

Chino Champion

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Quick TAKES

Champion early close

The Champion office will close at 4 p.m. Tuesday for the staff Christmas party.

Can't help smiling

Chino Valley firefighters, with help, accomplish their mission of making kids happy. Page A3

Local is first resort

Chances are Chino Valley merchants have just what you're looking for. Pages A8-10

Dazzling displays

Christmas lights are shining all over Chino Valley. Pages A5, B3

\$10,000 setback

Chino American Little League faces an expensive field repair. Page C1

Recognize that face?

Cutting edge software may help owners recover lost pets. The Pet Paparazzi explains. Page C6

Our 127th year No. 6 - 4 sections

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Ramona Jr. High turns 50



Champion photos by Brenda Dunkle

Ramona Junior High custodian Art Gutierrez (left, playing drums) of Ontario and his fellow Forgiven band mates perform classic rock and Latin rock music at the Chino school's recent anniversary party. The band formed three years ago and plays at churches and community events.

Alumni flock to celebrate

By Brenda Dunkle

Like many turning 50, Ramona Junior High partied.

An anniversary celebration that included music, food, guest speakers, alumni, a gift basket raffle, and lots of reminiscing was held at the Chino campus on Dec. 5.

Jeff Starkey was among the many alumni attending the event. He attended Ramona in 1963 when the school opened, taking his first three classes of the school day at the old Chino Junior High on Riverside Drive, between Telephone Avenue and Seventh Street (where the Chino Valley school district office is now located). After lunch, he attended his last three classes at the new Ramona campus.

He remembered girls taking a record player out to the tennis courts at lunchtime and playing music. "That was my introduction to the Beatles," he said.

Mr. Starkey, a 1968 Chino High graduate, re-



Pamela Scruggs and her daughter Skylar Karnbach are both leaders at Ramona Junior High. Ms. Scruggs, who attended Ramona from 1972 to 1974, is Parent Teacher Organization president. Skylar, an eighth grader at Ramona, is on the Leadership team at the Chino school.

cently retired as a beer deliveryman. His granddaughter Audrey Munoz, an eighth grader at the school, is living in the same Chino house where Mr. Starkey was raised.

Ron Mead of Chino Hills, who served as Ramona principal from 1999 to 2005, said the school

See RAMONA, Page A2

Schools struggle with lead in water

By Brenda Dunkle

The school district submitted more than 600 water samples for testing this week from 15 school sites.

The schools' water was previously tested this fall and found to contain levels of lead that the U.S. Environmental Agency considers to be high. On Dec. 6, the district announced that 12 sites had levels of lead that required action.

District spokeswoman Julie Gobin said three additional schools are also being retested because their high lead levels were overlooked in the initial testing. Those schools are Dickson and Walnut elementary schools, and Buena Vista Continuation High.

The water will be tested at the same independent certified lab in Grand Terrace that did the initial tests. District officials expect the results early next week. Ms. Gobin said.

The analysis will look at both the lead and copper content of the water samples, as well as its relative corrosiveness, assistant superintendent Greg Stachura said Monday.

Based on the results, the district will develop a plan, Mr. Stachura said.

The district also retained an environmental consultant on Wednesday, Ms. Gobin said.

On Dec. 6, the day the district found out that water samples taken in October tested high for lead at more than a dozen school sites, the district began providing bottled water to those schools. Bottled water will be provided to the schools until the problem is resolved, Mr. Stachura said.

The affected schools announced Dec. 6 are Rolling Ridge Elementary, Butterfield Ranch Elementary, Townsend Junior High, and the Alternative Education Center, all in Chino Hills; Cal Aero Preserve Academy, Marshall Elementary School, Borba Fundamental School, Magnolia Junior High, Don Lugo High,

See WATER, Page A8

Tres Hermanos on the block

City of Industry discusses sale of Chino Hills land

By Marianne Napoles

The day many residents have been dreading or anticipating came Thursday when the City of Industry held a closed door meeting to discuss the sale of the 2,400-acre Tres Hermanos property.

Industry's city manager and city attorney were named as negotiators for the price and terms of the proposed sale.

The agenda did not identify a potential buyer.

