

THE MOHAHVE MUSE



Mohahve Historical Society
P.O. Box 21, Victorville, Ca 92393



Volume 26 Issue 4
April 2023

President: Marcy Taylor, **VP:** Delvin Harbour, **Treasurer:** Carol Wiley, **Rec Secy:** Meera Maheswaran, **Corres Secy:** Stormie Reid
Directors: Mary Dutro, Dennis Hom, Eric Mandeson, Mike Phillips, Rick Schmidt

President's Corner

Happy Spring, MHS members!

April is here and I think we took care of April showers in March. I shouldn't have mentioned the word "weeds" last month, as my yard is now full of them, growing taller every day it seems. For some reason I was reminded of a poem a third grader taught me: "Spring has sprung. The grass is riz. I wonder where the flowers is?" Not very good English, but catchy. And as I was driving up to Barstow for the March 11 Fort Irwin fieldtrip, I saw fields of purple on both sides of the road in the Bell Mountain area and beyond.

On to other subjects. For those of you with a membership directory, please update the Cadenhead's phone numbers to read: Home (760) 244-9401 and Cell (760) 662-9032. Thank you.

It's recognition time. I would like to acknowledge Rick Schmidt and Julia Jackson, who for several years



have volunteered weekly at the Mohahve Historical Society research room at the Victor Valley College Library, operated by Librarian Leslie Huiner, also a MHS member. MHS volunteers, including myself



for about a year, have made it possible for High Desert residents, whether college students doing research projects, budding authors writing books, or people who just want to find something out, to have access to the vast collection available. Numerous books by local authors

cite Mohahve Historical Society or member Fran Elgin (who created the research room) in their credits or bibliographies. Recently another MHS member, Elaine Kendrick, also started volunteering. A big thank you to Rick, Julia, and Elaine for working tirelessly behind the scenes to keep local history alive.

Another shout out goes to MHS member Scott Johnson, author of "Hesperia: Gateway to the High Desert," for donating the proceeds of recent book sales to the Apple Valley Legacy Museum. Yes, our rent comes due every month. Thank you, Scott.

Remember our 8 year anniversary weekend March 31, April 1 and 2. The porch sale, silent auction, raffle, and museum visits will take place daily. Tickets for the Saturday night Ho-Down are on sale for \$15. Dinner and all entertainment is included. See details below.

Thanks to all of you for supporting local history.

Marcy

**Apple Valley Legacy Museum
8-Year Celebration!**

Fri, March 31 - Sat, April 1 - Sun, April 2
Apple Valley Inn, Bob Hope Cottage #153
20601 Hwy 18, Apple Valley, 92307

DAILY EVENTS (10 - 4pm)
Collectibles Sale, Silent Auction, Museum Visits
Vintage Treasures Raffle. RESULTS - Sunday 3pm

SATURDAY NIGHT HO-DOWN (4 - 7 PM)
Dinner and Entertainment for \$15.
Live Music: "Boni on the Keys" and "Sweet Gospel Jam"
Square Dancing led by "the Thunderbirds"
Delicious Vittles: "Old Town Dogs" Roy Rogers nephew David!
Museum visits, Western comedy skit, Sing-along

Tickets on sale NOW! \$15
Apple Valley Legacy Museum - Open: Mon - Sat 10-4, Sun 12-6
Or call 760-985-1918 Cash or check only

MHS website: www.mohahve.org **Email:** Mohahve64@gmail.com (Stormie Reid - Webmaster)
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Mohahve-Historical-Society-2022-101844115718783>

MHS Upcoming Events

- Apr. 27 **MHS Mtg.** Eric Mandeson "Historical Landmarks of Lucerne Valley"
- Apr. 28 **Fieldtrip. 10am**, Lucerne Valley sites.
- May 24 **Fieldtrip. 10am**, Kemper Campbell Ranch. Peggy Shaughnessy.
- May 25 **MHS Mtg.** Gary Whiteside "The Whiteside Family and Flying Tigers"
- Jun. 22 **MHS Mtg.** Anne Roark "Doble, the forgotten Ghost Town and Mine near Big Bear"
- Jun. 24 **Fieldtrip. 10am**, Big Bear Museum
- Jul. 22 **Fieldtrip. 10am**, Cajon Pass Tour, Parts 1 and 2
- Aug 26 **Fieldtrip. 10am**, Wrightwood Driving Tour
- Sep 28 **MHS Mtg.** John Beyer "Beyer's Byways: Amboy, Ca"
- Sep 30 **Fieldtrip. 10am**, McDonald Museum, SB
- Oct. 26 **MHS Mtg.** Joe Manners & Marcy Taylor "Ghosts that Haunt the Desert"
- Oct. 27 **Fieldtrip. 10am**, Tour Oro Grande Town and Cemetery.
- Nov.16 **MHS Mtg.** Speaker Dennis Hom "Growing Up in Old Town Victorville", Election of 2024 Board officers.
- Dec. 14 **Christmas Celebration**

