American Sand Association Inc.
www.asasand.org

American Sand Association
"IN THE DUNES"

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Unite, Inform, and Mobilize

REACH Helicopter Launches From New Glamis Base

The new helicopter-landing zone behind the Glamis Beach Store was used for the first time Sunday, November 22nd. The proximity of the helicopter proves effective with the fastest response by a local air medical helicopter in history; 7 minutes! REACH Air Medical flew a total of 26 life saving missions with 4 from the Glamis area, 2 in the south dunes, and 3 flights out in the Ocotillo Wells area. The rest of the flights were interfaculty transfer flights from Pioneers Memorial Hospital in Brawley and El Centro Regional Medical Center.

This project was spearheaded by Tim Gantz (Glamis Beach Store) and Don Wharton (REACH) through the Kris "Chili Dog" Frick Foundation as well as other contributors to improve medical response time. The purpose of this auxiliary air base is to strategically locate their valuable resource near the heart of the Imperial Sand Dune Recreational area for rapid response in the event of a medical emergency.

REACH Air Ambulance in partnership with the ASA will continue to build upon this creative foundation that has been laid in a few short months. REACH plans to stage at the new base on all major holiday weekends.

ASA Hires Executive Director

During the past ten years the ASA has relied on the dedication of volunteers to accomplish its mission. This support and management has been the foundation by which the ASA has grown into the professional organization that it is today. Because of the extent of ASA activities and to bring the organization to the next level, the board voted to hire an Executive Director to continue the ASA scope of work in a professional manner.

"Continuity of governmental affairs, business and membership communications programs are critical to our success", stated ASA President Bob Mason. "The Board of Directors recognizes that we have reached the point where ASA needs a dedicated Executive Director to maintain our contacts and relationships with local, state and federal agencies. If the ASA is going to maintain Sand Sport recreation opportunities at the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area and other recreation venues, we must continue to operate in a business-like manner."

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Nicole Nicholas Gilles has been selected to be the ASA Executive Director beginning in December of 2009. Gilles is a long time resident of the Imperial Valley and the former Chief Executive Officer of the Brawley Chamber of Commerce and the Brawley Economic Development Commission. She is currently the President of the United Desert Gateway and a dedicated duner. Gilles' husband Bob, lived in Glamis for 22 years and helped his dad operate the family buggy repair business known as "Dirty Bob's."

According to Bill Jones, ASA Board Chairman, "Gilles will provide the day to day management of many important functions that are spelled out in a detailed job description." Jones continued by stating " ASA will continue to rely on volunteers for most of our functions such as the treasurer's duties, newsletter preparation and managing the support required at many events such as the annual Sand Sports Super Show." Gilles will also assist in providing timely communications with the membership and news media on matters affecting the ASA and Sand Sport recreation.

The ASA is excited to have Gilles in this important new role. Your continued support of the ASA is greatly appreciated.

FIND MORE INFORMATION AND STORIES IN OUR ONLINE VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER

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President's Report

By Bob Mason

Our organization will celebrate its tenth anniversary in June of 2010. During these ten years the ASA has developed a membership of over 36,000 and nearly 500 business sponsors. ASA has facilitated partnerships with the agencies responsible for land management and law enforcement. ASA is well connected with local, state and federal political leadership. Communication with its members includes this newsletter, an electronic monthly "What's New in ASA" and Info Meetings that are conducted in both Arizona and California.

During the past ten years ASA has received many honors, the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Four C's Award in 2004 from the National Director of the BLM. We have also been recognized by the California BLM State Director for facilitating numerous partnerships with the business community, local government entities and the Sand Sport community in general.

Some of our many accomplishments include; the design and implemention of the first public safety education program at the ISDRA, produced over 100,000 "Duner's Survival Kits" for distribution by local businesses, at information meetings and by the BLM to visitors at the dunes and we started the "Partners in Dune Safety" program of ASA, BLM, and the Imperial County Sheriff's Office (ICSO).

Recently the ASA Board of Directors conducted its second planning meeting on January 9, 2010. The Board discussed strategic direction for the next five years and established the 2010 short term objectives for the new Executive Director.

A ten year celebration is scheduled for the Sand Sports Super Show in Costa Mesa, California in September of this year. The Director of BLM has been invited to join the Board of Directors and the founders of the ASA.

Without your support none of this would have occurred.
Your continuing volunteer support is appreciated.

As Always, thanks for your support,

President

Chairman's Message

By Bill Jones

Night Duning Troubles

I want to take you back a few years. Before we had GPS, before cell phones and everyone had 2 head lights on their buggy. In other words about 25 years ago. We left Wash 11 on a cold winter night run with about 10 buggies. At some point the group split into 2 groups. We were deep into the central dunes when one of the buggies in my group broke down. We surveyed the damage and determined we needed to go back to camp to get some parts and tools. The logical thing to do was to leave the whip light on so we could find the buggy on our return. Taking some bearings where we were, we left for camp. The ride back to camp was uneventful. We gathered what we needed and headed back out. Going back to the exact spot at night in the large dunes is challenging. We thought we were up to the task and searched the dunes for the broken buggy. We wandered back and forth looking for the whip light we knew would guide us, No luck.

