



October 2007

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

This summer, more than 160 homes were repainted in the new, darker colors first used in Ironwood by HOA 6 (NE of Mariposa and Irontree). Homes in HOA 13 (Jasmine) and HOA 12 (Ajo, Carrizo, Wolfberry, Torrito, Sundrop and Palo Verde) were painted with these new colors. The result adds richness and variety to Ironwood's appearance.

HOA 12 also redid all of its circles in desertscape. Previously, HOA 13 and HOA 6 converted their circles to desertscape. In 2006, homeowners on Kerria sponsored a beautiful new circle. These welcome changes add color and diversity to our plantings, as well as saving water and protecting our streets from destructive nuisance water runoff.

Owners Association 1 (West side of Mariposa) is embarking upon a major program this Fall to replace its mailboxes, condo lights and ground lighting.

Congratulations to these homeowners and associations for initiating improvements that add to the livability of our community.

The major street maintenance program continued this summer as we spent \$627,528 to repave the streets in Ironwood HOAs 12 and 13, and slurry coat the streets in Ironwood Heights and Canyon View Estates. Summer repaving will continue through year 2011 after which we will reduce street expenses to a maintenance level that should sustain us 30+ years.

## SPEEDING

We still have too many drivers exceeding the speed limit in Ironwood. The California Vehicle Code sets the maximum speed limit in residential areas at 25 MPH. We have that maximum stated in our Rules and Regulations. At times, it takes a concentrated effort not to exceed that limit, especially on downhill stretches of some streets. We have monitor/recorders to remind drivers of their speed as do other gated communities. This Fall we will be using radar to track offenders and will be issuing courtesy warnings. Repeat offenders will be subject to fines which we sincerely hope will not be necessary.

A second Ironwood problem is the failure of golf cart operators to follow the same rules that apply to cars. It is a common practice to ignore stop signs while driving carts throughout our community. No one wants to see a major accident and so we feel a responsibility to work to avoid such a situation. Golf carts can easily flip over, and they offer little protection in a collision. We have choices: obey the rules or issue citations and fine repeat offenders. In the worst case, we can install speed bumps (ugh!)! Wouldn't it be better all around to just obey traffic rules while driving your golf cart?!

## CHANNEL 77

Do not forget to check cable Channel 77 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!



## GOVERNANCE:

### The ABCs of ICA, HOAs, DRM and the IWCC

Our Ironwood community of 1066 homes has a governance structure that is more complex than most communities, a legacy of sequential development. Many Ironwood homeowners do not realize that they are members of TWO homeowner associations:

- The Ironwood Community Association (ICA) - ICA members include the 1066 Ironwood homeowners and the Ironwood County Club ("Club") as a distinct entity. ICA is responsible for central operations such as security, gates, street maintenance, common area landscaping, negotiating the TV cable contract, etc. ICA further supports the community by facilitating communications and solutions to common issues.

- Their local homeowner association (HOA) - Ironwood has 16 HOAs ranging in size from 14 to 150 homes that provide local member services such as landscaping, architectural guidelines, home insurance, etc. Your monthly HOA association monthly dues includes ICA dues.

Desert Resort Management (DRM) is a community management firm that supports ICA and 13 of the 16 Ironwood HOAs. DRM maintains a service desk for maintenance requests, and a 24/7 answering service for emergencies. It also assists ICA and most HOA boards with identifying CC&R issues, maintaining records, board and annual meeting support, and providing financial services such as dues collection, bill paying and general accounting.

Of the 1066 homeowners in Ironwood, approximately 600 are members of the Ironwood Country Club (IWCC). About 200 other Club members reside outside the gates of Ironwood.

## SECURITY IN IRONWOOD

Security is the largest single regular expenditure in the ICA budget because of its importance to the community. We are fortunate that our location and security program have resulted in a very low incidence of crime compared to other gated communities in the Palm Desert, Indian Wells and Rancho Mirage areas.

However, too often we take for granted the serene comfort of gated community living. There

are hundreds of people that enter Ironwood each day who are not residents -- guests, vendors and contractors. We have an effective gate pass and transponder system but, occasionally, there are some who enter who are of questionable character. We therefore need to insure steps are taken to eliminate the opportunistic theft: lock and close garage doors, lock your car doors, do not leave packages in parked cars, etc.

We are evaluating the installation of cameras at our gates to assist in our security efforts. Cameras would give us a record of all vehicles that enter and leave our complex and assist us in identifying suspicious parties. As the valley grows, security concerns will also grow and so we need to be continuously vigilant.

However infrequent, any incident is a major concern and we are continually striving to improve Ironwood security. Recently, we began to regularly post security messages and alerts on Ironwood TV channel 77. Please view this information on a regular basis for timely security reminders and reports of security incidents as they may occur. Any recent security incident will be posted for a two week period as a service to homeowners. Diligent, informed and alert homeowners are a key element in any security program.

The Resort Communities Security Association (RCSA), of which ICA is a member, provides a monthly report of security incidents that occur in gated communities located in Palm Desert, Indian Wells and Rancho Mirage to its members. We are noticeable by our absence in most RCSA reports because of our relatively low incident rate. We would like to improve this further and continue to evaluate security practices and equipment.

Recent security improvements include the hiring of Boyd Associates to provide security officers and services, and the hiring of our own, full-time Director of Security Fred McLean. Fred has many years of security in the corporate world and the US Marine Corp, and we are fortunate to have someone of Fred's background and diligence to help lead Ironwood's security efforts. We regularly visit other communities to examine their systems and programs. We also meet with outside consultants and vendors to benchmark our equipment and program to help insure Ironwood security remains one of the most effective in the area.



