COLDWELL BANKER BEST REALTY
Ridgecrest’s #1 Real Estate Office!

Residential  • Commercial  • New Home Construction
Lots & Land  • Property Management

Open 7 Days a Week for Your Convenience
M-F 8am-6pm • Sat. 9am - 5pm • Sun 10am - 2pm

Come By For Free Area Map, Area Brochure, and Rental List
Or See Our Website at www.RidgecrestColdwellBanker.com

(760) 375-3855
710 N. China Lake Blvd. • Ridgecrest, CA 93555
Coming Soon

Mokulele Airlines is looking forward to bringing some true “Aloha” to the Indian Wells Valley in 2017 with service to Los Angeles International Airport with frequent affordable, and reliable air service.

- Easy Online Bookings
  (changes & cancel online too)
- Low Change Fees
- Child Discounts
- Pets fly free!
Table of Contents

IWV groundwater continues to be source of debate ........ 5
Budget cuts felt throughout Kern County......................... 7
ZOLL AutoPulse CPR system rolled out in September .... 9
Casino in Ridgecrest ......................................................... 10
Sierra Sands looks forward with new goals, challenges ... 13
Updates to facility welcomed by soccer club ............... 20
As new JPA takes shape, IWV’s groundwater source continues to be a heavily debated topic

BY JACK BARNWELL
Editor
jbarnwell@ridgecrestca.com

The dynamic of the Indian Wells Valley’s groundwater supply has seen a great deal of news in the last two years. New state laws dictate the regulation or management of an already critically over-drafted groundwater basin, conservation is an accepted part of life and local agencies must collaborate to ensure a sustainable future that doesn’t curb development or growth.

Already in 2016, the IWV has seen the formation of the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Joint Powers Authority, a precursor to another agency that will shape the dynamic of groundwater regulation in the area. Its core members are Kern, Inyo and San Bernardino counties, the Indian Wells Valley Water District and the city of Ridgecrest, who have a vote on the board. In addition, two associate non-voting members — the Navy through Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake and the Bureau of Land Management sit on the board.

California developed the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014, which took effect at the beginning of 2015, to regulate the state’s various groundwater basins for the first time in state history. The state’s intent is to let local agencies take the lead, according to JPA members, and faces a daunting timeline.

Kern County First District Supervisor Mick Gleason sees the time-line — a groundwater sustainability agency by June 30, 2017, and a sustainability plan by January 2020 — as something the JPA can meet.

“I firmly believe we will have everything complete and filed for the GSA before the deadline and meet the requirements mandated by state law,” Gleason said.

The road to get where the member agencies are now taking months of difficult discussion, Gleason said, but the end result was the JPA’s formation.

“We’ve come up with a reasonable JPA — maybe not the Declaration of Independence quality — but one that represents the vested interests in our water basin,” Gleason said. “It gives them (vested interests) a representative vote.”

The next step is forming the GSA, the plan, and ensuring that the new government agency can meet the demands the state has imposed on water basins across the state.

That information would be developed at the committee level, where Gleason said all the grunt work would be done. Those committees include the GSP development advisory committee, the technical committee, among others.

“Developing that organization will be our first chore,” Gleason said. Kern County took the initial lead in developing the JPA, including supplying staff, consultants and coordinating with different agencies.

Now with the JPA in place, Gleason, who will chair the JPA through 2017, said he sees the county’s role...
Slipping from the head of the pack to one of mutual partnership.

"Instead of taking on more, we are trying to delegate and share more responsibility to the other vested interests," Gleason said. He added that the JPA/soon-to-be GSA is slowly taking on its own personality.

Gleason added that an evaluation of groundwater supply and demand will need to be balanced by continued development of the IWV as a whole. Committees will develop the data and bring it to the GSA board for approval, where it must be decided how to meet the goals mandated by the state while keeping the area thriving.

During many meetings over the last several months, many of the stakeholders in the IWV basin, from agriculture to private groundwater well owners, have questioned what the GSA will look like, and whether they face complete regulation, new fees or rate hikes.

During the last JPA meeting, held Sept. 15 at Ridgecrest City Hall, board members noted that SGMA Sept. 15 at Ridgecrest City Hall, \( \text{fees or rate hikes.} \)

The open vs. closed debate is over," Gleason said. "Whether we are open or closed will become of importance to us as we develop our plan, but we need to take this law on because our water table is in decline. We're trying to answer how we are going to stop that."

Conservation of water in the desert is a way of life," Zdeba said. "I don't see us going back to the way we were."

