

Irvine Ranch Water District Pipelines

The Newsletter of Irvine Ranch Water District / December 2006
Volume 2006 Number 12

San Joaquin Marsh
2006 Photo Contest Winners



Jeremy Smith
Honorable Mention



Jack C. Pei
Honorable Mention



Harold Beral
Honorable Mention



School Mascot is a Microbe

When students from the Irvine Home School visited the IRWD Michelson Water Reclamation Plant as part of their earth resource unit earlier this year, they were so impressed with what they learned, they adopted the “water bear” as their school mascot.

A water bear is a microbe that can only be viewed with a microscope and is only occasionally seen in the activated sludge that cleans up wastewater at the IRWD plant. During the lab portion of the field trip, a drop of wastewater containing the activated sludge from the aeration tanks is placed on a microscope slide. Students are able to see the images of the different microbes in the wastewater on a television screen.

“The students were really impressed,” said Peggy Frick, lead teacher for Irvine Home School. “They were able to see scientists working in their environment and learn how the plant operates.”

When the water bear appeared on the screen, the students were told that it isn’t seen as often as some of the other microbes. The microscopic water bear only resembles a bear if you use your imagination, sort of like envisioning forms in clouds.

After the field trip, the students decided the water bear would make a dandy mascot, so a banner was created. The water bear that appears in the school’s banner, however, doesn’t look as much like its microscopic counterpart as it does a polar bear sitting in water.

“It’s actually more symbolic,” Frick said.

Irvine Home School is an alternative education option of the Irvine Unified School District and is built around an independent study model. The school has 80 students from kindergarten through eighth grade.

For more information on booking a free field trip, see page three...

IRWD OFFICES CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:

•

SHADETREE PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

Community service hours are available for all volunteer tree planting activities. For more information call (949) 453-5670 or visit their Web site at www.shadetreepartnership.org.

CITY OF IRVINE EVENTS

• **Bringing Nations Together Through Art - Multi-media presentation unites photographers from California and Taiwan**

Bringing nations together through art, the Irvine Sister Cities Foundation, in conjunction with the Sun-Ten Museum, is hosting a special multi-media exhibit featuring photographs from renowned California and Taiwanese artists. The complete photographic exhibit will be on display at the Sun-Ten Museum, 9200 Jeranimo Road, Irvine, **through December 31**. For more information or reservations, call Nancy Romero at (949) 724-6254.

**ASSISTANCE LEAGUE® of Irvine Masters Golf Fundraiser
WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO THE 2007 MASTERS GOLF TOURNAMENT**

For \$100 you can buy a chance to win a package for two people for the two final days of the 2007 Masters Golf Tournament. The package is worth over \$7500 and includes the following: two passes to the Masters Golf Tournament Finals April 7-8, 2007 in Augusta, Georgia; three nights hotel accommodations for two; three days car rental and clubhouse parking; hospitality privileges including breakfast, lunch, snacks and beverages; and \$250 toward travel expenses. Only 400 chances will be sold. The drawing will be held Wednesday, February 14, 2007 at 7 p.m. at South Lake Middle School, Irvine as part of the monthly meeting for Assistance League of Irvine. Winners do not need to be present to win. For ticket information, contact Assistance League of Irvine by leaving your name and telephone number at (949) 798-5020. For more information about the package visit <http://irvine.assistanceleague.org>.

Assistance League of Irvine is a nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to providing programs and services that will enrich and improve the quality of life in Irvine.

FAMILIES FORWARD

Every holiday season, Families Forward distributes food and provides holiday gifts for homeless and low income families through their Adopt A Family program. People interested in being a "donor" to one of these "adopted" families is encouraged to call the Families Forward office for information at (949) 552-2727. Families Forward will also continue to provide needed food to 40-60 families each week in the month of December along with the holiday program. Food donations are always welcome and can be delivered to the office at 9221 Irvine Blvd., Irvine 92618.

Families Forward exists to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through housing, counseling, education and other support services. It has been serving the needs of families in the area for twenty two years.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), is seeking volunteers to serve as advocates and mentors for abused children. An information session will be held on **Thursday, January 25** and **Thursday, February 22, 2007** at the Irvine Heritage Park Library, 14361 Yale Avenue from 6 to 8 p.m. R.S.V.P. (714) 619-5155.

As a service to residents we feature a calendar of community events in "Pipelines." Events or activities of community-wide interest can be included in the calendar on a space available basis. We reserve the right to print those items of most interest to the public. If your group has an event you would like to include, please submit written information at least two months prior to your event. Please include date, time, place, contact person's name and telephone number. Mail your request to: Public Affairs Department, IRWD, P.O. Box 57000, Irvine, CA 92619-7000, fax your request to (949) 453-1327, or e-mail your request to velazque@irwd.com.

