

January 2009



IRONWOOD  
COMMUNITY NEWS



## TIME TO SIGN UP FOR JANUARY RESIDENT FORUMS

If you have not yet participated in one of these sessions designed to solicit homeowners comments regarding ICA's tentative plans to upgrade Ironwood's boulevards and medians, we urge you to do so now. Each Resident Forum requires individual sign-up since attendance at each session is limited to insure all views are heard. The remaining sessions will be held on the following dates in the Valley View Room of the Ironwood Country Club:

· **January 9, 12 and 19: 9:00 am and 1:00 pm each day**

To register, please email Jodi Gaylord at DRM at [JGaylord@drmineternet.com](mailto:JGaylord@drmineternet.com) (preferred) or call DRM at 760.346.1161.

These potential improvements would be accomplished in coordination with the on-going streets maintenance program and are in response to the ICA Strategic Plan objective to create a long-term Ironwood Community Plan. This objective concurs with results of the McMahon Group survey of Ironwood residents where a significant majority expressed strong support for continued streets maintenance, as well as initiatives that integrate greenscape and desertscape to improve year around attractiveness and reduce water usage.

We seek and value your input on these potential, cost-effective improvements that would be accomplished over several years and NOT require an increase in the regular monthly assessment as currently projected in the ICA Strategic Plan.

## SPECIAL SAVINGS ON PAVERS, NEW HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING

**Driveway Paver Program** - In early 2008, ICA announced a program whereby ICA would aggregate resident interest in driveway pavers and shop that total to interested paving company contractors with the intent of obtaining a preferred price for Ironwood residents. Farley Paving was selected. They measured each driveway and gave owners a specific quote for four different types of pavers. In the end, 30 residents took advantage of this program and realized substantial savings as Farley offered special off-season pricing to Ironwood homeowners. ICA's role was simply to connect interested residents with a contractor willing to offer special pricing. Individual homeowners still had to obtain permission from their local HOAs for these improvements.

If you are interested in the 2009 Paver Program, please contact Jodi Gaylord by email at [JGaylord@drmineternet.com](mailto:JGaylord@drmineternet.com) (preferred) or phone: 760.346.1161 not later than February 28, 2009. Our intent is to secure quotations by the end of April.

**2009 Heating and Air Conditioning Replacement Program** - Building on the success of the 2008 Paver Program, ICA has been working with a licensed heating and air conditioning contractor and has negotiated a discounted price for Ironwood homeowners to replace their old units. The contractor represents Heil Heating and Air Conditioning Systems, a sister company of Carrier and part of United Technologies. The manufacturer's website address is: [www.heil-hvac.com/home.html](http://www.heil-hvac.com/home.html).



### **Benefits:**

- *Depending on the system size, homeowners may realize overall savings of \$500 to \$1,000 on purchase and installation;*
- *Lower utility bills;*
- *Possible rebates from Southern California Edison. See their website for details: [www.sce.com/rebatesandsavings/residential](http://www.sce.com/rebatesandsavings/residential); and*
- *The Palm Desert Energy Independence Program allows residents to secure low cost loans for energy saving programs such as new furnaces, air conditioning, windows, etc. These loans can be paid back over several years as an add-on to your residential property tax bill. See Palm Desert's website for more information: [www.cityofpalmdesert.org](http://www.cityofpalmdesert.org).*

One product being featured as part of this program is the Heil 14 SEER high efficiency system with a 2-speed fan motor, Copeland scroll compressor, 410A refrigerant (a non-ozone-depleting chemical) and a 10-year compressor warranty. The furnace has a multi-speed blower and an 80% AFUE rating. The furnace warranty is 5 years on all parts, with a 20-year warranty on the heat exchanger.

If you are interested in getting a quotation for a new high-efficiency furnace and A/C system through this program, please contact Jodi Gaylord at DRM via email (preferred) at [jgaylord@drmineternet.com](mailto:jgaylord@drmineternet.com) or by phone at 760-346-1161, ext 141, NO LATER THAN MARCH 13, 2009. Our intent is to facilitate quotations by the end of April 2009. ICA will compile a list of interested owners and pass them on to the contractor who will then contact homeowners directly and provide an individual quotation.