Conservation of water in the desert is a way of life,\footnote{Zdeba said. B.""I don't see us going back to the way we were."" Zdeba said.}"
Budget cuts felt throughout Kern County

Declining oil prices hit tax revenues, impacts services from libraries to public safety

BY JESSICA WESTON
City Editor
jweston@ridgecrestca.com

Historic cuts to Kern County’s budget have caused ramifications in many areas. From the closure of the Kern County jail facility in Ridgecrest to the restructuring of the county Parks and Recreation Department, the need to reduce expenses is reshaping the face of government in Kern County.

The price of oil
It all has to do with the price of oil. First District Supervisor Mick Gleason has made the rounds of local meetings, explaining at length that the drastic drop in the price of oil—from $100 to $35 a barrel—has necessitated historic budget cuts. The corresponding reduction in property tax forced the county to make drastic cuts. The goal is a 15% across-the-board cut over the next four years, broken down into smaller increments by year. This year’s cut is 5 percent across the board for all departments, with a 5.6% horizontal cut tentatively planned for next year.

The Ridgecrest Jail
Perhaps the cut felt the most strongly in Ridgecrest was the closure of the Kern County jail facility in Ridgecrest. After a few false starts it was finally closed on June 30.

It was back in February 2015, that Kern County Sheriff Donny Youngblood first looked at closing the Ridgecrest jail due to budget cuts. The jail was given a reprieve the, but was back on the chopping block a year later, with an initial date of Feb. 20, 2016 given for its closure.

The jail got yet another reprieve, until the end of June. The city of Ridgecrest, meanwhile, held a standing-room-only Town Hall meeting on the subject. Rarely have the city council chambers been the scene of such agreement: virtually no one present wanted to the jail to close.

It finally did, however, although even that was not without controversy. Initial reports had the jail closing a day early but in the end it didn’t
matter. “It doesn’t matter if the jail closed yesterday or today,” Strand said to the Daily Independent. “The Kern County Sheriff’s Department still closed the local jail. This will have significant impacts on public safety in the valley, potentially making officers unavailable to respond to emergency calls for service.”

When the closure was imminent, Strand formulated a mitigation plan. Two community service officers were hired, allowing the transport of detainees to other booking locations without having to take additional officers off the streets.

The Ridgecrest City Council approved a prisoner van to make the job easier, although as of early September it had not yet arrived. Strand emphasized in September that these mitigation measures were not perfect, but were helping to soften the effect of the jail closure.

A turnaround on misdemeanors

In some cases, additional sources of funds have been found. Case in point, the Kern County District Attorney’s office. The office temporarily quit prosecuting certain classes of misdemeanors on Aug. 24, according to District Attorney Lisa Green. Green said that the Supervisors mandated 5 percent cut left her department no choice at the time, due to loss of staff.

All this changed in September, however. Green announced Sept. 14 that her office would once again be prosecuting all misdemeanor crimes, according to the Bakersfield Californian. Green said that the Kern County Community Corrections Partnership was able to reallocate $1.2 million of Proposition 109 County Community Corrections Californian. Green said the Kern County Sheriff’s office was prosecuting all misdemeanor crimes, according to the Bakersfield Californian.

Green has repeatedly declined to state the now-irrelevant list of misdemeanors that were not to be prosecuted. She did say they were all non-violent crimes.

Fire Station Closures?
Will local Kern County Fire stations face the ax?

As with other county departments, the Fire Department is looking at significant cuts. As of press time, the fate of the four fire stations in closest proximity to Ridgecrest was not determined. Green said the Daily Independent in September that he had not heard anything about closing the two stations in Ridgecrest, Station 74 on Las Flores and Station 77 on Dolphin in Ridgecrest Heights.

Station 73, in Inyokern, was once rumored to be on the closure list. According to Green in September, this is not the case. Gleason said, however, that the county will be having discussions with the Indian Wells Valley Airport District in Inyokern in an attempt to optimize the operation of the Inyokern station.

As of September, Gleason said Fire Station 75 in Randsburg hasn’t been decided yet.

Streamlining other departments

Gleason announced in September that the county was looking at ways to streamline departmental operations through the implementation of performance audits throughout the county. “Hopefully through the course of the year, we can find out where the fat is, where we can get at it and take more sensible, logical strategic cuts to meet the 15 percent reduction. We’ve got to get there, it’s going to be painful but the next couple of years that’s what we are looking at,” he said. Gleason told the Daily Independent that the committee would be headed by Supervisor David Couch and himself. ‘We’re going to develop a performance audit team that is going to go into various departments now, early, in a proactive manner to see what we can do about finding places to cut.’