Community Events

- Mar. 31 Apr. 1 ,2
Apple Valley Legacy Museum, 8th Year Anniversary Celebration at Apple Valley Inn, Bob Hope Cottage #153
- Apr. 15 **Oro Grande Roundup & Car Show**
10am-dusk, 18880 National Trails Hwy
- Apr. 30 **Clamper's Monument Dedication** at Dead Man's Point, Apple Valley, CA, 10am,
- May 6 **AV Flea Market**, 8am-1pm,
- Jun 10 **Village Street Fair**, 10am-2pm,
- Jun 23 **Route 66 Festival, Tulsa OK**, featuring -25 "Overground Railroad" by Candacy Taylor and Apple Valley Murray's Ranch.
- Jul. 4 **Freedom Festival**, Brewster Park, AV
- Aug. 12 **Rockin' Flea Market**
- Sep. 7 **Concerts in the Courtyard, AV**
- Sep. 14 **Concerts in the Courtyard, AV**
- Sep. 21 **Concerts in the Courtyard, AV**
- Sep. 28 **Concerts in the Courtyard, AV**
- Oct. 7 **Happy Trails Parade**, Street Fair, Car Show
- Oct. 14 **AV Air Show**
- Oct. 21 **AV Pet Show**
- Nov. 11 **Veteran's Day Parade**
- Dec. 2 **VV Christmas Parade**

MEMBERSHIP STATS

Life	33
Annual	65
Honorary	12
Total - active	130

April General Meeting

Be sure not to miss our April 27 meeting to learn more about a neighboring historic small unincorporated town on the east side of the



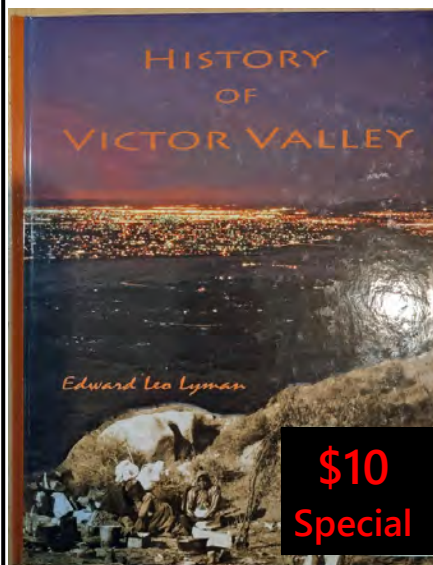
Victor Valley. Board member Eric Mandeson, a Lucerne resident, will introduce us to "Historic Landmarks of Lucerne Valley." If any of you have read "Lucerne Valley: A Wild West Town of Character(s)," (get the pun?) then you know the town has a long, interesting, exciting, and somewhat unusual history. As always, we will meet at the Lone Wolf Colony. Doors open at 6:30pm for a 7:00pm start time, and, by the way, Lucerne books will be available for purchase.

The following day April 28, yes **Friday**, not Saturday, we will take a trip to explore some of the sites covered in the presentation. Meet at 10:00am at the Chimney Rock monument on the south side of Highway 18 at Rabbit Springs Road. Other monument sites will include the 50th Anniversary of E Clampus Vitus, Mitsubishi Cement Cushenbury Plant, and Old Woman's Springs Ranch. In addition we will see Nelson's Studios and a few surprises, and maybe even learn a little bit about homesteading, mining, or bootlegging. This is a driving tour with stops along the way. Wear sturdy shoes as monuments may be on the dirt. At the conclusion of the tour, Eric has invited us for lunch at his house, which is close to our starting point and on the way back home for most of us. Sign up for this tour at the Thurs. night meeting, by stopping by the Apple Valley Legacy Museum, or by calling (760) 985-1918.

BOOK SALE!