After searching for hours we decided to wait for sunrise and resume our search then. This was one of those life experiences when you learn things, I learned that no matter how cold you think it is, it gets much colder right before the sun comes up. Once the sun was up we realized we were about a half a mile away from the buggy. When we arrived at the buggy the whip light switch was off! We gave Kenny a very hard time about making it more difficult than it had to be by turning off the light. He swore he left the light on. We didn't believe him. Repairs were made and we headed back to camp.

We arrived at camp cold to the bone, hungry, tired and irritated at spending a hard night in the dunes. As we warmed ourselves by the camp fire, another duner who was in the other group approached us. Tom was rested, showered and sipping a cup of hot coffee. Tom walks up to Kenny and says, "You should thank me." Kenny asks what for? Tom replied, "I came across your dune buggy in the dunes last night and you left your whip light on. I didn't want the battery to run down so I turned it off." Tom was completely surprised when Kenny jumped across the fire and chased him around camp. Moral of the story? Nothing is ever as easy as you think it is in the dunes.
No names have been changed because no one in this story is innocent.

Chairman of the Board

WHAT IS THE ASA?

The ASA is the lead organization fighting to keep the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA) open to OHV use. We are a nonprofit California corporation under the IRS Tax Code known as 501(c)(4). Leaders of the ASA are volunteers.

The ASA has joined with the Off Road Business Association (ORBA), San Diego Off-Road Coalition (SDORC), American Motorcycle Associaton (AMA District 37) to fund EcoLogic Partners Inc. Ecologic has filed lawsuits against the Bureau of Land Management and the Fish and Wildlife Service and has standing in other lawsuits affecting the ISDRA. We stand poised to oppose any legal actions brought by any anti-access groups that would prevent the new Recreation Area Management Plan from being implemented. This plan would remove some of the closures entirely and grant conditional access to others.

In addition to our legal actions, we filed a precedent-setting delisting petition to remove the Peirson's Milk Vetch from the Endangered Species List. This plant was used to create the closures put in place in 2000. These closures total over 49,000 acres of sand dunes and are located south of Highway 78, south of Highway 8, and at Mammoth Wash.

Our delisting petition's were based on good, solid science derived from biological studies paid for by the ASA, ORBA, and SDORC. However our petition's were not successful and other avenues are being planned to address the potential for delisting of the PMV. We have two lobbyists that we work with one in Washington D.C. and the other in Sacramento.

We have made several trips to Washington D.C. and Sacramento to present our case and plan to make several more. Our Public Safety and Education makes us known as a group that is not only interested in a World Class duning experience, but Stewards of the land and its resources: a very good connection with the current administration.

The ASA has received the US Dept. of Interior's 4C's Award, recognizing our organization's commitment to working with the Bureau and others to enhance recreational conservation on public lands in Southern California.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

I've hit the ground running since coming on board as ASA Executive Director. In addition to familiarizing myself with all the responsibilities of the position, I've had many meetings with law enforcement officials, concerned users and businesses.

In December, I was invited to attend a meeting at the BLM El Centro Field Office that was called by various racing organizers in the Superstition area. This group wanted to have a sit down and talk with the BLM about some of the contacts they have had with law enforcement officers. The ASA has received similar communications regarding law enforcement; however, much of the information received has been second hand. Because of this, the ASA developed a user questionnaire to give us first-hand accounts about your contacts with law enforcement agencies. The intent of gathering this information is to provide an accurate database upon which the ASA can carry out effective discussions with law enforcement managers. For more information and take the survey, please visit our website at: http://www.americansandassociation.org/leoform/form.html

Recently, I had an opportunity to accompany our Chairman Bill Jones to visit some of our business sponsors. Our first stop was with Forest River in Rialto who manufactures recreational vehicles. Many people who work at Forest River visit the dunes and utilize their knowledge to upgrade their products. Our next stop was Funco Motorsports also in Rialto. Funco is truly a family business with three generations of the George family running the everyday operations. We then went to Buckshot Racing in La Habra. It was nice to meet Andrew Buck and put a face to the Monster semi I always see hauling several Buckshot cars through Brawley on his way to the dunes. Buckshot will also be hosting our next info meeting sometime in March or April pending the release of the RAMP. We really appreciate the support of all of our business sponsors. This year I'm going to try and visit as many of our sponsors as I can. This will help me become more familiar with the products they have to offer.

2010 is going to be an exciting year for the American Sand Association. As the ASA prepares to celebrate its 10-year anniversary at the Sand Sport Super Show in September, we also await the release of the draft Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP). This will be a call to action for our membership. We'll need your help to submit comments to the BLM regarding the proposed alternatives. The BLM will use this information to help determine the future of the PMV closures. The ASA will be providing some bullet points for you to include in your correspondence. We will be contacting our membership as soon as the draft RAMP is released.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me by calling 760-996-8983 or you can always email me at ngilles@asasand.org

Thank you for your support.

