

THE CARAVANER

March 2007

E-mail: rsmith@jetlink.net

A Message from Our Wagonmaster

Welcome back to Lake Perris!

Wow! Coming here twice in one year! We'll get this leveling thing down to perfection at this rate. All kidding aside, we are extremely fortunate to have a staff here at Lake Perris that's so easy to work with and looks forward to our coming. Supervising Park Ranger, Norb Ruhumke has been enormously helpful in providing us with a location to hold this March Caravan, all on very short notice. It's too bad that Vail Lake Resort would not uphold to the agreement that was made last June. When all is said and done, it will be their loss not ours.

This issue of the Caravaner that you're now reading was designed and assembled by our new Editor, Frances Smith. She stepped forward and volunteered for this awesome task of which we all are extremely grateful. Never having done anything of this nature, she has created a Caravaner to be very proud of and the best part is that she is willing to continue (although she did state, "at least for the time being I'll give it a try".) Donna La Porte has done an outstanding job for the four years she held the position; we thank her for all of the hours she spent putting out a quality Caravaner. As you well know she has definitely raised the bar to new heights. She felt the time has come for some new ideas and new blood; as in all things, it's good to move forward and open new opportunities so others may take the led. Many thanks to both Donna and Frances for being there!!

There's more exciting news! This month we are pleased to have a special guest speaker here on Friday that you will definitely not want to miss. Neil Lekander, formally from A' Weigh We Go®, an RV weight safety program, will give a talk on what else, RV safety; see Bob Fillers article in this month's

issue of the Caravaner for more information. Thanks to Bob and Joe Gibbs for taking on this ongoing project to bring us programs that will enhance our RVing. Stay tuned for more interesting, informative, and enlightening topics. If you know of someone that is willing to come and share their knowledge on an interesting RVing subject, get in touch with either Bob or Joe and they'll take it from there.

Spring is just around the corner and it's time to get ready for our annual Easter Bonnet Parade. Last year we had a good number of you participating, but wouldn't it be great to see even more of you take part in the fun and silliness? How about getting some light-hearted completion going between the groups to see who can conjure up the most outrageous hats, or maybe the fanciest, or how about the weirdest? You've got time at this outing to get together to make your plans and hopefully come up with a winning endeavor. What about putting forth a challenge to another group and see who will come up the winner? Let your imaginations run wild and let's have some fun with it! We'll look forward seeing you all decked out at the parade at Stagecoach come April 21st!



Happy Travels,

Rosemary



A Belated
Happy St. Patrick's Day to all of the Irish
and even the not so Irish

A Message from Your Assistant Wagon Master

What a wonderful place for a caravan. Buena Vista Aquatic Rec. Area is fantastic. We had fairly good weather with the exception of Thursday afternoon when we had a bit of rain. All ran for cover and the rest of the day was spent in the rigs. Gary and I still checked in arrivals from our rig. We actually took in 9. Mind you the rain was very light and Gary didn't linger too long out in the open. I must say we had a grand time of it. The lakes, concrete pads to park on, trees, grass and wildlife made it even more special. Speaking of wildlife; we had a visitor at the host tent one night. He ate up all of the packaged hard candies and 1 pound of chocolate covered raisins! His foot prints were all over the table cloth. I bet he was one sick little guy the next day. I didn't leave anything else out any more. We also had a visit from a little, unafraid gopher next to the host tent. We were practically on top of him or her. We think it was a female gather material for her nest. When she had enough of she filled in the hole. An owl was spotted as well other wildlife. It was cold at night but very pleasant during the day. I loved it and I hope you did too.

Here at Lake Perris we should enjoy good weather. Maybe it will be easier to level this time. What a challenge it is. Anyway enjoy your stay here at Lake Perris and I will be looking for you to get my hugs. Have a great campout and above all have fun.....

Linda Geneser

Assistant Wagon Master



FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING

Submitted By:

Don and Marjorie Richards, Safety Team Officers

Recent catastrophic events have brought to our attention the need for emergency plans in every home. As Lazy Daze caravaners, we are at an advantage in having necessities in our rigs ready for travel most of the time. The American Red Cross recommends that we be able to sustain ourselves for 72 hours in case of a natural disaster or other kind of emergency. Here are the agency's tips for getting prepared:

FOOD

Non-perishable such as canned or dehydrated meals, cereals, fruits, powdered milk, and food for those with special dietary needs. Provide a manual can opener. Water: 3 gallons per person in airtight containers. Replace every six months.

