

To the Editor
Ojai Valley News
From: Ron Phillips, President, Ojai Film Society

A Sad Anniversary

July 20, 2015 marks the one-year anniversary of a major water main burst on Ojai Avenue. The historic Ojai Playhouse and its adjoining Jester restaurant were flooded and shut down.

As of this writing, the interior of the theater remains a derelict pit. No major renovations have been made for over six months. There is no indication when work may resume.

In the meantime the Ojai community has been denied the enjoyment of a true movie experience: popcorn, candy, soft drinks, brilliant projection and surround sound.

Many Ojai arts organizations and their audiences have been denied the proper forum for their programs. This includes the Ojai Film Society, Ojai Film Festival, Ojai Music Festival and several charities.

Why?

The answer is complex.

It involves:

- a) an initial denial of liability by Golden State Water's secondary insurers, and;
- b) the subsequent stalling by Golden State's secondary insurers to pay for all the detailed engineering and architectural plans necessary for City approval, and;
- c) the delay this has caused the general contractor in providing a "final settlement" bid he can live with.

Complex, yes. But the inescapable fact is, Golden State Water is responsible for the damage and they are responsible for restoring the theater in a timely manner.

A six-month halt is egregious. Further delays are intolerable. The Film Society has a list of contacts for Golden State Water, and their parent, American States Water and the California PUC. If you would like to raise your voice with ours, please email ojaifilmsociety@sbcglobal.net for the list.

Golden State, we want our theater back.

Ron Phillips
President, Ojai Film Society