One recent money-saving move was announced in mid-September. The Board of Supervisors voted to reposition the county’s Parks and Recreation Department as part of the Administrative Office’s General Services Division.

The changeover will occur at the beginning of November. Another cost-saving measure will take place when well-regarded Parks and Recreation Director Bob Lerude retires the following month. The county will save more money by not replacing Lerude when he retires.
Saving lives in Ridgecrest may have gotten a little easier.

On Sept. 14, Liberty Ambulance rolled out a new lifesaving tool: the ZOLL AutoPulse Automated CPR system. Four of the devices are now on the streets in the Ridgecrest and Inyokern Area.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation is an emergency procedure in which chest compression is combined with artificial ventilation in a person who is in cardiac arrest. It is used in emergencies such as heart attacks or near-drownings or other situations in which a patient’s breathing or heartbeat has stopped.

This automated system reportedly does manual CPR one better, according to Liberty Ambulance Chief Operations Officer Steve Davis. It does automatically what a person normally does. This has two advantages: it frees the first responders to do other things, and it provides more consistent and extensive compression.

Davis was on hand at the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Sept. 14, supervising the rollout and training first responders from Liberty Ambulance and the Kern County Fire Department.

The ZOLL AutoPulse is a non-invasive cardiac support pump. It is automatic, portable, and battery operated.

Davis strapped the device on a medical dummy to demonstrate its use. It compressed and thumped rhythmically, performing automated CPR, as first responders gathered in a semi-circle asking technical questions about its use.

Davis explained the advantages of the AutoPulse over manual CPR. “We no longer have to have a human actually manually do the chest compressions,” he said. “This device does that for us.”

This is a safer option when transporting a patient, he explained. The AutoPulse allows responders to sit down and put on a seat belt in the back of a moving ambulance. It can also allow more attentive patient care. “[The responder] can also concentrate on other aspects of patient care like airway control, monitoring the rhythm and administering medications,” he said.

According to Davis, the AutoPulse is more effective than manual CPR for several reasons. “Number one,” he said is the fact that it is continuous. “The depth is consistent, always doing chest compression at the same depth continuously.” This is not always the case when a person does CPR manually. “They get moved around, have to stop, get fatigued.”

Manual CPR can also be disrupted by pausing to rotate the staff or pausing to move the patient.

AutoPulse, by contrast, is “much more consistent and its continuous, it doesn’t stop,” he said.

The AutoPulse provides circumferential compression, which he said is better than “just one spot in the middle of the chest.”

Davis said studies show this type of circulation provides better return of circulation than manual compression.

Conventional CPR only provides 10 to 20% of normal blood flow to the heart and 30 to 40% to the brain, whereas AutoPulse provides pre-arrest blood levels to the heart and brain according to a presentation from the company. It also provides superior levels of neurological function when compared to manual and piston driven CPR, according to the presentation.

“For a patient who is in cardiac arrest, who needs CPR, it provides a much better chance of survival,” Davis said.

The devices officially went into action Sept. 14.

❖

ZOLL AutoPulse CPR system rolled out in September

BY JESSICA WESTON
City Editor
jweston@ridgecrestca.com

Saving lives in Ridgecrest may have gotten a little easier.

On Sept. 14, Liberty Ambulance rolled out a new lifesaving tool: the ZOLL AutoPulse Automated CPR system. Four of the devices are now on the streets in the Ridgecrest and Inyokern Area.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation is an emergency procedure in which chest compression is combined with artificial ventilation in a person who is in cardiac arrest. It is used in emergencies such as heart attacks or near-drownings or other situations in which a patient’s breathing or heartbeat has stopped.

This automated system reportedly does manual CPR one better, according to Liberty Ambulance Chief Operations Officer Steve Davis. It does automatically what a person normally does. This has two advantages: it frees the first responders to do other things, and it provides more consistent and extensive compression.

Davis was on hand at the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Sept. 14, supervising the rollout and training first responders from Liberty Ambulance and the Kern County Fire Department.

The ZOLL AutoPulse is a non-invasive cardiac support pump. It is automatic, portable, and battery operated.

Davis strapped the device on a medical dummy to demonstrate its use. It compressed and thumped rhythmically, performing automated CPR, as first responders gathered in a semi-circle asking technical questions about its use.

Davis explained the advantages of the AutoPulse over manual CPR. “We no longer have to have a human actually manually do the chest compressions,” he said. “This device does that for us.”