ICA's role in both the Paver and HVAC programs is simply to connect interested Ironwood homeowners with a contractor willing to offer preferred pricing to Ironwood residents. It is, of course, up to individual homeowners to evaluate the product and quotation, and then secure any HOA approvals or City permits that may be required.



## AROUND IRONWOOD

**Smart Controllers** - Several HOAs are converting to smart controllers to reduce water consumption and lower utility bills. These satellite controlled irrigation clocks can reduce water demand by up to 26%. They also eliminate the need to manually change watering times with our frequent desert weather changes, a notoriously inefficient way to manage water use. With the implementation of tiered water rates, these controllers will be a critical component of Ironwood's water conservation and cost management program.

**Painting** - Ironwood Owners Association VIII will be painting their 128 units beginning in January. They have chosen a new color palette as have other HOAs in recent years. The new colors include many of the rich desert hues found in our local mountains. The variety and boldness of the new palette greatly updates the visual appeal of the homes. And as any real estate professional will tell you, a fresh coat of paint gives a great boost to resale value.

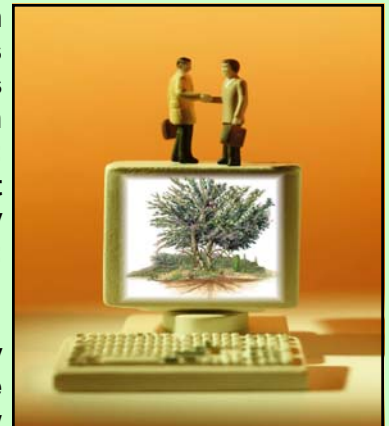
**Repair Orders** - The DRM management firm supports 14 of the 17 Ironwood homeowner associations. In an effort to improve repair order tracking and lower costs, Ironwood HOAs and DRM have made the following changes: (1) all Ironwood repair orders are now being documented by one DRM person who provides central reporting, determines the urgency of the repair, and then directs repairs to be made; (2) rather than have DRM maintenance people respond to individual repair requests, and providing the request is not an emergency, repairs orders will be accumulated and dealt with on Tuesdays and Thursdays for Ironwood. In this way, the number of trips to Ironwood for repair people will be minimized. In 2007, Ironwood HOAs spent more than \$70,000 on such repairs. We expect that this new repair order management approach will significantly reduce this total cost in 2009.

### ICA WEBSITE NOW OPEN

The new Ironwood Community Association website has recently been developed for use by residents and HOA boards. The site is work-in-progress and will be expanded as time and funds permit. The web address is [www.ironwoodcommunity.com](http://www.ironwoodcommunity.com) and it provides a variety of information including: ICA board minutes and strategic plan; ICA governing documents; Ironwood Policies, Rules and Regulations; Security information and resident transponder application; new homeowner information; Emergency Preparedness; copies of ICA newsletters; a form to send in a service request; and, latest Community Enhancement information.

We especially urge you to visit the Emergency Preparedness link. It presently contains several important publications, including Los Angeles Fire Department and FEMA brochures both of which offer excellent advice on how to deal with an emergency such as an earthquake. These articles can be downloaded from the website and printed for your convenience.

There is also a link entitled "Your Local HOA" which is currently being developed. Ironwood Owners Association XII will be the first HOA to post documents and resident information on this site, and this will be done gradually over the next months. As time goes on, we hope to also post links to other local HOAs.



## **STATEWIDE WATER DROUGHT DECLARED**

*By Dennis Mahr,*

*Communications & Legislative Director, Coachella Valley Water District*

A combination of dry conditions and court rulings has put a squeeze on California water supplies and triggered a statewide drought declaration. In some areas of the state, this has resulted in water restrictions and rationing. Thanks to water stored in a massive aquifer and nearly a century of judicious management of it, the people of Coachella Valley haven't been subjected to such drastic steps. However, that aquifer doesn't hold an endless supply and judicious management must continue and be improved upon as importable supplies dwindle and the population grows.

In 2002, the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) adopted a comprehensive Water Management Plan which called for a reduction in use by all categories of water users.

