



The Source

Voice of the Saline Preservation Association
P.O. Box 136, Keeler, CA 93530



Issue #35

Summer 2010

SPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patricia Barton
PO Box 572
Bishop, California 93514
pbarnton @ salinepreservation.org

John Dukes
PO Box 221
Keeler, California 93530
JohnD @ salinepreservation.org

Timbo Hynes
the Ranch
Lancaster, California
timbo @ salinepreservation.org

Tom Ganner (webmaster)
PO Box 811
Haines, Alaska 99827
majortom @ salinepreservation.org

Rick Brower
South Lake Tahoe, California
rangerrick @ salinepreservation.org

Hello again friends and lovers of Saline Valley. Another year has passed since we have published a newsletter, so we'd like to bring you up to date on the happenings affecting Saline Valley and organizational developments. It's been a busy and eventful year for both Death Valley National Park and for SPA.

NEW DVNP SUPERINTENDENT

Mrs. Sarah Craighead has taken her position as Superintendent of Death Valley National Park following the retirement of J.T. Reynolds at the end of 2008. Mrs. Craighead comes to Death Valley after serving as Superintendent of Saguaro National Park. She has been getting familiar with the very large territory under her supervision and is focusing on bringing the infrastructure of the Park up to date, including recently initiated road improvement projects in the main section of the Park. Our camp host has visited with Mrs. Craighead in Furnace Creek, but the Superintendent has not had occasion to visit the Saline Valley or the Springs to date. SPA welcomes the new Superintendent and the Board looks forward to meeting her and establishing a positive and cooperative working relationship.

CAMP FUNDS HELD BY DVNP

SPA is very interested in the existence and disposition of the fund for support of Saline Warm Springs established by Superintendent Reynolds. We were told that Saline Valley visitors donated approximately \$800 to this fund, but none of it was ever provided by DVNP for the support of the Camp Host or necessary supplies for the maintenance of the Spring's camp sites. Since it was only the personal word of Superintendent Reynolds that secured the donations to this fund for use in Saline Valley, it may be that this money has been pre-empted for use in the park generally, or for administrative costs for Saline Valley rather than maintenance of camp site conditions. If these monies were used for things like more frequent pumping of latrine facilities, no notice of that has been provided to the Camp Host. The latrine facilities were pumped out in early May, a very timely procedure after a winter's worth of visitor use. If you donated to this fund, you might write to Mrs. Craighead to ask for an accounting of how this money was or will be utilized. You may address your letters to Mrs. Sarah Craighead, Superintendent Death Valley National Park, Death Valley, CA 93232

A letter from Lizard Lee:

Saline Valley Warm Springs Consultant

Those of you who know me understand that I'm a man of few words. So, I'll keep this short. The new SPA Board has asked me to act as a special consultant on issues related to the Springs. It is an honor to work collaboratively with the current SPA Board and you may hear from me in the SPA newsletter from time to time. It's important for the Park Service, the Camp Host, and SPA to work together for the continued enjoyment of all visitors to the Springs.

Many thanks to everyone who has offered support through the challenging times and the good times. As always, I'm available at the Springs to assist visitors along their journey.

Lizard Lee, Camp Host
Saline Valley Warm Springs

New Desert Protection Act

The Desert Protection Act of 2010, sponsored by Dianne Feinstein, was passed recently. This bill adds about 41,000 acres to the park and validates the “Wilderness Restoration” activities that have been being carried out in recent years. These activities primarily resulted in closing pre-existing roads within the park that allowed access to remote sites by vehicle. This has closed sites previously enjoyed by many within the park to anyone not able to walk with weight. The one good part of this bill is that it gives the Inyo County Road Department access to the borrow pits located along the Saline Valley Road for road maintenance work, which SPA has been urging DVNP to allow.

DVNP recently requested input from the public on management of its backcountry lands, but stated that the Saline Valley Warm Springs area would be handled separately at some time in the future. SPA is maintaining vigilance on this planning effort and will participate as allowed at the appropriate time. Information was recently released regarding a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reached between Inyo County and DVNP to cooperate in the process of planning for backcountry management and administration. Inyo County Board of Supervisors will appoint one staff member to participate in this planning process and SPA will make an effort to communicate our concerns regarding Saline Valley policies and administration to this individual as well.

SPA Develops Website

We hope that Saline Valley visitors have discovered the website we have established in recent months. Located at www.salinepreservation.org, it contains information on SPA as an organization, membership registration and bylaws, road conditions, archives of previous newsletters, and an interactive forum for communication and discussion among visitors to Saline Valley. It’s our hope that you will check this site out and let us know what you think of it, and/or if you would like anything added to the items currently available on the website. The forum was very handy for many potential President’s Day visitors in February as actual up-to-the-minute conditions encountered by travelers were posted, (with pictures), for the consideration of others wishing to try the trip.

