



Chuckwalla Valley

Voice

APRIL
2012



An Outside View A Commentary by Sam Cunningham

This month saw the Desert Center Chapter of the Lions Club hold their annual Bar B Que dinner and Variety Show to raise money to fund two \$500.00 scholarships for some lucky area students. If sitting in a capacity crowd, eating a delicious meal while being entertained by all those brave souls willing to take the microphone means success, then it was a big, big hit.

We were serenaded with line dances, drum displays, covers of Car-

rie Underwood and Johnny Cash, and some original music and skits from some of Desert Center's youngest and newest residents. The evening was capped with "Julio's "naughty, naughty cousin manning the door at the department store and an equally naughty bosom-emptying routine from Shari Quale that made us all want to dust off the old record player. I even blushed and that's pretty hard to do.

Since I was a boy,

and even to this day, I have loved the old Andy Griffith show with its down-home, wholesome comedy that always had some message. The people of Mayberry always helped each other through tough times. As I sat and took in the Variety Show festivities, I thought about the reason for the event. It was an act of kindness...yet another act of kindness.

Growing up in a bigger city, I never experienced life in an area where so many people
Cont. on pg. 2

Easter Services shared by Churches Diana Mossbarger

Easter Sunrise service will be held on April 8, 2012 at the white cross by the south lake in Lake Tamarisk...time: 6:00 AM. This is a combined effort of the Eagle Mountain Baptist Church and the D.C. Nazarene Church. All are

invited. This has been a great time of remembering the first Easter Day.

The Nazarene Church will host Easter dinner for all who want to come. Time: about 1:00 PM the same day. We will also have an "indoors" Easter

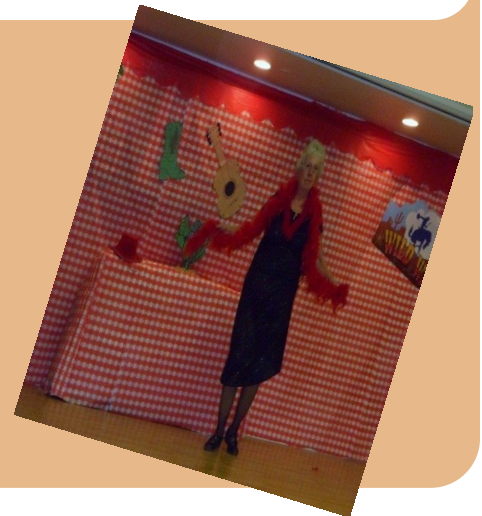
service in our sanctuary at 11:00 AM that day, but NO Sunday School on that day (April 8, 2012). We would appreciate it if those planning to eat with us would RSVP so we will know how many to plan for. 951/487-2581





ple would mobilize around a cause, person, or family in the way they did in that old Andy show or in the way that I have seen over my last year visiting Desert Center. It is something to witness. I've had the rare opportunity to see a community from the inside and as an "outsider". From within, I have seen a town whose sleepy exterior belies all the things that take place inside. Who would imagine all the clubs, groups, mixers, dinners, and "drive-ins on the driving range" that bind it together in so many ways? It is also a community that is experiencing unprecedented change and with that has come apprehension and concern... but not a lack of resolve.

Everyone may not have the time to decipher every development as it comes but motivated groups have stepped in to keep them informed and be their voice if needed. They love their flora, fauna, mountain views, and Variety Shows out here and they care about each other. I think this is why so many stay involved and committed while hoping for responsible and moderate change. It is also one reason why I think so many return year after year. Everyone should be so lucky to live in such a place. I can only compare this to my time in the military. Our motto was that Marines always "take care of their own". The hundred or so people that took part in this show came together in the latest act of kindness to do just that...take care of their own. I'd say the Marines, and of course Andy, would be proud.



First Solar Offers a Tour

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On March 23rd First Solar conducted its first tour of the Desert Sunlight Project. As we lined up, signed our waiver, and presented our ID's we were provided water, a snack and informational handouts. Snaking our way to the four buses they had lined up to transport us, we were all very excited to finally be able to see what exactly is going on up there!!

Sitting in the bus waiting in line for our turn to enter the facility we noticed a truck leaving the site going through what we would learn is the "wheel wash". This is one of the mitigation measures put in place to

protect our local flora and fauna from foreign plant invasion and food source. It is required that all vehicles entering or leaving the facility must go through this procedure to remove any foreign seeds from entering and any indigenous seeds from leaving the site.

