

Cactus Country Crier

NACCCA Chapter 44 Fall, 2006 Edition

There's panhandling and there's work.

We've reached a milestone of sorts: this is the 1st anniversary issue of the "new" Chapter 44 newsletter! In reflecting back on the accomplishments of the Chapter at last month's meeting I had to confess that we've made limited progress on our statue fund, (with a notable exception detailed elsewhere in this edition) but we should be proud of our reborn newsletter – especially if it gets the word out to folks who can't attend our regular meetings.

As of this edition of the Crier, we've raised just under \$5,000 of the approximately \$20,000 needed to purchase a CCC worker statue. Let's face it; asking for money (from anyone) isn't easy. I'd much prefer to be spending more time on creating exhibit materials for South Mountain Park or some other place where the CCC worked. I'd rather be taking our traveling exhibit around to places for people to see. In short, I'd rather work than panhandle. In that regard, I think I'm a lot like you CCC guys were back in the 30s.

In the coming days, I'll be contacting the manager of my local Wal-mart to give him or her a statue proposal packet. Like it or not, Wal-mart is heavily into helping local charities. My hope is that they'll see some merit in what we're trying to do. I'm also going to send another letter to Salt River Project – this time directly to the boss. You may remember that they rejected my first request for a donation. I don't think the pencil pusher that replied even knows that the CCC did a lot of work for SRP. I'll make sure their boss knows we exist.

Nope, it's not in our nature to ask for money, but if each of you would think about a potential funding source for our statue and send that person or organization a kindly worded request for a donation to the statue fund, you'd be multiplying the effort enormously. Then, with the statue purchased and placed in a suitable spot, we can get back to the

business of working to improve the public's knowledge of the CCC and its work.

Let's face it, there's panhandling and there's work, and sometimes panhandling can be harder than work!

--- *Michael I. Smith, President*

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Meeting Highlights for September

Turnout was a bit low-perhaps because of the summer break. Audrey Clark, Chapter Secretary was unable to attend due to illness and we will keep her in our prayers.

We were joined by Mary Beth Duncan's two sons Duke Ralston and his wife Darlene from Augusta, Kansas and Rick Ralston and his wife Darlina from Pueblo, Colorado. Mary Beth's daughter Sue Peterson also joined us from Pendleton, Oregon. Mary Beth reports that they enjoyed attending the meeting and we managed to put daughter Sue to work; she very kindly offered to explore grant-funding options for our CCC statue campaign.

Discussion centered, not surprisingly, on ways to raise money for a CCC worker statue. The certificate of deposit where the statue fund is currently held has matured and we voted to roll it over after adding recently raised donations to the previous total.

The publication of Bob Moore's book on the CCC in the Arizona Rim country was announced and we need to decide what to do with the complimentary copy that he graciously donated to Chapter 44.

Do you have an idea about how we could raise money to place a CCC Worker Statue in Arizona? Let's hear about it!

South Mountain CCC Article

I was lucky enough to get an article about the CCC published in the South Mountain Villager during the summer break. I did the short write up after encouragement from Harold Baldwin who has had numerous articles run in the Villager. Harold said the CCC story was the best story layout he'd seen in the Villager yet.

National Public Lands Day 2006

Once again – for about the 5th or 6th year in a row – Chapter 44 was represented at the National Public Lands Day celebration on Saturday, September 30th.

National Public Lands Day has been set aside to celebrate the extensive public lands system that makes up our national parks and forests and the day is celebrated at local venues nationwide. In the past here in Phoenix the Public Lands Day has been at Patriot's Park and at South Mountain Park and the past two years at Phoenix North Mountain Park.

Our exhibit has come a long way from its first days as a simple collection of laser copied photos propped on plywood display boards. In addition to many photographs, now visitors can see real examples of CCC manuals and textbooks used in camps. A newly added exhibit board tells the story of the CCC's work fighting forest fires.

I was fortunate to have Fred Garcia and Bill and Jeannette Millard join me for moral support and to talk to the many curious attendees, many of whom spoke of having relatives who served in the CCC. Especially gratifying were the many young people who stopped by to look at our collection of photos. We made a point of giving each of them a CCC information sheet and encouragement to write a CCC paper as a school project in the future.

