

Chuckwalla Valley Voice

June 2012

BLM hold an “information workshop” on the Desert Harvest Project

Only a handful of residence showed up for the meeting on Monday at 1:30, but I don't think it was because of a lack of interest or concern as much as it was the time of day. Many folks who would have like to be there were working and couldn't get away. No one spoke, but not because they didn't have opinions, but like myself perhaps they are more comfortable making their remarks on line or in letter form

BLM and Desert Harvest showed up in force ready to defend their project, it was quite an impressive show of poster board, diagrams, experts and maps. They departed quickly for a similar meeting in Joshua Tree.

One alternative supported by BLM is to reduce the size of the projec by about 164 acres and use taller, more efficient panels. According to Ian Black , the projects senior solar developer who gave a presentation at the Chamber of Commerce meeting, the smaller foot print and the solar fees which are still

being debated will cause a significant problem for the project. It will be more difficult to secure a purchase agreement with the reduced acreage and resulting reduction in megawatt output. But, according to BLM if they use the taller solar panels on the smaller footprint the project could produce 20,000 megawatts more than the larger foot print with shorter panels. The downside to the taller panels is the project will have a greater visual impact for local resident.

The complete Draft EIS can be viewed at the local library or you can view the document on line at http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/palmsprings/Solar_Projects/Desert_Harvest_Solar_Project.html

It appears the government has made a determination that deserts can be sacrificed for the greater (perceived) good. There is no arguing there will be negative impacts, but these projects have the blessing of the government and these reports simply serve to ensure the impacts are minimized.

You can still be part of the process by submitting your comments to the BLM at cadetherharvest@blm.gov

The comment period ends July 13th.

New pool hours

Thursday through Sunday 2PM to 6PM

THE CHEMEHUEVIS
The People of Corn Springs
Part I by Charlene Carney

A story created by Mrs. Carney many years ago to describe Indian life in Chuckwalla Valley to the School children.

Like The Sun That Rises

My family calls me Like-The-Sun-That-Rises. I am the daughter of Chief Black Eagle and elder sister of Little Wrestler. We live much of the time near a spring where we can grow corn and squashes. Palms and mesquite grow here. Our hunters bring home meat. Our women go out with the children and old ones and gather food from the trees and plants. We are seldom hungry.

My people are called by many names. Some of our kinsmen call us 'the Southerners.' The Serrano and Cahuilla call us 'The Timid People' because of our peaceful natures. The Yuma's call us 'The Northerners.' We call ourselves 'The People.' My grandmother tells us stories of when The People lived in a land far to the north called Utah. We are a peaceable family. More warlike Indians raided our homes, stole our young women and children and killed many of the rest. Those who escaped were forced to search for safety ever farther and farther from our homes in Utah. We lived near the Mojave for a while and wanted to stay there, but they fought viciously and drove us away.

Many of our families wandered on to the banks of the River That Runs Red that the strangers from far away call the Colorado. Living was easy there

until the Apaches and others came and discovered the river was filled with fish and the riverbanks rich in the animals our young men hunted. The fierce warriors of the Apaches drove most of us away from the river. The People followed the trails of the traders and found this lonely place with its spring with running water where we can grow corn and squashes. Here we have remained many years.

Although our tribal members here at the spring are few in number, our tribal area is very large. Some say there may have been perhaps 800 of The People at times. The People's family groups have become widely separated as some of our some of our tribal members found homes along the way as we were driven ever southward toward the desert wastelands. A few of The People remained among tribes in the Mojave Desert or stayed along the banks of the Colorado River. Others found a good life at the Twenty-nine Palms Oasis and remain there. Our nearest Chemehuevi neighbors live along the Colorado River on the east and the land of the Cahuilla in Land of the Little Shells on the west. Those whose homes are from us are becoming ever stranger to us as they take on the customs and ways of their neighbors.

Our little band of Chemehuevi families spends the cooler seasons in our Corn Springs camp. We stay at Corn Springs several moons each year, more time than at any other place we stay. We see very few strangers except for traders who exchange what we want for our woven caps, baskets, the quartz or agate stones or dyes such as that from the red cinnabar found nearby. We live in peace in this land of little water, far from others.

* * * * *

The sun is rising and my parents are mourning by the graves of our ancestors and family who are no longer in the land of the living. Children never play there or walk over the graves. Little white stones are scattered over the graves.

The newest grave belongs to my brother who had

not killed his first deer. I miss him very much. I must remember never to think his name for fear of evil coming to him. My father and mother will find another name to call him so we can speak of him. After our annual mourning ceremony, his name will be given to another family member so it will live on.

My permanent teeth are in and I have been old enough for many moons to take care of Little Brother. He is strapped to my back right now. If only other children would come out to play! Little Wrestler is happier when I am moving. A walk down a trail will have to do.

The spring with its trees and plants the stranger called Corn Spring Oasis is a good place to spend the cold months. My father and brothers dug down into the ground to the height of my knees to make a one-room shelter. We step down into the little room shelter by poles that support clay and brush walls. It is round with a sort of rounded roof of mud and brush. The fire hole in the roof is near the door. We all sleep on woven mats on the dirt floor. On cool nights I sleep under a little rabbit skin robe my mother made. I can wrap myself in it on cold or windy days. We have a fenced in yard where mother does much of her work.

How small our garden was this year! Grandmother tells of times when water flowed abundantly from our spring and the garden was many times this big. The spring is barely flowing this season. Even though the spring is not giving us much water, this is a lovely place for a garden and the corn grows well. Each season when we return, we find lost seeds have come to life with little squash and corn plants poking their heads above the ground. The land looks dry and empty, but our storage baskets are full.

