

The BRIDGE

April 2008

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Newsletter for Volunteers

New Visitor Center Films Well On Their Way!



Fred Takes Center Stage.

Aperture Films hit town on March 13th for a week of shooting for the new VC films. Wanting to capture as much footage as they could, the crew, (and Michael) put in 14 to 16 hour days shooting sunrises and sunsets and everything in between. These wildland film makers were a treat to watch.

Continued on page 10...

Steering Committee

Tuesday, April 8, 2:00 P.M.
Discovery Lab V.C.

General Meeting

Monday, April 21, 2:30 P.M.
Discovery Lab V.C.

Linda Carson and Sally Theriault will discuss the many concerns of the Anza-Borrego Foundations and Institute.

Potluck!

The potluck will be held on Tuesday, April 22, at 6 p.m. at the home of Ann Nourse, 3302 Running M (South end of Running M)
For directions call Ann at: 767-3659
Bring food to share, tableware, beverage of your choice and chairs.

The Suggestion Box is Back!

The box is back in its regular spot waiting for your great ideas or comments.

Volunteer Field Trip

April 7th Volunteer Trip
Ocotillo Wells-SVRA

We'll meet at the Ocotillo Wells District Office at 8:30 AM for a presentation hosted by Kathy Dolinar, District Superintendent, and her key staff, including Steve Quartieri.

Then we'll have a vehicle tour to look at what is going on in the recreational area.

The morning concludes back at the office complex for a question and answer session followed by a lunch barbecue prepared by OW-SVRA staff. Our lunch donation is \$5, which includes a beverage. Please bring exact change.

The day's events will last until 2:00 PM.

4-Wheel drive is required so please carpool. We can also consolidate cars at Ocotillo Wells. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about our next-door neighbor. 4WD is required so we will be ride sharing. Bring water, lunch and the usual things

Have a Funny Story?

Bring them to Michael for possible inclusion in the Bridge. We all experience humorous moments working at the VC or out in the field. The best (clean please) will make it into the Bridge.

The View From the Visitor Center

By Michael Rodriques

April is here, the great flower fields have melted away under the influence of sun and caterpillar. Spring break has snapped back to yield days quiet and calm.

I never thought it would end...

A season of flowers is a great event. Summer, Fall, and Winter we scan the skies for rain, hopeful in our need and fearful of our sanity.

Rain brings blossoms and this way madness lies.

It is all about the love. We love the rain, gentle or fierce. It sculpts the land, cools the brow and nurtures everything. We knowledgeable judge its quality, flow, temperature, and temperament to accurately foretell how the next season shall unfold.

On occasion all conditions coalesce to create a perfect storm of blooms, and the flower people come.

How wonderful that so many would travel so far for beauty. We love them for that.

We love to share our private bounty with all. Service brings us together to share our love.

We love the caterpillar, consuming the blossom and nibbling away at days of suddenly recognized stress.

We take a deep breath, together.

Together, once again, the volunteers of the desert have become one with the petals and all they signify. Long days and longer, come and go. No request for help goes unanswered and each stands with each other to meet all challenge with strength and humor and wit.

The staff of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park deeply appreciates your time, labor, and concern for this amazing place we all care for.

Thank you all.

It is all about the love...

Refresher Training

Your refresher training worksheets (two-sided) are in your mailbox now. **Please remove your 2007 worksheets with a completion sticker on it from your volunteer mailbox and take them home.**

There will be more opportunities to get in your required field trip with park staff (not a naturalist) in the ABDSP this spring if you have not already done so. The naturalists have some excellent programs coming up so there will be plenty of opportunities to get some of your options done. Don't forget you must attend at least one general meeting during the year and yes, this does count as one of your options. Remember to enter all trips, options and general meetings on your time sheets under training. Training hours do count towards your volunteer pins, but not on your floor time. Please enter your items on your worksheets and leave them in your volunteer mailbox, as they will be checked throughout the year. Good luck and if you have any questions: please call Harvy Miller, 767-0442 or talk to Michael.