It's always a bit of work but I think we're always glad to have participated in National Public Lands Day each year. We put out the donation jar and managed to pull in \$30 in donations for our statue fund, too!

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If the opposite of “pro” is “con,” what’s the opposite of progress?

+ Chapter Eternal +

I'm sad to have to report the loss of three good friends who we've lost over the past few months.

James Grose passed away on June 22, 2006. Jim was born in Charleston, West Virginia and he served in the CCC in West Virginia. Ironically, when Jim and his wife Chris moved to Arizona after the war, they lived for a time in apartments in what once had been the CCC camps at South Mountain Park. Jim attended our Chapter meetings on a regular basis and would always depart with a wave, saying, “We'll see you, buddy.” Condolences to Jim's wife Verna (Chris) Grose, 1512 W. Puget Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85021.

Willard Dunigan passed away on October 4, 2006. Willard served as a cook in the CCC and many of you may remember the big pot of spaghetti he made for our potluck dinner at South Mountain Park several years ago. No one was prouder of their time in the CCC than Willard and I'll always remember how smartly dressed he was when he attended Chapter meetings. Condolences to Lucille Dunigan, 2002 W. Sunnyside Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85029.

Owen Carolan passed away October 7, 2006. Owen served in CCC camps in Arizona (Prescott and Mayer) and in Oregon (Bly Ranger District). Owen was Chapter 44's longest serving president, having filled that position from 1994 to 1999. Owen was the glue that held Chapter 44 together and kept it moving forward for a number of years and it is through his diligence and dedication that we are able hold our meetings in the conference rooms at the Maryvale Medical Center. We'll remember Owen as one of our hardest workers and we'll miss his humor and the stories he told. “*You betcha!*”

The passing of three members of Chapter 44 in such a short time span reminds me to remind you that you should have documented your CCC story with someone. Write down your CCC experiences. Don't wait for someone to ask. Posterity will ask when it's too late and the researchers of tomorrow will be left to speculate or worse, to rely on the spurious accounts of today's revisionist historians who always want to blame America first.

Looking To The Future.....

October

We may have a surprise visitor at our October meeting, but since his schedule is somewhat tentative at this point, you'll just have to attend and take your chance! Date: October 21, 2006.

November

We have nothing special scheduled for the November meeting, however this is when we typically nominate officers for the December election. Date: November 18, 2006.

December

Remember, this will be our Christmas gathering. There won't be an official meeting, just time to enjoy company and raffle off items in the annual "loser's raffle." Date: December 16, 2006.

A Noble Effort, Richly Rewarded

Mackey and Audrey Clark sent a letter to the NACCCA Journal very simply outlining our CCC statue effort and seeking help from members nationwide. Due to their straightforward approach, we've received just over \$600 from NACCCA members both far and near! And, just when it seems we've received the last response, another letter with a check will arrive in the mail! We owe Mackie and Audrey a great big thank you for their efforts on the statue project and for their hard work in the past. With success like this from just one letter, I think I'll ask them to write to the NACCCA Journal every other month or so!

News From National

The national reunion, held in Dallas, Texas was reportedly a huge success. Unfortunately, Chapter 44 was not represented this year and it is certainly the hope that we'll have better luck next year. Early reports are that the reunion will be held in Cumberland Falls, Kentucky in late September 2007.

The NACCCA Board voted to change the organization's name to Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy and to merge with the Camp Roosevelt Legacy Foundation. This will be put to the membership for a vote. President Walter Atwood

reports that information will appear in an upcoming issue of The Journal. For the record, I personally support this move, as it will insure the perpetuation of NACCCA's vision and goals into the future.

We're on the Internet now! Don't forget that Joan Sharpe has very kindly placed our Chapter 44 newsletter's on the website of the Camp Roosevelt Legacy Foundation. Check them out at www.ccclegacy.org. Tell your friends and family members that they can keep up with Chapter 44 news on their computer!

