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Blowsand Reader

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 1

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2012

Superintendent's Notes

By Kathy Dolinar, District Superintendent

Just a few days ago, Tierra Del Sol presented me with a special award—a steel wheel that reads, "Outstanding Service...Kathy Dolinar...Dedication and Determination to Enhance and Preserve OHV Recreation." It was a great honor to receive this award. TDS has been a great partner and supporter of the park during my 8-1/2 years at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

This wheel is also a symbol of OW today. It represents those of us passionately carrying out the vision of the park, and the many spokes that help hold the wheel together. The wheel has become strong through years of hard work and dedication and a love for the park by those contributing to its strength. The wheel is a strongly-built object made of material that can resist many impacts that may cause bruises but that will not break the wheel. The wheel, to those who are a part of it, exemplifies strength and the ability to keep rolling ahead despite the often rocky road.



Bo Neece presents the "wheel" award to Kathy.

While it took the past eight years to strengthen this wheel into its current form, that strength is now needed to carry the mission well into the future. It is more critical than ever that the wheel keep moving ahead and stay on course despite the large obstacles that are in its path. The challenges to the park are at an all time high. As we work through the general plan process that will guide the park into the future, we have more threats to recreation than ever. There are challenges from those who are not solution-oriented, and those who do not see the value or understand the importance of OHV recreation. Stakeholders and staff need to work together as a team to drive the wheel forward for the good of the park.

During these challenging times, I encourage you all to reevaluate your role in the wheel. As the wheel award states, I have led the district with dedication and determination to protect and enhance the park for the good of all the

Superintendent's Notes *continued...*

people. Thank you to those of you who have held fast with me. Your support, as seen in all the spokes, has and will continue to make the park strong. The rocks placed in the path of the wheel have also helped to make it stronger. With these challenges the strength of the wheel is tested, and I believe, the strength will keep the wheel holding fast to its course.

Thank you especially to Tierra Del Sol, who through its partnership, has become like family to me. The wheel award means more than you can ever know.

Blowsand Reader Survey

Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill out our survey. There appears to be some confusion as to the purpose of the newsletter. It started as a means to communicate to the internal OHV staff what had happened at Ocotillo Wells SVRA during the months covered. After receiving some excellent comments, we hope to expand our electronic distribution to the public and also expand our articles to include information for and about our visitors. At the same time, we plan to include information about upcoming events.

Because OW's riding season is primarily late October through April, and seasonal staff departs in April, we reduced the number of issues from six to four two years ago. Staffing limitations will require us to continue with four issues a year for now. The four issues are: May-October (our summer issue), November-December, January-February, and March-April. Each publication is released approximately the third week of the month after the end of the issue month, i.e., the summer issue is released about the third week of November.

Watch for changes and enhancements to the newsletter during the next year, and keep sending your comments and suggestions!

The *Blowsand Reader* is published four times a year—November (May-October issue); January (November-December issue); March (January-February issue), and May (March-April issue)
Publisher/Editor: Beth Shugan bshugan@parks.ca.gov (760) 767-5370
Contributors: Ocotillo Wells staff, Friends of Ocotillo Wells, and occasional outside contributors

San Felipe Wash Runway?

By Andrew Fitzpatrick, State Park Interpreter I

Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area recently hosted Angus Smith for a day of historical reminiscing, archiving, and discussion. Having grown up in the “blockhouse” (now home to the Interpretation and Trails Departments) in the days before OWSVRA, Angus had plenty of insights and many photos to share. One of the most amazing photos was the one you see to the right.



Photo courtesy of Angus Smith

A Pacific Southwest Airlines plane made an emergency landing in San Felipe Wash in 1974.

On March 5, 1974, a NAMC YS-11A-202 training aircraft belonging to Pacific Southwest Airlines was in flight

above the Borrego Valley. Based out of San Diego, Pacific Southwest Airlines (PSA) billed itself as “The World’s Friendliest Airline” and was known for its sense of humor. Only four crew members were aboard the plane as it began a simulated landing stall. Here Murphy’s Law—what can go wrong, will go wrong—came into play, and the PSA flight found itself with both propellers actually inoperable and the engines unresponsive.