Compliments of Mary Duto

"History of Victor Valley", still only \$10.00 per copy
Available at the General Meeting or Apple Valley Legacy Museum!



Many MHS members were instrumental in the proofing and publication of this book.

It is dedicated to Fran Elgin, past MHS Board member and Victor Valley College Librarian.

**\$10
Special**

Fort Irwin Field Trip by Marcy Taylor

March 11 marked the date of the long awaited fieldtrip to the Fort Irwin Museum, now known as the "General Robert W. Cone National Training Center and 11th ACR Heritage Center." Organized by Pat Schoffstall from the Mojave River Valley Museum and led by Heritage Center Director Ken Drylie, the trip was attended by three MHS members (Dennis Hom, Carol Wiley and Marcy Taylor,) five Mojave River Valley Museum members, and one guest from Las Vegas. The entry into the base went like clockwork, as all attendees had completed and submitted background check paperwork in advance. Ken met us at 10:30am on the nose at the main gate, and we were off!



Like many of our recent fieldtrips to larger museums, we were overwhelmed with more information than most of us could remember. The fast-talking docent with the photographic memory of names, places, and dates took us room to room, display to display, conflict to conflict, and around the world, loading us with information from the World War II era through the following decades. Some of the most interesting displays included six blue chairs salvaged (stolen?) from Saddam Hussein's palace, costumed characters including a Middle Eastern soldier dressed as a woman, two steel beams from the World Trade Center, Vietnamese War and Iraqi Freedom exhibits, replica bunkers and meal kits, a sign warning against entering East German territory 1 kilometer ahead, and a priceless vintage photo of the 11th Cavalry parading on horseback and riding in horse-drawn wagons in front of the Smithsonian Institute building.



Thank you, Pat, for inviting MHS board members to join you on such an educational outing. We certainly value our partnership with the Mojave River Valley Museum.

Bell Mountain & Sycamore Rocks Field Trip by Marcy Taylor

The Lord is testing my strength and endurance. After snow for my Feb. 23 presentation leading to very low attendance at the Lone Wolf Colony, then more snow leading to a cancelled Feb. 25 fieldtrip, He sent wind for the rescheduled March 4 trip. However, 11 hearty souls (9 members and 2 guests) had a fun informative experience, enjoyed beautiful scenery, and got a bit of exercise as well.

We met at Dale Evans and Waalew, the southeast corner of the Murray's Overall Wearing Dude Ranch, for an on-location dose of early Bell Mountain history, with Bell Mountain, Catholic Hill, and Sycamore Rocks all within plain view. The remains of the Murray's main ranch house, Pearl Bailey's recently remod-



eled home across the road, the row of cypress trees she planted, and other landmarks were pointed out. The two 1939 Herb Jeffries films, "The Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem Rides the Range" were both filmed right here.

After circling the ranch and a stop at Popago Trail, which leads straight to Sycamore Rocks where both films ended, we were off to see the Sidewinder Well (on the mule train route to Daggett) and a number of early homesteads, as well as current homes of the descendants of the 37 Black Bell Mountain homesteading families. Our next stop was the triplex, which housed the Bell Mountain Post Office, the store, and Golar Banks' Real Estate Office, now the home of Major Broyles III. Then it was off to the many ruins of Lily Raglan's guest ranch near by.

From there we traveled back south past the Broyles family's extensive homestead property, and to the current Apple Valley