Nicole Nicholas Gilles
Executive Director

ASA Board Planning Meeting

ASA will celebrate its tenth anniversary in 2010. Beginning the new year and a new decade, the ASA Board of Directors met in Ontario, California on January 9, 2010 to discuss plans and strategies for the next five years. ASA founding member Jerry Seaver opened the meeting with the history of the ASA and how the ASA was formed. ASA Board member / Secretary Bob Gagliano acted as the facilitator for a brain storming session centered around the future directions that the ASA will take.

The first order of business was to update the ASA Mission Statement as follows:

THE MISSION OF THE ASA IS TO "UNITE, INFORM, AND MOBILIZE." WE ACCOMPLISH THIS MISSION THROUGH THE USE OF VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF TO PROTECT THE RIGHT TO RECREATE ON PUBLIC LANDS. WE BELIEVE IN RESPONSIBLE, ENVIRONMENTALLY BALANCED MANAGEMENT FOR ALL PUBLIC LANDS. THE ASA COOPERATES WITH NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL SAND SPORT ASSOCIATIONS.

The Board identified the following six key areas of activities upon which to build the ASA vision of the future:

Communications - Education - Fundraising - Legislation - Membership - Safety

Professional Fundraiser Denis Greene spoke with the Board during the meeting. Greene identified several opportunities to enhance the organization membership and financial position.

The Board will meet again in March or April to continue the development of this vision of the future of the ASA to insure that our right to recreate on public land is preserved for future generations.

Support the ASA

Win this amazing "Dual Sport" car by BANNING MOTORSPORTS

This fully equipped car comes complete with sand tires and wheels in addition to the off-road tire and wheel package shown

GRAND PRIZE!

Drawing will be held at the
Sand Sports Super Show
September 19th, 2010

Thanks to these generous sponsors!

Banning Motorsports • Foddrill Fabrication • Foddrill Motorsports • Turn Key Engines • Mendeola Transaxles • Weddle Industries • KC Hilites
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All proceeds to benefit the ASA General Fund

*Visit the ASA website at **www.asasand.com** for more information*

Ad design by dla design concepts

Tickets are $20 each
Must be 18 years of age to enter and win
Purchaser of ticket subject to all terms and conditions of raffle

For mail orders send check or money order to:

Banning Motorsports Buggy Raffle, P.O. Box 1872, Canyon Country, CA 91386

Or Call: 888-540-SAND

Winners need not be present!

A New Way To Support The ASA

Recently, the American Sand Association partnered with GBG, a Health and Wellness company, for a special fundraising program that has the possibility to significantly benefit the ASA. GBG has been in business for the past 14 years, it is also owned by a fellow off-roader and sand duning enthusiast named Stuart Finger who lives in Northern California.

Here's some information about GBG as well as how the fundraising program works. If you are currently using vitamins or know that you should, we would like to encourage you to check out GBG's great tasting liquid 10-in-One Super Formula. Some of the 10 Formulas include a Bone and Joint Formula, a Cardiovascular Formula, a Stress Reducing Formula, an Immune Enhancer Formula, and much more. These formulas are all delivered in liquid form and designed to get into your system in just 3 minutes.

Not only is this vitamin scientifically engineered under strict health standards, it is competitively priced compared to supplements in retail stores. The primary difference is that when you purchase the items through ASA's GBG web-site, proceeds from your 10-in-One purchases will be sent directly to the ASA.This is your chance to both improve your health and support the ASA. To learn more, simply visit the ASA's exclusive GBG web-site http://shopgbg.com/ASAfundraiser. Proceeds from your purchases will benefit the ASA by helping pay for legal fees, biological studies, and other expenses that are incurred in the battle to keep public lands open for off-road vehicle use. The ASA would like to thank you for your continued support as a member.

VOLUNTEERS PROMOTE ASA AT ARIZONA DIRT AND SAND EXPO

The ASA was pleased to participate in the Arizona Dirt and Sand Expo held at the Arizona State Fairgrounds in December. Although the event was much smaller than previous years, the inclement weather didn't deter the diehard OHV enthusiasts from checking out the Expo.

The Banning Motorsports raffle car was proudly displayed at the ASA booth along with our merchandise.

We would like to thank former ASA Board Member Don Johnson for coordinating our volunteer efforts for the Expo and all the other volunteers who helped at the ASA booth. Your support is really appreciated.

A Fun Way to Clean Up Your Camping Area

via the ASA Bulletin Board

Recently, an ASA member shared how his family helps keep their camp area free of nails…. I would like to share a game we play with our children Taylor (8) and Morgan (5). I have a tool I bought from Harbor Freight that has a large magnet with a three foot handle on it ($10.00 each), it is designed to pick up nails on the shop floor. The game goes as follows: Once they fill up their sand bucket with nails and glass they each get an ice cream from the Ice Cream Truck. The girls spend hours dragging the magnet though the sand in our camp, it gives us adults a break and saves someone from getting a flat tire.

