simple stories of Langston Hughes.

In 2004, he was honored by Robert Redford's Sundance Institute with a "Risktaker Award" given to him by Sundance for both his creative and activist efforts. He also was given an honorary doctorate by The City College of New York, with whom he has partnered to create a new publishing degree program aimed at young urban residents — the only such program in the country.

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