Jim Ewert, general counsel for California Newspaper Publishers Association, said the city is required to identify the entity or person with

whom it is going to negotiate.

The ranchland containing oaks, sycamores, and open grassland is located in Chino Hills and Diamond Bar, but is owned by the City of Industry and its now-dissolved redevelopment agency.

Chino Hills contains the lion's share of Tres Hermanos—1,700 acres. Diamond Bar contains 700 acres. The land is bisected by Grand Avenue.

Both cities this year rezoned small portions of the ranchland to "very high density" to accommodate affordable housing mandates.

Industry city manager Kevin Radecki confirmed the negotiations

but said he could not elaborate on the details of the sale because it is a closed-session topic.

Councilman Art Bennett, who serves on the Tres Hermanos Conservation Authority, said he was surprised to learn that the ranchland is for sale, although it has been anticipated for years.

"It's a beautiful piece of property where you can see cows grazing, but at the same time, whoever is buying it will have the expectation to make money," he said. "Let's hope that whatever comes forward is acceptable to the general public, aesthetically pleasing, and will blend into its surroundings."

Claire Schlotterbeck, founder of Hills for Everyone, said Tres Hermanos is a beautiful buffer between Chino Hills and Diamond Bar. "It would be a shame to see it developed into housing or strip malls," she said.

Ms. Schlotterbeck said the ranchland offers opportunities to build creative non-urban uses.

Hills for Everyone is the umbrella group for the effort to connect the wild lands of the Puente-Chino Hills wildlife corridor.

Also on the City of Industry closed session agenda was a discussion of purchasing the final portion of the Boy Scouts Reservation.



Champion photo

Songs for the season

Chino Valley Community Chorus will present its Christmas concert at 7 p.m. Monday at CrossPoint Church, 6950 Edison Ave. The theme is "Home for the Holidays." The chorus will sing favorites such as "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and "Jingle Bells," along with lesser known pieces and original works. Admission is free. Stan Berger (right) leads the chorus as it performs in Chino council chambers Dec. 3 following the lighting of the Chino Christmas tree. Dr. Berger released his second CD on Monday, his birthday. See Page B6.

Crestline fire truck injures Chinoan

By Josh Thompson

A 23-year-old Chino man is in critical condition at Loma Linda University Medical Center after being struck by a fire truck in the driveway of a San Bernardino County Fire Department station in Crestline around midnight Tuesday.

Seandor Wayne Flis was flown to the hospital with severe injuries to his chest and back, authorities with the California Highway Patrol said.

Authorities believe Mr. Flis was dropped off in the driveway of the fire station at 23407 Crest Forest Drive by someone who then called 9-1-1 to report a man unconscious in front of the fire station.

Two firefighters working at the station were dispatched to the call and were possibly told the man was in front of another fire station where no employees were stationed at the time, authorities believe.

Not realizing the man was in front of their own station, they struck him with their fire truck as they left the driveway.

CHP is investigating.

Parade forecast calls for sun, fun

By Kevin Keckeisen

Ten school bands will march in the Youth Christmas Parade and Fair today (Dec. 14).

Theme of the event is "A Storybook Christmas."

The parade, featuring classic cars, horse-drawn carriages, local school

Street closures map Page A4

bands, performance groups and a float competition that celebrates the talents of Chino's youth, will start at 9 a.m. today.

The parade will step off on Riverside

Drive at Monte Vista Avenue and march east on Riverside before turning south on Central Avenue, ending at Chino Avenue.

There are 110 entries in the parade, including 10 Chino Valley School District bands: Chino High School 77th Cavalry

See PARADE, Page A4

Holiday schedule

Two Chino Valley schools, Oxford Preparatory Academy charter school and Countrywood School, begin their Christmas/winter breaks today (Dec. 14). Both Chino schools will resume classes Monday, Jan. 6.

Chino Valley public schools, Ontario Christian schools, Cornerstone Christian, New Hope Fellowship, Loving Savior Lutheran School and St. Margaret Mary Catholic School will begin their Christmas breaks Saturday, Dec.

21 and will return to classes Monday, Jan. 6.

Heights Christian Schools in Chino Hills will begin its Christmas break Friday, Dec. 20, and will resume classes Monday, Jan. 6.



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