



## From the National Monument staff, Greetings,

Yes, Fall is here at last, there is snow on the mountains tops, and the daytime temperatures throughout the National Monument and the Coachella Valley are cooling down. We've had a long, hot summer, but fortunately there were no wildfires. And thanks to all the rain (and snow at the higher elevations) we've been receiving it looks like we just might avoid having any fires through the rest of the season.

Thanks to the cooler weather, we will be seeing some of our old friends on the hiking trails again. Moreover, things are getting better; the Draft Trails Plan is being printed, and should soon be released for public review. For further information, please contact the Coachella Valley Association of Governments at [p] 760-346-1127. The Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service are cooperating agencies for the trails plan a part of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Plan. Congratulations to all of our partners who have had a hand in developing this vital document for our National Monument and the Coachella Valley.

This Fall Season has been designated as Wilderness Season for the National Monument, and we kicked things off with our fourth anniversary celebration, Saturday, Oct. 23. It was a day full of fun and activities for the entire family, all at the National Monument Visitor Center, 51-500 Highway 74, in Palm Desert.

Among all the many special activities and hands-on events was the raising of a new National Monument Flag. Unfortunately some of our plans changed at the last minute, but we also had some unexpected surprises.

Jim Foote, BLM's Outdoor Recreation Planner, wrote and performed a special birthday song for the celebration. Needless to say, it was one of the unexpected highlights of the day. Representative Mary Bono, started things off with few words of wisdom, and later in the morning spent some time autographing some of the new National Monument posters.

Forest Service volunteers were out in force, with a special wildfire display and demonstration. Both Smokey Bear and Gamby the Quail put in appearances to the delight of all the children and parents. Our friends from the Living Desert, brought along some extra special guests from their desert zoo. In all it was a great day and everyone seems to have



*Rep. Mary Bono, takes time out of her busy schedule to autograph some of the new National Monument Posters, at this year's annual celebration.  
Official BLM photo by F.H. Mowry*

had a wonderful time. If you missed out on this year's event, be sure to mark your calendars for next year's celebration, October 22, 2005. And by all means make sure you come to our next special Earth Day celebration in late April. The new National Monument Poster is available at the Visitor Center.

There's still time to take advantage of several of the FREE Fall programs we're offering throughout the National Monument area. Greg Hill, BLM's Planning and the Environmental Coordinator is giving his "America's Greatest Gift" lecture, about history of our public domain, at the Mizell Senior Center, in Palm Springs (Nov. 4). There's going to be a 'Weed' Art Show (Nov. 6-7) at Twentynine Palms.

Desert naturalist and National Monument volunteer Joe Migliore, is giving his earth shaking 'Countdown to Earthquakes' presentation at the Palm Desert Library (Nov. 8). Tracy Albrecht, the National Monument's Education Outreach Specialist, is talking about Roadrunners, the cuckoos of the desert (Nov. 10). For more details on these and other programs, log onto our Home Page at:

[w] [http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/santarosa/santa\\_rosa\\_national\\_monument.html](http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/santarosa/santa_rosa_national_monument.html).



*Keeping an eye on her handler, one of the Living Desert's special guests enjoys the open air at this year's celebration.*

*Official BLM photo by F.H. Mowry*

The National Monument has received "... recognition as a leader in improving air quality, strengthening the local economy and enhancing public awareness of alternative fuels ...," from Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham. This is the result of the National Monument's involvement with the Clean Cities Coachella Valley Region program.

The last Monument Advisory Committee meeting of 2004, took place Oct. 2. New officers were elected in accordance with the Charter. Buford Crites was re-elected to the position of Chair, and Gary Watts, representing California State Parks, was

elected to the role of Vice Chair, for the coming year. The MAC also agreed to schedule upcoming meetings for 2005, Feb. 5; June 4; and Oct. 1; all meetings are open to the public. Meetings begin at 9 a.m., with Public Comment scheduled for 11 a.m., the meetings take place in the Palm Desert City Council Conference Room.

As always, there were a variety of topics discussed at this past meeting. Jim Foote and Gary Watts, provided an update for the Signage Work Group. They are preparing to move into the next phase: Working with the various entities on a sign plan to help identify the National Monument. The next meeting is scheduled to take place at the BLM Palm

Spings-South Coast Field Office, 690 W. Garnet Ave., N. Palm Springs (off Indian Ave., just before the I-10 interchange), at 10 a.m., Nov. 8.

The MAC was also advised of the importance of having representatives from all the local jurisdictions, and agencies involved with signing in attendance at this next meeting. As with all such meeting, it is open to the public, if you'd like to attend please contact Jim Foote at [p] 760-251-4800. (CD-R copies of the official National Monument Logo will be available at this meeting.)

Representing the Forest Service, John Ladley, filling in for Laurie Rosenthal, gave a brief update. Things are still fairly busy for the Forest Service, as they continue to work out details of their community fire plans.

The really good news, is the Forest Service has every intention on keeping the Forest open throughout the season, since there doesn't appear to be any significant threat of fire, which could force new closures.

John also provided some information about the plans for a special use permit to the owners of the Hay Dude Ranch. This project is being worked on to increase the usage of the Ribbonwood Camp area, up in Pinyon Pines. After some discussion and voiced concerns, John agreed some more information needs to be provided and to his attendance at the next Pinyon Pines Community meeting (held Oct. 11).



*After finishing an original birthday composition, Jim Foote, BLM Recreation Planner, listens as Danella George, invites everyone to say the pledge of allegiance while the new National Monument flag is flown for the first time.*

*Official BLM photo by Wanda Raschkow*

Pam Hansen, our Forest Service National Monument staff member at the Visitor Center, provided celebration updates, and Frank Mowry, another National Monument staff member provided a briefing on the National Monument Business Plan.

Finally, the MAC got to see four minutes of the new National Monument High Definition Video, a project being completed by Frank Jones, of *Palm Springs Life* magazine. Everyone in attendance was both impressed and pleased with what they were able to see of the film. According to Jones, they are still in negotiations for a narrator. In addition to the film clip, a new 1-minute Public Service Announcement about the National Monument was premiered. According to Jones, this PSA will soon be playing on local stations in the area.

Before closing I want to remind everyone about the use of trails within the National Monument. It is important we remember we share the National Monument with a variety of wildlife, including some listed as federally endangered or threatened, this includes the recovering Peninsular Ranges Bighorn Sheep.

With this in mind, please remember as of Jan. 1, 2005, we will be entering into the trails avoidance program, once more. We do this in order to allow the bighorns some privacy, as they mate and enter into the lambing season. We will be posting additional on our Home Page, and information is available at the Visitor Center, [p] 760 862-9984.

To learn more about any of the many programs, and events mentioned, as well as to see the minutes from previous the MAC meetings, visit our Home Page:

[w] [http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/santarosa/santa\\_rosa\\_national\\_monument.html](http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/santarosa/santa_rosa_national_monument.html)

From the Santa Rosa & and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument staff,

***Happy Trails!***

**Danella George**

**National Monument Manager**

*From desert oases to granite peaks, the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument is a land of contrast with stories of adaptation.*