Paleontology Program

Paleontology News, April, 2008

04	8AM-12PM	Odontology Lecture (Certification students only)
04	8AM-3PM	Field, Post Office Parking
10	9-12PM	Steering Committee, Paleontology Lab
10	1PM-3PM	Curation and Preparation Paleontology Lab
11	8AM-12PM	General Meeting, Osteology Lecture Visitor's Center
11	1-3PM	Curation and Preparation, Paleontology Lab
17-21	8AM-12PM	Zzyzx Field, <i>Optional</i>
25	8AM-3PM	Curation and Preparation Paleontology Lab

April will continue to be a busy time for the new paleontology volunteers as they review for a practical exam in the laboratory and continue to prepare fossils for curation. It is always exciting for the new volunteers-in-training to find fossils when out on field survey trips, and this season has been no exception.

On two separate trips in March, a total of about 120 Holtville second graders plus teachers and parents visited Fossil Canyon, south of



ABDSP, with Judy and Jimmy Smith. Under the direction of the Desert Protective Council, these students are learning about how to protect and respect the vast resources of our deserts. The first group of students was so excited about rocks that they constantly pulled on Jimmy's sleeves asking him "what's this rock? What's this rock?" On the second trip a number of the students, without being asked, started picking up trash and filled at least one large trash bag, as they headed back to the bus. Seems they have already started taking care of the desert.

The 5th grade camp students completed another successful season touring the paleontology laboratory and the curation hall. Several paleontology members were overheard commenting about how impressed they were with the intelligent questions and the level of interest from these students. The students were able to help identify fossil teeth and tell us whether they were from a horse or a camel. Some students helped clean the matrix from bone fragments using a toothbrush, and many looked through a microscope at thin slices of rocks or through magnifying lamps at microfossils.

Don't forget about the Zzyzx field trip being held here in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park on April 21! The meetings will be held April

18-19 at The Desert Studies Center at Zzyzx in the Mojave Desert east of Barstow, but the last day of the field trip will be in Fish Creek. All paleontology volunteers are encouraged to attend the field trip. The tentative departure time from the Fish Creek Campground is 8:00a.m.

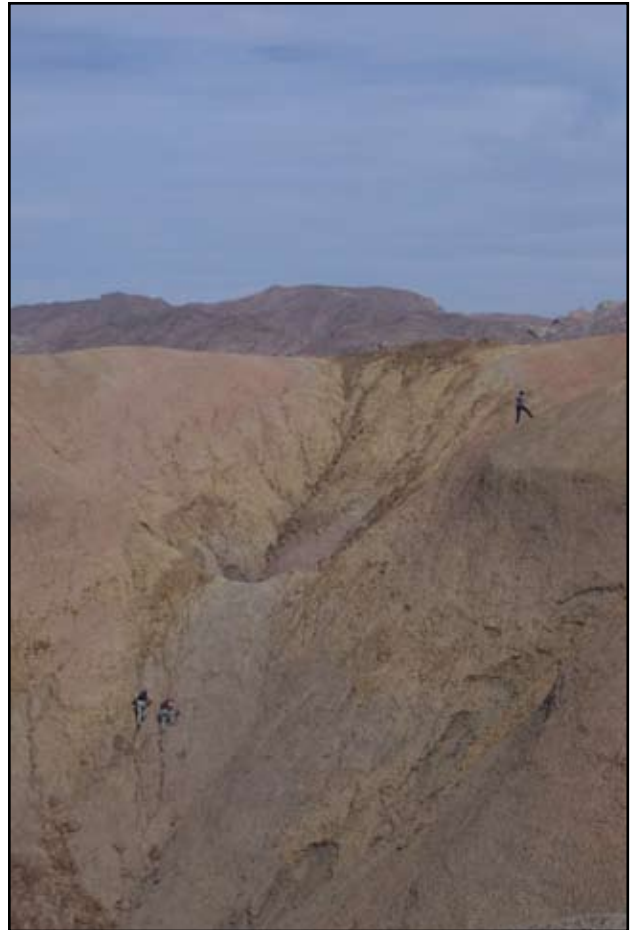
When the new films are ready for the Visitor Center next year, watch for snippets from the paleontology laboratory. The film crew stopped in one Monday afternoon to interview George McDaniel and to film activity in the paleontology laboratory. It will be fun to see how much of the footage actually makes it into the “behind the scenes” film.

