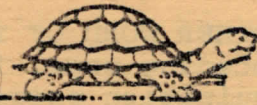


TORTOISE T-R-A-C-K-S



THE DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER +++ SUMMER, 1980
P. O. Box 453, Ridgecrest, CA 93555 + Vol. 1, #4 + Gloria Nowak, Editor

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

April 26th brought a long-awaited milestone in our efforts, the dedication of the DESERT TORTOISE NATURAL AREA and the opening of the interpretive facilities. Preceding the 12:00 PM Bureau of Land Management (BLM) ceremony, 130 Nature Conservancy (TNC) members and other visitors led by Committee guides explored along the new nature trails, winding through the carpet of alkali goldfields. Congressman Bill Thomas gave the dedication address to the 300 attending, following brief remarks by BLM District Manager Lou Boll; Assemblyman Phil Wyman's field representative, Bill Reed; DTPC President Laura Stockton; California City Mayor Nancy Crews; BLM State Director Jim Ruch; and Dept. of Interior Deputy Assistant Secretary Dan Beard.

In making my remarks I made several unintentional, serious omissions, for which I apologize. In recognizing individual Committee members, Treasurer Shirley Moncsko is the last person who should be overlooked. And among the many organizations that have given a great deal of continuous support, special recognition of the Desert Tortoise Council and California Turtle and Tortoise Club chapters is in order. The Bureau was unusually lavish in recognizing the efforts of individuals and organizations toward establishing the DTNA, but pointedly did not include Kristin Berry, who we all know is the originator of the project and the primary moving force behind it.

After the ceremony Dan Beard said that we should be proud, as our efforts have resulted in the largest wildlife preserve in the United States for the protection of a non-game species! Yea Team! We can all take a moment to congratulate ourselves on our hard-earned success. However, we cannot afford to crawl into our burrows and relax. There are many milestones yet to pass...Issues like the California Desert Plan and management of the Natural Area to include hunting on the north portion must be firmly handled with a display of public support. Over 11 square miles of private land need to be acquired through BLM exchange and TNC purchase. The funds for the purchases come from product sales and tax-deductible donations. BLM management requires constant monitoring and pushing by the Committee and other concerned people. The Committee must manage the 2½ square miles thus far purchased by TNC, which also requires patrolling the fence that surrounds the DTNA.

If you don't already feel that you are involved to the top of your shell -- visit your Natural Area; join the Committee as an active or contributing member; write letters on important issues as requested periodically in this newsletter; help raise funds for the land; or help patrol and "sign" the TNC part of the Natural Area.

- Laura Stockton, President, DTPC

CALIFORNIA DESERT PLAN: The continued survival of the desert tortoise depends on the outcome of the California Desert Plan. The Committee here offers a special thanks to all those who waded through the 6-lb. draft document and our evaluations, along with those of the Desert Tortoise Council and the Sierra Club, and then sent comments to BLM. The final plan will be out at the end of September, after which a brief 30-day comment period will be allowed. Analysis information will appear in our fall newsletter, so be ready to write again!

ANOTHER WORD OF THANKS: As President Laura Stockton pointed out on the preceding page, fund-raising is indeed a prime requisite for our land acquisition program, and we wish we had room here to list all our contributors; because even the smallest donation helps the cause. As we began to do in the last issue, we will list the names of our major benefactors whenever time and space permit. In that context, a word of thanks is due the Foothill Chapter of the California Turtle and Tortoise Club for their generous gift of \$500, earmarked for us from the proceeds of a recent show. We are deeply grateful to all of you who give us your financial support to the best of your ability; not only because of the money, but also because it shows us the size and intensity of the support of our project on the part of the public. And this is not only through your donations, but also the purchase of our products, providing you with visible symbols of the project through which you automatically publicize what we are doing, and thereby add still more friends to our roster.

WHAT'S NEW IN PRODUCTS: In the very near future we will have some new order forms, which will provide information about our new products and some price changes. We will be happy to supply them on request as soon as they are available. For one thing, our familiar best-selling "I MAY BE SLOW...BUT I GET THERE!" T-shirt will come in matching colors for adults and children - 4 altogether; and all sizes will be in heavyweight cotton. Then, we are adding another design; also for adults and children. The new shirt will feature a lovely, appealing, serious drawing of a tortoise, printed in multicolor on beige, and will say "DESERT TORTOISE NATURAL AREA". Moreover, our original color design note cards with envelopes are now available; with either a tortoise or a burrowing owl on the front and an appropriate conservation message on the back; leaving the inside for your correspondence; 50¢ each. And for even faster communication, it's our color photo postcards in 8 desert animal or plant studies; 2 with a tortoise and the rest with burrowing owls, Mohave ground squirrel, zebra-tailed lizard, horned lizard, pack rat or thistle sage flower; 25¢ each. Then, a color photo poster beckons, "Follow Me To...The Desert Tortoise Natural Area!"; \$1.00. Also for \$1.00, you can remind people to protect the desert tortoise with an attractive bumper sticker. And don't forget our needlepoint or crewel embroidery kits and our pendants and bolo ties.

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

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