



## Spring Valley Lake Association

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### Message from the Board President for SVLA Breeze October 2015

Following a survey of the community and much discussion, the name *Spring Valley Lake Community Center* was selected as the new name for our community building on Rolling Ridge Drive, where we hold many social events, board meetings, and other activities throughout the year. The survey showed over 80% of respondents favoring a name with Spring Valley Lake Community Center in it. Our staff will develop the appropriate signage for the building and we should see the new name in lights soon. Thanks to the Planning Committee, staff, and members who participated in this effort!

The county has kicked off the long-awaited Phase 1 of the road repair project within SVL and the work should be completed by the end of November. Phase 1 will resurface about 3.5 miles of the most travelled and damaged roads. We don't have a start date for Phase 2 yet, but another 2 miles of our roads will be resurfaced during that project.

During the road planning process, I was surprised to learn that none of our real estate taxes go towards maintaining county roads, including those in SVL. I often hear the argument that because SVL property owners pay more tax dollars than many other high desert property owners, we should have more money spent on our roads. However, the main sources of county road repair funds are gasoline taxes and the Measure I sales tax - and neither of these is tied to property values or real estate taxes. Of course, the competition for these road funds is great since we live in the largest county in the United States (over 20,000 square miles). While we will continue to work with county officials to get our share and improve our roads in SVL, our thanks go out to Supervisor Lovingood and Public Works for the much needed road repairs we will be receiving over the coming months.

We get occasional interest and questions about our lake and how the water accounting process occurs, so I'll try to briefly summarize the process using a familiar analogy. Our lake is similar to a swimming pool where the bottom drain is always partially open, the filler hose always on, and the water level is maintained just below the top so it doesn't overflow when it rains. The "drain" for our lake is always kept open so there is a constant release of water into the Mojave Narrows to keep fresh water flowing through our lake. SVLA receives credit for all the water we release to the Narrows in this manner. Since lake water is always flowing out of the lake to the Narrows, the "filler spigot" for our lake must be kept on to keep it at a constant level. The filler hose is a combination of 1) SVLA-owned wells and, 2) water that is received through the SVL Country Club from the Mojave Fish Hatchery. SVLA gets charged for all the water that flows into the lake from these two sources. In a perfect world, if all the water we put into the lake simply flowed through it and out to the Narrows, the two amounts would offset each other and we would have no water bill for our lake.

However, we don't live in a perfect world and Mother Nature takes her toll on our lake water through evaporation and leakage, just as in many pools. These two losses make us turn the "filler spigot" on even harder to replace these additional losses, and we get charged for this additional water. While we do get some allowance for these losses, we don't get enough to cover all the losses, so we must replace the extra water we use annually by either leasing it from someone like the Mojave Water Agency, or purchasing permanent water rights, like we did in 2014. This entire process is monitored by a court-appointed Watermaster for the Mojave River basin.

While our water rights purchase last year was not enough to completely cover our annual lake water use, it came pretty close this year by covering all but 211 acre-feet (an acre-foot of water is about 325,000 gallons), which will cost SVLA

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about \$90,000, compared to over \$400,000 in 2010 (\$500,000 at 2015 water prices). As water prices continue to rise every year, the benefit of SVLA owning permanent water rights for our lake will continue to grow on into the future. If it weren't for the allowance we receive every year for losses and the permanent water rights we currently own, the annual water bill for our lake would be over \$1 MILLION dollars a year!

I hope you now better appreciate this valuable asset we own that gave our community its name, and better understand the process of keeping it filled. It would be nearly impossible for a community in California today to re-create an amenity like our lake. It truly adds value to all our homes, no matter what part of Spring Valley Lake you live in.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held at 6PM on October 27 in the Community Center.

Scott Eckert, SVL Board President