WHAT’S NEW IN PALEO?

by Sharron Sussman

There’s always something new in Paleo - this season it has been the certification of our first pair of Field Master Volunteers, Bob and Sandra Keeley. Advanced certification in specific areas for experienced volunteers was added to our training program a couple of years ago, with the introduction of Laboratory Masters qualified to supervise work in the preparation laboratory. The Field Master program involves advanced work in navigation, field collection procedures, field geology, communications and safety, enabling certified Field Master volunteers to function as independent field trip leaders.

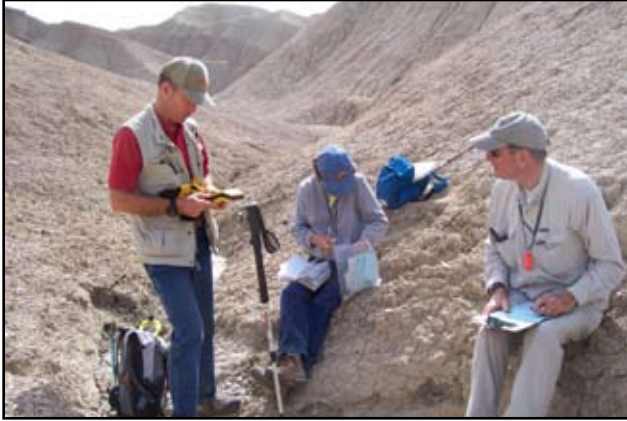
For their maiden expedition, the Keeleys have been assigned to conduct systematic prospecting surveys in one of the older areas of the Park, the Fish Creek region. Here, rocks deposited during the Pliocene-Pleistocene epochs tell the story of the ebbing of the Miocene marine incursion, which had sent oceanic waters possibly as far north as San Gorgonio Pass by about seven million years ago. This period included the onset of massive sediment deposition by the ancestral Colorado River,



Dick and Joanne Ingwall scale a ridge in the DeGuynos Formation under the supervision of field master Bob Keeley

which shallowed the Imperial Sea and pushed its northern shoreline steadily south, as well as the final closure of the Isthmus of Panama, which affected the distribution of both marine and terrestrial species. For about two months, the Keeleys have been leading small groups of certified volunteers along the contacts between the Deguynos and Camel Head Formations, representing sediment deposition from marine and brackish water respectively, where advancing rivers and streams met the retreating sea.

The territory, which ranges from extremely rugged eroded ridges to huge expanses of rolling mesa, has been prospected on and off for



It ain't done until the paperwork is done... - Bob Keeley is taking GPS coordinates while Sandra Keeley and Dick Ingwall work on paperwork.

the past 100 years, but finds have often gone undocumented. Much fossil material from this area now resides in collections at UC Berkeley, the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, the San Diego Natural History and the Smithsonian Institution, and is not coming back here anytime soon. But we will soon be transferring a large collection of invertebrate fossils to Anza Borrego's collection from the University of Chicago. Most of it came from the nearby Carrizo Impact Area over the past 30 years, collected by Susan Kidwell and Charles Winker in the course of their geologic investigations. It will all need to be curated, an enormous job, according to Pat Gerdson, the volunteer curator of invertebrates.