The air is warmer each day now. We'll soon leave this lovely place to search for food where it is cooler. We have harvested all there is to find here. The dates were picked many moons ago. The mesquite, Palo Verde, and ironwood trees have given us their pods. Mother, with the help of the children and the old men, has gathered and preserved the ocotillo blossoms, the cactus fruits with their seeds and limbs, and all the edible plants and seeds that may be gathered for food or medicine. The corn and squash are preserved for the future.

The People are said to eat more stews with vegetables than do any other groups. All we will need for many moons is stored away in baskets. We have all we can carry. Sometimes my father, Chief Black Eagle, takes our tribe to the mountains for agave, yucca and pinion nuts. Sometimes we go to the river for fish. Wherever we go, we must carry gifts to offer for the use of other tribal areas. Others like our woven conical-shaped hats that help keep us from being chafed while carrying burdens. We live in a land where we find lovely stones for our rings and pendants, and these are valued highly by others. We also have extra baskets and even some seashell money and beads to trade or give as gifts.

Look for Part II in the next issue

June, 2012



The Chuckwalla Valley Voice and how it got its 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. When I returned I began working for the Lake Tamarisk Desert Resort and 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 it 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 newsletters 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.

760/399-6213: cell
Juliesmile_80@hotmail.com
www.cvvoice.wordpress.com

Support your local library

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!!!

New DVD's this month include J. Edgar, Iron Lady, War Horse, The Descendants and more.

Library hours:

Tues., Thurs. 10-6 and Sat. 10-2

Summer Reading Program

The Lake Tamarisk Library launches its Summer Reading Program, on Tues. June 5th. This year's theme....Dream Big...READ!

Join in the games, crafts, reading every Tues. and Thurs. from 10:30 to 11:30am. Prizes for the most books read and free Tee Shirts!

Nazarene Church

*Sunday School 10am
Worship Service 11am*

*Bible Study Fri. 7pm
Located at 44120 Shadow Way, Lake Tamarisk
Pastor Diane Mossbarger 951/487-2581*

*Pool Hours
Thursday through Sunday
2-6*

Ladies of the Lake enjoy two fabulous outings

On Friday May 11th "The Ladies" gathered at my house for a nice little luncheon, a little laughter and yes you got it....a bit of gossip. Then again on June 1st "The Ladies" got together and drove to Palm Desert where they enjoyed a bit of "thrifting" and a visit to the Rancho Mirage Library, followed by a nice soup and salad lunch at the Olive Garden. If you would like to join "The Ladies", you can contact Lois at the library and she will add you to the contact list and we'll let you know when and where the next outing is. We will be taking a break until Sept. at which point we will be having a pot luck at the CSA Hall.

We hope you will join us in Sept.!!

AA MEETINGS HELD EVERY FRIDAY AT 7PM....44120 SHADOW WAY, LAKE TAMARISK CONTACT JULIE SMILEY AT 760-399-6213 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Father's Day Sunday June 17thDon't forget!!!!

History of Church Camp in Desert Center

by Julie Smiley

Since the late 1950's the local community has joined a group effort to raise money to send the local youth to Summer Bible School. Businesses, individuals, groups and organizations have all donated money to the cause. But it is the "Cans for Camp" program started by the late Noel and Jeannie Brush that provide the bulk of the revenue. Noel and Jeanie started the program many years ago and residents, inmates from MTC, the Hospitality Committee at the Desert Resort, the Residents Association have all collected and donated their cans and bottle for the cause. Mc Goo's has a cage out back where locals can drop their cans and bottles to be collected and redeemed later by E.C. one of our many local residents who volunteer their time and resources. Tammie Dye has coordinated camp forms and drivers, Matthew Green and his daughter Sarrah have volunteered their services and vehicles to get the kids and their gear to and from camp. One year MTC volunteered a van and driver. You can only imagine how much fun the kids had with the bars on the windows and their screams of "help!!!! Get us out of here!"

I remember my time at Church Camp, it was in Idyllwild. Never had I been away from home alone before. I remember the tender care of my supervisor who helped me write home for money, I remember the sweet decadence of lying in bed with my theater size bag of M&M's with no one to tell me I couldn't eat the whole bag. Lesson #1, there are reasons you can't eat the whole bag!! I also remember the funny story of the girl who mistakenly brushed her teeth with her mascara brush! I remember the services and the message too, but mostly I remember the freedom, fun, and many lessons that came to a sheltered small town girl away from home on her first "big adventure".

Renee Vargas, the pastor of the Eagle Mountain Baptist Church has once again reached out to the community for help in seeing to it that as many kids as possible have this valuable opportunity. First Solar has contributed funds to many community groups and organizations, the church being one of them. The Church has decided to put these funds towards scholarships that will help send 8 kids on their own "big adventure". Good luck to them and may they develop some valuable spiritual lesson that will serve to guide them down the many slippery slopes they will encounter along life's path

Summer camp begins on Sunday, June 24th and ends Thursday, June 28th. For more information contact Pastor Vargas at 760/333-2798 or Charlene Carney at 760/227-3057

Once again I find myself drawing on Charlene Carney's time line, historical knowledge and research prowess to get the information I needed for this article. Thank you Charlene for your help.

EAGLE MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH (25980 Kaiser Rd)

SUNDAY 9:45 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL-11:00AM WORSHIP-6:30 EVENING WORSHIP

WEDNESDAY 3:30 PRAYER/STUDY LITE DINNER SERVED

SATURDAY (every 3rd Saturday) FOOD PANTRY 7PM COMMUNITY STUDY