The Aviation Safety Network’s accident report found “crew non-adherence to prescribed procedures” had contributed to the aircraft’s rapid descent from the sky. However, the crew was skilled enough to bring the plane down in a successful emergency landing on the sandy bottom of San Felipe Wash at about 11:10 AM. While Angus Smith remembers the stretch of San Felipe Wash that



Photo from the Werner Fischdick Collection

The PSA training aircraft sitting on the runway in San Diego.

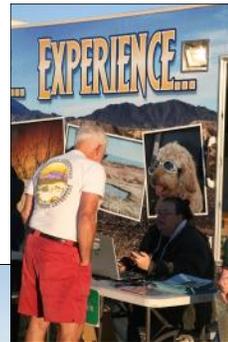
served as a natural desert runway as being within the boundary of today’s Ocotillo Wells SVRA, the accident report recorded it as being 8.8 miles east of Borrego Springs, which would put it on the north side of Borrego Mountain, just in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. In any case, this episode (and its accompanying surreal photograph) fits comfortably into the extraordinary history of the Borrego Valley.

Roughneck Rendezvous III

By Jeff Price, State Park Interpreter I

OW's big Roughneck Rendezvous Off-Highway Geocaching Adventure has come and gone once again. In its wake, we would like to take a moment to reflect on this year's event and the efforts of the staff and volunteers at Ocotillo Wells who made this weekend such a success.

Planning for Roughneck Rendezvous III began in May of 2011. The overall theme of the event, "The Colorful Characters of Ocotillo Wells SVRA," was chosen to reflect all those people, or "colorful characters," who shaped the land and the history of the area into what it is today. This year's mascot was the ubiquitous desert prospector— Peg-Leg Smith— and his trusty burro. With a theme ready to guide us, we moved into high gear. With help from the biological resources, cultural resources and GIS staff, we selected three years' worth of cache locations within the park. It took several weeks during June and July to choose the locations.



Registering and receiving GPS coordinates.



Do you have the GPS Coordinates?

What was the question for this panel cache?

Let's go find some geocaches.



Needless to say, we are all glad that we will not have to brave 110+ degree temperatures for the next three years!

Once the riding season started in late October, the interpretive team also ramped up speed. New trading cards were developed for the cache boxes. The Cache Logbook and the general rules and guidelines booklet were created and printed. Over 20 interpretive panels were completed. With

the help of the Trails team, the panels were installed in time for the geocaching weekend. Overall, a **LOT** of work was put into this event by the staff of many departments, and the attendees certainly appreciated it!

(Continued on next page...)

Roughneck Rendezvous III *continued...*

Not only did we have help from all of the departments at OW, we also had volunteers help us complete many vital tasks. For example, some volunteers helped camouflage cache containers, some entered data into Geocaching.com, some helped insert the materials into the caches, while others helped place the caches in the park, helped staff the registration booths, and much more! Without the true dedication of these volunteers, the event would not have gone as well, AND the organizers would have had prematurely gray hair!

Where is the answer?
...I found it!



(Continued on next page...)

Roughneck Rendezvous III *continued...*

About the same number of registrants signed up this year as for last year—about 268. It may not seem like an increase, but considering the state of the economy and the overall slump in



We could not have said it better!

visitation, any increase is a big success. We had 387 overall participants that went out in Jeeps, ATV's, side-by-sides and any other imaginable vehicle trying to find as many of the 156



Lady Prospector—a very colorful character, indeed!

cache as they could. We had 105 caches that were 4x4 driving caches located throughout the 85,000 acres of lower OW. We also had about 40 caches that were accessible to anyone who did not have an off-highway vehicle. Ten of these were ADA-accessible walking caches and an additional 15 hiking caches located near the Discovery Center.

Inside the Discovery Center, we sponsored a scavenger hunt using the many interpretive displays. Across the road from the Discovery Center, one of our great volunteers and his Boy Scout troop held an orienteering course that showed our tech-savvy visitor how to navigate when the batteries in the GPS ran out! Overall, it was a great day filled with a lot of fun and excitement, culminating with the famous Roughneck Rendezvous Raffle. This year's raffle



Another cache and another answer!

(Continued on next page...)

Roughneck Rendezvous III *continued...*

had over \$5,000 worth of goodies, including a \$400 GPS unit! Thank you to all who donated items for the raffle.

