

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Local job fairs
See pages 5 & 12

New Tudor House
theater productions
See page 7

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CEDARPINES PARK • VALLEY OF ENCHANTMENT • CRESTLINE • TWIN PEAKS • RIMFOREST • AGUA FRIA • BLUE JAY • DEER LODGE PARK • LAKE ARROWHEAD • CEDAR GLEN • SKYFOREST • RUNNING SPRINGS • ARROWBEAR • GREEN VALLEY LAKE

Volunteers Wanted for Forest Cleanup Projects

By **RHEA-FRANCES TETLEY**
Staff Writer

The Bear Valley Protection Society (BVPS), centered in Running Springs, is conducting projects throughout the mountain communities to make the environment and forest healthier.

Led by Adam Creason, the group is seeking volunteers for this spring and summer activities of cleaning the forest and community areas. Last winter, 35 BVPS volunteers cleaned the forest from two large, former homeless encampments in Valley of Enchantment in Crestline. The completion of this project made that section of forest safe for everyone to enjoy hiking through and using again.

To begin this spring, BVPS will start with a much easier project. The first cleaning opportunity of 2025 is the Running Springs downtown area itself on April 26. The winter tourists often leave trash behind, and the town wants to look shiny clean again. BVPS will be meeting with those who want to volunteer behind Neo's Pizza in Running Springs at 9 a.m. for a Running Springs clean-up day. They invite all who

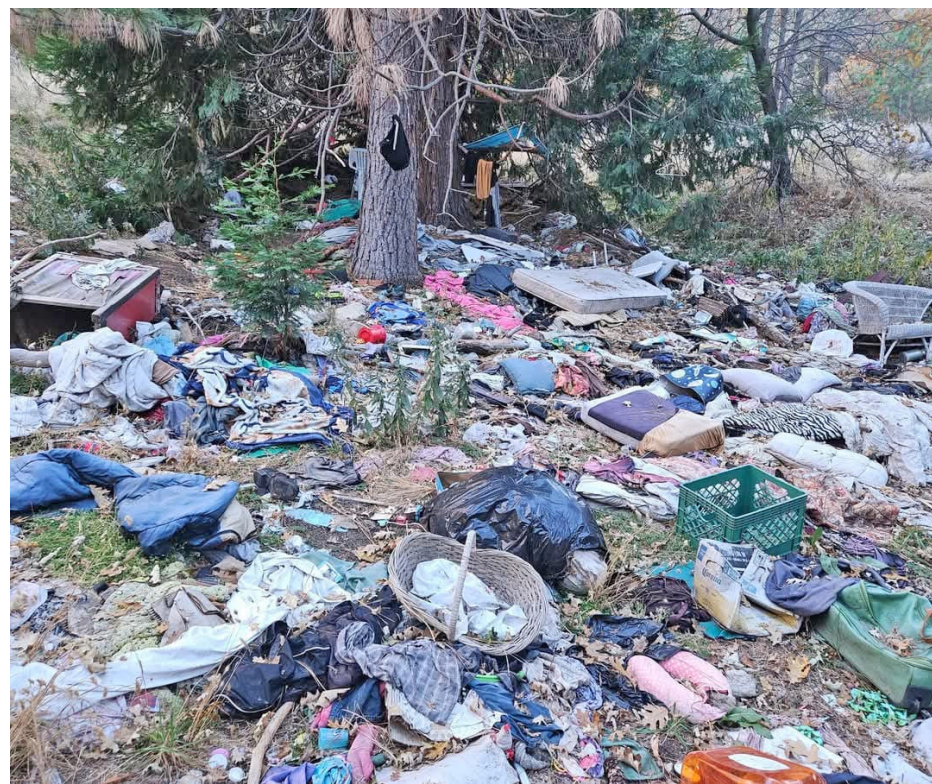
are interested in keeping our mountain communities clean to come and help, as many hands make the work easier.

"Together, we're making a difference and protecting the places we love," said Creason. "Just one hour of your time can make a huge difference."

This season, BVPS plans to clean up additional encampments and more, as they will be working with the U.S. Forest Service and the Rim Recreation and Park District and hope to work with several chambers of commerce. Through education and outreach that will, hopefully, play a key role in preventing illegal dumping. They have plans to work with the Forest Service to restore some of the forest that was damaged by dozer cuts from the Line Fire and partner with Rim Rec on growing native plants gardens.

"The mission of the Bear Valley Protection Society is to restore the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the San Bernardino National Forest," Creason said, adding, "Our forest is being destroyed by illegal dumpsites."

The group cleans up those illegal



Trash and debris left at an abandoned homeless encampment in Valley of Enchantment. (File photos)



Local residents partnered with Forest Service firefighters during last December's forest cleanup project.

dumpsites and hiking trails within the forest and local mountain communities, in coordination with local volunteers. Another arm of their efforts is planting Coulter Pine seedlings. They intend to plant 4,000 seedlings in the former Line Fire area this season and they have plans to establish a nursery to cultivate and grow

native plants for the rehabilitation of the area, in conjunction with the Forest Service. They also plan to remove invasive species from the forest. This will help preserve this vital ecosystem for future generations.

The group hopes to play a major role in the health and rehabilitation of the San Bernardino National Forest. The Bear Valley Protective Society is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. They believe, through these ongoing efforts, that they are making a tangible difference in the health and sustainability of our public lands. If you would like to be involved in these future projects or cleanups, contact Creason through the Bear Valley Protection Society's webpage, www.bearvalleyps.org.