In agriculture, where most irrigation in the valley during the last 30 years has been converted to drip systems to save water and improve production, the Water Management Plan called for an additional 7 percent reduction by 2015. It has exceeded that goal by achieving a 12 percent reduction so far.

Since water is a significant part of the cost of doing business for golf course managers, most also were irrigating efficiently when the Water Management Plan called for the golf community to reduce water use by 5 percent by 2010. Already the valley's golf courses have reduced water use by 12.5 percent.

The plan then called for CVWD's domestic customers (residences, businesses, local governments, schools and homeowners associations) to reduce water use by 10 percent by 2010. Currently, these water users only have shown a 6 percent reduction.

CVWD's current efforts, then, are to work with these water users to help them reduce their consumption and to lower their water bills. The district is preparing to implement a tiered rate system in 2009 with an individualized water budget for each user based on lot size, number in the household and current weather conditions.

A review of customer accounts shows that most people easily will be able to stay within their water budgets without depriving their landscaping of needed water simply by replacing their irrigation controllers with "smart" controllers that automatically adjust for changes in weather conditions. These are obtainable through CVWD for a discount offered in conjunction with the county or city in which the home is located. More than 70 percent of domestic water use goes for landscaping.

To further reduce irrigation needs, homeowners associations and individual homeowners can replace some turf with plants described in *Lush & Efficient Landscape Gardening in the Coachella Valley*, a book and companion interactive compact disk produced by CVWD and sold at cost. The full book, order information and other conservation tips are available on CVWD's web site [www.cvwd.org](http://www.cvwd.org).

## LOW FLYING AIRCRAFT

During springtime these past two years, we experienced a series of low flying helicopters over Ironwood, especially over our Southwest corner. Bighorn has assured us that there have absolutely been no landings of helicopters there last year, and none in recent years other than the one well known unauthorized landing about 18 months ago. Several incidents were certainly city and county police aircraft searching for suspicious persons reported in areas outside Ironwood. We suspect other flights were real estate showings.



Aircraft are allowed to fly within 1000' above the terrain, with some other limitations. Any low flights over Ironwood are a real intrusion and a negative impact on the integrity of our community. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the government agency responsible for aviation safety. It is their policy to investigate complaints of low-flying aircraft operated in violation of Federal Aviation Regulations, and that might endanger persons or property.

If you witness aircraft flying over Ironwood at an altitude of less than 1000 feet, the FAA recommends you contact the nearest Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) in Riverside to make a witness report. Their telephone is 951.276.6701. Their website is: [http://www.faa.gov/about/office\\_org/field\\_offices/fsdo/ral/](http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/field_offices/fsdo/ral/). One can send an email to them from this website.

They will want to know details, including:

- **Identification: registration number appearing on fuselage (essential); military or civil; time and place; what direction was the aircraft flying; color, etc.**
- **Altitude: How low was it flying? On what do you base your estimate? Any photographs?**
- **Supporting evidence: witnesses, police, photographs, etc.**

Recent experience shows that filing such reports is not always met with timely response, but it must be done if we are to rid Ironwood skies of such aircraft.



## CIVIC NEWS

**City of Palm Desert Website** - The City has been improving its website and we encourage you to visit [www.cityofpalmdesert.org](http://www.cityofpalmdesert.org) to learn more of what is going in our community. There is a substantial amount of information available on a variety of diverse topics, such as security and earthquake preparedness. One can sign up for email notifications of certain interests, such as City Council agendas. Much of this article was recently posted on the City's website.

**Palm Desert Goes Green** - The City of Palm Desert has a well-deserved reputation for excellence and leadership when it comes to conservation and environmental stewardship. The City's groundbreaking efforts in recycling, energy conservation, water efficiency, and sustainable development have garnered national recognition.

In 2006, Palm Desert pledged to reduce its energy demand and use by 30 percent over five years and established a Department of Energy Management. Thanks to a unique partnership between the City and Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company, and The Energy Coalition, this program kicked off in 2007. Known as Set to Save, the program encourages energy efficiency and conservation.

A recent report in The Wall Street Journal named Palm Desert, as one of nine cities, worldwide, coming up with innovative ways to cut energy use. The other cities mentioned in the report were: Amsterdam; Ann Arbor, Michigan; Aspen, Colorado; Beijing; Chicago; London; New York; and Thane, India.