Word From Maine

We received a nice letter from John and Thelma McLeod who have recently relocated back to Maine. It sounds as if they've settled right back into their activities there and while we miss having them as part of our group, we're sure glad to know they're managing to keep busy. Included with their letter was a donation of \$75 for our statue fund, which was certainly a lovely, generous gesture on their part. I will bring the letter to the next meeting and share it with all assembled. In the meantime, we'll say a prayer that this winter is not too long, or too cold. John and Thelma, the welcome mat is always out!



Thank you to the following for your recent donations to the CCC Statue Fund:

John and Thelma McLeod
William and Joan Reid
Larry & Mabel Brunson
Mr. & Mrs. David Van Amburg
Kenneth & Therese Gardiner
Marshall Gilbert

Christmas Is Coming!

We'll be having our annual Christmas festivities during the December meeting and, as has been our custom the past few years, we'll have a "loser's raffle" to give away some nice prizes.

For those of you who aren't familiar with the loser's raffle here's how it works: Every month, once the 50/50 raffle winner is drawn, we write our names on the backs of our losing raffle tickets and they are collected into a large can. No raffle tickets are sold at the December meeting; instead, we draw tickets from the collected loser tickets and simple prizes are awarded to each person whose name is drawn.

This year we may have a special drawing for only those in attendance at the meeting, so I encourage you to join us for our holiday celebration if you are able. In the past we've had some pretty nice gifts, including handmade items donated by Jack Duncan, framed 1st Day commemorative postal covers depicting the anniversary of the CCC and Franklin Roosevelt medals from the U.S. mint. If you have an idea for an inexpensive loser's raffle prize, we'd like to hear about it. Also, if you have an item to donate, we'd be grateful to have it.

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Like Wildfire, Stupidity Must Be Stamped Out Wherever It Is Found

Many of you know that I frequently search the Internet for information regarding the CCC, especially newspaper articles. In the past year I've stumbled upon at least two cases where individuals claiming to be "historians" have distorted the story of the Civilian Conservation Corps in order to promote some pet notion or theory.

A fellow by the name of Rex Curry wrote in an online article that the CCC was "military socialism" akin to the USSR and the Nazi Party and that the CCC helped to extend the Great Depression, "enlarged domestic poverty and led the country into WWII and large loss of life." (Hogwash!)

Mr. Curry's work is clearly the ranting of a self-obsessed lunatic. He frequently cites himself as a source of background information for his so-called

research and he rounds out his commentary by stating that the CCC "diverted almost 3.5 million men from productive work in a free market economy. In the process they developed a vivid sense of dependency, and that they were being controlled by the government." (Baloney!)

While Mr. Curry's comments are obviously the disjointed ramblings of a rabid ideologue, the writings of Richard Ebeling, another alleged historian, are actually somewhat frightening given that he has recently been a professor at college in Michigan.

In an article entitled "When the Supreme Court Stopped Economic Fascism in America," Mr. Ebeling made this comment about the Civilian Conservation Corps: "Much of the urban youth of America were rounded up and sent off to national forests for regimentation and mock military-style drilling as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps."

Until recently, Mr. Ebeling was a professor at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan. Which is to say, Mr. Ebeling is, or has recently been, a college professor teaching young people!

I sent emails to both Rex Curry and Richard Ebeling. Not surprisingly, I received a blathering reply from Mr. Curry in which he stated that my rebuttal to his comments about the CCC merely proved his point. Mr. Ebeling didn't have the guts or the decency to reply so I mailed a letter to his former boss at Hillsdale College, a Mr. Larry P. Arnn, president and former head of their history department. Mr. Arnn confessed that he knew little about the Civilian Conservation Corps, but that he has doubts about its "constitutionality." As a former head of the history department at the college level, I think it's sad that Mr. Arnn is not familiar with the CCC. Perhaps he's no more a historian than Mr. Ebeling or Mr. Curry.

If you have access to the Internet, look these two kooks up. If you see or hear of other people twisting the story of the CCC, try to set them straight or at least try to see that your counterpoint is available to sit alongside their distorted account. It's your story so long as you're willing to tell it and so long as you're willing to see that others tell it correctly.