FIRST AID

Well stocked kit with the Red Cross First Aid, be sure to include a copy of your up-to-date Medical Information form.

FLASHLIGHTS

Include one in your nightstand or under your bed, along with spare batteries. Don't use matches or candles until you are sure there are no gas leaks. Electronics: Have a battery operated radio or T.V. Cell phones may be interrupted, but keep yours charged just in case. Have a car-based charger.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

A Class ABC extinguisher can be used safely on all small fires including electrical, grease and gas fires.

MISCELLANEOUS

Gloves (with leather palms), waterproof poncho, duct tape, tool kit, dust mask, pocket knife, cash.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

It is advisable to store your Lazy Daze with a full tank of gasoline and water ready for travel. We can never know what the "get away" circumstances might be.

Your Safety Team recognizes this information as valuable, but hopes there will be NO emergencies!

Source: American Red Cross Bulletin

Lazy Daze Anniversaries



Shirley Mc Kinney - 50th badge



Jim and Marilyn Ramey - 75th badge



Joe and Lore Hardcastle - 150th badge

REMEMBERING FRED BURRIS by Rosemary Webb

February 21st Fred Burris passed after a courageous ten month battle with cancer. Fred and Barbara joined the club back in Oct. 1989, almost 17 years ago attending 104 caravans and are long standing members of the Firesiders. They both loved traveling, especially in the Lazy Daze and if four-wheeling was on the docket they were the first to go. One year Don and I got the chance to travel to Utah with them and boy did we have a ball! You could always count on Fred and Barbara to liven things up; be it over the CB as we bounce along the back roads or back in camp. I remember one evening after a full day out on the trail; we were all setting around enjoying the last bit of daylight when someone asked Fred, "where's Barbara?" Fred in his very matter of fact, clam tone replied, "Oh, she's in doing woman's work" – well you can image the response he got from all the gals that were enjoying the evenings get-together. We never let him forget it and he never made that remark again, at least not in front of a bunch of women. I feel privileged having the opportunity to know Fred and I'm so thankful for having so many wonderful memories that will stay with me.

Just as I was to beginning to writing this piece; Barbara emailed me with the following note.

From Barbara:

I just wanted to thank all the wonderful Lazy Daze Caravaners for their cards and telephone calls during Fred's illness and after his death. I have been especially comforted by reading all of your comments about and memories of Fred. I can't tell you how humbled Fred would have been to see so many of you at the funeral services. So many of our friends and family have told me how touched they were to see the Lazy Daze friends there because they knew how much Fred loved his Lazy Daze outings. It is hard for me to imagine attending caravans without Fred, but I am going to try my best. My son is going to give me more driving lessons so I hope to be at the May outing at Live Oak.

Love, Barbara Burris

GOODWILL AMBASSADOR REPORT



It is with regret that I must report the passing of Fred Burris. He was with the Firesiders and many of them attended his funeral on the 26th of February. Barbara would appreciate hearing from you.

Margaret Heideman had surgery on February 26th after her colonoscopy reported some unfavorable results. She wasn't too concerned, just wanted it over with.

Thinking of you cards were sent to John Cross and former member, Chuck Marler. For those of you who would like to drop Chuck Marler a note, his address is: 2026 W, Lumber St., Lancaster, CA 93536-6514.

Last Caravaner I mentioned that we mailed "Missing You" cards to various members who haven't attended any caravans in awhile. It was nice to see the effort was not wasted as three showed their smiling faces in Bakersfield. This month our Missing Members are Jim & De Niese Vanlerberghe of Murrieta. If your group has a Missing Member and would like for me to send a reminder to them that they should join you again around the campfire, just pass me their name.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Ursula Grinde as she has volunteered to donate some of her hand-crafted greeting cards for the goodwill of our members. Sometimes it hard to find the message to fit the situation, but now with her help it will prove much easier.

