

## Same old same old

In 'Then was then, now is now' (May 29) Bill McDaniel tries to make two points but gets it wrong in each case.

First, he says that while he used to believe that the Town of Apple Valley shouldn't take over Apple Valley Ranchos Water Company, he's changed his mind because of recent rate increases. How could he possibly have missed the fact that should the Town seize control of Ranchos, it will not be lowering the rates, nor will they commit to ending rate increases? If rate stability is so important, then it's important to realize that the public no longer will have the cushion of the CPUC to protect it, when the Town decides it needs more money for water delivery.

Second, McDaniel makes the curious point that Ranchos is not a normal company, but rather a government-granted monopoly. While true, this isn't the fault of Ranchos! This is the way our state government chose to set up things, and that's the way it was when McDaniel recommended against the Town's purchase of Ranchos back in 2011. Nothing's changed in that regard. If McDaniel is only now so concerned about monopoly power, then he should be concerned that the Town government is also a monopoly. Anyone who believes the Town Council's monopoly grip on our water system will be wise and benevolent should first ask why millions of dollars seem to be missing from Town coffers.

When you combine these two issues, it seems clear that the Town of Apple Valley is in such desperate need of cash flow that it's willing to twist the law in a way never intended — which it can only because of its monopoly position as a government entity — to execute a hostile takeover of Ranchos.

Why else would the Town refuse to provide documents to the public, and fight a writ filed to compel them to do so?

— Greg Raven Apple Valley

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