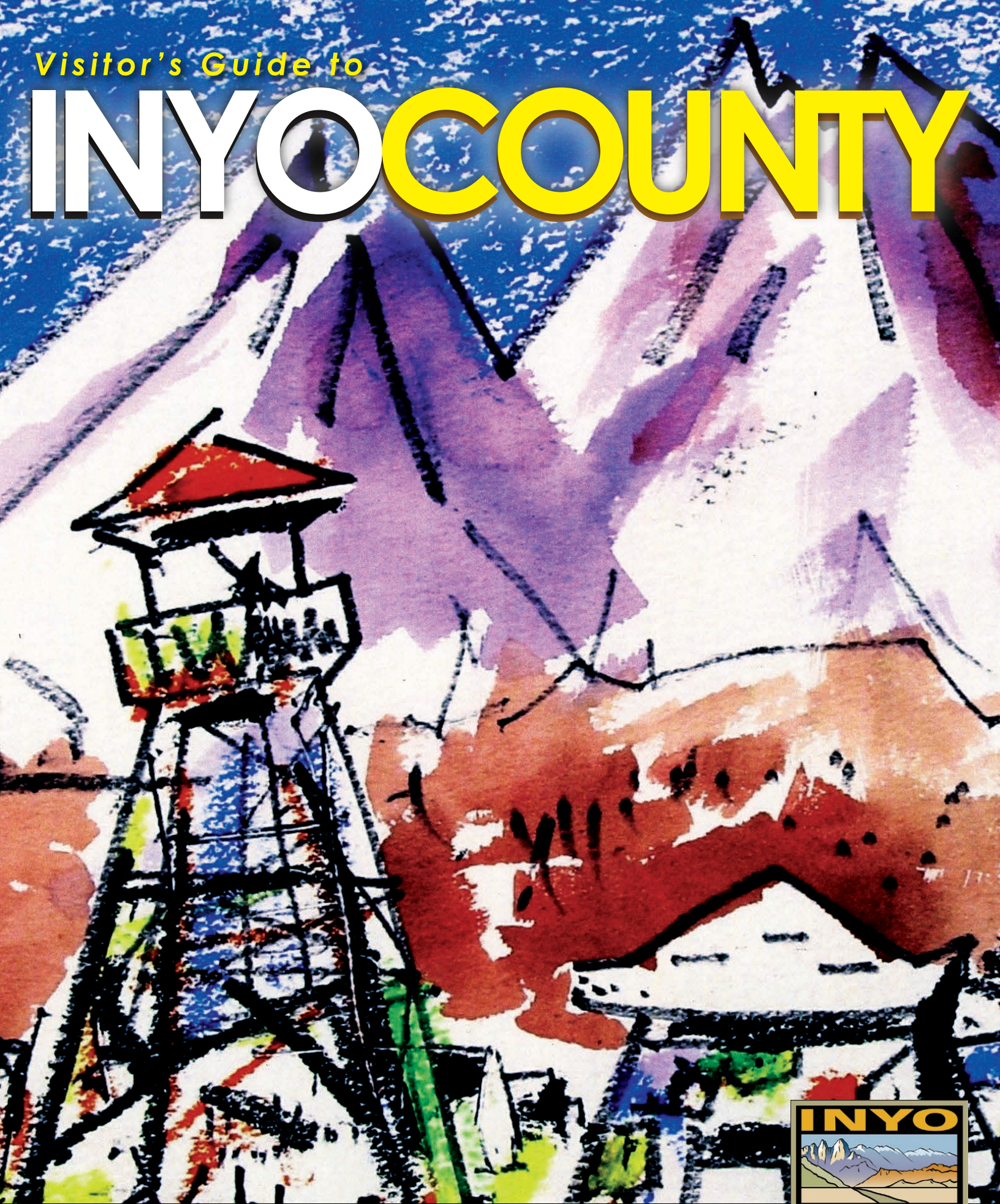


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INYO COUNTY



SEVENTH EDITION

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The Other Side of California

DEATH VALLEY AND THE EASTERN SIERRA

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Manzanar National Historic Site

By Patricia Biggs



Cemetery Monument

Along Hwy. 395 between Lone Pine and Independence, a lone guard tower marks the edge of Manzanar National Historic Site. The square-mile site is rich with history that testifies to the human determination to make the best of hard times. During World War II, more than 10,000 people of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated under watch from eight guard towers like the one near the highway. A five-strand barbed-wire fence marked the area in which those people could move freely, and military police checked passes when people entered or left the secure area through sentry gates.