The ASA applauds this family for taking the initiative to keep the desert clean. No one likes nails in their tires. Please don't bring wood containing metal out to the dunes and always remember to be good stewards of the land.

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Game and Fish to step up efforts to enforce OHV Decal compliance
Low participation is hurting program goals and benefits to recreationists.

Citing statistics showing that less than one-quarter of off-highway vehicles in Arizona have the required OHV Decal, Arizona Game and Fish Department Director Larry Voyles announced that the agency's officers would be stepping up compliance enforcement efforts in the field.

"Our officers will be issuing citations to off-highway vehicle users who don't have the required decal on their OHV," said Voyles. "The program has been in effect and public education efforts have been ongoing for over a year now. The compliance rate is very disappointing, given the benefits the program would provide to recreationists."

Voyles likened the "user play, user pay" program to wildlife conservation, where hunters and anglers pay for wildlife conservation through the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses. "Rates for hunting license compliance exceed 95 percent," said Voyles, "Hunters and anglers have demonstrated their commitment to wildlife conservation for decades."

As for OHV Decal compliance, Voyles stressed, "Arizona Game and Fish officers have unequivocally demonstrated their ability to achieve compliance through aggressive law enforcement. All OHV users should expect more special OHV law enforcement operations throughout the state beginning in January and going on through this spring until compliance numbers show a dramatic increase."

"The Department has worked with a number of organized OHV groups who all supported this legislation. They have a right to expect the same level of compliance and commitment from all OHV users," said Voyles.

The OHV Decal program took effect Jan. 1, 2009 and requires the annual purchase of a decal for any off-highway vehicle designed by the manufacturer primarily for use over unimproved terrain and weighing 1,800 pounds or less. This includes most ATVs, side-by-sides (utility vehicles), dirt bikes and some sandrails.

The benefits of the OHV Decal program include information and education efforts, facility development and maintenance, maps, signage and reduced wildlife habitat impacts.

Other projects that are being funded through the OHV Decal program include the new OHV Laws and Places to Ride booklet that is an ongoing joint venture between Arizona State Parks and the Game and Fish Department. A continued grant program to help clean up and restore riding areas and new informational outreach items like riding area maps will be created in the future.

The OHV Decal costs $25 and is good for one year from the date of purchase. The Motor Vehicle Department will not be sending renewal notices, so it is your responsibility to make sure your vehicle is in compliance. Officers will be citing vehicle owners who fail to display the OHV Decals soon, so avoid a costly citation as these field renewal notices are sure to cost considerably more than $25. The OHV Decal can be obtained at any MVD office, MVD third-party service provider, or online at www.servicearizona.com

For more information about the OHV Decal program or OHV use in Arizona, go online to www.azgfd.gov/ohv

ASA PROMOTES RV SAFETY

As a direct result from a meeting held between the ASA Executive Director and the El Centro CHP office, the following information has been provided by Officer Wes Boerner to help provide safety information to our members.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is concerned with the safe operation of RVs, recreational trailers, and all other trailers. Most drivers have experience in driving passenger vehicles; however an RV or trailer handles differently. Some of the most noticeable differences are the restricted vision and added braking times. Other differences include space requirement needs, increased following distances, increased turning radiuses, and more space needed for lane changes.

This information is for people who currently drive recreational vehicles (RVs), pull noncommercial recreational trailers, 5th Wheel trailers, and Toy Box trailers. It concentrates on the requirements needed to legally drive these vehicles.

In order to understand the legal requirements, you will need to add some terms to your vocabulary.

DEFINITIONS:

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating – 350(a) CVC – means the weight specified by the manufacturer as the LOADED weight of a single vehicle. The maximum weight that your RV can carry, including driver, passengers, and cargo. (This weight rating is displayed on your vehicles federal label.)

Unladen Weight – 660 CVC – weight of a vehicle equipped and ready for operation on the road including five gallons of fuel, required equipment and permanent attachments to the vehicle. Does not include any load.

Permanent Trailer Identification Plate (PTI) – 468 CVC – The DMV shall commence the "PTI" plate program to be used by all trailers EXCEPT for trailer coaches.

Trailer Coach – 635 CVC – a vehicle, other than a motor vehicle, designed for human habitation or human occupancy for industrial, professional, or commercial purposes, for carrying property on its own structure, and for being drawn by a motor vehicle.

House Car – 362 CVC – a motor vehicle originally designed, or permanently altered, and equipped for human habitation, or to which a camper has been permanently attached. (This is simply a Motorhome.)

