

CVPA Newsletter

QUARTERLY No. 22

JULY, 1996

Messages from our Presidents — Past and Incoming

Chuck McCollough, Past President

The limit of two consecutive terms set by our By-Laws is a healthy thing in that it forces us to find new officers who are likely to have fresh new ideas.

Our new president, Joe Fontaine, comes into office with impressive credentials. As a past president of the National Sierra Club and still very involved in that and other environmental organizations, he has a wealth of experience that can add new dimensions to CVPA's approach to preserving the beauty, rural character and farm-lands of Cummings and Brite Valleys.

Vice President, Al Sanbrano, has served as treasurer for both the Stallion Springs Community Services District (CSD) and Property Owners Association. Al has done a very competent job of establishing CVPA as a tax exempt non-profit corporation with the State and the IRS. We are fortunate to have him join the Board.

And providing their usual loyal service and continuity will be Carol Wein, Treasurer, Ann Miller, Recording Secretary and Laurie Rude, Corresponding Secretary.

I won't be disappearing from CVPA by any means, as our By-Laws provide that the immediate past president be a non-voting ex officio member of the Board. Also, I will be ready to give Joe any help he may ask for.

CVPA has come a long way in the six years since we first started taking memberships. We have established a reputation for being knowledgeable, reasonable and doing our homework before taking positions on issues. I believe we have won the respect of Supervisor, Steve Perez, the Planning Department and the Community. Our hallmarks are being proactive and working within the system, and so far these have served us well.

I want to thank all our members for your continuing support, and I especially thank my wife, Lorraine, for her six years of support and providing coffee and cookies and handling the 50/50 drawings at our meetings. I think she deserves retirement!

Joe Fontaine, Incoming President

As I assume the leadership of the Cummings Valley Protective Association, I realize that I have my work cut out for me if I am to live up to the standards set by outgoing President Chuck McCollough. Chuck has been the inspiration that has kept the CVPA so effective over the past few years. But now Chuck deserves a rest, although we will still be looking for his advice as we move ahead into the coming year.

I have been doing environmental work of many kinds for over thirty years and look forward now to being able to contribute to the solution of problems in my own back yard; the Cummings Valley area. Even though much of my experience has been at the State and national level, I am very familiar with the local area. My grandparents lived in Bear Valley in the 1880s; my great grandfather was on the Kern County Board of Supervisors in the 1890s and my family has been here ever since. I have lived in the Tehachapi area for 31 years and in Bear Valley Springs for 10 years, having recently retired from my job as a High School teacher in Bakersfield. As a consequence, I am well steeped in the history of Kern County and understand the growing pains we are experiencing.

So for what they are worth, I hope to use my experiences and knowledge to move the purposes and goals of the CVPA forward. But one person cannot be successful without the support of many others. So, in this coming year, I am asking for help and advice from all of you as we move ahead. I want to hear from you about what we should be doing and not doing. You can reach me at home if you want to call me and if I am not there you will be likely to reach my wife, Bugs, who will be my right arm in this endeavor. Please let me hear from you if you have some ideas for the CVPA. I want the organization to be as responsive to your needs as possible.

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Cummings Valley Protective Association

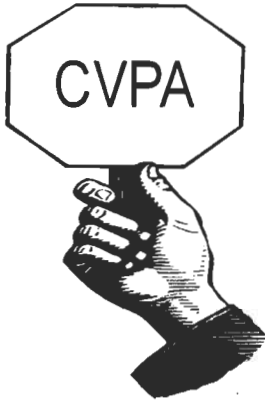
17851 Tejon Drive Tehachapi CA 93561 (805) 822-3478

CVPA holds Second Annual Trash Pickup

Twenty-two members and friends of the Cummings Valley Protective Association rallied to clean-up littered roadsides in the valley on Saturday, June 8. An estimated seven cubic yards of trash were hauled to the big dumpster generously donated by Paul Benz. That volume had accumulated since last October when ten yards were collected in the first ever pick-up along valley roads.

A new addition in this year's effort to cleanup were four sets of Burma Shave style signs. They called attention to driving caution and protecting scenic values of Cummings Valley.

Recognizing the community benefit of the project Sonny Ormsby of Old Town Signs gave a generous discount, making the sign idea possible. The four sets of verse, each with four separate signs spaced 35 to 40 yards apart and in the traditional Burma Shave red background with white lettering, read as follows:



Littered Roads / Such A Disgrace / Please Put Trash / In Proper Place;

Workers Ahead / Picking Up Trash / Watch The Road / Do Not Crash;

Littering is / Such A Disgrace / Don't Desecrate / This Lovely Place;

Please Be Careful / How You Drive / We're Picking Up Litter / And Want To Stay Alive;

A fifth sign at the end of each verse read "CVPA" in place of "Burma Shave" that the older generations will remember.

County "Road Work Ahead" signs were also placed at main entry points to the work area, courtesy of Kern County Transportation Management.

Carol Wein, organizer of the event, said, "The enthusiasm and hard work of everyone who turned out were wonderful, and special thanks to Bob Roedel, owner of Springs Emporium in Stallion Springs who provided ice and water which he and Chris Grimes supplied to hot thirsty workers while picking up full bags in their trucks to haul to the dumpster. Thanks, too, to Beth, manager at Subway Sandwiches, for the price break on sandwiches to feed our hungry workers. I also want to thank Fred Trower of Bear Valley Springs Realty and Rubien Brandon of Country Real Estate for the loan of steel stakes for mounting our Burma Shave signs"

Thanks to the following who helped with the trash pickup: Carol Wein, Jackie Wein, Toby Wein, Jo Ann Huckins and grandson Marshall Stone, Dolly Mester, John Mester, Al Sanbrano, Al Swingle, Don Thomas, Chris Grimes, Barbara Brenner, Dorothy Woods, Helen Huff, Bob Roedel, Kathy McGavin, Solveig Thompson, Billie Brust, Shelly lowetz, Mel Gates, Chuck McCollough, and anyone whose name we missed (with apologies).