Within that barbed wire, the people created beauty. They dug ponds and lined them with concrete and beautiful rocks from the Sierra and Inyo ranges. They played musical instruments, painted murals, carved

wooden sculptures, and made silk flowers.

Outside the fence, they farmed 440 acres, worked a chicken ranch and hog farm, supplying as much as two-thirds of the food needed for the center. No one tried to escape, but stories abound of people slipping under the western fence to fish for trout in the streams and lakes of the Sierras.

After Manzanar War Relocation Center closed on November 21, 1945, the guard towers were removed, yet they remained a powerful icon of confinement. The late artist Henry Fukuhara often portrayed a Manzanar guard tower, sentry post, and the cemetery monument in his watercolor paintings. An example of his work is featured on the cover of this Visitor's Guide to Inyo County.

Congress established Manzanar National Historic Site on March 3,

1992. After 70 years, the site still holds artifacts attesting to the war years: foundations, barbed wire, marbles, rock gardens, a cemetery, and more. All are preserved and protected under federal law. The 1944 Manzanar High School auditorium is now the Visitor Center. It is open daily except December 25. Admission is free.

Inside the Visitor Center, watch a 22-minute award-winning film, Remembering Manzanar, narrated by Japanese Americans who had been incarcerated here during World War II. Exhibits include a 3-D model of Manzanar War Relocation Center and artifacts such as the blue star banner that Nawa Munemori hung in her barracks window until her son died fighting in Italy. Families with youngsters should be sure to explore the Visitor Center toy room. It is reminiscent of the Toy

Continued on page 4



Rock Garden

Continued from page 3

Loan Library operated by Manzanar's Education Department.

Outside, a residential block offers two replica barracks and a mess hall for visitors to learn what life was like in Manzanar during WWII. An archeolo-

gist and his team have excavated and stabilized several of the rock gardens, adding inviting spots to stop along a tour road.

The cemetery monument is perhaps the most iconic symbol of Manzanar. Every year on the last Saturday

in April, about 1,500 people make a pilgrimage to the cemetery in honor of those who lived and died here from 1942 - 1945. Beyond honoring the past, the annual Pilgrimage reaffirms the promise Nidoto nai yoni – "let it never happen again."



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The Visitor Center at Furnace Creek

By David Woodruff

The Visitor Center at Furnace Creek has been as much a "must see" in Death Valley National Park as the famed Sand Dunes and the Badwater salt pan since its opening in 1960. For over 50 years, visitors to Death Valley had enjoyed the large-scale relief map, the many exhibits and the tens of thousands of presentations made by National Park rangers.

But unlike the Sand Dunes and the other geologic features of the Park, the passing of the years had not been kind to this fondly thought of structure. The familiar exhibits had become dated, many items were in need of repair or replacement and of most concern, and the 50-year-old structure had become the mostly costly structure in Death Valley to operate. The electric bill alone ran over \$45,000 a year!

In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allowed the Park Service to begin designing the rehabilitation of this facility. User fees to federal recreation lands paid for the visitor center reconstruction. The

Continued on page 6



Continued from page 5
Park Service conducted a series of concept design open houses where everyone from grade school and college students, the general public, the park staff and park stakeholders shared involvement in the project.

These strategy sessions provided a wealth of ideas and new concepts with a primary emphasis on creating exhibits that told of the story of natural and geological history of the Park, and to tell the public about the Timbisha

Shoshone Native Americans who had resided in Death Valley for hundreds of years.