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Class C license:

- **3 Axle Motor Vehicle weighing 6,000 lbs or less**
- **Motorhome – 40 ft or less**
- **Trailer Coach – 10,000 lbs or less**
- **5th Wheel Trailer over 10,000 lbs with an endorsement (but not over 15,000 lbs).**

Class B license:

- **3 Axle Motor Vehicle weighing over 6,000 lbs**
- **Motorhome over 40 ft but not over 45 ft with an endorsement**

Class A license with endorsements:

- **5th Wheel Trailer over 15,000 lbs**
- **Trailer Coach – Over 10,000 lbs**
- **Any 2 Trailers (No matter what the weight)**

NO passenger vehicle regardless of weight, may tow more than one vehicle.

NO motor vehicle under 4,000 lbs. unladen may tow any vehicle weighing 6,000 lbs. or more gross (21715 CVC)

TRANSPORTING PASSENGERS

Here are the rules for transporting people in RV's or recreation trailers:

- **People are NOT allowed in a trailer coach while it is being towed. (21712(d) CVC)**
- **People are allowed in a 5th-wheel trailer (21712(f) CVC)**

A camper with people in it must have an unblocked exit door which can always be opened from both the inside and outside. (23129 CVC) and an audible or visual signaling device which can be activated from inside the camper and which is constructed so as to allow any person inside the camper to gain the attention of the driver of the motor vehicle (28080(a) CVC).

COMMERCIAL DRIVER LICENSE APPLICATION PROCESS

To operate commercial vehicles, you must apply for a Commercial Driver License (CDL). Only California residents may obtain a California CDL. Residency is established by any of the following:

a) Registering to vote here,
b) Paying resident tuition at a public institution of higher education,
c) Filing for a California homeowner's property tax exemption,
d) Obtaining a license (such as a fishing license),
e) Or any other privilege or benefit not ordinarily extended to nonresidents.
You need a CDL if you operate a vehicle or combination of vehicles which requires a Class A or Class B license.

A commercial motor vehicle is a motor vehicle or combination of vehicles designed or used for either the transportation of persons for hire OR transportation of property (has a cargo area) and:

- **Has a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more.**
- **Tows ANY vehicle of 10,001 pounds or more.**
- **Tows more than one vehicle (requires a Double Trailer Combination Endorsement).**
- **Has three or more axles (except if weighs 6,000 pounds or less).**

To obtain an original non-commercial Class A license, you must:

1) **Complete an application for a driver license (DL44).**
2) **Pay the application fee.**
3) **Submit a Health Questionnaire (DL 546) dated not more than two years prior to the date of your application.**
4) **Pass the basic Class C law test (unless you qualified for a Class C license within the past 12 months).**
5) **Pass the Noncommercial Class A Vehicles test.**
6) **Pass a vision test.**
7) **Pass a pre-trip inspection test.**
8) **Pass the skills test.**
9) **Pass a driving test towing the type of vehicle you wish to tow.**

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The Permanent Trailer Identification Plate (PTI) program applies to trailers which are classified as "cargo haulers" (and some small tent trailers).

If you have access to water/sewer/propane – it is designated as a trailer coach (which is designed for habitation) and the PTI plate program does NOT apply. You will have to renew your registration annually and have new "year stickers" issued by DMV.

All this information can be found on the Department of Motor Vehicles website at: www.dmv.ca.gov

CLICK ON:
Publications - TAB
Driver License Handbooks - DROP DOWN LIST

- **California Commercial Driver Handbook**
- **Recreational Vehicles and Trailers Handbook**

We hope this information helps you get to the dunes safely.

INFORMING OUR MEMBERS

As a courtesy after every major holiday the BLM contacts the ASA to review emergency medical service (EMS) data. The following information was provided for the New Year's holiday:

129,442 = Total visitors / 10,000 more than last year
63 = Number of medical responses
1 = Fatality
657 = Citations issued. Most were for non permit compliance and registration violations.
31 = Arrests / 18 of those were for Driving Under the Influence
10 = Number of life flights out of the dunes. REACH reported more record setting response times as a direct result of their on-the-ground presence at the dunes. This has been accomplished through their partnership with the Kris "Chili Dog" Frick Foundation and the Bureau of Land Management.

ATV Rider Certification Classes

All dune users are encouraged to know the laws, particularly applicable to youth all-terain vehicle (ATV) riders. The BLM has stated that if a child is found to be riding without an ATV Safety Certificiate or is unsupervised, the parent or guardian will be ticketed. The outstanding efforts of the American Desert Foundation have made it possible to offer ATV Rider Certification classes at Glamis this year to fulfill the California State requirements. These ASI certified ½ day classes will be held on selected dates, now through May, 2010.

ASA Volunteer Mike Reber recently attended one of the courses. "Over the Thanksgiving Weekend, I took my six-year old son to the course and, in just a few hours, he earned his certification. The Glamis location couldn't be more convenient to our family!" Under California State Law, every parent has an obligation to be certified while supervising their kids on ATVs. The entire fee for California kids is subsidized by the state. For more information, visit www.atvsafety.org

For dates and times, visit www.americandesertfoundation.com

Meet the Hosts

You may have seen them on your visits to the dunes, but do you know them? Our campground hosts cover both the north and south dunes and help visitors orient themselves to the area. These hosts answer questions, initiate Emergency Medical Service response, take in lost dogs (and the occasional goat), pick up trash, and generally provide helpful hands and smiling faces when needed the most. Who are they? You're about to find out.