Mona Shaner
MonaL@sbcglobal.net



Ote, Toki, Denari, & Gypsy taking friends for a walk

HOST TENT VOLUNTEERS

How can I thank all of you for helping out at the Host Tent?? I cannot stress enough how important all of you are. This is your club and you make things happen. We had another great group of volunteers last month at Buena Vista Rec. Area. And they were:

Vern and Charlene Tutterrow
George and Rosie Reeder
Allen and Sue Mercer
Tom and Jan Hiemstra
Florence Moore
Enos and Joyce Hirst
Betty Boshma
Bill Arthur
Lurlie Edgecomb
Bob Tallmadge
Ed and Shirley Potter
Ed and Dottie Carey
Bob and Joan Blechen
Joe and Jane Fletcher
Ilene Van Gossen
Dave and Laura Techentin
Rod and Lynne Mortensen
Jim and Ann Cook

Our Thursday afternoon crews were rained out.....

Thank you all once again for your help.

Linda

Geneser



Early Morning Host Tent Chat



For oodles of help, all you need to do is raise the hood!

TERRY TANNER'S TECH TALK

I installed an electric heating element in my 6 gallon Atwood water heater in my 2001 **Lazy Daze** 26 Foot Rear Bath. A detailed description of my installation of a "Lightning Rod" heating element is in the article "WaterHeaterAC.pdf" in "Files Section" on the "Techsnoz" website. Installing the water heater element is not difficult if the electrical panel is on the same side of the rig as the water heater.

The arguments for using shore power to heat your water are: 1) It saves propane; 2) The energy required is basically included in the daily cost of the hook-ups; 3) Using the shore power is very convenient; and 4) You should need less frequent trips to the propane provider.

The arguments against the after market ac heating elements are: 1) The cost of the heating element kits is about \$100, not including installation, so you can buy lots of propane for the cost of the kit; 2) Aftermarket installation probably will void your warranty; 3) Flushing your water tank is more difficult; and 4).There is increased risk of the water tank overheating

If you have decided to proceed anyway, then the two most popular kits are the "Hott Rod" and the "Lightning Rod". Both cost about \$100. The Hott Rod can be purchased on-line at www.dyersonline.com and the Lightning Rod at www.campingworld.com. The kits both require a power source - usually the microwave circuit has enough extra capacity; installing an "On/Off" switch at a convenient location; and running the wires into the exterior water heater compartment.

The Hott Rod thermostat attaches to the water heater tank so some of the tank insulation must be removed and the thermostat will be on the tank making access difficult to change the thermostat setting. The Lightning Rod thermostat straps to the Temperature/Pressure Relief Valve in the exterior water heater compartment. This simplifies the installation and makes the thermostat control easily accessible.

If the thermostat is set too high, the tank temperature can reach levels where the Temperature/Pressure Relief Valve will open and start dumping water into the water heater compartment. If the thermostat should separate from its installed position, then a constant "On" condition can trigger a dangerous overheating situation that should open the relief valve. It is important to periodically inspect the thermostat to insure that it is properly and tightly attached so it will be measuring the water heater temperature. Also your electrical usage needs to be monitored. The Lightning Rod draws about 4 amps so if you are running the water heater, the air conditioner, the microwave, and a toaster, and a hair dryer or two, it is possible to exceed the 30 amp capacity of the main circuit breaker.

Atwood makes a six gallon water heater with an AC element that is otherwise identical to the Atwood water heater installed by **Lazy Daze**. The cost difference is much less than the cost of the aftermarket element. It is a worthwhile upgrade if your water heater ever needs replacing and makes for easy water tank flushing.

[Techsnoz](http://www.techsnoz.com), the Caravan Club "Tech Talk" website.

Check it out at: <http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/Techsnoz/>

WELCOME FIRST TIMERS!



Steve and Joan Brown
Windsor, CA



Mike Vogel – Full Timer



Dave and Carole Abernethy
Alhambra, CA

The Painted Turtle



Wow Lazy Dazers you have out done yourselves with afghans and quilts. I have over 50 to deliver this week plus some 25 prior to Christmas campout already delivered. At Buena Vista alone Carol Hyland (quilt lady), Shirley Potter, Freddie and Sandy Whitney, Carol Lucas, and Joyce Hirst came up with 13 Afghans to give to the Painted Turtle 2007 camping experience.