As we entered the gates, the first structures we came upon were the administration area, followed by the water storage area, which consisted of a large man made pond, covered with netting to prevent the ravens from gaining access to the water and making the

area their home. The equipment is also covered with netting to prevent nesting. Ravens pose a serious threat to the protected Desert Tortoise. According to Mr. Cyr, our tour guide, water is used mainly for dust mitigation and at this point they are well under their allotted amount. The photovoltaic panels that have been chosen for this site do not require any water, not even for washing.

As we drove along many very good questions were asked the tone ranged from suspicious, and curious to flat out flabbergasted (that would be me). As I looked down on the valley floor toward the project from the Desert Center area, I assumed that vast expanse of cleared land was all that would be needed for the project. But I discovered the land that has been cleared is only about 2000 of the





Community Bulletin Board



Desert Center Area Chamber of

Commerce

Chamber Meeting are held the first Wednesday of Each month at the CSA Hall at 6:30pm. The Strategic Planning Committee meets at 5:30 on the same day.

The National Day of Prayer is Thursday May 3rd. The theme this year is "One Nation Under God" Fran Anderson has offered her services as community Coordinator. You can reach her at 760/227-3419

Lion's Club News

Lion's Club meets the Second and Fourth Tues. of every month, 7PM CSA Hall

Eagle Mountain Baptist News

Meet your new pastor

Renee Vargas

760/333-2798

Sunday Services

10am and again at 6:30pm

Bible Study

Wed. Bible Study 3:30 at the Carney Ranch
5-1/4 miles North on Rice Road

Food Pantry

3rd Sat. from 9am –12 at the Baptist Church

Easter Services

April 8th at 11am

Book club meets on April 5th

The Lake Tamarisk Library is sponsoring a reading group that meets monthly or bi monthly depending on the book. Come on by and join the fun, stimulation and camaraderie!! Next meeting April 5th 1:30pm. Lake Tamarisk Library

Nazarene Church Schedule

Sunday School 10am

Worship Service 11am

Bible Study Friday at 7pm



First Solar offers a Tour

Solar Facts

If you are interested in learning more about *the economics of solar, endangered species, greenhouse gases, industrial solar, public lands issues, rooftop solar, subsidies, transmission, water use and wildlife I urge you to take a look at this site.*

<http://solardoneright.org>

Another good site is

<http://basinandrangewatch.org>

Track the progress of incoming projects at

<http://www.solareis.anl.org>

Click on Solar Energy Zones, then Riverside East

suspicious, and curious to flat out flabbergasted (that would be me). As I looked down on the valley floor toward the project from the Desert Center area, I assumed that vast expanse of cleared land was all that would be needed for the project. But I discovered the land that has been cleared is only about 2000/2500 of the 3800 acres that will eventually house the solar panels. Talk about having the breath knocked out of you.

As we continued to fire questions off random and rapidly to our tour guide Mr. Cyr (From Blythe) this is what we learned:

- The Project began in Sept. of 2011 and will be complete by 2015. It will generate 550 million watts of power, enough to power 160,000 homes.
- The panels have a warranty of 25 years and are completely recyclable.
- There is a perimeter fence that sets the foot print of the project, and outside?) that fence is a tortoise fence to insure the translocate Tortoises don't return home, which is a very strong inclination for them.
- The panels are 2'x4' each and generate approx. 75-95 watts each.
- Someone asked what the total budget was for the project and Mr. Cyr didn't know.
- When the project is complete it will employ about 15 people. Their jobs will consist mainly of maintaining the converter stations and picking up broken glass, security etc.
- The next phase will begin next week.
- There have been as many as 100 biologist, geologists, and archeologist on the project but currently there are about 30.
- The panels are made in Mesa AZ, Perrysburg OH and in plants overseas.
- From the freeway, we were told the solar panels will look like a "shimmering lake" when the project is completed.
- The thin photovoltaic film is encased in glass.
- Once the land is cleared of all vegetation, the soil is treated with a palliative product to suppress regrowth.

Solar Tour *Cont. from Pg. 5*

- The vegetation cleared is mulched on site and incorporated back into the land.
- The first phase will be online in 5-6 months.
- Desert Sunlight is currently the second largest project in Ca. second only to the Topaz Project.
- Transmission will be begin when the Red Bluff Substation is complete which is expected in 2013.

The question was asked if these tours would become an annual event and Mr. Cyr said he wasn't sure but it was a possibility. All in all it was a good tour and I think we all would like to thank the company for opening their doors to us.