**Energy Independence Loan Program** - Palm Desert was instrumental in the passing of Assembly Bill 811. This bill offers California cities a new way to help their citizens finance energy improvements. Simply put, residents can borrow money through the City and pay it back, over time, through a property tax assessment.

Financing is available for new energy efficiency improvements to existing structures, not for new construction. Eligible improvements include a wide variety of energy-saving upgrades such as high efficiency heating and air conditioning systems, dual glazed windows, efficient pool pumps, door replacements, solar systems and more. Residents can take advantage of this financing while participating in the ICA HVAC Program described elsewhere in this newsletter.

Anticipated advantages of using an Energy Independence Program loan include immediate savings on utility bills and a higher tax payment but one that is offset in part, or completely, by utility bill savings. It would also be possible to transfer whatever balance remains on the loan to the new owner when the property is sold should buyer and seller agree. For more information, visit the City's website at [www.cityofpalmdesert.org](http://www.cityofpalmdesert.org), or call the Office of Energy Management at (760) 837-0287.

**Hillside Ordinance** - The City revised this ordinance effective January 2008 in response to public outcry over construction of a large estate on a prominent ridgeline south of Ironwood. Key provisions of the ordinance include:

- Development on or across prominent ridgelines is prohibited. Pad elevations and architectural design shall be set so that rooflines are not visible above existing ridgelines.
- The City must notify residents living within 4000' of any proposed new construction as well as all homeowner associations South of Haystack Road. The prior ordinance only requiring noticing homes within 300'.

Please note that while the ordinance "prohibits" construction on ridgelines, it allows hillside construction providing that rooflines are not visible. Despite the clarity of wording, this past year several hillside landowners have petitioned the Palm Desert Planning Commission and City Council to allow exceptions to the ordinance and allow new construction on ridgelines. Fortunately, these petitions became known and Ironwood residents and others in the community wrote emails and letters in support of protecting our ridgelines, and so these petitions were rejected. However, it is clear there will be further challenges in the future and so ICA continues to work with City officials to learn of such petitions so that timely public comment can be made.

## TRIANGLE OF LIFE

*(The following is extracted/edited from Doug Copp's article, "The Triangle of Life" which can be found on the Ironwood Community website. It contrasts the "duck and cover" earthquake survival technique advice with Doug's "triangle of life" approach.)*



My name is Doug Copp. I am the Rescue Chief and Disaster Manager of the American Rescue Team International (ARTI), the world's most experienced rescue team. The information in this article will save lives in an earthquake. I have crawled inside 875 collapsed buildings, worked with rescue teams from 60 countries, founded rescue teams in several countries, and I am a member of many rescue teams from many countries. I was the United Nations expert in Disaster Mitigation for two years. I have worked at every major disaster in the world since 1985, except for simultaneous disasters.

Simply stated, when buildings collapse, the weight of the ceilings falling upon the objects or furniture inside crushes these objects, leaving a space or void next to them.

This space is what I call the 'triangle of life'. The larger and stronger an object is, the less it will compact, and hence the larger the void it will create. Being in this void - and not under the object - can save your life in an earthquake.