Some thoughts if you want to get involved. Carol took pillow slips and made quilts. Freddie and Sandy made 12 x 12 squares which just need to be put together. This is good for traveling as they do not take up so much room making.

For those who do not know, we are a part of a huge team of volunteers that help a summer camp called the Painted Turtle. This camp is made up of kids who have life threatening and on going permanent illnesses. The object of the organizers is to take these kids out of a medical setting, which

they spend most of their day and give them a true camping experience. These kids ride horses, fish, live in tent like structures, play all kinds of games, do camp fire time, sing songs and just be together. Do note that the camp has a full staff of medical personnel and equipment should the campers need attention to their specific illness. They come for one week and leave with incredible memories of new friends, activities they can never do at home and each get an afghan and a Painted Turtle pillow also made by volunteers. Some 600 children participate in this experience over the summer at Lake Hughes.



Submitted by

Jane Farwell, #2445

.....the Afghan Collector

RV Safety Presentation at Lake Perris Caravan

On Friday, March 23rd at 1:00-2:30 P.M., Mr. Neil Lekander will be making a presentation on RV Safety exclusively for you Lazy Dazers here at our Caravan at Lake Perris. This will be the first in a series of presentations organized for the purpose of providing outside expertise on subjects of broad interest regarding the RV lifestyle we all enjoy so much. It will be held in the general meeting assembly area. Be sure to come early, bring your chairs, pad and pencil, be prepared for a most interesting afternoon. A question and answer period will follow Neil's presentation.



Neil W. LeKander is a longtime recreation vehicle (RV) enthusiast having been exposed to the joys of the lifestyle by his parents as a youngster. Neil and Pat (wife of 40 years) have traveled extensively by RV (approximately 300,000 miles to date) and owned a series of RVs (often more than one) for more than 32 years. Neil and Pat have lived full time in their classic motorhome, "UNDO", for the past eight years (since retiring) while writing and speaking at RV shows and rallies and enjoying their travels throughout the USA and Canada. Neil is a lifelong racing fan with a passion for building and driving automobiles and an avid enthusiast of all things mechanical.

Neil's formal college degree is a BS in maintenance engineering. He is also a certified engineering technician, a licensed aviation mechanic and a licensed pilot. Most importantly, Neil is a recent retiree from a major USA tire company following a 32-year career as a wheel/brake/tire design and product support engineer. Most of that career was spent in various field-based positions around the USA. Neil worked with customers helping them to resolve operational problems and to



Neil & Pat's coach "UNDO" in Utah

derive the maximum economic value from those products. Neil's employment presented the opportunity to lecture extensively on maintenance topics and to work towards the advancement of professionalism of maintenance personnel. It also provided the opportunity to write a series of books with an emphasis on achieving "excellence in the maintenance and operation of those company products."

With that background it was only logical for Neil (and Pat) to combine those lifelong interests by joining A'Veigh We Go®, an RV weight safety program, as the West Coast weighing team for a three year period to utilize those skills for the betterment of all RVers. That program with its day-to-day contact with RVers, RV manufacturers, RV dealers and the multitude of problems faced by RVers prompted him to compile much of what he learned into his book, ***"The RVer's Ultimate Survival Guide"***, the product of several years effort.

As Neil and Pat travel the country today they continue to seek the input of the RVers they meet along the way to add new detail and personal imprints to ***"The RVer's Ultimate Survival Guide."*** Please feel free to share your RV safety stories with Neil after the meeting on Friday, and let's give Mr. LeKander a hearty Southern California Lazy Daze welcome.

"The RVer's Ultimate Survival Guide" is self published and marketed directly at the author's website www.rvsafetyinfo.com.)

OH WHAT FUN WE HAD!



Dometic Refrigerator Recall

Submitted By: Bob Filler

In January, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Dometic announced the recall of certain 2-door refrigerators that were manufactured between April 1997, and May 2003, due to the potential risk of fire. Many of the motorhomes in the club have one of the listed units. The recall notice is published below for you to determine whether the model and serial number of your refrigerator are on the list. You will find that information inside your refrigerator compartment. If your unit is on the list, you may wish to contact Dometic at the number listed below to be sure you receive a recall notification. Repairs are to be done at no charge to you, and according to the notice, will begin between April and June of this year.