The new exhibits provide opportunities for visitors to learn about Death Valley in a more interactive manner. Realistic models of desert creatures are available to touch and one can pull levers in the geologic section to learn how the Basin and Range province (which Death Valley is part of) was formed. Throughout the exhibits, videos provide detailed information on

a variety of subjects. The old favorite relief map was replaced with a beautiful 3-D map accompanied by informational videos. And the Timbisha Shoshone exhibit features hand woven baskets and artifacts. Videos narrated by tribal members tell about their people and why they call Death Valley home.

Terry Baldino, Death Valley National Parks Chief of Interpretation states, "In the new exhibit hall, exhibit designers made the deliberate decision

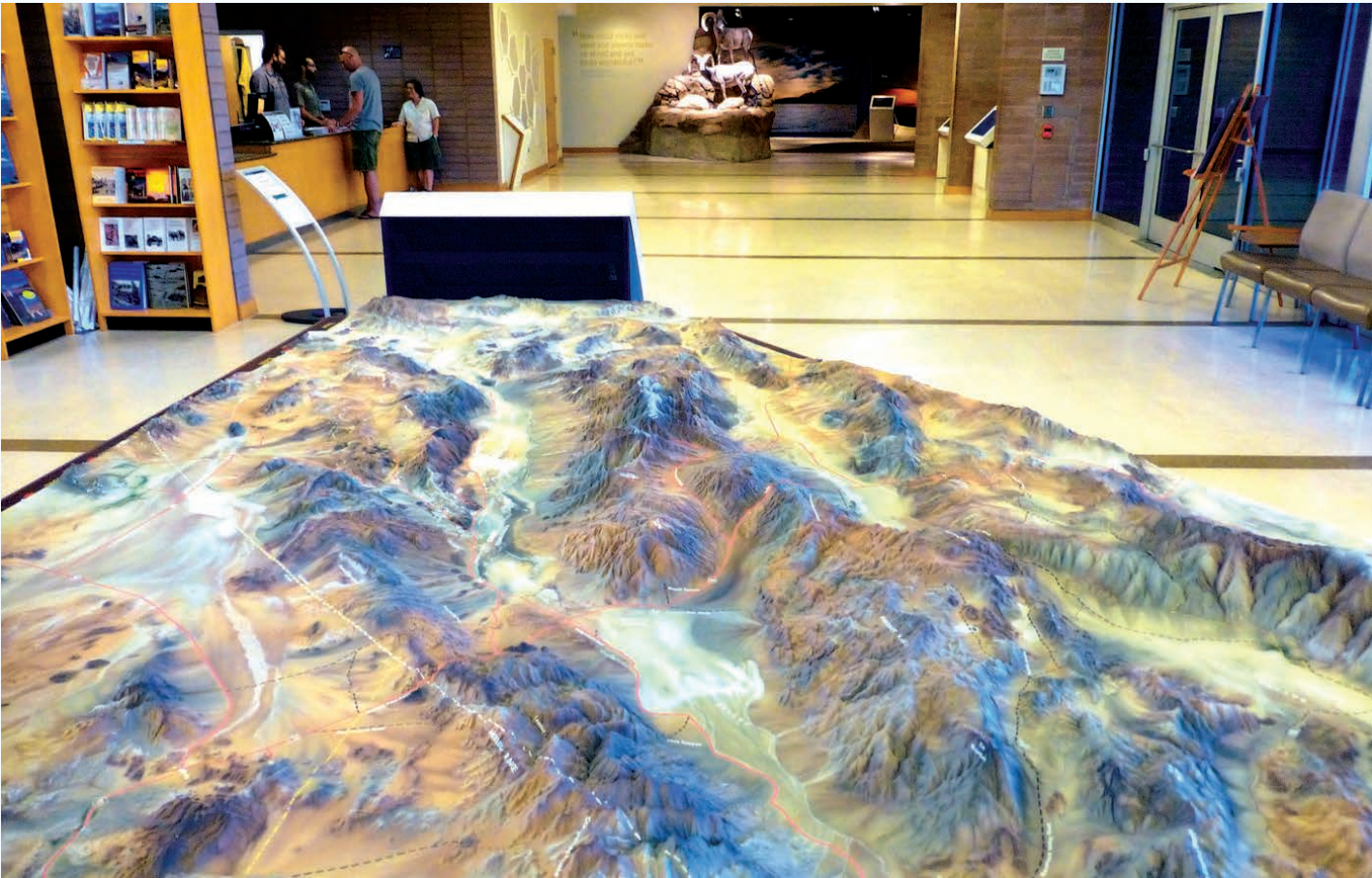
to not label every animal, plant and geologic feature. We want people to have a sense of self exploration and discovery and perhaps peak their curiosity to learn more and come and ask about that lizard or geologic formation." Baldino adds that the night sky display is one of the most popular exhibits. Visitors step inside the exhibit to experience Death Valley National Park's star studded sky and hear a variety of nocturnal sounds and howling animals.