CSA Votes for an Across the Board Price Increase

On Thursday March 15th the CSA Board voted to a 5% price increase pretty much across the board. There was some haggling about golf, but in the end, the rate increase will hit all of us in a fairly minor way. For those in the houses their water/sewer will increase by about \$5.00.

Representatives of the Dept. of Environmental Health were present at the meeting. Evidently in 2001, when the County reduced the hours of operation at the local

County Landfill, they signed a 10 year contract that would essentially subsidize a trash hauling company to provide disposal services for the area. The CSA Use to charge around \$16.00 to provide trash pick-up. When the County made the decision to "reduce the hours of operation" in an effort to save money, they passed those savings on to the Hauler. That contract ends this year. We are currently paying about \$18.00/month whereas Blythe pays around \$30.00. The County needs us to begin to make up the difference, so they are proposing an incremental

price increase (approx. 7.32% a year) for the next 7 years. The proposal will go before the County Board of Supervisors for a vote.

If you have an opinion one way or another on this subject you are encouraged to contact your County Supervisor, John Benoit at district4@rcbos.org. If you have any questions you can contact the Deputy Director of Environmental Services, John Watkins at 951/358-5055

National Nutrition Month

The academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages Americans to “Revamp Your Plate”! In 2010 My Pyramid was replaced by My Plate which is an easy to understand visual cue to help people understand what a healthy diet looks like with each meal they prepare. March is actually National Nutrition Month (I know, I’m a bit late) and I found this article in my Dr.’s office interesting and thought I would do some investigating on my own.

The new 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans indicate that at each meal $\frac{1}{2}$ of our plate should consist of fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ th Lean Protein and $\frac{1}{4}$ th whole grains. Living where we live I find it extremely difficult to eat as many fruits and vegetables as is necessary. When I go shopping I buy what I think I will use, but half the time they end up as slime at the bottom of my crisper. So I investigated the question whether frozen fruits and vegetables are as good for you as fresh, and was delighted to learn that if you make sure there isn’t a lot of added stuff in your frozen goods like sugar, and salt, they are actually almost equal to, and in some cases better than fresh. Consider

that frozen fruits and vegetables are picked at the peak of ripeness and go straight from the field to the processing plant where they are “Flash Frozen”. The fruits and veggies we buy at the store, have been sitting in storage in some cases for who knows how long, and with each day they lose nutritional value. Then we bring them home and they sit in our refrigerators where they continue to lose nutritional value. When you consider the loss due to spoilage, frozen may even be cheaper.

According to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, based on 2009-10 data, in the U.S. the least expensive fresh fruits were **watermelon, bananas, apples, pears, pineapple and peaches**, all costing less than \$.56 per cup. The least expensive fresh vegetables were **potatoes, lettuce, eggplant, greens, summer squash, carrots and tomatillos**, all costing less than \$.42 per cup.

So check out your plate when you sit down to eat tonight. Is it half full of fruits and veggies, $\frac{1}{4}$ whole grains and $\frac{1}{4}$ lean protein? Well if not tonight maybe tomorrow, armed with your new MY PLATE diagram, you can make an effort toward a healthier plate and a healthier life.



In addition to your new MY PLATE diagram here are some interesting points I got from Elizabeth Quigley, RD in her article titled “MyPlate” Replaces food Pyramid...A Great Place to Start?”

- Eat foods as close to the way Mother Nature grew them as possible (i.e., whole grain versus refined grains).
- Eat local and seasonal foods.
- Consider having one or two dinners a week that are vegetarian
- Eat a rainbow of colors every day.
- When you do choose to eat processed foods, the ingredient list should read like a recipe not a chemistry experiment.
- The food you eat should taste good and be good for you.

The USDA website is full of tools and information for healthier eating, check it out www.usda.gov

Cert Training brings out the best our community has to offer

An earthquake shakes, a fire blazes, people are hurt, and emergency services are on their way. There is an effective way to gain information on how to better prepare, respond, and recover from disaster, obtain training. During the weekend of March 9-11, 2012, residents from the Lake Tamarisk area took the next step in emergency preparedness by taking Community Emergency Response Team training provided by Riverside County Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services. This essential preparedness course instructed residents on how to identify natural and manmade hazards that could dramatically affect the community. The training consisted of numerous modules, including disaster preparedness, fire safety, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, CERT member organization, disaster psychology, terrorism, and ended with a real life simulation.

