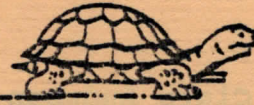


# TORTOISE T-R-A-C-K-S



THE DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER +++ SPRING, 1980  
P.O.Box 453, Ridgecrest, CA 93555 + Vol. 1, #3 + Gloria Nowak, Editor

STATE OF THE NATURAL AREA REPORT: The great moment in our history will soon be here! The official grand opening ceremony of the Desert Tortoise Natural Area Interpretive Center is scheduled for Saturday, April 26th, according to the latest word from BLM. The ribbon-cutting will take place at 12:00 noon on that day; and in case you would like to be there and aren't sure where it is, the entrance is from the unpaved Randsburg-Mojave Road, not far from the Lakeshore Inn in California City. This event represents the culmination of over seven years of hard work and unwavering determination to succeed; on the part of Committee members and friends, BLM personnel, The Nature Conservancy and other conservation groups who have provided both financial and moral support from the beginning of the project.

Nevertheless, even while we rejoice at the attainment of this great milestone, we must remember that our task is far from finished. Except for arrangements for managing and patrolling the area, the construction and other "outside" work is nearly done. As this is written, we are told that the Interpretive Center is nearing completion including the surface treatment of the first nature trail, designed especially for the handicapped, the fence around the interpretive area and the installation of the display panels. All of the above work is scheduled to be finished by the end of March.

However, there remains much yet to be done on the inside; namely, the acquisition of the 11 square miles of private land parcels that still checkerboard the interior of the Natural Area. Some of these sections occupy prime tortoise habitat and some are divided into many small parcels. Over 400 property owners are involved in this, and they vary in their degree of willingness to part with their land at all or for any reasonable price. Indeed, some of them have shown very little sympathy for the project. Naturally, this prevents the completion of the outside fence; and also poses a continuing threat of development, which would be hardly beneficial to the tortoise. Therefore, long and arduous negotiations lie ahead, bolstered by all the fund-raising efforts we can muster, by product sales and donations.

A WORD OF THANKS: At this time, even though much of our work remains to be done, we must take a look at what we have already accomplished; and it behooves us to express a belated public word of gratitude to our many generous contributors, without whose help the entire project would have been impossible to achieve. Unfortunately, the limitations of time and space prohibit the inclusion of every name, so that the list is necessarily incomplete; however, we will correct this in future issues. In fact, we would appreciate having any omitted names of persons or groups brought to our attention. Moreover, we are unable to list all the contributions by a host of friends which have accumulated into large amounts over the years. Here follows a partial list of our donors of \$100 or more, including some Committee members whose gifts are in addition to their many long hours of hard work for the cause, and also including some memorial contributions. In some cases, the donations include the cost of products for the Committee's fund-raising efforts.

Santa Clara Audubon Society  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Henry  
Wm. M. Lustberg with Gulf & Western Corp.  
Louise deB. Spetnagel  
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Gould  
Westchester Chapter, CTTC  
Foothill Chapter, CTTC  
Barry A. Swackhamer  
Frank L. & Marian Adams  
Mr. & Mrs. M. D. Rosenau, Jr.  
Joseph Pinhiero (in memory of his wife, Jane)

W. R. & V. T. Hilker  
Josephine I. Read  
Ceroma Ballsun  
Charles Porter  
Patrick Doheny  
Kay A. Booth  
Edith P. Shepherd  
Rex & Betty Mason  
Kristin Berry  
Beverly F. Steveson

LEARN ABOUT THE TORTOISE! Dr. Kristin Berry, our Committee founder and Lead Zoologist for the BLM in Riverside, will conduct another class on the tortoise in California City, April 19th and 20th; under the auspices of the University of California Santa Barbara Extension. Last year's class was a great success. See the attached form for full information.

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL SYMPOSIUM: Try to attend this if time permits! It begins at 9:00 AM Saturday, March 22nd and extends through a field trip on Monday, March 24th. It's at the Holiday Inn at 1200 University Ave. in Riverside; (714) 682-8000. For further information on this, call Dr. Kristin Berry at (714) 787-1600.

GUIDED TOURS: If your group wants to walk the newly-marked nature trails in the Natural Area with an informed guide during the upcoming tour season, write to Laura Stockton c/o the Committee, as soon as possible. Remember that the season extends from late March through May.

Try to attend Dr. Berry's class, and to be present at the grand opening of the Interpretive Center; and if time permits, to at least drop in on the Desert Tortoise Council Symposium. Also, don't forget our products the next time you need a gift for someone - or some fun-to-wear T-shirts for the family camping trip this summer.

Best of luck to you and the tortoises till next time!

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