On Sunday, the last day of the Roughneck adventure, we had an opportunity to give back to the desert that supports our recreation—we held the Cache In-Trash Out cleanup event. The 91 participants fanned out in the early morning hours looking for trash and adventure. The team who brought back the most refuse won a Trasharoo vehicle trash bag! Unfortunately(?!), we did receive some complaints that there was not *enough* trash to make it a challenging competition! It seems that the most trash one team could find in four hours was four bags—they were the winners! It speaks volumes about our visitors when there are complaints that there isn't *enough* trash to clean up! No one was really disappointed with the outcome.

All in all, this year's Roughneck Rendezvous was a great success, and we are already planning and looking forward to Roughneck Rendezvous IV! So here's big hearty thank you to all of the staff, volunteers, and sponsors that made Roughneck Rendezvous III the great event that it is! **THANK YOU!**

~Roughneck Planning Team



Turning in the cache logbook for raffle tickets.

...it's Raffle Time!



Visitor Services

By Jesse Adams, State Park Peace Officer

The Rangers and Lifeguards of Ocotillo Wells are involved in helping far more people than any of them could possibly remember. On rare occasions one of the people who crosses paths with the Ocotillo Wells Rangers or Lifeguards will stop to say thanks. For an entire family to take a Sunday drive all the way back to OW to say thank you in person and to also bring a thank you card is nearly unheard of!

On February 18, 2012, around 12:15 pm, Ryan, a 12-year old from Temecula, was riding his dirt bike and sporting his brand new riding gear. His parents had recently upgraded their son's safety equipment and figured that going cheap was not the best way, so they went with higher-quality gear. This was Ryan's first time out in his new gear, and it never fails that a brand new helmet is bound to get a scratch or two. Ryan was near camp riding by himself through a set of whoops when he went down. He awoke, still alone, unable to remember what happened, but he knew he must have

wrecked. In some pain and very upset that his new helmet was damaged, Ryan returned to camp where he took a few bites of a sandwich and then went to lie down. Around 1:30 pm Ryan's dad checked on him, and discovered that Ryan's condition had gotten dramatically worse, so 911 was called. Ranger Jesse Adams, Desert Lifeguard Matt Dawson and Cal Firefighter Mario were the first to arrive. Ryan was mostly unresponsive except that when he was touched, he screamed. Ryan soon started vomiting, which is another bad sign. At this point an airship was already on the way, and DL Matt and Firefighter Mario were fighting with Ryan to prepare him for the flight to the hospital. The airship couldn't get there fast enough. When they did arrive, they didn't like what they saw either. Ryan was now on a backboard, but did not want to be touched or bothered. He was also still vomiting, which is not good for a person strapped down to a backboard;

however, there was no other safe way to move him.

Ryan was promptly

taken to Riverside Community Hospital where he was diagnosed with a skull fracture and grade 2-1/2 concussion—remember, this was with a *higher-quality helmet!* After about 48 hours, Ryan was released from the hospital with the stipulation that he was to take a week off from school and a month off from any type of sport. The following week



Ryan proudly sits in the Cal Fire engine.