Water Quality Update Fluoride

There is naturally-occurring fluoride in our water but Irvine Ranch Water District does not add fluoride to the water supply. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California has announced plans to begin adding fluoride to its water, which makes up approximately 35 percent of the IRWD drinking water supply. This change is tentatively planned for July 2007. IRWD also obtains water from local groundwater supplies, primarily the Dyer Road Wellfield. During normal well field operations, this water naturally contains fluoride at a level close to the state's recommended range to prevent cavities. Therefore, IRWD is not planning to fluoridate its well water. If you have questions about the MWD fluoridation policy, please call (213) 217-5709. Questions regarding IRWD's fluoridation policy should be directed to IRWD at (949) 453-5500.

Receive and Pay Irvine Ranch Water District Bills Online

Anytime...24/7

Anywhere...at work, home, or on the road!

Schedule your payment in advance!

Irvine Ranch Water District, in partnership with CheckFree, offers the convenience of receiving and paying your water bill online, free of charge, from your checking or money market account.

When you sign up for eBill you will no longer receive a paper bill. Instead, you'll be able to go online and view your most recent bill.

Here's how it works: once enrolled, every month we'll send you an e-mail to let you know that your IRWD bill is available for viewing and payment. No more stamps to buy, checks to write, or envelopes to mail.

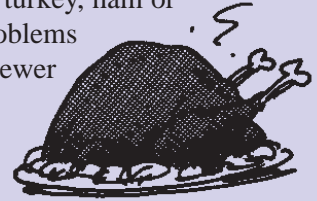
- Save time by paying your bill on-line.
- Save money by eliminating postage stamps.
- Pay your IRWD bill with this free service.
- If you are new to online bill paying, this is a great way to try it!
- Greater control over bill management.
- Automatically tracks your payment history.

To sign up visit www.irwd.com.

Don't Let Your Holiday Meal Create a Spill!

Grease poured down drains is the leading cause of sewage spills.

Grease needs to be handled carefully all year round, but especially at this time of year. With the holidays upon us, many families are cooking special meals to share with friends and relatives. But the larger quantity of grease created by cooking a turkey, ham or roast can result in problems within your home's sewer pipes or within your neighborhood if not disposed of properly.



Never pour grease down your sink drain, toilet or garbage disposal! Instead, pour grease into a can and refrigerate or freeze until solid and then dispose of the can on trash day. An empty soup can works well for everyday cooking; however for larger holiday meals you may want to save a coffee can to hold the grease. Wipe excess grease from pots, pans and utensils with paper towels before washing. These simple steps will help IRWD protect the environment by preventing sewer spills.

Did you know...

- Irvine Ranch Water District has provided free water education programs to public, private and home schools within its service area for over 30 years.
- Age-appropriate curricula, aligned to the California state content standards, are available for each grade K-6. Programs for grades 7-12 are tailored to the specific needs of the class and teacher.
- Free field trips are also available. Students in fifth grade or above may visit the Michelson Water Reclamation Plant to see how water is recycled. Students of any age may visit the San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary to learn how urban runoff is cleaned in the wetlands before the water flows to Upper Newport Bay.
- Teachers wishing to schedule a program should call the IRWD Public Affairs Department at (949) 453-5500 or e-mail smithm@irwd.com.



- Too much water can stress plants and leave them susceptible to disease. According to the California Association of Nurserymen, more plants are lost due to over-watering than to any other cause. If you think you need to water, check the moisture of the soil 3-6" below the surface. With our heavy clay soils, the surface may look dry, but the clay remains moist beneath the surface.
- Avoid fertilizing your lawn this month. Fertilizers applied during this time of year are more likely to get washed away by rain, contributing to pollution in the waterways. Cool season lawns can be fertilized in the spring and fall; warm season lawns can be fertilized in late spring and summer.
- Cut back roses.
- Bare root season for fruit trees and roses. Water to keep the plants moist, but not wet. Water deeply, not frequently. Build a mound 3-4" high around the planting hole and hand water the new plants directly in the early morning.

Suggested Weekly Watering Schedule

Weekly Watering Schedule for SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Turf grass: 2 days, 2 cycles* of 2 minutes

Trees, shrubs, groundcover: 1 day, 2 cycles* of 3 minutes

Percent option: 30%**

Turn water off when it rains and let soil dry before turning water on again.

**By "cycling" your irrigation timer to turn on for the suggested number of minutes an hour apart, you reduce runoff and gain deeper watering and healthier root growth. Start with this weekly schedule and increase the times only if your plants show signs of stress. If stress occurs only in isolated areas, check your irrigation system before increasing the time.*

***Some irrigation controllers have a feature by which the watering time can be set by changing the percentage instead of specifically entering the days, cycles and minutes.*

If you don't have the instructions for your controller, check the manufacturer's website. Many controller manufacturers provide online access to the owner's manual.

The mission of Irvine Ranch Water District, a public agency, is to provide reliable, high quality water and sewer service in an efficient, cost effective manner and environmentally sensitive way that provides a high level of customer satisfaction.

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Pipelines

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24 Hour Service (949) 453-5300

Should you discover a disruption in your water service or other problems call the IRWD 24-hour emergency line and a representative will assist you.

Visit the IRWD

Web site:

www.irwd.com

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