This is a safer option when transporting a patient, he explained. The AutoPulse allows responders to sit down and put on a seat belt in the back of a moving ambulance. It can also allow more attentive patient care. “[The responder] can also concentrate on other aspects of patient care like airway control, monitoring the rhythm and administering medications,” he said.

According to Davis, the AutoPulse is more effective than manual CPR for several reasons. “Number one,” he said is the fact that it is continuous. “The depth is consistent, always doing chest compression at the same depth continuously.” This is not always the case when a person does CPR manually. “They get moved around, have to stop, get fatigued.”

Manual CPR can also be disrupted by pausing to rotate the staff or pausing to move the patient.

AutoPulse, by contrast, is “much more consistent and its continuous, it doesn’t stop,” he said.

The AutoPulse provides circumferential compression, which he said is better than “just one spot in the middle of the chest.”

Davis said studies show this type of circulation provides better return of circulation than manual compression.

Conventional CPR only provides 10 to 20% of normal blood flow to the heart and 30 to 40% to the brain, whereas AutoPulse provides pre-arrest blood levels to the heart and brain according to a presentation from the company. It also provides superior levels of neurological function when compared to manual and piston driven CPR, according to the presentation.

“For a patient who is in cardiac arrest, who needs CPR, it provides a much better chance of survival,” Davis said.

The devices officially went into action Sept. 14.
Casino in Ridgecrest
Timbisha Shoshone, developers roll the dice

BY JESSICA WESTON
City Editor
jweston@ridgecrestca.com

The economic landscape of Ridgecrest may be changing, along with the physical lay of the land.

In a highly controversial move, the Ridgecrest City Council voted to approve a municipal services agreement and later a land sale to developers representing the Timbisha Shoshone tribe, for a casino complex to be built near the front gate to the base. It could be several years before a casino or any other establishment is open for business, but for many months in Ridgecrest the topic was the talk of the town.

The land in question is 24.6 acres in the Ridgecrest Business Park and from the very beginning, the tribe’s plans to build a casino there brought out passionate arguments on both sides.

Those supporting the casino touted economic growth, a boost in tourism and in jobs. Casino opponents cited everything from moral issues to proximity to NAWS China Lake as reasons to oppose the idea.

SEE CASINO, PAGE 11

Timbisha Shoshone Tribal Chair George Gholson speaks at a city meeting.

Ridgcrest Family Dentistry & Orthodontics

Anne Brett, DDS
Lorna Offutt, DDS

General Dentistry
Implant Dentistry
Surgical Placement &
Complete Restoration

For appointments: (760) 446-9011
900 N. Heritage Dr. Suite D Ridgecrest, CA 93555
It has been a long six months.

The public first caught wind of council’s casino plans back in April, when the MSA appeared on the city council agenda. That first meeting ended with council tabling the item, but not before casino opponents spelled out in graphic terms just what they feared the outcome of allowing such an establishment in Ridgecrest could be.


These were just some of the objections raised by those opposing the casino at that first meeting.

“Do we want to risk the displeasure of God for $395,000 a year?” Pastor Wayne Porter asked. A large number of people spoke up at that meeting, mostly opposing the casino.

A few people disagreed. “I just can’t believe what I’m hearing. I feel like I am in the movie Footloose trying to convince everyone to let us have a dance,” Ryan Ziegler said.

And that pretty much defined the debate that was to go on, for numerous town hall and regular city council meetings. Those supporting the casino also came out in force at subsequent meetings.

Groups for and against the casino produced a lot of material on why a casino would be good or bad for the city.
meetings. Both sides produced buttons and signs, and casino supporters added tee-shirts and bumper stickers.

Council eventually approved the MSA, in two steps. It was approved in concept May 18 and with final language on June 1. Councilman Eddie Thomas switched sides, voting for the MSA in concept but against the final language.

Casino opponents did not give up, however. An anti-casino petition was circulated and the issue seemed to inspire some candidate choices in the upcoming November election.

A cache of city emails to and from the developer was released thanks to the efforts of Mike Neel. Although some found the email trail suspicious, the land sale was approved shortly thereafter on Sept. 7. Mayor Peggy Breeden’s face upon casting what proved to be the deciding vote told the story of five months of anguish.

“It is tearing me apart because I have been threatened in my business [The Swap Sheet],” she said. “I have been told if I vote yes for this, what’s going to do, what’s going to happen,” she said before voting yes.