Report Date : January 11, 2007 at 05:33 PM

NHTSA Campaign ID number : 06E076000

Make / Models :	Model/Build Years:
DOMETIC / NDR1062	9999
DOMETIC / RM2652	9999
DOMETIC / RM2662	9999
DOMETIC / RM2663	9999
DOMETIC / RM2852	9999
DOMETIC / RM2862	9999
DOMETIC / RM3662	9999
DOMETIC / RM3663	9999
DOMETIC / RM3862	9999
DOMETIC / RM3863	9999
Manufacturer : DOMETIC CORPORATION	

NHTSA CAMPAIGN ID Number : 06E076000

Mfg's Report Date : AUG 28, 2006

Component: EQUIPMENT:RECREATIONAL VEHICLE

Potential Number Of Units Affected : 926877

Summary:

CERTAIN DOMETIC TWO-DOOR REFRIGERATORS MANUFACTURED BETWEEN APRIL 1997 AND MAY 2003: SERIAL NOS. 713XXXXX THROUGH 752XXXXX; 801XXXXX THROUGH 852XXXXX; 901XXXXX THROUGH 952XXXXX; 001XXXXX THROUGH 052XXXXX; 101XXXXX THROUGH 152XXXXX; 201XXXXX THROUGH 252XXXXX; 301XXXXX THROUGH 319XXXXX, INSTALLED IN CERTAIN RECREATIONAL VEHICLES AS ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT AND SOLD AS AFTERMARKET EQUIPMENT. A FATIGUE CRACK MAY DEVELOP IN THE BOILER TUBE WHICH MAY RELEASE A SUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF PRESSURIZED COOLANT SOLUTION INTO AN AREA WHERE AN IGNITION SOURCE (GAS FLAME) IS PRESENT.

Consequence:

THE RELEASE OF COOLANT UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS COULD IGNITE AND RESULT IN A FIRE.

Remedy:

THE VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS WILL NOTIFY OWNERS OF RECREATIONAL VEHICLES THAT HAD THE REFRIGERATORS INSTALLED AS ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT AND DOMETIC WILL NOTIFY OWNERS OF THE AFTERMARKET REFRIGERATORS. DOMETIC WILL INSTALL A SECONDARY BURNER HOUSING FREE OF CHARGE. THE RECALL IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN BETWEEN APRIL AND JUNE 2007. OWNERS MAY CONTACT DOMETIC AT 888-446-5157.

Notes:

CUSTOMERS MAY CONTACT THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S VEHICLE SAFETY HOTLINE AT 1-888-327-4236 (TTY: 1-800-424-9153); OR GO TO [HTTP://WWW.SAFERCAR.GOV](http://www.safercar.gov).

"THE WELL-INFORMED ONES"

Where are You?

Submitted by: Rosemary Webb

What happened? I guess we don't have any "well-informed" Lazy Dazers? You must not have checked out our new and improved website? I was eager to reveal the five winners at this General Meeting as the "well-informed ones", those that got all eight Buena Vista questions right; but it's not going to happen!

Not too worry; you do have another chance to become one of the "well informed." See if you can find the answers to the following questions about Lake Perris on our website; just go to www.lazydazecaravanclub.org. Barbara Berggreen has done a super job revamping the site and you'll be amazed at the amount of information she has dug-up. E-mail me your answers through the website – they'll end up on my computer. The first five submitted with all questions correct will be the winners and announced at Stagecoach Trails.

1. How many acres is Lake Perris?
2. What is the name of the Regional Indian Museum located in the park?
3. What is the name of the island in the lake? How high is it?
4. What are the regular camping rates with water & electric hook-ups? (Not Lazy Daze rates.)
5. How long is Perris Dam and when was it built?

You can find the answers on our website under *When & Where* section – *March Caravan*. Get your answers in before April's outing to be a winner.



LAST CHANCE



This is your last chance to purchase the Golden Caravan DVD compiled by our own Donna La Porte.