Farmland Protection

Have you noticed the increase in acreage being actively farmed in Cummings Valley? This is good news to go along with some other good news

The Federal Agricultural Improvement Reform Act of 1996 is the most far reaching federal program to date for farmland protection, authorizing \$35 million for state and local farmland protection programs. Because of its top agricultural position and the threat to farmland by urbanization California may get a sizable chunk of this.

The federal moneys may tie in well with California

Senate Bill 258 signed into law by Governor Wilson last October. This bill creates a new state grant program to pay for acquiring agricultural conservation easements by local governments and private nonprofit corporations.

Although state legislators have told CVPA that in the early years of the program moneys will likely be directed toward farmlands threatened by their proximity to large urban centers, there may be future opportunities for CVPA to apply the program in Cummings or Brite Val-

leys.

Yellow Starthistle: A Progress Report

Yellow starthistle with its long sharp spines and its toxin that is deadly to horses has already taken over some 10 million acres in California. It has no natural insect predators here as it does in its native Eurasia so it spreads uncontrolled.

When infestations were found along roadsides in Stallion Springs and Cummings Valley last summer, the CVPA Board committed to eradicating it in Cummings Valley before it could spread throughout the area. The Stallion Springs CSD has committed to eradication there, and Bear Valley Springs is working aggressively toward control or eradication.



CVPA was planning to participate in a group spray program organized by the newly formed Tehachapi Yellow Starthistle Task Force. The program was to use a commercial spray company, but no company was found that could provide the desired service. Some of the small jobs were completed by Todd Ussery (822-1636).

Fortunately, Kern County Transportation Management came through with a program to spray ROUNDUP in a six to eight foot strip along all the major county roads in the Tehachapi area including Cummings and Brite Valleys. Their timing was good, and essentially all starthistle seedlings were killed in the sprayed swath. We owe them a big vote of thanks, as we know they were working on a very small budget for roadside spraying.

In several areas along Banducci and Pellisier Roads

the weed had spread farther out so with the help of Stallion Springs we sprayed those areas. We thank Lloyd Dorris who is licensed to get the necessary permits to buy the chemicals and to spray. We obtained an encroachment permit from the County to allow us to work in the right-of-way. With the loan of a spray rig, Paul Beckett

and Chuck McCollough sprayed while Pete Hussman followed in his "chase car." with flashing lights and a large "road work ahead" sign on the back to provide protection for the operation. It cost CVPA \$72.71 for the chemicals.

In spite of this effort some starthistle

was inevitably missed. We are now "rounding up the strays" by chopping, pulling and spraying with ROUNDUP which is still effective into the early blossom stage. If you see any Yellow Starthistle in Cummings Valley, please destroy it or call Chuck McCollough at 822-3478.

You may be reading about the release by the Agriculture Department of natural enemy insects (Hairy weevils) imported from Greece (and thoroughly tested to insure they don't attack desirable plants). If they adapt to our climate, they may eventually provide some control, but as with any predator/prey relationship, they, and the Starthistle, can only be expected to coexist in some state of balance. The bottom line: we still need to carry on the battle unabated.

Progress on Incorporation and Tax Exempt Status for CVPA

In February 1996 CVPA applied to the Franchise Tax Board for tax exempt status. Along with that application we filed for incorporation as a non-profit organization. In April, we received tax exemption from the board and the articles of incorporation endorsed by the Secretary of State. We applied for and received an employer's I.D. number which is required.

We have applied to the IRS in May 1996 for tax exempt recognition. They have acknowledged receipt of

our application and recently asked for additional information in the form of publications about the organization to help them make a determination. We have responded to that request.

September Barbecue Set

Mark Saturday, September 21 on your calendar for the annual CVPA barbecue. We do not have details yet, but are considering 4:00 pm at Horsethief Park in Stallion Springs. Plan to come. It is always a great event.



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17851 Tejon Drive
Tehachapi CA 93561

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CVPA NEWSLETTER

Membership

A new membership year has begun, and dues are payable as of July 1. Please use the form below to renew right away. Look at the date in the center of the top line of your mailing label. If it shows 97, you are paid up. If it shows 96 or earlier, your yearly membership renewal is due.

It is vital that we keep our membership numbers up to be recognized as a credible voice of the community. Through the process of attrition, our numbers are dimin-

ished each year, and although we are getting some new members, it is essential that our current ones stay with us. It is a good feeling to see the quiet rural character of Cummings and Brite Valleys. The goal of CVPA is to keep it that way. Although we are not aware of any imminent development threat, we need to be ready and strong if someone comes along with the idea of turning farmlands into housing tracts or strip malls -

Yes, we (I) want to continue to support CVPA!

Enclosed is our (my) \$12.00 dues for the July 1, 1996 thru June 1997 membership year.

Address Changes? _____

Mail to:
Cummings Valley Protective Association
c/o Albert Sanbrano, Membership Chairman
30341 Horsethief Drive
Tehachapi CA 93561