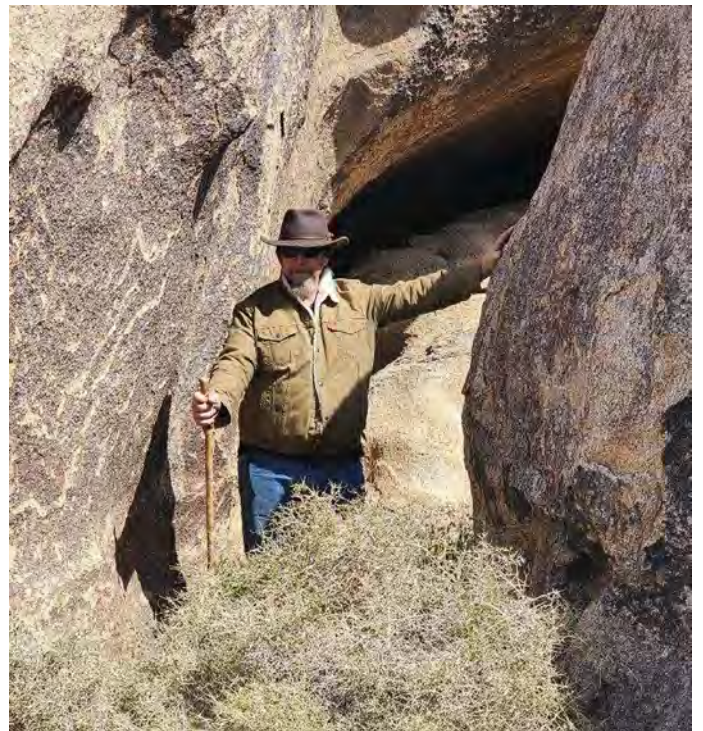


Airport, the original site of the McCarthy and Corwin Ranches, both white owned. An interesting fact is that Elmore and Harriet Corwin built a school on their ranch property for the local Black children, as it was too difficult for them to travel all the way to Victorville to get an education.

Since it was on the way to our last stop at Sycamore Rocks, we took a drive past the old home of Eva Conrad, publisher of "The Apple Valley News," who was the first local woman to get a pilot's license. At that time it was common for pilots to land on runways in their own yards. Perhaps that's why two dismantled airplanes still remain on her property. Lastly, Carol Voll, MHS member and owner of the property used for filming of old West-erns, including the two with an "all Colored Cast" starring Herb Jeffries, greeted us for the most interesting part of the fieldtrip. The group standing in front of the unusual and recognizable split rock, prominently featured in both films, made for a great photo



op. Another favorite photo was of board member Eric, playing the heroine's daddy, emerging from the cave in which he had



been held by the bad guys. It was easy to see why the beautiful gigantic boulders at this location were the perfect scenery for old westerns, before the encroachment of modern development.

Out with the Old, In with the New

by Marcy Taylor

Is that a good thing? Not if you're a historical society member with the mission of preserving and sharing history. Local landmarks that mean something to the old timers, as well as to some history-minded more recent desert transplants, are disappearing in the High Desert wind.

One by one the buildings in Victorville's Old Town, most along C, D, 6th, 7th and 8th Streets, the original thriving downtown area, are being lost. There early travelers would get off the train and check into the Turner or Stewart Hotel, patronize the local restaurants and stores, relax at the Green Spot, and even attend a rodeo. Later Route 66 travelers stopped to gas up and get a bite to eat, maybe even stay awhile. But due to fires, the homeless, and neglect, some parts of Old Town Victorville are becoming a thing of the past, as the buildings are subjected to the demo crew.

Across the river in Apple Valley, a newer town when compared to the railroad / Route 66 cities of Barstow, Oro Grande, and Victorville, some buildings are meeting a similar fate. I witnessed the demo of the original Bank of Apple Valley, whose stones of the unique circular outside vault now line my driveway. I watched as the old adobe real estate office on Highway 18 and Tao was razed after a car crash. It was heartbreaking to see the old Bennington and Smith real estate office, across from St. Mary's, make way for yet another Starbucks and a fast foods restaurant. Just recently, in the area known as Cotner's Corner at the intersection of Bear Valley and Central, the much loved Waffle Iron Cafe building (which served first as a service station and later a recycling plant) along with the market next door, were both demolished to make room for a much larger service station now being built on the property.

The most noticeable missing landmark is definitely the Hilltop House, destroyed beyond repair by fires and



vandalism. It will someday be rebuilt as the look-out point for the hiking trail, which people use daily, both for exercise and the amazing views from the top of Bass Hill.

Just this week I saw the demise of the Railroad Tie House on Waalew,



once a dentist's office and listed in the Apple Valley Historic Points of Interest booklet. Next went the Terri Lee Doll Factory, which was later Dee Gee Toy Company, and then the third location of the Apple valley Library. Only the foundation and the concrete deck that once surrounded the swimming pool remain.



Next in line to go will be the old Buffalo Trading Post building, despite being recently remodeled and fully occupied. Fortunately the Buffalo sign has been salvaged and will soon reappear in the Apple Valley Village area.



And the most heartbreaking will be the demo of what I consider to be the most beautiful building in Apple Valley, the fourth office of the Apple Valley Ranchos Development Company, most recently housing Agio Real Estate. The beautiful river rock architecture, both in side and out, the



beamed ceiling made of the old Tidewater and Tonopah railroad trestle, and the original wall-sized Apple Valley plot map that graces the main hallway, will soon come down.