Others who have scouted for fossils near Fish Creek included the legendary Harley Garbani, ranger Paul Remeika and paleontologists from the Los Angeles County Museum. But large areas on our maps remain empty of the black dots that represent locality numbers where fossils have been found. In recent years, Jerry Hughes has made some significant finds, including rare specimens of *Valenictus imperialis*, the extinct Imperial walrus, dolphin vertebrae and a crocodilian scute. This has stimulated renewed energy for prospecting in

the Fish Creek area.

In the course of their weekly eight or nine-hour scramble-walks along the washes and ridges, the volunteers have found enormous numbers of invertebrates, as expected. Coquina, or "shell hash," caps many of the sandstone ridges and crumbles down the gullies. Most of these go observed, but uncollected, as the collection already contains adequate numbers of the common taxa, and statistical study of fossil remains is beyond the current scope of



Typical coquina that caps sandstones in the Fish Creek area

our prospecting. Unusual or especially well-preserved specimens have been taken, though, including what appears to be a previously undescribed species of snail in the Camel Head Formation north of Fish Creek. And, exciting in direct proportion to their rarity, a few vertebrate specimens have been found: a crocodilian jaw; a fish vertebra that is the first fish material found to date in the Camel Head Formation; and fragments of turtle bone. The search continues...

As we proceed with what Pat Gerdson calls "a more systematic survey and curation effort" in the Fish Creek area, we hope to uncover more clues about the creatures that inhabited this

Archaeology



DYAR HOUSE RECOVERY AND CLEAN-UP COMPLETED

Joan S. Schneider,
Associate State Archeologist

Since November of 2003, when the Cedar Fire burned most of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, including the historic Dyar House, significant archaeological, historical, and archival collections, languished within the Dyar House basement. They were covered with the debris of the main and second floors of the house which burned, along with the roof, and fell, further destroying anything that might have survived within the basement. In spite of the rain, sleet, and snow in mid-February, the shell of the Dyar House and its basement are now emptied of their burned, broken, rusted, and soggy contents!



Burned out Dyar house



Haz-mat team in basement

Jim Newland of the California State Parks Southern Service Center, after long delays, finally got the recovery project and the clean-up started by securing funds from both Parks and FEMA. Getting the project started was complex because of the hazardous condition of the remaining stone walls of the house and because hazardous materials had to be handled. Jim contracted with a HAZMAT cleanup company that agreed to work under the direction of archaeologists. Since handling the collections buried in the rubble of the basement required a specially trained and outfitted HAZMAT team, Parks archaeologists could not directly handle any of the materials until they had been cleaned of hazardous materials and were taken out of the shell of the building. Michael Buxton (“Bucky”) Seasonal Archeologist at the Southern Service Center and Joan Schneider, Associate State Archeologist for the Colorado Desert District worked closely with the HAZMAT team, with Montane Sector Superintendent Nedra Martinez, keeping an overall eye on the project. Other Colorado Desert District staff and Colorado Desert Archaeology Society (CDAS) volunteers also worked at the project site, including Associate State Archeologist Sue Wade,

Continued...

Archeologist Bonnie Bruce, CDAS members Genna Yoder, Carol and Ron Matzenauer, and Sam and Astrid Webb. Curator III, Christina Swiden, from the Northern Service Center, started us off and helped us iron out logistical problems; she will return to help us sort out what we have in temporary storage.



Bonnie, Matt, Sue, Joan, Astrid sorting potsherds

The memories of the people who worked at Dyar House helped us determine where the significant collections were stored in the basement and other areas of the house. We knew that there were metal collections cabinets with many small and important items, a large collection of ceramic sherds from the Barrel Springs site (now in the OWSRVA) in cardboard boxes in one area, a collection of metates, manos, mortars, and pestles underneath some shelves where large ceramic vessels and historical items from the Dyar Family days, the mining, ore processing, and lumbering days of the past, and earlier times of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park were stored. We also recovered decorative and hardware items from Dyar House itself, both as a collection and as examples in the event that reconstruction of the house takes place sometime in the future.