This is one fabulous 25 minute slide show set to music that will bring back wonderful memories of the week in Cheyenne; and for those that couldn't make the trip, it will give you a glimpse into all the festivities that took place.

If you can catch Frances Smith Rig #2206 anytime during this campout, she will be glad to take your \$8.00 and present you with one super DVD. You can't procrastinate any longer; this is the last campout they will be offered plus there are only 41 left. You surely don't want to miss-out!

HANDY CB HINTS

Submitted by: Steve Tivy

Last month in the Caravaner there was some useful information on the correct operation of your CB Microphone (Mic). I hope some of you benefited from it! This will be an ongoing article each month with hints to help all of us be more skillful in the use of our CB's, be it here at a caravan or on the road.

Buena Vista Caravaner covered the procedures of the correct use of the microphone such as: Key the Mic before talking; don't talk before the other guy unkeys; say the person name twice so they may hear you; leave a few seconds of quiet time before responding back. (See the February Caravaner for more details.) This month I will add to those hints one very important issue that needs to be addressed which is.....

.....MICROPHONE POSITION

This is far more important than most realize. This can affect the other guy's reception.

The microphone should be held about 1 – 2 inches from the mouth for best transmission. Too far away and your voice will fade away, and too close will cause distortion.

My own preference, particularly while driving, is to hold the top of the Mic to the side of one's mouth – actually touching the skin. The cord will then be pointed away from you. When the Mic is touching, the Mic will turn with you when you turn your head. It also places the Mic at a constant distance from your

mouth. And it eliminates hearing breathing over the radio.

SEARCHERS & SCRAPPERS

Do you have a passion for pictures? Do you get excited to see old photographs of your favorite places? Have you begun an archive of the historic places in your neighborhood? Do you save all the unidentified "old family photos" to add names at a future date? Well, now is the time to attend our 11:00 AM meeting on Saturday morning? Bring a pencil and something for notes, and join us. We have a great time of sharing, and we need you!

This month we will be looking at an exciting website you can use to dig up photos from the largest online Genealogy Photo Archive. Or, if you want to be a Photo Detective we can explore Maureen Taylor's website to gain new information to help with photo identification. We want to discover the stories behind the images of the past. It may take time, but it can be accomplished.



Don't have a computer? I have another book for your library. There are many resources that you can use to increase your skill working with old photos. I will bring my Hawken Heritage album to share some ideas I used in making a history album. Come prepared to share what you have done, or are in the process of doing with your photos.

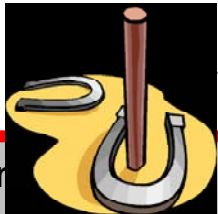
New attendees will receive a notebook packed full of useful information. If it has been a while since you met with us – come and update your notebook. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Jan Hawken #2790

HORSE SHOE WINNERS

Carl Orr #2671

Vern Tutterrow #1222



EMERGENCY: Call on

CODE RED: FIRE/GAS LEAK

CODE BLUE: MEDICAL

Please Do Not Use CB Ch 30 Until ALL CLEAR Is Sounded

Next month I'll talk about controlling the control knobs.



Allen Mercer and Marie Wilson



Getting Waster Toss Instructions



Doc solves the world's problems

IMPORTANT COFFEE HOST INFORMATION



Something new is happening with the coffee replenishment of supplies. Ever since the 50th anniversary we have been transporting four boxes instead of the normal three with the fourth box containing excess supplies.

So starting now, Bob and Frances Smith are keeping the excess supplies at home and will bring or purchase anything that might be needed to the next caravan. Therefore, starting with this caravan the person cleaning and putting everything away for the next person or group needs to notify Bob or Frances of what needs to be replenished.

If anyone would like to take over for Bob and Frances in this duty please see either one of them at this caravan. Also, this is being tried on a temporary basis to see if it works.