And to compliment the new interpretive features of the Visitor Center, several major upgrades and improvements were made to make the building much more energy efficient. Among the many improvements was the installation of triple pane windows, a new roof with more insulation, an air-lock entry to limit cool air loss, insulation between the old brick wall and the new inner wall and the installation of a more efficient heating and cooling system. These improvements have reduced energy consumption by over 33%.

The official celebratory ribbon cutting for the rehabilitated Visitor Center was held November of 2012 and the guest and event lists were fitting for this largest national park (outside of Alaska). At the top of the list was an appearance by the famed Borax Twenty Mule Team. A collaboration of extraordinary engineering with amazing animal skills, the Twenty

Mule Teams were used to haul borax out of Death Valley during the 1880s. The sight of twenty mules, in a string over 120 feet long, pulling a set of wagons designed to haul loads over 72,000 lbs, across some of the most torturous terrain anywhere, is something this author will long remember. Past Park Superintendents and legends from Death Valley's past were also present for the re-opening.

With the newly refurbished and remodeled Furnace Creek Visitor Center, there has never been a better time to visit Death Valley. A wealth of information awaits you, to provide ideas and information on where to visit and to help you better understand this land of mystery and illusion.



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North Death Valley: Full of Life and Adventure

By Charles James

The ocean is a desert, with its life underground, and a perfect disguise above.

From “A Horse with No Name”, 1972 hit song by the band America.

If it were not for the approximately million visitors that come to Death Valley every year, it might seem a very dangerous place to live, much less visit, but in truth it is only dangerous for the careless or the unprepared.

Many that live close to Death Valley in surrounding counties have never visited the park. In reality the park is far different from what is implied by the name given to it during the California Gold Rush in 1849 by prospectors on their way to gold fields. For the record, only one death was recorded during the Gold Rush from 1848 to 1855.

Far from “dead”, the park is the home to more than 1000 species of plants; fifty of which are found nowhere else in the world. Within its borders lies the hottest, driest, lowest point in North America. The 5,269 square miles of park has incredible desert scenery, teems with desert flora and fauna which, as you pass from the lowest areas of the park to its highest peaks, crosses four major plant zones, each with its own climate at different elevations.

The park also has a widely diverse and active geology, untouched wilderness, and sites of historical and cultural interest from prehistoric Indian cultures to gold and silver prospectors, including its most notorious and beloved flimflam con artist, Walter Scott, also known as “Death Valley Scotty.”

The best times to make the drive

are in the winter and in the spring. You can enter the park from the east or the west. From the east you will pass through Pahrump, Nevada, or from the west, where you will pass through Panamint Springs Resort. The Panamint Resort Restaurant is a great place to stop for food and drink, featuring a well-stocked bar and some really great food.