Pat and Jerry Vine, Buttercup Hosts, South Dunes

Pat and Jerry have been hosting at the Imperial Sand Dunes for the last 6 years. Before the Buttercup Ranger Station became a reality, the Vines parked their RV across the street and greeted visitors from beneath a wind-battered canopy. Now that the station is completed, the Vines staff the public room and keep the building in tip-top shape, freeing up BLM EMS to patrol. No strangers to campground hosting, Pat and Jerry have spent the last 30 years volunteering as campground hosts across the country, beginning in North Dakota and zigzagging westward: Montana, California, Nevada and Arizona. Claiming the El Centro Field Office as the "best ever" location volunteered for, the Vines' vow to remain as hosts for the next twenty years. Trust me; they'll do it.

Bobbie and Bill Pinkerton, Dunebuggy Flats Hosts, South Dunes

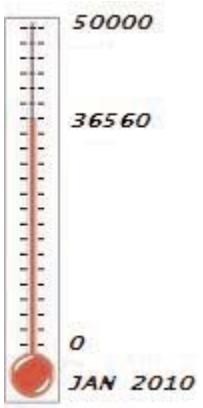
Spending their second year as the campground hosts at Dunebuggy Flats (their first host location), Bobbie and Bill Pinkerton are long time OHV enthusiasts and committed duners since 1986. Back in the 1960's, before the dunes drew them in, Bobbie and Bill tore apart their Volkswagen Beetle and converted it to a buggy, exploring the Bullhead, AZ area and apparently starting some sort of a craze. Today you'll find the Pinkerton's bouncing across Dunebuggy Flats in their UTV, picking up trash and checking fee compliance. With their RV located at the entrance near the restrooms, Bobbie and Bill greet hundreds of visitors as they stream by, eat a lot of dust, and try to keep the speed down at this congested area. Last place in the world you'd expect to find a retired boat mechanic, but there are the canals nearby…

Rusty Massie, (Pad 3) Gecko Road Host, North Dunes

Thirty-eight years ago, Rusty offered a helping hand to a fellow duner, and has been doing it ever since. Whether assisting BLM EMS with medicals by locating incidents and advising further support needed, or transporting staff to remote areas, Rusty had been a sort of visitor go-to guy. Twelve years ago, Rusty joined the Volunteer Dunes Patrol, making the relationship with BLM more official. At this time, he became "DP11," a call sign he maintains to this day. Available to assist BLM when needed and when visiting the area, Rusty resisted becoming a bonafide campground host for many years to maintain the freedom to travel to other locations during the season. Finally convinced (or talked into it), Rusty became our most unique campground host, in that you'll never quite know where the "host" campsite will be located from year to year on Pad 3. An invaluable help and of immeasurable service, Rusty continues to assist BLM when the going gets tough. So, when you need it most, don't be surprised to see a guy in an orange buggy coming out to help you.

All of our campground hosts spend a great deal of time making sure a visit to the dunes remains a safe one. Please acknowledge this dedication and offer up some thanks when you see them.
This place would not be the same without them.

>>> *MEMBERSHIP NEWS* <<<



ARE YOU ONE OF THE *5000* + ?

If there is a pound sign (#) in front of your name on the mailing label of this newsletter you ARE. We tried to send you an email and it bounced or was returned as undeliverable. We send out a monthly email titled "What's New in the ASA" each month we don't produce this newsletter.

We want to keep ALL our members INFORMED of the latest news concerning the ISDRA and to alert you to latebreaking news but we need a valid email address to do that. Many long standing members may have changed email addresses over the years and no longer are able to receive our emails. To update your email address you can send it along with your name and address (for verification) to membership@asasand.com and we will update your membership information. Let us know if you would like to receive the newsletter via email instead of US Mail and it will save the ASA some money too.

Thank you for your support of the ASA in our fight to Keep Our Riding Areas Open
Dick Holliday - ASA Membership Director

We would like to welcome all the new and renewing Supporting Members that have signed up or renewed since our last newsletter. Their commitment goes a long way in supporting the fight to keep our riding areas open now and for our future. Thank You!

Kevin Barinowski	Larry Engwall	Kevin Kandarian	Richard Owen	Carl Stafford
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Final Report On Washington DC Visit

by Bob Mason and Dick Holliday - October 23 -- November 4, 2009

Meeting with William Woody, BLM Director of Law Enforcement and Security

We discussed some of the law enforcement issues at the ISDRA and how they could be resolved. This included the cooperation between the Imperial County Sherriff's office and the local BLM officers. Mr. Woody referred us to Mr. Smith as the best person to contact in the Sacramento BLM state office. We alerted Mr. Woody to the issue of fees being collected on the eastern side of the railroad tracks and the lack of a legal means to access the ISDRA. Mr. Mason discussed the Director's participation in the ASA 10th anniversary event at the Sand Show in September 2010.