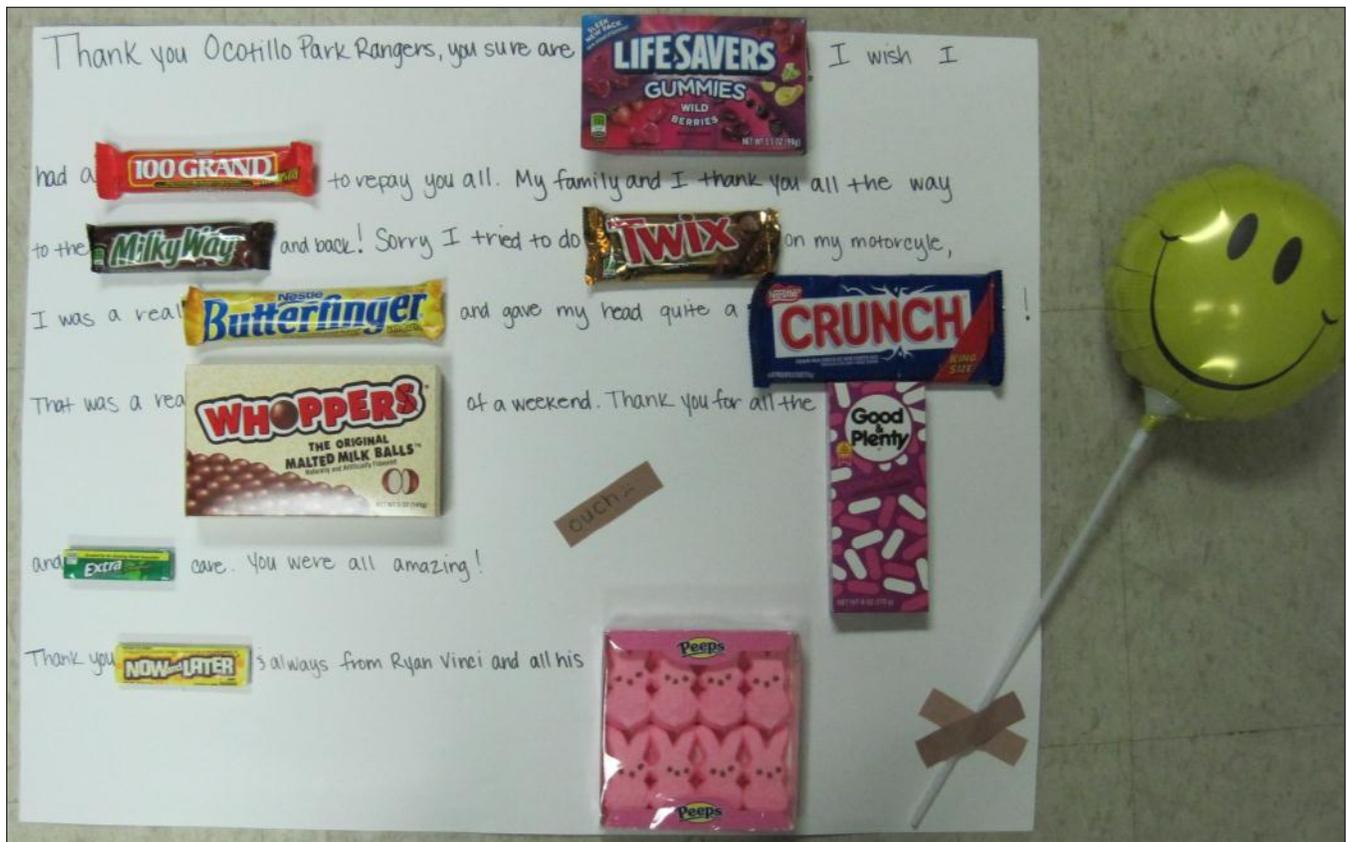


Ryan with his sisters and Cal Fire responders.

(Continued on next page...)

Visitor Services *continued...*

Ryan and his family made a return trip to Ocotillo Wells. This time it was to bring the emergency responders a thank you!



Ryan's thank you card.

I (Jesse) think I can speak for all of the OW Rangers and Lifeguards when I say that we really are not out here for any kind of applause. However, a warm thank you certainly is appreciated and makes a difficult day a little easier. The thank you we received from Ryan and his family really does take the cake. We are all extremely glad to know that Ryan is doing well, and will be making a full recovery. For Ryan and his family to come all the way out to Ocotillo from Temecula just to say thank you to our Rangers, Lifeguards and Cal Firefighters in person truly means a lot, and the card they brought was amazing.



Jesse Adams and Ryan holding his card.

Heber Dunes... The Cutting Edge

By Vic Herrick, Supervising Peace Officer

High Performance Off-Highway Vehicles at Heber Dunes SVRA

Heber Dunes hosts a variety of off-highway enthusiasts, and we are always watching for trends and trying to plan and adapt to meet their changing needs. Based on numbers, the largest number of riders are on ATV runners, which are well adapted to the terrain—a mix of sand dunes, trails and clay flats. Other off-highway vehicles include motorcycles, sand rails, dune buggies, jeeps and pre-runners. Pick-ups, may also be seen here in lesser numbers.

I have been hearing and seeing more and more high performance off-highway motor vehicles, especially early on Sunday mornings. These users favor the dunes in the early morning hours, when they have the place pretty much to themselves—and the dunes are often trackless, especially after a windy night. Many of the owner/operators have multiple vehicles—backups for break downs and alternative ways to get an adrenaline rush. I have noticed that racing and competitiveness is



common, and I have witnessed some major rollovers and seriously-damaged, expensive vehicles. I even witnessed a man struck by a speeding vehicle—and to my amazement, the victim walked away laughing after a brief verbal exchange with operator. These vehicles are routinely operated at high rates of speed, often leaving the ground and flying long distances 4-6 feet above the ground.