Spring is the park’s busiest time and visitors are cautioned to remember that it can get extremely hot! Remember to always carry plenty of water; at least one gallon a day per person, and if you leave your car, always take water along with you— always! Remember an old Arab proverb, “In the desert water is worth more than gold.”

Visitors should also never travel on unmarked roads and should always let someone know where you are going. If you leave your car, leave a note on the dashboard. Always check the weather report as sudden storms can often cause dangerous flash floods.

Furnace Creek is centrally located in the park. It is an oasis fed by underground springs and the most

developed part of the park. It features all kinds of accommodations for visitors, including the beautiful, luxurious and historic Furnace Creek Inn, an AAA-rated four-diamond resort that pampers every guest. The Inn was built in 1927 by the Pacific Coast Borax Company for guests to enjoy the uncommon beauty of Death Valley and was finished in 1935.

There are also other lodging available such as the Ranch at Furnace Creek, Panamint Springs Resort, and Stovepipe Wells Village Hotel to mention just a few. There are also RV parks and campgrounds. The Park’s Visitor Center is also located in Furnace Creek and it is a must-stop for information on what activities are taking place, the best places to go, travel tips and what routes best take you to where you are going.

From Furnace Creek drive north. Stop along the way at the Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes, which are about 85 feet high, created by the confluence of winds that drop the sand here. Make a stop at Old Stovepipe Wells situated on the eastern edge of the sand

dunes. Old Stovepipe Wells was once a life-saving source of water in northern Death Valley.

After Stovepipe Wells you can turn north on Scotty’s Castle Road. Head up to Titus Canyon, which has rugged mountains, colorful rock formations, a ghost town, petroglyphs, wildlife, rare plants and spectacular canyon narrows.

Visitors to Titus Canyon from the east often stop at Rhyolite ghost town before starting the one-way drive. The park service says that Titus Canyon is the most popular backcountry road in Death Valley National Park.

After Titus Canyon, continue north to Ubehebe Crater where you will find a crater that is 500 feet deep and one-half a mile across, the result of a major volcanic event about 2,000 years ago in which rising magma (molten rock) turned groundwater to steam with a violent result of steam and rock building until it exploded, spewing rock over a 6-mile area.

Visit the Salt Creek Interpretative Trail, home to the endangered pupfish. It is 4-miles from the Scotty’s Castle Road turn-off and one of the few places in Death Valley that has a spring.

Then head over to Scotty’s Castle where park volunteers wearing period costumes offer guided tours of the Castle. Albert Johnson built the impressive Spanish Villa in the early 1900s at a cost exceeding \$1.4 million. Prepare to be amused by stories of Death Valley Scotty, a lovable rascal if ever there was one.

On your next visit to the park, make your next excursion to southward and southeast of Furnace Creek, where more adventure awaits at the Badlands, the Artist’s Palette, Zabriskie Point, the Amargosa Hotel, Opera House, and Café in Death Valley Junction, the beautiful Ash Meadows, Tecopa Hot Springs and Mud Bath, the Shoshone Museum and Gift Shop, and China Ranch.



Scotty's Castle



Furnace Creek Resort Inn



Exit from Titus Canyon



Ubehebe Crater

Bishop, California

Small Town With a Big Backyard

Many first time guests who stay in Bishop are awestruck not only by the area’s scenic grandeur but by its infinite outdoor and historic recreation opportunities. Like these visitors, once you stay in this charming locale, you discover many hidden gems that often go unnoticed by the hasty Highway 395 traveler. So sit back awhile, learn what Bishop offers, and consider checking into one of the most beautiful and often-overlooked towns in America.

Flanked by 13,000 to 14,000 rugged mountain peaks, Bishop is akin to “small town with a big backyard”. To the west, ice age glaciers have carved precipitous and striking canyons where scenic touring, fishing, camping, hiking, mountain biking, and photography beckon. These canyons include Bishop Creek, Rock Creek, and Big Pine Creek Canyons. Rustic lodges and “out of this world” country style fare can be found at each canyon as well as horseback riding and pack operations to ferry guests to the Sierra’s topaz colored backcountry lakes.