The land sale was approved three to two. Mayor Pro Tem James Sanders and Councilman Eddie Thomas were the dissenting votes.

But the other side, or at least Mike Neel, had not given up. Neel, who at press time was running for Mayor, served the city on Sept. 8 with a letter alleging a Brown Act violation. Neel claimed council failed to properly notice the closed session meetings in which the land sale was discussed and demanded they withdraw the land sale. City Attorney Keith Lemieux agreed there may have been a Brown Act violation, but said it is minor. Lemieux said that because the land sale approval took place during an open meeting, the error is insubstantial. Lemieux said he plans to advise council to correct noticing practices going forward.

City Council was due to deliberate on how it would disclose information regarding closed session items at its Sept. 21 meeting. As of press time for this magazine, it was not yet decided.

Casino developer Nigel White makes his case at a city council meeting. White has advocated for the casino, noting it will bring jobs and a boost in Ridgecrest’s economy.

FROM LAND SALE, PAGE 11

Eddie Thomas switched sides, voting for the MSA in concept but against the final language.

Casino opponents did not give up, however. An anti-casino petition was circulated and the issue seemed to inspire some candidate choices in the upcoming November election.

A cache of city emails to and from the developer was released thanks to the efforts of Mike Neel. Although some found the email trail suspicious, the land sale was approved shortly thereafter on Sept. 7. Mayor Peggy Breeden’s face upon casting what proved to be the deciding vote told the story of five months of anguish.

“It is tearing me apart because I have been threatened in my business [The Swap Sheet],” she said. “I have been told if I vote yes for this, what’s going to do, what’s going to happen,” she said before voting yes.

The land sale was approved three to two. Mayor Pro Tem James Sanders and Councilman Eddie Thomas were the dissenting votes.

But the other side, or at least Mike Neel, had not given up. Neel, who at press time was running for Mayor, served the city on Sept. 8 with a letter alleging a Brown Act violation. Neel claimed council failed to properly notice the closed session meetings in which the land sale was discussed and demanded they withdraw the land sale. City Attorney Keith Lemieux agreed there may have been a Brown Act violation, but said it is minor. Lemieux said that because the land sale approval took place during an open meeting, the error is insubstantial. Lemieux said he plans to advise council to correct noticing practices going forward.

City Council was due to deliberate on how it would disclose information regarding closed session items at its Sept. 21 meeting. As of press time for this magazine, it was not yet decided.

Casino developer Nigel White makes his case at a city council meeting. White has advocated for the casino, noting it will bring jobs and a boost in Ridgecrest’s economy.
Sierra Sands looks forward with new goals, challenges

BY JACK BARNWELL
Editor
jbarnwell@ridgecrestca.com

A new school year, new challenges and changes are underway within the Sierra Sands Unified School District, both on the surface and within its lesson plans. The Daily Independent caught up with Assistant Superintendent of Personnel Dave Ostash to talk about the changes happening at Sierra Sands, and what the new school district looks like.

Construction
"For us in the district, what is both at once a real excitement and a real challenge is construction and modernization," Ostash said.

On the construction front, two of SSUSD’s campuses are undergoing modernization — or being completely built from the ground up on a new site.

Sherman E. Burroughs High School is undergoing a modernization effort for the first time in its history.

SEE SSUSD, PAGE 14

The newly redone student quad at Burroughs High School includes a shaded area.

SINCE 1976
1501 1/2 N. China Lake Blvd.
(760) 446-4004
cardinalplumbing.net

SINCE 1977
805 W. Inyokern Rd.
1-760-446-6211

SINCE 1980
Tamera Roulund
Loan Officer
Individual NMLS# 1465816
509 W. Ward Ave., Suite C
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
1-760-446-7895

Branch NMLS ID #239669
Company NMLS ID#3274
Licensed by the Department of Business Oversight under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act

2016 PERSPECTIVE  13
I am proud to serve Ridgecrest and be a part of the Indian Wells and Searles Valleys. No one can honestly say we have no challenges here. However, most have been identified and discussed - so answers are being found and solutions addressed. From that Perspective, we are working on those solutions and turning the challenges into opportunities. We are blessed to have so many entities and remarkable individuals working so closely together. Working together, even more fully, with the Navy, while developing economic opportunities that make us good neighbors to all, is the path to a strong and dynamic future - our future!

Peggy Breeden
Mayor of Ridgecrest
federal government recognizing that.

“The whole purpose of this grant is to ensure that the students from military and DoD homes get to go to 21st century classrooms equipped with the latest educational tools,” Ostash said. “The instructional technology that will be equipped in every single classroom and be more versatile.”