I am, of course, describing the growing group of Remote Control (RC) vehicle operators. These amazing machines and their operators are regular visitors here, and provide outrageous thrills to the operators.

Some of these vehicles are sophisticated, incorporating the latest in technology and building upon the proven performance of both two-stroke, gas-fueled engines and electric motors. Not surprisingly, a wide range of performance and commensurate costs are available. Operators definitely vary in ability to control these machines, and most enthusiasts continually upgrade and seek out higher-performing machines as their operator skills increase. Skilled operators continually challenge themselves with engineering solutions to coax greater performance out of their machines. There really are more similarities to full-scale off highway machines than differences.

(Continued on next page...)

Heber Dunes... The Cutting Edge *continued...*

RC machines commonly attain speeds of 40-50 mph, and the very fastest (usually electric) can reach 60-70+ mph. Serious entry-level RC cars may be as low as \$170, and the higher-performance machines may cost over \$1,200. With aftermarket and high-performance features, some owners have \$5,000 invested. Like full-scale off-highway machines, aftermarket products abound. Also like full-scale racing, competition drives the engineering breakthroughs that lead to improvements. When one sees the high performance of the RC electric motor-driven vehicles, one can hope the full-scale electric cars may achieve equally high performance of speed and economy in time. If only someone will invent a better battery... Some of these machines are very durable, surviving after flying greater than 15 feet off a dune, and making a rough landing and “endo”-type rollovers. Other times, not so, as the laws of physics apply to all, so repairs may be needed.



Watch for the RC enthusiasts at Heber Dunes SVRA on many Sunday mornings, or at another venue near you.



Trails News

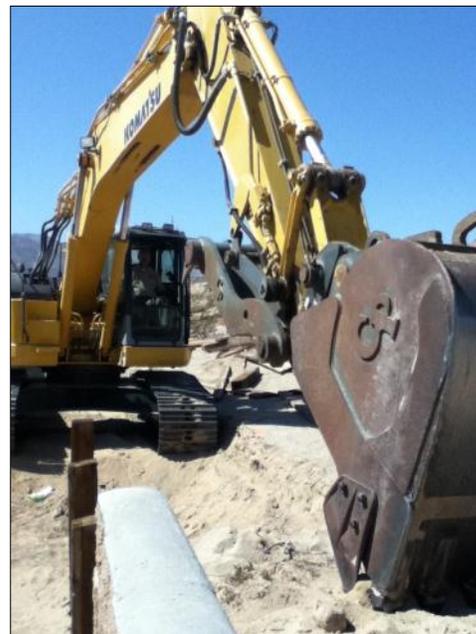
By Brian Woodson, Maintenance Supervisor, Trails



Krystal Friel, left, and Anthony Beepath, right, haul away slash that was cut from the windfall limbs of the Tamarisk trees at Holmes Camp.



Pete Hernandez and Cesar Casillas team up to remove the old wood retaining wall behind the auto shop to make way for the new concrete block wall to be constructed.



HEO Adam Asche works on the excavation for the new block wall behind the auto shop.

(Continued on next page...)

Trails News *continued...*

Our trail groomer in action somewhere along Palo Verde Wash.



Joshua McCue pounds in a sign post while Ryan Walasek keeps an eye on the height of the post installation.



Joshua McCue and Shay McGhee partner up to auger a hole for one of our sign installation projects.

(Continued on next page...)

Trails News *continued...*



Martin Rubalcava and Josh McCue mount a new sign to the post...

...while Ryan Walasek tightens the bolts on the Snap N' Safe coupler on the anchor post (the Snap N' Safe anchors are designed to break away in case of vehicle impact).



The final product.

Black-tailed Jackrabbit... Critter of the Month

By Beth Shugan, Senior Park Aide, Interpretation

The black-tailed jackrabbit's name is deceptive since this animal is a *hare*, not a rabbit, but it does have a black strip among the top of its tail. Hares have longer ears and legs than rabbits, and their young—called leverets—are born fully furred, with their eyes open. The babies are up and moving within minutes of birth.



The black-tailed jackrabbit is actually a hare, not a rabbit.