Some caring citizens are taking pains to salvage as many of the treasures as possible, just as I salvaged the old bank vault stones. While the buffalo sign, the totem poles, and other artifacts will live on in a new location, it is not quite the same. The historic buildings and the many fond memories that go along with them, will be just that, memories.

The Cajon Crew by Marcy Taylor

Members of the Camp Cajon Crew, whose efforts are supported by 4 historical societies (Wrightwood, San Bernardino, Highland, and Mohave Historical Society), can often be spotted hard at work on Wagon Train Road off the I-15 and Hwy. 138, just above the truck weigh station. On my way back from our Jan. 28 MHS fieldtrip to San Bernardino, led by San Bernardino Historic and Pioneer Society President Nick Cataldo (also a CC team member), I stopped to check out the action.

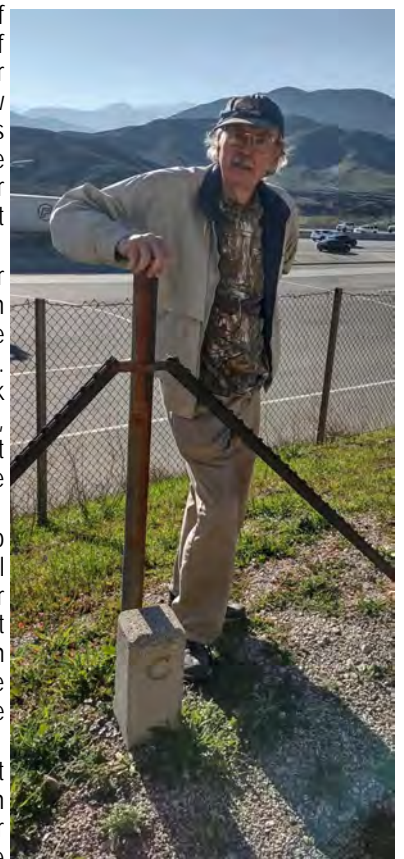


Mark Landis, shovel in hand, was placing an original piece of macadam (an old type of asphalt) from a 1916 alignment of National Old Trails Road on the Camp Cajon Scenic Rim trail for display. More pieces will be added allowing visitors to see how early roads in the area were paved. Nearby Gary Smith was showing off a California State "C-Marker" used by the state highway department to mark highway boundaries. This marker from a 1950's alignment of Route 66 was put on display at Camp Cajon September of 2022.

A few weeks later on February 21, MHS board member Dennis Hom and a friend were down in the pass previewing an upcoming July 22 fieldtrip of the Cajon Valley area, and there they were again, members of the CC team hard at work. Fighting the gusty wind, John Lenau, Gary Smith, and Mark Landis managed to install two permanent panels in the kiosk, replacing the two temporary panels that were installed last summer. According to Mark, the final two on the opposite side should be in place in four or five months.

Besides all the manual labor and physical improvements to the old Camp Cajon site in the pass, the team members also constantly expand their knowledge of local history with hikes and adventures to interesting sites. One example is the recent March 25 walking tour of the West Cajon Valley to view the amazing engineering feat of the Los Angeles and Independent railroad grades. At the meeting spot at Mormon Rocks members of the CC team provided attendees with some historical background, along with handout materials, of these two early railroad lines. From there tour guide Dan McMaster, a knowledgeable tunnel engineer, took over. He shared with the group the geology of the area, and the arduous task of digging a 325 foot tunnel at this site.

The next time you drive up the I-15 through the Cajon Pass, stop off on Wagon Train Road, not just to gas up or grab a hamburger at the McDonalds, but to drive one block farther and visit the Camp Cajon site: the two monuments, the relocated table (sponsored by Lucerne), the new kiosk, and the other features now available for travelers to see. And as you continue up the hill, observe the location of the rail lines, and imagine the job of the early railroaders who successfully connected the upper desert with the San Bernardino area, setting the stage for the transportation of goods up and down the Cajon Pass as we know it today.



GHDC Evening Affaire by Marcy Taylor

The yearly Greater High Desert Chamber Evening Affaire was another smash hit with hundreds of Chamber members in attendance at the SBC Fairgrounds Sunday March 6. Outstanding entertainment by Lady Tequila and Friends, back for their



3rd appearance, a silent auction of wonderful gifts donated by Chamber members, a delicious selection of food choices provided by local restaurants and caterers, a photo booth, a display of paintings by local artists, a gift bag of goodies, and lots of networking made for a great event.

