

They Found The Light In Valley Of De Luz

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DE LUZ — The fat gray ground squirrel galloped down the lone orange tree that is an island in the driveway, flapped its tail in the dust and — adding rodent injury to insult — made a sort of laughing face at Felix Garnsey.

Garnsey is 73, going on 74. He tries to be a retired farmer. But he still has crops in a grayish-brown field behind the house and regards crop-munching squirrels as his pioneer ancestors eyed Indians.

He did a marvelous run for a fellow older than President Reagan. In a milk shed that dates to Queen Victoria's time, he grabbed for counter-attack weapons and fired.

Nothing but the noise hit the squirrel, which made for the hills moating this almost hidden valley above Santa Margarita Creek, north of Fallbrook and just south of Riverside County. That suited Garnsey.

For such is the way of life Garnsey and his neighbors prefer here in the Valley of De Luz.

Here they feel their lives are a celebration of getting away from everything. But quiet. Peaceful. No blood-sports; just so the squirrels keep their distance.

At the doorway of their oak, stone, brick and cedar house — part of it was once the grape house when De