He added that insulation will provide a quieter atmosphere for students to concentrate on school work, meaning less distraction.

Ostash noted that construction was without its hurdles.

“Public construction can be challenging because of regulatory measures,” Ostash said. The federal government comes with workforce protection requirements. Windows in new buildings, for example, will be raised and reinforced with custom glass to ensure they withstand blasts.

At the state level, all school plans must go through the Division of the State Architect, which governs construction on all public schools and other facilities. Plans are scrutinized to ensure they comply with up-to-date building codes and safety measures. Changes in the plans on either end can lead to delays.

While Ostash acknowledged it was challenging, especially around school schedules, the end results will be well worth the wait.

**Curriculum: Common Core, new leaps**

Ostash said that the district is deeply involved in California’s Common Core standards, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress and Smart Balance testing systems.

The new Common Core standard and the state testing systems aligned to those standards are designed to be more rigorous for

SEE CURRICULUM, PAGE 16
students in grades 3-8 and 11th grade. Mathematics and English/Language Arts questions require more response and critical thinking than the previous system, which was based largely on memorization.

“It’s empowering our teaching professionals with basically a collaborative model,” Ostash said.

Sierra Sands made the jump early in the roll-out of Common Core by volunteering to be a pilot district for the new system. In addition it rolled out its Chromebook initiative, in which students received an Android-based laptop to accommodate the state’s new system.

Ostash said it’s a change from the way things have been done in the past, both locally and across the state.

“Traditionally, when you look at education in California over the last few decades, it’s been a real top down model,” he said. “Even the California Department of Education is recognizing that is not the most effective way to inspire and influence and empower teachers to be most effective.”

Common Core he said, is based on depth of knowledge rather than wrote memorization, required of old testing systems, which were typically fill-in-the-blanks.

“It’s taking curriculum that is age-old and finding ways to depth of knowledge to students,” he said. “Students who achieved high marks in the past were either well suited or well supported to be taught, memorize and regurgitate material.”

Common Core, he says, approaches lesson materials from the stance of “why” or understanding how something is set up. “You have a working knowledge as opposed to recalling,” he said.

SEE ACHIEVEMENT, PAGE 17
"The way classrooms are built up in California now, there is a greater degree of expectation in the material in order to earn high marks, which dovetail beautifully with being college and career ready."

He added this allows Sierra Sands to achieve one of its goals once students graduate from Burroughs. "We want to be at a starting point for success, whether they go straight to work here in the valley, go to Cerro Coso College or go off to university," he said. "We want to make sure when they leave, that we empower them to compete and succeed not only with students in other California schools but with students around the globe."

Common Core also acts a springboard to empower teachers, he said.

Ostash said the best method was "leading from the middle," or focusing on results and collaboration.

"That means getting people who actually do the work (teachers, principals, coaches) to network within best practices in a systematic way," Ostash said.

One approach to this is the late-start Wednesday, where students come in a half-hour later than the normal schedule. Sierra Sands can better monitor results. While he said it appears many students have accepted this change that was implemented last year, Ostash submitted the district is aware others are still adjusting to it.

"We're still in the community buy in phase," Ostash said of the late start Wednesday model. "Our parents and the community are our stakeholders and we want them to be with us in this.

In the end, it boils down to teamwork, an essential element in a
place like the Indian Wells Valley. “We realize and recognize that we are in an isolated area, so we have a really strong culture of self-reliance and success,” Ostash said. “When we see movements on a statewide level for collective compliance, we’ve always understood where things are going.”

Common Core always being the example, Ostash said the district realized the new standard would be “nonnegotiable.” “We saw the mind shift toward Common Core and embraced that early and got all the training we could at the time,” Ostash said. He credited now-retired assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction Shirley Kennedy and her successor Michelle Savko with being forward-learning.

“We cannot afford to let our students down because we are THE public school system in the valley,” Ostash said. “Choices are a great thing for kids in terms of schools, but when it comes to the volume [of students], we are the public agency that this valley relies on. We take that role with a very high level responsibility.”

He called public education the great equalizer, where all students have access to the baseline standards.

“It’s sort of the main ingredient so every American has the opportunity whatever he or she wants,” Ostash said. “It’s great that we have private schools and I think the charter movement can only be additive and helpful to policy making levels, but I’m confident that the public education system will continue to be the primary driver for opportunity.”

He added if Sierra Sands doesn’t take that role seriously, it isn’t living up to its promise to the parents and students who live in the district.