True herbivores, the jackrabbit snips off vegetation at a neat 45° angle with its upper and lower incisors. Favorite foods include grasses, mesquite, cacti and herbaceous plants. They resort to dried vegetation or bark of young woody plants when the fresh greens are not available. Since it is cooler from dusk through dawn, jackrabbits are most active during those hours. Those of us who live in the desert, know to protect our young plants with fencing or the plants will be devoured overnight by hungry jackrabbits!

The black-tailed jackrabbit is the only hare found in the desert. Their coloring gives them great camouflage as they rest in slight depressions scratched out beneath bushes during the hottest part of the day. By controlling the blood flow to their ears, a process called thermoregulation, jackrabbits can control their body temperature. Their furred feet protect them from the hot sand. Another adaptation they have developed is that of coprophagy—they eat their scat after it is first deposited in order to absorb all the nutrients and water as it passes through their digestive track a second time. The resulting scat is dry and looks like tightly-compacted woody pellets.

On constant alert for predators, including foxes, coyotes, bobcats, hawks, great-horned owls, eagles and snakes, the jackrabbit's eyes are positioned so it can watch for motion all around. They also have good hearing and sense of smell. When startled, jackrabbits use their long hind legs to run up to 35-40 mph in a zigzag pattern. They can jump up to 20 feet in an effort to get away, but their normal gait is a bound pattern where the hind feet land together in front of the front feet.

As you hike around the desert, you may startle a jackrabbit from beneath a bush. Watch how fast he moves!



The jackrabbit is camouflaged against the dry desert vegetation.

OW Maintenance

By Karen Sypniewski, Office Technician



Just a few of our January & February projects...

You would think our maintenance shop is a beehive...Honey do this, honey do that... With as many worker bees as we have, it is essential that we have an overseer. Here at Ocotillo Wells, we prefer to do things differently. Our “queen” bee is a male. He goes by the alias Dennis Raymond. Dennis has much responsibility organizing and prioritizing new projects while maintaining the established buildings throughout our 100,000 acres.

Along side him are his two PMWIs—John and Rick. The Project List is ongoing, but the staff keeps plugging away project after project.



Maintenance poured concrete for several projects over the past two months.

much concrete, the Trails Team was called in to assist our staff. Their help was not only needed, but much appreciated! Concrete was poured for fuel tank pads and the exterior areas around the Maintenance Shop. Jeff is our skilled block layer. His exceptional skills have been put to good use with both pouring concrete and building retaining walls. He will soon complete the “Wall of Ocotillo.” Under the concrete lies rebar. With many years of iron work experience, Leon has been extremely helpful in the setup work as well as the concrete pouring. He has also been busy

This past month John completed the installation of the vacuums and repaired the lights at the car wash rack. Use of the car wash will help clean our dusty, muddy vehicles.



New vacuum for the wash bay.

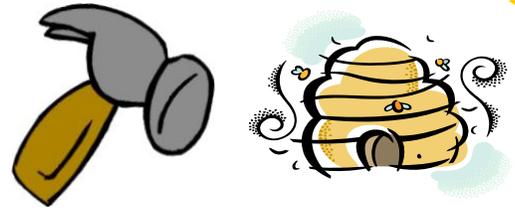
Rick lead the masonry projects. Over the past couple of months, our Maintenance staff has poured approximately 40 yards of concrete. With this



Concrete is placed around the Maintenance Shop.

(Continued on next page...)

OW Maintenance *continued...*



painting and beautifying the Ranger, Resource and GIS buildings. Chris and Vern have not only assisted with the masonry projects, but also have been very busy constructing decks for the dorms and employee residences for leisure enjoyment.

Housekeeping...the group that keeps the park clean! Julie is head of our Housekeeping Department. She spends a lot of time checking



The fuel tanks now rest on new concrete pads.

on, repairing and making sure our park restrooms are ADA-compliant, and clean and stocked for the public's use during their visit. To help accomplish this large task, the Housekeeping Department is split into sections. Mike and Peggy generally "buzz" around the District area maintaining the amphitheater, removing litter and pressure washing the decks around the buildings. With the high traffic flow in our Discovery Center, this facility takes time to clean and maintain. Allison cleans and stocks restrooms from the 300 Building to Holmes Camp. This includes Quarry Road, The Cove, Main Street and Toner areas. Debbie and Terra tag team on the north side to do the remainder of the restrooms and Pumpkin Patch. The area off S-22 has a lot of visitors and requires a lot of driving time, so Gary helps out on the weekends. He has been with OW over 12 years and is very familiar with the park and knows what needs to be done. He is a devoted employee. Now for the sparkle... Maribel not only sparkles, but so does everything she cleans. Maribel cleans all our District buildings and helps out wherever necessary. She works very hard and is a great asset to our department. Last, but not least, is our Office Technician Karen. Karen assists both Dennis and all the Maintenance Staff with all the day-to-day tasks necessary to keep the department running smoothly.