First the drawers from the metal collection

cabinets were removed, cleaned and handed up, as a unit, to the archaeological team “on top.” They were a mess! The fire was so hot that all the plastic and paper tags and boxes that had been so carefully arranged and cataloged within those drawers were gone, leaving little mounds of burned artifacts, some so burned that they were permanently glued to the metal drawers. Each drawer was mapped, and small groups of objects were removed and sealed in separate plastic bags so that there might be a chance to reconstruct the information about those objects. We failed to plan for the fact that everything was wet (both from the HAZMAT cleaning and from the weather) when it was taken out of Dyar House. Things could not be left in the plastic bags we brought with us because mildew and more rust would ultimately destroy what was left.



Bonnie & Astrid sorting through burned drawer

“Necessity is the Mother of Invention!” Joan suggested that we try to make bags out of plastic window screening to allow things to dry; it worked! Now, a whole team of “CDAS Bag Ladies” got out their sewing machines and cut screening and sewed artifact bags, hundreds of them! The CDAS Bag Ladies included: Sue Wade, Astrid Webb, Mary Bennett, Bernie Haskell, Maggie Maguire, Joann Ebright, Roses Barrie, and others. Chuck and

Mary Bennett, Richard Payne, Astrid Webb, and others, got artifacts out of plastic bags and into window-screen bags.

The HAZMAT team members were taught how to screen the debris within the basement using archaeological equipment; they operated under continual monitoring, through the windows and doors of the first floor, of Bucky and Joan. A grid was laid out within the basement, just the same as when an archaeological site is excavated. When an area with archaeological or historical items was discovered, the location was recorded on a map of the basement, the debris was first cleaned and then passed through the archaeological screens, and finally separated, bagged, and labeled by staff and volunteer archaeologists working “on top” .



Projectile points fused to bottom of metal drawer

Every individual larger item was photographed, labeled, the location from which it was removed recorded, and then added to an inventory list. All items (smaller items which were bagged and larger individual items) were transported to ABDSP where they await further processing. In all, over 170 larger objects and many more medium-sized objects (mostly all metal) were recovered including frying pans and kettles and other kitchen items, blacksmithing tools, horseshoes, shovels, picks, guns, lamps, fireplace accessories, door knobs, metal decorative items, saws and other lumbering equipment and many other unidentified objects. Larger stone and ceramic items (some remaining whole, but many broken into smaller pieces and deformed because of the heat of the fire) included ollas, metates, mortars, pestles, manos (and the souvenir mugs sold in the gift store). And, of course, thousands and thousands of small stone, ceramic, and shell artifacts that were stored within cabinets and in cardboard boxes await sorting and re-identification. Alas, the paper records, historical photographs, and other early Park documents did not fare well. These are so burned that it is unlikely that the information they contain can be restored without huge expenditures and special processes.



Nedra & Joan admiring recovered artifacts

But only the first part of the project is complete! We now go forward with the tedious job of determining what can be done to preserve the items that survived the fire and the aftermath of four and a half years of exposure to the elements. The most frustrating job will be trying to determine the *provenience* (the location and context from which they came) of all the archaeological materials. As every archaeologist knows, it is only through having *provenience information* that artifacts can be used to tell the story of the past!



Melted glass among recovered potsherds

A ton of equipment to lug around!



Perched on the edge of the Slot



The crew has a bone to pick with LuAnn



Softly into the night...