## PARKING RULES AMENDED

The Ironwood Council, consisting of all HOA presidents, Club representation and the ICA board, recently completed a review of current parking regulations and decided to propose a change that would clarify the issue of homeowner parking. These proposed changes were recently put forth to all homeowners and, with modest changes, was adopted by the ICA board after an open meeting held September 10, 2007. The amended regulation is as follows:

*“All residents shall park vehicles under their control in their garage, driveway, car port or the designated cut-out parking areas of their own associations. If and as necessary, temporary daytime street parking by residents is permitted. No overnight street parking is permitted by residents. Guests, or permittees (which include service vehicles), may park in the street if street cutout parking is unavailable. Short term exceptions can be made through security by obtaining a guest pass or permit.”*

*“Guests of Homeowners in Associations 1 and 2 should use the street cutout parking area on the south side of Foxtail. Associations 1 & 2 homeowners and visitors are not allowed to park in the guest parking spaces inside Association 10.”*

Please note that residents visiting another home in Ironwood are considered “guests” at that home and are so free to park in any available authorized place, including the street -- although not overnight. These changes will lessen parking issues and improve the aesthetics and security of our community. Thank you for you cooperation.

## IRONWOOD COUNCIL

To facilitate community collaboration, the Ironwood Council was formed and meets approximately three times per season to discuss common issues and address community-wide problems. This Council consists of the ICA board, the presidents of the 16 homeowner associations, a liaison from the Club’s board, and a representative of Desert Resort Management. Topics and activities in recent sessions included breakout sessions to generate inputs for the ICA strategic plan, discussion of ICA financial projections and practices, the composition of the ICA board, and the role of the Club as a member of ICA. As well, there were ICA committee reports and discussions covering topics such as finance, security, the streets, landscaping, planning and architectural preferences for our community.



The Ironwood Council is intended to facilitate communications and collaboration between and among HOAs, ICA and the Club. Having a diverse and decentralized organization structure in Ironwood offers special challenges, and we feel the Council plays an important role in providing a forum to address important community matters in a timely manner.

Via email, the Council also receives general information and alerts, solicitation of opinions and general community information from ICA on a regular basis.

## INTERSECTION OF MESA VIEW AND HIGHWAY 74

Some homeowners have expressed concerns over the safety of this intersection, and so we have been in contact with the City of Palm Desert and State of California on this matter. We had asked them to evaluate traffic safety at this corner since traffic coming from the South is often at a high rate of speed making turning onto Mesa View difficult. This intersection currently remains in the State right-of-way. However, we were recently advised that the City and Caltrans are in the latter stage of negotiations to relinquish jurisdiction over Highway 74 to the City.

A Department of Transportation letter to us stated that, when the transfer occurs, DOT will include the funds to install a traffic signal at this intersection allowing the City to complete this project relatively quickly. We do not yet know when this will be, but please be aware that this improvement is apparently on the near horizon.

## CONTACT INFORMATION UPDATE NEEDED - Especially Email

Enclosed is a form to update your contact information, if needed. We are especially interested in building a database of Ironwood homeowner email addresses so that we can provide more timely information updates, if needed. Mail in the form, or email your email address to [krobertson@dminternet.com](mailto:krobertson@dminternet.com).

## ICA BOARD SOLICITATION

If you would like to serve your community by participating on an ICA committee or as a board member, please do nominate yourself! Enclosed is a sheet that allows you do to so. You may have thought about this in the past. Today is a good time to act!

## NUISANCE WATER IS COSTLY

“Nuisance water” is the term given to water runoff in our streets from sprinklers. In addition to wasting water, nuisance water is a primary contributor to the erosion of our asphalt streets over the years. Please report any incorrectly positioned sprinklers to Desert Resort Management at 346.1161.



### IRONWOOD COMMUNITY NEWS

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#### Management Information

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#### Board of Directors

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Secretary: Ron Doll  
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## OVERVIEW OF ICA FINANCES

As summarized in documents mailed to you earlier, ICA’s budget for 2007 is just over \$2,100,000. The primary sources of revenues are (approximately):

- \$ 1,330,000 from homeowners for operations and reserves**
- 351,000 from homeowners for TV cable**
- 332,000 from the Ironwood Country Club**
- 98,000 transponder fees, mostly from contractors**

Homeowner dues are currently \$104/mo plus \$29 for cable and are included in one’s local HOA dues. They break out as follows:

- \$ 65 per month for operations**
- 39 per month for reserves (mostly streets)**
- 29 per month for cable TV**

Most homeowners are unaware of the Club’s sizable contribution to ICA annual revenues. The transponder fee for contractors is \$37.50 each 90 day time period. A contractor spending four days or less in Ironwood per quarter is not required to buy a transponder.

The major areas of ICA year 2007 spending are, approximately:

- \$ 622,000 streets maintenance (via reserves)**
- 563,000 security**
- 351,000 cable TV**
- 224,000 common area landscaping**
- 67,000 utilities**
- 64,000 professional management (DRM)**
- 50,000 postage and printing**

The streets program is multi-year and anticipated to be completed in 2011. After that time, we expect yearly street maintenance to be approximately \$80,000/year. Current street spending levels are high because our roads were not properly maintained for so many years, and financial reserves for this purpose were not put in place. Therefore, we have some catching up to do.

The TV cable fee of \$29 is a “pass through” charge and represents a savings to homeowners of \$40/month, according to Time-Warner. ICA has a community-wide contract with T-W on behalf of Ironwood homeowners.