Meeting with minority House Resource Committee members

Bob Mason, Dennis Stephens and Dick Holliday met with three members of the minority membership of the House of Representatives resource committee staff. They are concerned about the way the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) is being administrated and were very interested in our concern about the cost of fee collection and the way fees are being collected. They seem stunned at the amount that was being spent to collect the fees. They expressed that it was clearly not in compliance with the current FLREA law. They supported our proposal to ask congressional representatives to ask for a review of the way fees are being collected.

Meeting with Bob Ratcliffe , BLM National Recreation Staff

Bob Mason and Dick Holliday met with Mr. Ratcliffe and members of the BLM National Recreation staff to review fee collection issues at the ISDRA. We reviewed our concerns with the amount of fee revenue that is being used to collect the ISDRA Special Recreation Permit (SRP) fees. Mr. Ratcliffe acknowledged that it seemed like a lot of money is going to collect fees but that was because the BLM had asked the contractor to supply some tasks that should not be construed as actual costs of fee collection.

We then discussed the way the fees are being collected. The BLM again took the approach that they are collecting an SRP and that is acceptable under the FLREA. We agreed that they can collect an SRP and believe that they are collecting an SRP; however, our contention that each vehicle entering the recreation area is required to purchase a permit before they are allowed entrance is really like collecting an entrance fee as opposed to an SRP. Again Mr. Ratcliffe expressed that they had the authority to collect an SRP and that was added to the FLREA legislation just to handle venues such as the ISDRA. We again acknowledged that they did indeed have the authority to charge an SRP however the method they were using to collect the SRP fee was not in compliance with the FLREA.

Meeting with BLM Director Abbey

Bob Mason and Dick Holliday along with BLM staff (Bill Woody, Bob Ratcliffe and Ed Roberson) met with Director Abbey. Bob Mason explained the ASA and how we interact with the local BLM and local communities. Bob highlighted the "Take It Outside "cards and related the new partnerships with the Border Patrol, Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Native Plant Society. The Director was particularly interested in the youth education aspects of our outreach programs.

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Long-Time Pro-Access Advocate Passes

We have lost a valuable member of California Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs (CA4WDC) and a great friend. Don served as the northern natural resource consultant for many years, as well as being an event chair and CA4WDC board member. His knowledge and experience will be missed. Don made a difference through his efforts promoting and supporting responsible recreation on public lands for many years.

On December 23, 2009 just before noon Don Klusman passed away due to his ongoing heart issues.

Donald Earl Klusman, Jr. 57, of Yuba City, CA, passed away at his residence. Born June 25, 1952 in Sacramento, CA. A Yuba-Sutter resident for 40 years, he was the former owner of Don's 4 Wheel Drive, and also a consultant for the State, Federal & Private Organizations to keep Public Lands open to the Public.

Don was also a member of S.I.R.S. of Yuba City, Histum Yani R.V. Club. Survivors include his wife Cheri Klusman of Yuba City; daughter Patty Lynn Klusman of Sacramento; son Jeremy Lee Jones of Cedar Rapids, IA; granddaughter Shyla Marie Onidas of Sacramento; mother Helen Klusman of Yuba City; sister-in-law & husband, Gayle & Jerry Marta of Yuba City; father-in-law & mother-in-law, Dwight & Norma Dowds of Yuba City; Preceded in death by his father Donald Earl Klusman, Sr. Memorial services were conducted on Tuesday, December 29, 2009. Memorial contributions can be made to CA4WDC (California 4 Wheel Drive Club Assoc.), 8120 36th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95824. www.cal4wheel.com

The family has requested in lieu of flowers that donations be made to the CA4WDC Jack Edwards legal fund in memory of Don Klusman.

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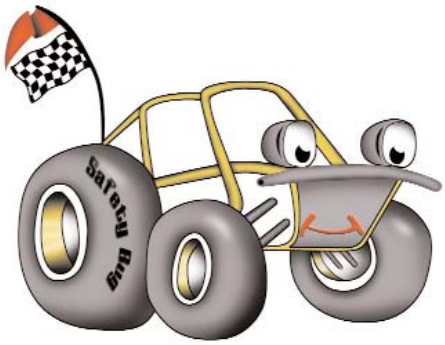

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ONLINE CONTENTS

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Taxpayers Foot The Bill For Environmental Lawsuits
November 5, 2009

By Oregon Tax News,

The federal government spends about the same amount of money funding environmental lawyers as it does to protect endangered species according to an investigation conducted by a Wyoming lawyer who defends farmers and ranchers involved in environmental lawsuits.

According to the Capital Press, Karen Budd-Falen was curious how much money the federal government paid the lawyers who initiated cases against her clients and uncovered more than $4.7 billion in taxpayer money that the government paid to environmental law firms between 2003 and 2007. That represents an average of $940 million a year, compared to $922 million spent directly on the 986 endangered and threatened species, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's annual report.

