

OLD WATER

— for Lew and Kathy Mayhew

According to a report given to the Calaveras County Water District by a United States Geological Survey hydrologist on August 24, 2011, groundwater tested in northwestern Calaveras County on the western slope of the central Sierra Nevada Mountains ranged from 2,200 to 13,400 years old.

We take it from the ground thirteen thousand
four hundred years old, Calaveras well water,
irrigate the sins of land use, keep a golf course
green while we tell ranchers who pump sand
that we are sorry but not to blame
for the variable aquifer. Forget for every tee time
eighteen thousand gallons is the toll,
that recharge takes centuries to occur.
Earth offered us another Mother Lode,
invested each fissure with liquid gold.
God blessed the land under which water flowed.
In the dark strata of the underground,
water ages, grows thin and won't be found.

Muriel Zeller
Valley Springs, California