Park Volunteer Visitor Center Duty Schedule: April 2008

Shift	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4	5
9-1			Coffin, I Kennan, A McGuire, M Decker, P	Coffin, I Barber, H McGuire, M Miller, H	Johnson, L Landis, M Mason, P	Lindemann, S Medema, M-F Cormier, J	Decker, N Hellyer, D Loizos, B Delany, J-M
11-3							
1-5			DeMunck, K Strong, J Reilly, A	Cormier, K Juers, B -----	Ehly, R-G Vickars, K	Davis, H Cate, S Reilly, A	Wakefield, T-C Cogdell, P
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9-1	Carskaddan, J Barrie, R-B -----	Barber, H Macy, E Miller, H	Decker, N Mason, P Hellyer, D	Anderson, J Prath, K Loerke, L	Decker, P Carskaddan, P Vickars, K	Cate, S Miller, H Cogdell, P	Wakefield, C-T Steele, C Hellyer, D
11-3							
1-5	Barber, C Churchwell, MJ Nourse, A	Roller, J-L Salt, S	Larson, p Ekelund, M -----	Webb, A-S Larson, L	Ehly, R-G Barber, C	Porter, J-R Fort, J	Quinn, W Shugan, R-B Larson, R
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9-1	Loerke, L Barrie, R-B Vickars, K	Hatcher, M Vickars, K Shannon, D McDaniel, R	Bigelow, M-J Barber, H Mason, P	Ebright, J Johnson, L Landis, M	Medema, M-F Carskaddan, P Decker, P	Keenan, A Cormier, J Lindemann, S	Wakefield, T-C Loizos, B Ota, V
11-3							
1-5	Hatcher, M Prath, K Churchwell, MJ	Falk, R Larson, L Nourse, A	Clark, G Juers, B -----	Haldemann, J Cormier, K Bailey, N	Webb, S-A Phillips, L	Clark, G Cogdell, P -----	Rideout, D Shugan, B-R
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9-1	Hopkins, J-D Churchwell, MJ Barrie, R-B Ota, V	Keenan, A Macy, E Shannon, D McDaniel, R	Barber, H Decker, N -----	Anderson, J Bigelow, M-J	Strong, J Cate, S Decker, P Mason, P	Bigelow, M-J Macy, E	Estes, N Steele, C Cogdell, P Loizos, B
11-3							
1-5	Steel, C Barber, C Quinn, W	Hatcher, M Cormier, K	Ekelund, M Larson, P	Burge, R Reilly, A -----	Ehly, R-G Larson, L	Porter, J-R Fort, J	Rideout, D Wakefield, T-C
	27	28	29	30			
9-1	Cormier, K Delany, J-M Barrie, B-R	Macy, E Barber, H Shannon, D	Bigelow, M-J Loizos, B	Ebright, J Bailey, N Burge, R			
11-3							
1-5	Barber, C Churchwell, MJ Larson, R	Larson, L Reilly, A Phillips, L	Webb, S-A Salt, S	Rideout, D Roller, J-L			

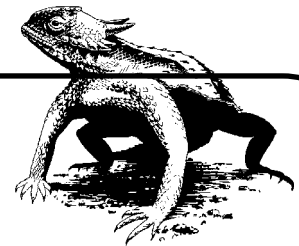
Meeting: Volunteer Gala, April 1, 2008, 6:00 P.M., Road runner Club.
 Steering Committee, April 8, 2008, 2:00 P.M., V.C.
 Pot Luck, April 15, 2008, 6:00 P.M., Ann Nourse residence.
 General Meeting, April 21, 2008, 2:30 P.M., V.C.



**ANZA-BORREGO
DESERT STATE PARK®
200 PALM CANYON DRIVE
BORREGO SPRINGS, CA 92004**

First Class

Staying In Touch



VC Volunteer Steering Committee

Sam Webb, Chair 767-3205

Paleontology Society

Beth Shugan, Chair 603-566-3046

Archaeology Society

Chuck Bennett, Chair 767-4761

Anza-Borrego Foundation & Institute

Linda Carson 767-0446

Sally Theriault 767-4063

Other Numbers

Visitor Center 767-4205

Stout Paleo Laboratory 767-3944

District Library 767-7792

Mike Rodriques (VC Manager) 767-0334

George Jefferson (Paleo) 767-4974

Sue Wade (Archaeo) 765-0485

The BRIDGE

"The Bridge" is a newsletter for all of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® volunteers. If you know of a volunteer who is not receiving his/her own copy, please let us know. The deadline for next month's issue is the 15th of the current month.