According to her research, Budd-Falen found that three environmental groups—Western Watersheds Council, Forest Guardians and the Center for Biological Diversity—filed more than 700 lawsuits against the U.S. government between 2000 and 2009.

"That money is not going into programs to protect people, wildlife, plants and animals," Budd-Falen told the Capital Press, "but to fund more lawsuits."

"They are not filing these suits to try and protect the environment. They are filing these suits to make money."

According to Budd-Falen, environmental groups are eligible for government funds under the Equal Access to Justice Act, which provides for the award of attorney fees to "prevailing parties" in cases against the government. The firms also are accessing government funds through the Judgment Fund, which is a line-item appropriation in the federal budget used for paying claims against the government.

"We tried to track the fees paid to environmental groups in certain federal courts. These guys are charging between $350 and $450 an hour in legal fees." Budd-Falen told Now Public.

"If you just look at the raw number and say 'why in the world is the United States paying a million dollars bankrolling them to sue us,' well that's what congress set up through EAJA. That's the law, we're bound by it," Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Haws of Boise told Now Public.

Budd-Falen found in one 15-month-long case that Earthjustice Legal Foundation and the Western Environmental Law Center filed for $479,242 in attorneys' fees.

Brian Smith, a spokesman for Earthjustice, told the Capital Press that the foundation counts on those fees because it represents groups free of charge and that if the government had been doing its job under the Bush administration, the foundation wouldn't be so active. He believes the current Obama administration will reduce the need for environmental lawsuits.

However, Budd-Falen doubts the steady stream of lawsuits will stop, or even slow. "Why would you stop filing litigation when you can get that kind of money? They are not filing these suits to try and protect the environment. They are filing these suits to make money."

Contract Awarded For Mesquite Landfill Rail Yard

Coffman Specialties, Inc. of San Diego has been awarded a $36.3 million contract to construct a rail spur and intermodal rail yard at the Mesquite Regional Landfill, where municipal solid waste (MSW) will be received for disposal by way of California's first waste-by-rail project.

The Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County today awarded the contract to Coffman Specialties, Inc., the lowest of eight bids received for the project that will include a rail spur, bridge and construction of the facilities where containerized trash will arrive by train for disposal at the regional landfill. The Mesquite Regional Landfill is located about 5 miles east of Glamis.

Work is expected to begin in the spring and take about 18 months to complete. "Awarding the contract for the MRL rail spur and intermodal facility is a major milestone in the development of the waste-by-rail system that will provide an innovative, environmentally responsible, regional solid waste disposal solution," said Janet Coke, manager of the Sanitation Districts waste-by-rail project. "The enormity of the project also will bring numerous construction jobs to the Imperial Valley."

The MRL project calls for the construction of a 100-acre intermodal facility, similar to what is commonly seen at seaports where containers are moved by crane from ships onto tractor-trailer trucks for delivery. A similar process will move containerized MSW from rail cars onto trucks for disposal in the landfill.

Additionally, the infrastructure project requires construction of a 4.5 mile rail spur to connect with the Union Pacific Railroad main line about 1-mile northwest near Glamis. A bridge to span storm water control channels on the landfill property also will be built.

The Sanitation Districts went out to bid on the project in July after signing an agreement with Union Pacific that spells out the terms and conditions for transporting up to two unit trains a day - each that will carry 4,000 tons of MSW - to the Mesquite Regional Landfill.

At the same time, construction is underway on the Puente Hills Intermodal Facility, where sorted trash will be loaded onto trains for the 200-mile trip to the Mesquite Regional Landfill. The access road construction has begun for an intermodal project that is estimated to cost $100 million. The project is expected to be completed in early 2012.

The Mesquite Regional Landfill was fully built in 2008. The state-of-the art landfill includes a road and drainage system, a water distribution system and the modular offices to house landfill staff. The first cell of the landfill has been lined with a 5-foot-thick multi-layer system that exceeds state, federal and local standards.

To get the Mesquite Regional Landfill into operation before the rail infrastructure is completed and to provide greater flexibility in its early years of operation, the Sanitation District has proposed that Imperial County modify the permit governing the facility. The Sanitation District has requested that Imperial County allow the trucking of a limited amount of waste to the landfill.

The proposed permit modification seeks permission to truck up to 4,000 tons per day of waste a day, 1/5th of what the landfill is permitted to receive. A draft environmental impact report, with air and traffic studies of the proposal, is expected to be released soon.

The Mesquite Regional Landfill is permitted to receive up to 20,000 tons per day (tpd) of municipal solid waste, after it has been sorted to remove recyclables and hazardous waste. Up to 1,000 tons per day of the waste that the landfill receives is reserved for Imperial County waste.

At peak operation, the Mesquite Regional Landfill is expected to employee about 250 people and to pay Imperial County fees of about $17 million a year.

Michele Ochs
Mesquite Regional Landfill - El Centro office
Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
444 South 8th Street, Suite B-1
El Centro, CA 92243
Phone 760-337-5552