Cultural Resources

By Joanna Collier, Archaeological Project Leader, and Margaret Kress, Assistant State Archaeologist

Bombs Away!

Throughout the years at Ocotillo Wells, people have brought in bombs from the WWII training era found in the park. Since they are technically historic resources, they have been stored in the artifact collection curated by the Archaeology Department. After attending unexploded ordnance training conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers, archaeologists became fully aware of the danger that



Box of bombs from artifact collection.

these bombs posed to park personnel. The rangers called the San Diego county/ATF/ Marine Corps bomb squad to assess the collection. On



Bomb squad arriving via helicopter.



Bomb squad carrying box of bombs.

February 1, the bomb squad arrived at the District Office via helicopter. After looking at all of the potentially explosive artifacts, the squad removed the dangerous ones from the collection. They took them out to a sheltered location in the Cove at the base of the mountain, placed C-4 charges on them, and detonated them in four separate explosions. Archaeological Project Leader Joanna Collier was allowed to assist with the detonation.



Bombs about to be detonated, covered in C-4.

If you see unexploded ordnance in the park, you should record the location using GPS, take a photograph (from several different angles if possible) from a safe distance, and contact Rangers via Surcom (951-943-1582). Keep other people away from the area. **Do not touch or remove the unexploded ordnance!**



A controlled explosion.

(Continued on next page...)

Cultural Resources *continued...*

Sheran No. 1 Oil Well

While looking at potential routes for a planned water line from Toner to the District Office, Glyne Johnson and Don Solleder discovered the remnants of an oil well near the airport at Benson Dry Lake. Archaeologists Margaret Kress and Joanna Collier investigated the site and identified it as the Sheran No. 1 well, drilled in 1939 by John F. Sheran. This oil well was documented in the journal of a local resident from the late 1930's.



Rogers journal Page 162, December 17, 1939, Sheran No. 1 Well, view North.



February 2012: North overview of Sheran No. 1 Well, red arrow indicates actual well casing.



Rogers journal Page 161, December 1939, Sheran No. 1 Well, overview SW.

Mrs. Holland's Cabin

On February 23, State Park Interpreter I Andrew Fitzpatrick, Assistant State Archaeologist Margaret Kress and Archaeological Project Leader Joanna Collier conducted an interview with Angus Smith, former resident of the blockhouse in what is now the District Office complex. Angus directed archaeologists to a historic site west of Main St. This was the homestead of Mrs. Holland, the first school teacher in the area, who taught three generations of local children before retiring in the early 1960's.



Mrs. Holland's cabin foundation.

Silver Cholla

By Beth Shugan, Senior Park Aide, Interpretation

The silver cholla (*Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*) is commonly found in well-drained sandy, gravelly or rocky soils on alluvial slopes or desert flats but not in the very driest sections of the desert. In our portion of the desert, they are usually found below 1000 feet in elevation, but not below sea level.

This species of cholla is made up of many joined, cylindrical, stem pieces each up to about 4" in length. Its many short branches go out at right angles from the main stems, and these main stems appear to come off the top of one main trunk of the cactus. The short branches are densely covered with spines. When the spines are lighter and more silvery color, this cholla is called a silver cholla. When the spines are darker and more golden colored, then it is called a golden cholla—but they are the same plant.



This cholla has dense spines that shade the main stem from the heat of the sun.

Don't get stuck by a cholla spine—the small barbs on the end provide a very painful puncture wound. If a cholla "ball" attaches to your shoe, use a comb to remove it—NOT your fingers!

When the spines of the same plant are more yellow or golden in color, as in the photo on the right, the cholla is called a golden cholla.



The spines on the silver cholla give the cactus a silvery appearance.