As a result of the development of our website, we are making the announcement now that we will be moving toward an e-mail/website-only format for “The Source” in the near future. We will post news updates on the website and even send notice of new editions of “The Source” to SPA members by e-mail only. So we need to ask here that you send us your e-mail address, along with a first and last name and current mailing address (for identification purposes). We will need this information for each person wishing to be registered as a voting member of SPA. Please send this information to membership@salinepreservation.org.

Registering as a Forum participant on our website is not a valid SPA membership registration. If you are not e-mail capable, we hope that you may have a friend who is, and is also a SPA member, who can print and mail you a copy. Another alternative is to use your local public library facilities to access SPA’s website. We will continue to carry persons without an e-mail address as registered SPA members, but do not foresee being able to produce and distribute hard copies of “The Source”. All personal identification information will be kept completely confidential.

SPA Bylaws Revision

SPA has recently reorganized with the nomination to our Board of Directors Tom Ganner, a past Saline Warm Springs Camp Host, and Nevada resident Rick Brower. Tom and Rick replaced retiring members Sherry Cosgrove and North Swanson. They join current Directors Patricia Wilder-Barton of Bishop, John Dukes of Keeler and Timbo Hynes of Lancaster. We have re-established a local area mailing address for SPA, (P.O. Box 136, Keeler, CA 93530) and revised our Bylaws and Mission Statement. We are required to call for a membership vote on all Bylaws revisions. Please review our revised bylaws at <http://www.salinepreservation.org/bylaws.htm>. Members may vote to accept or reject this document electronically by sending an e-mail to Abylaws@salinepreservation.org if you accept the proposed revisions, or Rbylaws@salinepreservation.org if you reject it. This e-mail must include your first and last name and your street mail address for membership verification purposes. We would ask that SPA members submit their vote within 30 days of receipt of this newsletter, which is the minimum stipulated in the attached Bylaws.

SPA Business Information

After print and mail costs for this issue of the Source, we are left with a balance of approximately \$3500. Membership had been declining gradually over time as old-timers visited less often and newer visitors were not aware of SPA's existence. We have, however, seen a marked increase in visitors registering as SPA members in recent months. The new SPA website has undoubtedly been a primary stimulus for the greater public awareness of SPA as an organization, as has SPA's Board of Directors now being composed of members who are able to be frequent visitors to Saline Warm Springs, establishing a greater on-site presence. SPA has received quite a few donations in recent months, and we would like to express our sincere gratitude for this generosity and support for our efforts on behalf of the Saline Valley and its devoted visitor community.

Saline Warm Springs Needs

A place has been established on SPA's website for camp needs to be posted and discussed by visitors and website users. In cooperation with the Camp Host, SPA is providing funds for, and securing, several items needed at Saline Warm Springs campsite. New cleaning brushes were provided recently. A new canopy for the Crystal Pool at Lower Warm Spring was also recently provided and installed, and new joists and screws are being obtained for maintenance of the deck on the lawn at the Lower Warm Spring. If you have a thought as to something needed at Saline Warm Springs for enhanced visitor comfort or convenience or operational efficiency, please let us know and we'll see what can be done in cooperation with the Camp Host. You can do this by writing to SPA at our snail-mail address, or by posting your suggestion on the "Camp Needs" section on SPA'S website. If you would like to make a donation to support SPA's efforts on behalf of the Saline Valley visitor community and/or maintenance of Saline Warm Springs campsites, you may send your contribution to:

Saline Preservation Association
P.O. Box 136
Keeler, CA 93530

President's Day Tournaments

Getting into the Valley over President's Day weekend was not a matter for the fainthearted. Snow had both north and south passes fairly well blocked. After a challenging assault into the valley through the south pass, and the moving of mountains to circumvent an abandoned bulldozer blocking the road near Hunter Canyon, a hale and hearty contingent of dedicated Springers joined those who had gained entry through Steele Pass (the only road not officially closed by the NPS) for a weekend of beautiful weather, mirth, merriment, and assorted tournaments. Todd ("Tin Cup") took the Saline Valley Open Golf Tourney by one stroke. The Lower Springs Skins softball team had to borrow members of the Palm Springs' Misfits to round out the team, only to lose by 2 points this year in a final score of Misfits 18; Skins 16.



Saline Preservation Association
PO Box 136
Keeler, CA 93530

First Class Mail
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #66
Ridgecrest, CA