BETTY'S COFFEE DELIVERY SERVICE



Photographers to the Caravaner

**Bob Filler
Frances Smith
Charlene Tutterrow**

**Keep in the KNOW!
Pick up the latest news – from the
Lazy Daze website!**



Art & Barbara Berggreen #2771
www.lazydazecaravanclub.org

**From the Desk of the Editor
Frances Smith**

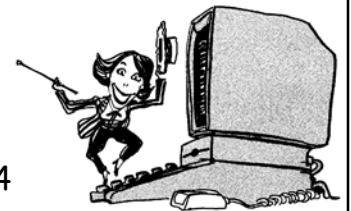
Submit your material for the "Caravaner" to Frances or Rosemary or to the following address:

Email: rsmith@jetlink.net

Please put **LAZE DAZE ON THE SUBJECT LINE**

Snail Mail:

Frances Smith
8995 Denver St.
Ventura, CA 93004



**Articles are due the Sunday following the
Caravan outing**

Church of the Lazy Daze

Sunday 8:30 AM

ALL ARE WELCOME



MOTHER NATURE'S REPORT

Submitted By:
Lurlie Edgecomb #2285



The muskrat was a "no show" at Buena Vista Aquatic Recreation Area in March. However, we hardly missed him with the entertainment provided by three Great-Horned Owls. The deep "hoo! hu hu hoo! hoo!" was the call of the male; the female has fewer, higher notes. She is larger than his mate. Their robust bodies, broad heads, large yellow eyes, and "ear" tufts of feathers make them easy to identify. Mourning doves competed with the owls for our attention by calling a soft "coo coo coo".

A large nest with a female (?) alongside was spotted half way up one of the pines. With a crowd watching, she made a glide to the next pine and then, with just a few soft flaps, she flew over us to yet another pine. There was a report of a second nest in the southern end of the camp and more hoots were heard from that quadrant. Now let me tell you about what I found out about those nests! My reading tells me these owls did not make them!! Those nests used to belong to crows, great blue herons or hawks. However, the owls nest earlier than those birds and take over by eminent domain (they are bigger and look fierce). Think back to Indian Hills in Tehachapi. The owls use large hole in the oak trees. BVARA doesn't have that kind of habitat. Being opportunists, the Great-horned Owls have taken over available housing and may have had eggs laid when we were there. The regurgitated pellets under the pines contained small bones, feathers and fur that the owls were notable to digest.

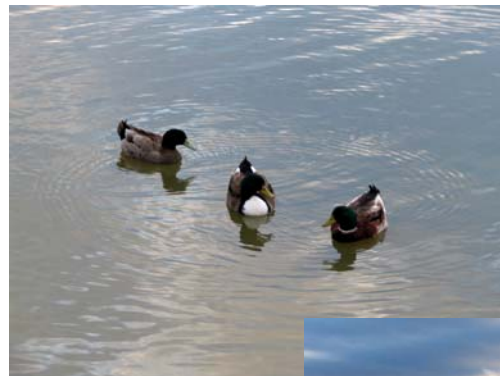
In the trees and on the ground there was more to be seen. The disappearing dandelion indicated a gopher underground. Brewer's blackbirds were shiny black with yellow eyes. A few female grackles were hanging around. A large hawk swooped between trees searching for a meal. Birds, mice, gophers, squirrels, bunnies, and even snakes are on his menu as well as the owls. Several kinds of small, gray jobs (yes, that is how they are referred to) that could be bushtits, female common yellowthroat, or ruby crowned kinglets showed themselves briefly. The robins were my favorites, plump and orange breasted and bold.

On the water, we could see the graceful western grebes, three mallard males and the coots. Oh, yes, the COOTS! These nuisance birds have

weird feet. With their lobed toes on yellow-green feet, they swarmed out of the lake by the hundreds and left squishy, dark green calling cards for us to step in. Nests were all over the place. They ranged from the large ones in the pines to medium and small ones in the deciduous trees. But most interesting were the pendulous, woven ones out near the end of branches waiting to be hidden by spring leaves. At Lake Perris, nesting and courtship behavior should have already started. Be observant and let me know what you observe. I have ID cards and books that you are welcome to borrow.



This barn owl was spotted in a pine tree on the south end of the campground by Lazy Dazer Jeanne Orr Saturday afternoon. Jeanne discovered the perched bird of prey after first noting scat under the tree which contained some relatively large bones, and even an animal or bird skull the size of a silver dollar.



Three Mallard
Males on beautiful
Lake Webb