The very thick coating of spines shade the stems from the sun's heat, thus keeping the plant cooler, a desert adaptation. Each spine is covered in a papery sheath that reduces water evaporation.





OFF-HIGHWAY ADVENTURE TOUR SERIES

Creepy Crawlers of the Night

You may not realize it, but when you are at OW, you are constantly surrounded by the creepy crawlers! Sometimes you might find these fascinating creatures during your daytime travels, but to fully experience the diversity of bug life present in Ocotillo Wells, you need to explore their domain at night. Join us on a jaw-dropping tour through OW as we go in search of beetles, spiders, scorpions and more! We will make our way to some secret spots teeming with creepy crawlers of the night!



Tour Dates:

April 13th, 2012

April 27th, 2012

7:00 pm to 10:00 pm

*This tour meets at the
Discovery Center off
Ranger Station Road

For more information please contact the Ocotillo Wells SVRA
Interpretation Department at 5172 Highway 78
Borrego Springs, CA 92004
(760) 767-5370 www.ohv.parks.ca.gov/ocotillowells

Hot Stars & Heavenly Bodies

ASTRONOMICAL NIGHTS FESTIVAL
OCOTILLO WELLS SVRA
MARCH 23RD & 24TH

Come lay your eyes on some stellar night skies and join us during a weekend of fabulous stargazing at Ocotillo Wells!



★ Stargazing Programs

Take a peek at faraway worlds through our telescope, enjoy a cup of hot cocoa, and be dazzled by presentations, movies, and more!
March 23rd & 24th 7pm-12am
Ocotillo Wells Amphitheater

★ Junior Ranger Programs

Explore the night sky, and join the elite ranks of "Dark Sky" Junior Rangers!
March 24th 11am, 1pm, 3pm
Ocotillo Wells Discovery Center



For more information, contact the Ocotillo Wells SVRA Discovery Center at (760) 767-5393 or visit us at www.ohv.parks.ca.gov/ocotillowells



Upcoming OW Events

ASTRONOMY DAYS WEEKEND

March 23 & 24 “Hot Stars and Heavenly Bodies”

Join guest astronomers Steve Kennedy and Paul Maag, along with OW Interpretive staff members Ali Barnes, Jeanette Meleen, and Ken Conway, on Friday and Saturday evening from 7 pm to after midnight at the OW Amphitheater. ONLY for this special weekend event, will you have a chance to look at the skies through a 22-inch and a 28-inch telescope! Bring your mug for hot chocolate!

Jr. Ranger astronomy programs will be also held on Saturday.

OFF-HIGHWAY ADVENTURE TOURS

Friday, March 30	Colorful Characters	9am-1pm
Friday, April 6	Full Moon Tour	6pm-10pm
Friday, April 13	Creepy Crawlers	7pm-10pm
Friday, April 20	Water in the Desert	9am-1pm
Friday, April 27	Creepy Crawlers	7pm -10pm

These tours meet in the Discovery Center parking lot. For more information, call 760-767-5393.

Follow Ocotillo Wells SVRA on Facebook!

As of March 15th, over 6,550 people have followed Ocotillo Wells on Facebook, and over 600 people “Like” us.



Find updates on changes in the park, historic and modern park photos, reminders about policies and regulations, and the schedule for our various interpretive programs. What a great forum for visitors to communicate and connect.



Check it out and “Like” us...because, after all, we like you.

www.facebook.com/OcotilloWellsSVRA

The Weather Log...



January

High Temperature	Jan 4 th	81.8 degrees
Low Temperature	Jan 17 th	41.1 degrees
Average High Temperature		73.3 degrees
Average Low Temperature		51.0 degrees
Maximum Wind Gust	Jan 21 st	51 mph
Rainfall for the Month		0.00 inches

February*

High Temperature	Feb 10 th	83.4 degrees
Low Temperature	Feb 3 rd	41.9 degrees
Average High Temperature		71.9 degrees
Average Low Temperature		57.2 degrees
Maximum Wind Gust	Feb 11 th	35 mph
Rainfall for the Month		0.00 inches

* **NOTE:** The February data only covers February 1-15 because of a failed battery. There WAS rain on February 15-16, but the amount was not recorded.

Data recorded at the Ocotillo Wells Ranger Station, Ocotillo Wells, California.



Ocotillo Wells District

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