Lake Tamarisk residents who completed the training are now better able to assist neighbors, family, friends, and fellow workers in the event of a disaster when professional responders are not readily available. CERT members are encouraged to support emergency response entities by taking a more active role in community preparedness projects within their home communities.

For more information on CERT programs, training, and opportunities, simply visit www.rivcocert.org or call Riverside County Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services at (951) 955-4700.

Story provided by Eric Cadden



The Community would like to thank all of you who donated 20 hours of your time to become CERT Certified.

Connie Lemon Passes Peacefully

On Tues. Feb. 28th, Desert Center lost one of its beloved members. Connie Lemon passed away peacefully in the Hospice facility where she was residing since being discovered unconscious and on Sat. Feb. 25th.

On Thurs. March 8th, the hospitality committee, and Ken Statler collaborated to put together a lovely memorial service. Ken Powers, an ordained minister from Canada conducted a beautiful service. Members from the community were invited to share stories, some were touching, others personified Connie; her brutal honesty, her dry

humor and her love of good gossip. We laughed and cried, but in the end we celebrated on our patios' with cocktail in hand, just as Connie would have like it.



Coming soon to Lake Tamarisk

1st Annual Eagle Mountain

Reunion and Harvest Festival!!!!

Coming Oct. 27th-28th 2012.

Reserve your room now at Royal Plaza Inn 760/347-0911 use the promo code "DC2012". Local Dry camping will be available as well.

Parade, Harvest Festival, Local Vendors, Tours, Dinner and Dance.

Look for the event page on Facebook, Eagle Mountain Refugee Site or the Chamber of Commerce site.

More details in the coming months.

For more information contact Julie Smiley at 760/399-6213

Support your local library or risk losing it.

If you haven't already, I would encourage you to join The Friends of the Library today!! Membership is very affordable.

Students and Seniors: \$3.00 Organization/Business: \$25.00

Sustaining: \$20.00 Patron: \$50.00

Life: \$100.00 Individuals: \$4.00

The funds go to the Friends of the Library who use the money to buy books, offer programs, speakers, buy DVD's and help to fund other small improvements to the library. If you haven't been to our local library in a while, I suggest you stop by and check out a book. Our library stays in business as long as we can prove it is being used. The way we do that is through the number of books, DVD's etc. being checked out, and programs being offered. It is literally one of those "use it or lose it" things. I don't know if you know this, but we have a rather large selection of DVD's, and since the nearest "Red Box" or Blockbuster is a rather long drive, this is a valuable and appreciated service. Thanks in part to the Friends of the Library andthey're FREE!!!



Chuckwalla Valley Voice, How it got it's start

My name is Julie Smiley, and this is my newsletter. I grew up, graduated, married and started my family in this valley. I recently returned after a 12 year leave of absence. After my husband passed away one of the jobs I took was working for the Lake Tamarisk Desert Resort. One of my projects ,was to help get their newsletter out each month. About the same time I was elected Public Relations Officer for the Chamber of Commerce and started working on the Chamber website, with one of

the additions being a newsletter. The scope and mission of the Chamber didn't always allow for some of the stories I thought would be interesting to cover, so I



decided to strike out on my own. And so the idea for the Chuckwalla Valley Voice was born. The intent is to create a local newsletter. It isn't a new or novel idea, we have had several news-letters in the past . My hope is to keep the community linked together through shared experiences, history, storytelling and information. If you have a story to share or a piece of news you want to get out, please use the information below to contact me.

Juliesmile_80@hotmail.com

P.O. Box 473

Desert Center, CA 92239

April 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 <i>Chamber Meeting</i> 6:30pm <i>Ladies of the Lake</i>	5	6 <i>AA 7pm</i>	7
8	9 <i>Line Dancing 3pm</i> <i>Bingo 7pm</i>	10 <i>Lions Club 7pm</i>	11	12	13 <i>AA 7pm</i>	14
15 <i>Easter Services</i>	16 <i>Line Dancing 3pm</i> <i>Bingo 7pm</i>	17	18	19 <i>CSA Advisory Board 7pm</i>	20 <i>AA 7pm</i>	21
22	23 <i>Line Dancing 3pm</i> <i>Bingo 7pm</i>	24 <i>Lions Club 7pm</i>	25	26	27 <i>AA 7pm</i>	28
29	30 <i>Line Dancing 3pm</i> <i>Bingo 7pm</i>	31				