Stormie Reid and Marcy Taylor were happy to represent Mohave Historical Society and the Apple Valley Legacy Museum, in a continuing quest to take advantage of our membership and keep our names out there.



Green Book Presentation by Marcy Taylor

It was a small but attentive crowd for the "Route 66 / Green Book" presentation featuring two Apple Valley ranches: the Lily Raglan and the Murray's Overall Wearing Dude Ranch, both located in the Bell Mountain area. After having to consolidate a 60 minute presentation into 20 minutes in Needles, I was looking forward to sharing this important part of local history with many MHS members and members of other organizations that had been invited. Unfortunately "Old Man Winter" had other ideas! Sometimes things just don't work out the way you plan.

The five-part slideshow consisted of the two original sections developed in 2014, "The Raglan Ranch" and "The Murray Ranch," in response to a request from Lynne Miller for help with Frank Norris's National Parks Service project involving locating all of the hundreds of Green Book sites from Chicago to Los Angeles. After learning about this project from local Route 66 Association member Sharon Foster, I delved into the research, with assistance from graduate student Jennifer Thornton who was writing her thesis on Bell Mountain homesteading families, and our own Fran Elgin of MHS. It was an exciting project.

With the recent help of Board member Stormie Reid, three more sections were added to the presentation: Candacy Taylor's 2019 visit to Apple Valley Legacy Museum and the Murray Ranch site; our resulting inclusion in the Smithsonian Traveling Green Book Exhibit, of which Candacy is the curator; and the discovery of Nolie Murray's gravesite at the 11th Street Victor Valley Memorial Park. His gravestone reads: "Founder of the World's Largest Negro Dude Ranch."

One of my most interesting additions to the presentation was the discovery of the first edition of the "Apple Valley News" with

Newton Bass (yes, the same Newton Bass who had many racial restrictions in the early AV CCR's) inviting everyone in town to the Murray's Easter sunrise service on Catholic Hill. Each year a preacher from Los Angeles and an all Black choir was bussed up to perform on a platform placed halfway up the hill, just as the sun rose over the top and white doves were released. Our own Bruce Hollenbeck provided his mother's black and white photos of the extravaganza, taken on her old Brownie film camera. Later Dick Garrison who holds the title of Victorville's longest continuous resident (his entire 94 years) took me to the exact spot captured in the Hollenbeck photos, while describing the memorable events in vivid detail.

After the presentation, many of the attendees expressed their appreciation, some stating they had little or no knowledge of the important role these ranches played, in the context of what was going on in the rest of the country at the time. Although the fieldtrip to Bell Mountain sites including the Murray Ranch and Sycamore Rocks, where scenes from the 1939 Herb Jeffries' movies were made, had to be postponed one week due to the weather, it was worth the wait to see where these two timeless movies made history, being filmed with "an all colored cast at a colored location."

As I watched part of the NAACP Image awards the Saturday evening after my presentation, I realized just how much things have changed in the past 86 years, and how far Hollywood has come. There is no question of the importance of the role the Murrays, Herb Jeffries, Pearl Bailey and others, and dear old Apple Valley, played in more than just our local history.



Dennis Hom and Meera Maheswaran receive their Lifetime Member certificates.



MOHAHVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 Founded 1964 Website: www.mohahve.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____
 STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
 PHONE: _____
 EMAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE

ANNUAL: FAMILY/COUPLE \$30 SINGLE \$20
LIFETIME: FAMILY/COUPLE \$200 SINGLE \$150

MEMBERSHIP DATE: ____/____/____

Newsletter (MUSE) delivery option:
 Email USPS

RENEWAL NEW MEMBER

Questions? Call (760) 985-1918
 Please make your check out to:
 Mohahve Historical Society

Mail the completed form and your payment to:
 Membership
 Mohahve Historical Society
 P.O. Box 21, Victorville, CA 92393

PLEASE USE THIS FORM TO RENEW OR CHANGE YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS
 (Name, Address, Phone, Email) and submit by USPS, Email or in person at a general meeting)

MHS GENERAL MEETING

Lone Wolf Colony
 23200 Bear Valley Road, Apple Valley, CA 92308
 7:00pm - doors open at 6:30pm



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 Post Office Box 21
 Victorville, CA 92393

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