SEE SSUSD, PAGE 19

A pair of Murray Middle School students tweak their team’s robot during a break in the April 2 VEX tournament at Immanuel Christian School. Murray Middle School, like Burroughs High and ICS, use robotics to teach Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

SEE OPPORTUNITIES, PAGE 17

place like the Indian Wells Valley. “We realize and recognize that we are in an isolated area, so we have a really strong culture of self-reliance and success,” Ostash said. “When we see movements on a statewide level for collective compliance, we’ve always understood where things are going.”

Common Core always being the example, Ostash said the district realized the new standard would be “nonnegotiable.” “We saw the mind shift toward Common Core and embraced that early and got all the training we could at the time,” Ostash said. He credited now-retired assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction Shirley Kennedy and her successor Michelle Savko with being forward-learning.

“We cannot afford to let our students down because we are THE public school system in the valley,” Ostash said. “Choices are a great thing for kids in terms of schools, but when it comes to the volume [of students], we are the public agency that this valley relies on. We take that role with a very high level responsibility.”

He called public education the great equalizer, where all students have access to the baseline standards.

“It’s sort of the main ingredient so every American has the opportunity whatever he or she wants,” Ostash said. “It’s great that we have private schools and I think the charter movement can only be additive and helpful to policy making levels, but I’m confident that the public education system will continue to be the primary driver for opportunity.”

He added if Sierra Sands doesn’t take that role seriously, it isn’t living up to its promise to the parents and students who live in the district.

SEE SSUSD, PAGE 19

A pair of Murray Middle School students tweak their team’s robot during a break in the April 2 VEX tournament at Immanuel Christian School. Murray Middle School, like Burroughs High and ICS, use robotics to teach Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
Partnerships play a huge role in this, he said, including in extracurricular activities.

“There is a lot we can do by ourselves but there is way more that we can do with partnerships,” he said. One example is the Burroughs Career Technical Education Building, made possible in part due to Sierra Sands investment in Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics programs (STEM), including those done in partnership with Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division at China Lake.

“That grant program to build that facility was done through a competitive grant,” Ostash said. “We would have not been designated to earn that grant if we did not have programs in place already. It wasn’t a ‘Field of Dreams, if you build it, they will come’ scenario, it was saying the state of California taxpayers are willing to invest in this building so you can deepen your programs.”

He noted that extracurricular activities, whether it was the VEX Robotics programs at Burroughs High and Murray Middle Schools, athletics, or the Burroughs Marching Band, helped foster a culture for students.

“Most people thrive when they become integrated into a school community,” Ostash said. “School is school because our mind set is ‘we have to go to school.’ But when we are engaged in a school community, you want to go school.”

He added studies show students do better in school and beyond when engaged with activities outside the classroom.

“You’re essentially learning new languages, like with music and math,” he said. “When you’re out doing athletics, you’re learning life lessons for young people so it brings them things like commitment, putting team above self, and pushing yourself in ways that you wouldn’t realize on your own.”

Proudly Serving The Indian Wells Valley

“... Now and into our future growth.”

Mick Gleason
1st District Kern County Supervisor

We like ‘em dead!

IT’S TIME TO GET THOSE PESTS UNDER CONTROL!
Get them before they make themselves at home!
• Tree Spraying
• Yard Spraying
• Termites
• Rodents
• Web Removal
• Weed Abatement

IT’S TIME TO GET THOSE PESTS UNDER CONTROL!

Locally Owned and Operated
Experience, Quality and Price Still Matter

STAFFORD’S Pest Control

Call The Pest Control Experts Today!

For your convenience, all appointments are scheduled to meet your needs
721 N. China Lake Blvd.
760-375-7575

FROM SSUSD, PAGE 18

The Burroughs Marching Band participates in the Parade of 1,000 Flags on Sept. 10, 2016.
It was the first day in a while in which the air wasn’t covered by smoky clouds. On the field at Kerr-McGee Youth Sports Complex below the orange-blue sky, elementary-school-aged children were kicking a soccer ball around, as parents, friends and other community members watched.

As 7 p.m. rolled around, and the sun was beginning to hide behind the Sierras to the west, the referee blew the whistle to signal the end of the match. The IWV Soccer Club successfully hosted a home match (against another local Ridgecrest club, Faller Elementary’s Tigres FC), which was the next step the 2-year-old club needed.

The game’s twilight ending seemed to be a mark on an otherwise perfect afternoon for soccer. The lack of adequate lighting on the field was a concern for the club.

