Shutdown, if I ever hear that word again it will be too soon. As we all begin to pick up the pieces and move on, I think we will find that there was not a corner of our country that was not adversely affected by this event. Even with keeping the Furnace Creek Visitor Center open for most of those 35 days, there have been impacts to our bottom line. With visitation slowed by daily reports of the conditions of National Parks and the added expense of keeping the visitor center open, DVNHA will be in recovery mode for a while.

Thanks to the generous support from hundreds of you, that recovery will not take as long as it might have. We cannot thank you all enough for the support and the kind words we received. People love their National Parks!

I would also like to thank our partners at the National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The shutdown was not their idea and if it was rough on us it was doubly so on them. They worked tirelessly to make sure we could get the agreement done to reopen the Visitor Center at Furnace Creek and also tried repeatedly to figure out a way to reopen the Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. We could not have better partners.

That is one of the reasons I am proud to let you know that the first week following Death Valley National Park reopening, we made a $9,000 donation to support a research study at Devils Hole. We were also able to fully support the Death Valley Dark Sky Festival in March by paying for a shade tent for kids programs and provide transportation for a keynote speaker. The park’s education programs have continued and R.O.C.K.S. field trips that had to be cancelled have been rescheduled for later this spring.

Our partners put in several aid requests this year. Right now three interns are working with NPS to support R.O.C.K.S., the Jr. Ranger Ambassador Program, and Interpretation Department. Other Science and Wilderness Projects may get put on hold as a result of the shutdown. The great thing about being a private non-profit is that we can be flexible and hold on to donated money until the Park is ready for the project. We don’t have a “spend it or lose it” problem. You know the money you’ve donated to dedicated funds may not get spent right away, but it will get spent on a great project that will have an impact.

In the end, there are a couple of things we should all know from what we just went through. First, that public land does not belong to “you” alone; it belongs to “all of us”. It should be treated with respect, you should not do anything in Death Valley that you would not do in your own back yard. Second, the best way to support public lands is by visiting them. So come see us in Death Valley NP and Ash Meadows NWR. There is no better time to be here than spring.

Speaking of spring, we have had a fair amount of precipitation in January and February, so we are all on the lookout for spring wildflowers. We have Desert Gold beginning to come up right in front of the DVNHA office. Keep an eye on our Facebook and website for wildflower updates.

We featured the 2019 Wildflower Shirt in this edition, but we also have a new Wildflower Coffee Cup you can also purchase online with us if you can’t visit in person.

Please see inside for details on last year’s accomplishments. We did some really great things. Until next time,

David

Death Valley National Park is collaborating with UNLV to study oxygen consumption rates of the Devils Hole pupfish. Measuring these rates is a means to estimate the metabolic needs of an individual pupfish. NPS hopes the information collected will help them to better manage Devils Hole to benefit the ecosystem and the ultimate survival of the fish that inhabit it. The $9,000 provided will allow for modification of existing equipment to conduct field experiments.
2018 IN REVIEW—You helped provide $393,667 in aid to Death Valley National Park and Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge from Oct. 1, 2017 - Sept. 31, 2018. Death Valley had a visitation of ~1.5 million and ~15,000 experienced the wonders of Ash Meadows. DVNHA provided 10,840 hours of service to 115,448 visitors plus 6,216 hours of educational programming. This support provided transportation grants that helped hundreds of school kids visit this amazing outdoor classroom and some much needed projects to help interpret the area to visitors from all over the world.

Aid to Death Valley National Park: $348,130
- $287,469 - Staff time in Death Valley
- $27,108 - Dantes View Tactile Topo Model Map
- $17,158 - Death Valley R.O.C.K.S. Program
- $6,101 - DVNP Video Project
- $2,502 - Miscellaneous aid
- $2,072 - NPR Radio Tower
- $1,993 - MarsFest support
- $1,928 - Scotty's Castle Historic Preservation and flood relief
- $1,000 - Junior Ranger Program
- $293 - Donations of inventory
- $261 - Equip. to repair pupfish video display
- $245 - Search and Rescue

Aid to Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge: $45,537
- $37,520 - Staff time in Ash Meadows
- $5,000 - Duck Stamp Contest
- $1,091 - Miscellaneous aid
- $1,056 - Volunteer Stipends
- $525 - Transportation Grant for Las Vegas school visit
- $345 - Donations of inventory

DVNHA’s financial information is published online for public disclosure.
To view please visit: http://www.guidestar.org/profile/95-2083126

Support for Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge helps keep the Visitor Center open more days and provide support for programs and volunteers like Hal who has just been recognized as the 2019 National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer of the Year!

Students explored this land of extremes with park rangers and educational interns provided by DVNHA. The Death Valley R.O.C.K.S. education program saw a 70% increase in participation from the previous year. 2,730 students received 400 hours of educational programming. Twenty-seven schools had 95 field trips funded with larger class sizes than before!
What a year!

New transmitting equipment purchased for Rogers Peak keeps NPR radio broadcasting in Death Valley. You can tune in at 88.7 FM radio next time you are in the Park.

The last episode of a series of interpretive videos made possible by a 2015 $50,000 donation from Rio Tinto was produced. Keane Wonder Mine, Skidoo and other interesting topics exploring Death Valley can be found on Death Valley National Park’s Youtube page: youtube.com/user/DeathValleyNP.

Keane Wonder Mine Reopening

Thanks to the Fund for People in Parks, a three-dimensional bronze tactile topo model was designed, fabricated and installed at Dantes View.

Support for 2018 MarsFest included printing signs and schedules, supplies for kids programs and support for presenters by providing transportation to their program locations throughout the Park.

Junior Ranger Adventure

A new Junior Ranger Book was produced with editing and design funded through DVNHA. Participation in Junior Ranger programs also increased 33%!
Native to the Southwestern United States, the Bigelow Monkeyflower, also commonly known as Bigelow’s Monkeyflower (Mimulus bigelouii) was originally identified by A.Gray. It is an annual desert herb that produces an erect stem. The plant color varies as well as shape and size, but can grow up to 9 inches tall. The tubular base of the flower is surrounded by a purple or reddish-green ribbed calyx (typically forming a pattern of spirals that encloses the petals and forms a protective layer around a flower) in a bud of hairy sepals with long lobe tips.

The pointed oval or rounded leaves are each up to 3.5 centimeters long and arranged in opposite pairs about the stem. The trumpet-shaped flower corolla is 1-2 centimeters long. The corolla has two upper lobes and three lower, and is generally magenta or deep pink in color with darker red, purple, and yellow spots in the throat.

This flower has recently been reclassified as (Diplacus bigelovii) by G.L. Nesom after the family Phrymaceae was redefined. The species had formerly been classified under the Figwort family: Scrophulariaceae.