### **TEN TIPS FOR EARTHQUAKE SAFETY**

1. Most everyone who simply 'ducks and covers' and gets under objects like desks or cars when buildings collapse are seriously injured or crushed.
2. Instead, get next to an object, next to a sofa, next to a large bulky object that will have a void next to it. Curling up in the fetal position is a natural safety/survival instinct and allows one to survive in a smaller void.
3. Wooden buildings are often the safest type of construction to be in during an earthquake since wood is flexible and moves with the force of the earthquake. If a wooden building does collapse, large survival voids are created. Also, a wooden building has less concentrated, crushing weight.
4. If you are in bed during the night and an earthquake occurs, simply roll off the bed onto the floor and next to the bottom of the bed.
5. If an earthquake happens and you cannot easily escape by getting out the door or window, then lie down and curl up in the fetal position next to a sofa or large chair.
6. Most everyone who gets under a doorway when buildings collapse is seriously injured or killed. Why? If the doorjamb falls forward or backward, you may be crushed by the ceiling above.
7. Never go on or below a stairway. The stairway has a different 'moment of frequency' (they swing separately from the main part of the building). The stairs and remainder of the building continuously bump into each other until structural failure of the stairs takes place.
8. Get near the outer walls of buildings or outside the building if at all possible. The farther you are inside the greater the probability that your escape route will be blocked.
9. People inside vehicles are often lost when the road above falls in an earthquake and crushes their vehicles. This is exactly what happened with the slabs between the decks of the Nimitz Freeway during the San Francisco earthquake. Most could have survived by getting out and sitting or lying next to their vehicles. All the crushed cars had voids 3 feet high next to them.
10. I discovered, while crawling inside of collapsed newspaper offices and other offices with a lot of paper, that paper does not compact and so large voids are found surrounding stacks of paper.

## ICA BOARD AND DRM CHANGES

**ICA Board Change** - After 5.5 years of outstanding service, **VJ Shrader** has retired from the ICA board, while continuing to serve on the important Streets Committee. VJ has been tireless and unusually effective in stimulating improvements to our community - often quietly in the background -- and we in Ironwood are fortunate to have someone with VJ's perseverance and foresight be of service to our community.

**Alison Delf** has been appointed to the ICA board to fill the remainder of VJ's term and has also been elected ICA Treasurer. Alison and husband Ken live in Calgary and have a home in Ironwood Owners Association III where Alison is also a board member. They have been Club members since 2003. Alison is a Chartered Accountant in Canada and brings strong financial and gated community development experience to the ICA board. Welcome, Alison.

**ICA Adds Association Manager** - **Sharron Badham** has joined DRM and the Ironwood team and is now the ICA Community Association Manager. **Nancy Parkinson, Jan Baker** and **Jodie Gaylord** will now be dedicated to supporting your local HOA. Sharron has significant community management experience in the Coachella Valley, most recently at Andalusia. She was general manager of Desert Horizons Owners Association for many years, and at Woodhaven Country Club before that. Sharron's golf club experience includes being club service manager at Ironwood 1977-1985 and as director of club operations at Rancho Mirage County Club.

Adding a fourth, very qualified person to the Ironwood/DRM team increases management resources to a level comparable to other communities and is designed to improve overall service to Ironwood residents. Welcome to Sharron and many thanks to Nancy, Jan and Jodie for their continued assistance.



### IRONWOOD COMMUNITY NEWS

Published by the Ironwood  
Community Association

**Management Information**  
DESERT RESORT MANAGEMENT  
PO Box 14387  
Palm Desert, CA 92255-14387  
42635 Melanie Place, Suite 103  
Palm Desert, CA 92211  
760.346.1161 Voice  
760.346.9918 Fax  
Email: [drm@drminternet.com](mailto:drm@drminternet.com)  
Sharron Badham- Association Manager  
eMail: [sbadham@drminternet.com](mailto:sbadham@drminternet.com)

#### **Board of Directors**

President: Larry Sutter  
Vice President: Larry Abbott  
Secretary: Ron Doll  
Treasurer: Alison Delf  
Director: Chuck Henderson  
Director: Janet Plat  
Director: Mitch Grossman

## RECYCLING BINS

Many Ironwood Owners' trash closets are too small to accommodate the standard Burrtec rolling recycling containers. Burrtec now offers a light-weight 18-gallon recycling bin. It will sit on top of the burgundy trash rolling container or on a shelf. Any owner who wants to order this compact recycling bin may contact Burrtec directly at 760.340.2113.

## DESERT RESORT MANAGEMENT AT NEW LOCATION

DRM has moved its corporate office. The new address is 42635 Melanie Place, Suite B, Palm Desert, CA 92211. The mailing address for correspondence is: P.O. Box 14387, Palm Desert, CA 92255-14387. Telephone numbers remain the same: (760) 346-1161; (760) 346-9918 FAX.

## CHANNEL 98

*Do not forget to check cable Channel 98 for both community and Ironwood Country Club news. We are striving to make better use of this communications tool. Please stop by and see what is new!*