The former football field at Kerr McGee Youth Sports Complex, now used as the home for IWV Soccer, will receive lights from a $1.7 million renovation.
Through an arrangement with Farmers Insurance Group®, a Farmers agent may now also be appointed with Anthem Blue Cross® in California. As an Anthem Blue Cross agent, I can assist you with your health insurance needs. Call me today.

DAVID HAUGEN
760-446-4560
http://www.farmersagent.com/dhaugen
1281 N NORMA ST #A
RIDGECREST, CA 93555
License #0608412,0G05847

Health care plans provided by Anthem Blue Cross. Insurance plans provided by Anthem Blue Cross Life and Health Insurance Company. Anthem Blue Cross is the trade name of Blue Cross of California, Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross Association. “ANTHEM” is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. “The Blue Cross name and symbol are registered marks of the Blue Cross Association. Farmers Insurance Group® is not part of, or affiliated with, Anthem Blue Cross.
are just enough to handle the club’s short-term goals, it opens up the conversation as to what else the park will need to satisfy things in the long run.

The Matt Armstrong Fields at Leroy Jackson Park, currently used by the IWV youth football and cheer teams, were once the home to youth soccer. The complex boasts a wide array for green space, allowing multiple teams to hold games simultaneously on the fields.

Kerr-McGee, on the other hand, is relegated to one field that, given an entrepreneurial spirit, could have multiple practices on it.

A return to the Matt Armstrong Fields isn’t ruled out, however; but the idea to expand Kerr-McGee could satiate both clubs.

“We’d like to be at the Matt Armstrong facility,” Blake said, “however, the current grass at Kerr-McGee is in better shape. We’re looking for a place that will be safe, well-lit and continue to grow.”

“We’d love to have our practice with the clubs practicing at the same time,” Gilbert said. “That way, the younger kids can learn from the older kids. It’s a more well-rounded club that way. Right now, we’re practicing on separate nights on separate fields.”

Additionally, the fields, even with proper maintenance, could suffer from overuse.

“That would be a good plan to have a bigger soccer complex, because the fields need to rest,” Gilbert said.

For now, the smallest steps are helpful to the club, with the lights being a large leap. And when everything is complete, the vision is that, by next year, Kerr-McGee will be abuzz during the cool summer nights.

“Lights are our biggest, No. 1 priority,” Gilbert said. “We’re happy with the lights. They’ll definitely help us.” ❖

In this Aug. 27 file photo, the IWV Soccer Club plays an exhibition match at Kerr McGee Youth Sports Complex.
CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND ROAD MAINTENANCE

Money stays 100% local • Measure V is for Ridgecrest

A YES FOR MEASURE V IS A YES FOR:

Police
Without Measure V our police department may face laying off up to fifteen officers. Measure V protects the police officers and neighborhood police patrols you rely on and maintains local crime prevention, investigation, and youth intervention programs.

Streets
Without Measure V road repair and maintenance would be drastically reduced. Measure V allows our city to better maintain streets and pothole repair. It keeps the roads safer for you and your vehicle.

RidgecrestYesOnMeasureV.com   RidgecrestYesOnMeasureV@gmail.com
RIDGECREST REGIONAL HOSPITAL
STATE-OF-THE-ART. CLOSE-TO-YOUR-HOME.


WE ARE THE FIRST CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITAL IN THE NATION TO CARRY THIS PRESTIGIOUS ACCREDITATION.

✔ Emergency Care
✔ Urgent Care
✔ Intensive Care
✔ Transitional Care & Rehab Unit
✔ X-Rays, MRI, Ultrasound, CT Scans, Nuclear Medicine
✔ OB/GYN & Perinatal Care Unit
✔ Gastroenterology
✔ Dentistry
✔ Dermatology
✔ Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapy
✔ Cardiac Rehab
✔ Respiratory & Sleep Lab
✔ Home Health & Hospice Clinic
✔ Psychology & Psychiatry
✔ Laboratory
✔ Pediatrics
✔ General Surgery
✔ Rural Health Clinic
✔ Patient Education (Diabetes, Childbirth, Lactation Counseling, CPR and More ...)
✔ Podiatry
✔ Southern Sierra Medical
✔ Wellness Resource Center
✔ Orthopedic Surgeries & Sports Medicine
✔ Women's Imaging: Digital Mammograms, DXA and 4d Ultrasound

760-446-3551  |  TDD# 760-446-7505
1081 N. CHINA LAKE BLVD., RIDGECREST CA 93555  |  WWW.RRH.ORG