

Merry Christmas 2006



Dear Friends and Relatives,
December 25, 2006

We wish you a very Merry Christmas from the Elks Lodge in **Chula Vista, California**. Chula Vista is about half way between San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico. This stop is a staging area for us while we wait for our Redding friends, **Jerry and Judy**, to arrive in their RV, and our friend, **Diana**, to fly in from Boise, Idaho. We will all be heading for Ensenada, Baja, Mexico on the 26th or 27th and will hook up with **Bob**, a friend of Jerry and Judy. We are expecting massive amounts of fun, but we will give you the details in our next letter.



Lobby of the old Coronado Hotel 2006

Chula Vista is a nice stop. It's close to a lot of interesting places. It is about 8 miles to San Diego, 8 miles to Mexico, only a few miles to a State Beach, and only a few miles to the San Diego Yacht Harbor. It is also a short drive to **Coronado** and the very beautiful and elegant old **Coronado Hotel**. What a grand place and what a grand beach. Yep, it also has a grand price. This time of year rooms start at \$220 a night. We sat out on the sun deck overlooking the beach and had a couple of beers. It was so beautiful that the draft beer at \$6.50 in a plastic glass almost seemed reasonable. The lobby had a magnificent and gorgeous Christmas tree. We had to take our pictures there. For some strange reason, we were the only couple wearing motorcycle jackets. Oh well, not everybody knows how to have fun.



Ice skating at the Hotel Coronado

Only in Southern California can you sit on a sun deck, get a tan, look at the Pacific Ocean beyond a beautiful beach and watch ice skating on an outdoor rink. Palm trees, sand, and ice skating. We just had to phone Diana in Boise, Idaho, where it was 11 degrees and snowing.

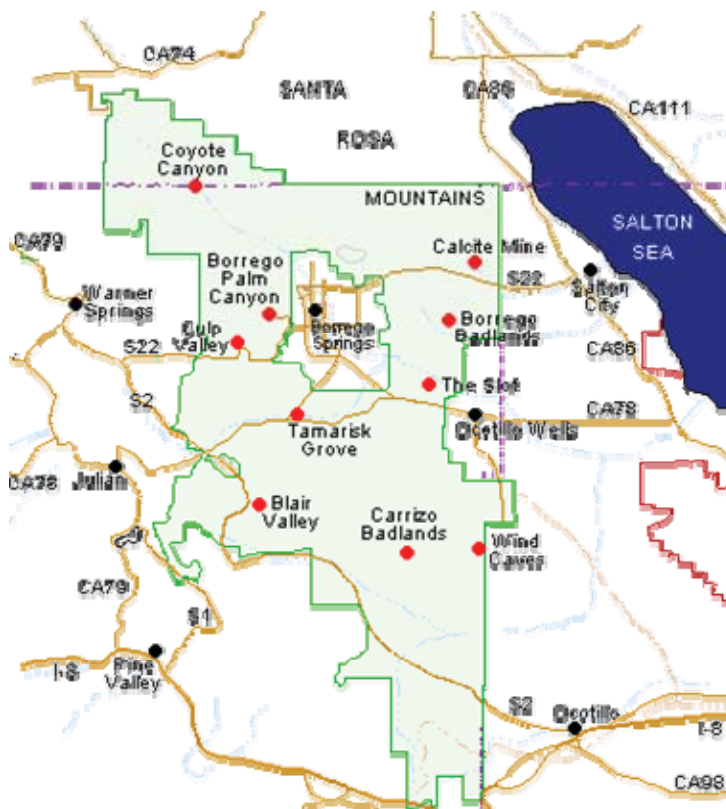
But, let's back up. You last heard from us in Indio, California. From Indio, we drove down the west side of the Salton Sea and then turned west and headed into the **Anza Borrego Desert State Park**. You may never have heard of it, but this is one very special State Park. First of all, it is big; 650,000 acres! It's one of the largest, if not the largest, State Park in the nation. If you want to ride dirt motorcycles, quads, or tour in a Jeep, this is the place for you. Ride horseback? This is the place for you. Go hiking? This is the place for you. The park has a fabulous visitor center and it's a great place to get an orientation on this unusual desert.



Anza Borrego Desert State Park



Anza Borrego Desert State Park



The State Park is shown light blue-green. Depending on where you are coming from, there are lots of ways to get there. California Highway 86 on the west side of the Salton Sea is an easy route. Coming in from the Pacific Coast via California Highway 78 through the town of **Ramona** is also an interesting route. This approach would also allow you to go through the quaint and interesting tourist town of **Julian**.

The terrain of this park varies tremendously. It goes from flat with lots of Jeep trails to extremely rugged like the above photos and then up into the mountains with pine trees. Right in the middle of the park is a nice little town called **Borrego Springs**. Hotels, restaurants and all the amenities. The town has several RV parks and there is also a State run RV park right near the visitor center. Of course, there are lots of camping sites and tent sites throughout the park. Miracle of all miracles, there are very nice places out in the desert to park your RV and ride your dirt bikes. The park actually caters to motorcycle riders and has built lots of sunshades with picnic tables for them.



Holiday Homes Mobile and RV Park in Borrego Springs, California

We are very fortunate to have friends, **Richard and Sandy**, who manage an RV park in Borrego

Springs. They provided us with a lovely, large and private place to park. The air was clear and the view was fabulous. We spent two lovely days there.



Elks RV Park in Chula Vista, California

That's our rig with the red motorcycle in front. They packed us in like sardines. You're lucky to get your slides out and you certainly can't put out your awning. You can barely walk between the rigs. What a contrast to Borrego Springs. Oh well, that's part of the RV lifestyle. Nevertheless, we will be glad when our friends get here and we can head for Mexico.



While Christmas trees, holly, and poinsettias are in short supply here, the Bird of Paradise plants are in full bloom. So from the land of palm trees, sun, sand, and tropical plants, until next time...

Home is where you park it.



Chuck & Donna