Bristlecone Tree

Speaking of “out of this world”, the OVRO (Owens Valley Radio Observatory) and the CARMA (Combined Array for Research in Millimeter Wave Astronomy) provide monthly tours of their radar telescopes --- gigantic celestial and metallic dishes that detect radio waves from deep space. OVRO and CARMA are located a short drive south of Bishop. For camera buffs and techies, these features make cool and interesting photographic subjects that are rare elsewhere.

From the far reaches of space, visitors can travel back to biblical time while they walk among the gnarled and twisted ancient trees of the Bristlecone Pine Forest. Located in the White Mountains east of Bishop, these rugged 5,000 year old sentinels eke out survival at 10,000 feet clutching to life in the thin dolomite soils that support them. Visitors and scientists from around the world hike, photograph,

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Bishop City Park

Continued from page 11
and study these fascinating trees. Along with the Sequoia and Redwood trees across the Sierra Nevada, the Bristlecone has its own place in the pantheon of America's greatest trees.

At the base of the White Mountains just north of Bishop, spend hours wandering among the historic exhibits and displays at the Laws Historic Village. This frontier town captures the 1880s to early 1900s spirit that harnessed the Wild West. The miner's cabin, faux boom town saloon, and the fully functioning 1920s era Death Valley Brill Car are a few delectable morsels located here. It's a great place for families to bring young children and frolic on the expansive grass lawn or pose for



South Lake




Lake Sabrina

family photos at the "Little Caboose." Buttermilk Country, located west of Bishop, is a landscape of granitic and rounded hills nestled at the foreground of hulking Mt. Tom and Basin Mountain – two 13,000 foot mountains whose peaks pierce the sky above. This intriguing and stunning spot attracts world class climbers, bouldering enthusiasts, hikers, bicyclists, photographers, artists, and four wheel drive enthusiasts to enjoy its beauty and inspirational views.

In Bishop's big backyard, you experience solitude, endless landscapes, and a cornucopia of hidden treasures often unnoticed by others. Seek out what they don't know when you come by to visit us.

For additional information about Bishop and its big backyard, contact the Bishop Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center at 760-873-8405; email - info@bishopvisitor.com. Our website is <http://www.bishopvisitor.com/>

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The Briggs Gold Mine

By David Woodruff

Mining is a patient game and it always will be... Clive Palmer.

Ask the old time prospectors that traveled the wilds of Inyo searching for their elusive vein of precious ore... patience is as important a possession to have as a mule or a pick. Mining profitably for gold is a long and tedious process. A fact that Larry Turner, General Manager of the Briggs Gold Mine in Southern Inyo County can readily attest to. "With the way the price of gold can widely fluctuate from day to day, even hour to hour" says Turner, "you could drive yourself crazy worrying about price swings. If you're going to get into the mining business, you have to learn to keep focused on

the long term picture, and not worry about the day to day craziness of price swings".

The Briggs Mine is located in Southern Inyo County about seven miles south of the old ghost town of Ballarat. The Briggs mine was first opened in 1996 and was a significant producer of gold for the next eight years. But after a few years of weathering stagnant gold prices and rising costs, the Briggs mine closed in 2004. After an extensive environmental reclamation process, many assumed the project wouldn't reopen. However, gold's resurgence in value led Atna Resources Ltd to reopen the mine in 2009.

The Briggs mine is a conventional

open-pit mine that uses heap-leach gold recovery to process the ore. Atna Resources states that targeted gold recovery at the mine is 80 percent, one of the highest recovery rates in the mining industry. All of the mining claims are located on land administered by the Bureau of Land Management ("BLM"). A total of 218 patented and unpatented lode and mill site claims cover a huge 4,480-acre area at the base of the Panamint Mountains.

The Briggs Mine has long been a leader in mining with a conscience. In June of 2002, the Briggs gold mine received a letter of recognition for its "long-term commitment to excellence in environmentally sound and responsible operations" from the State Director

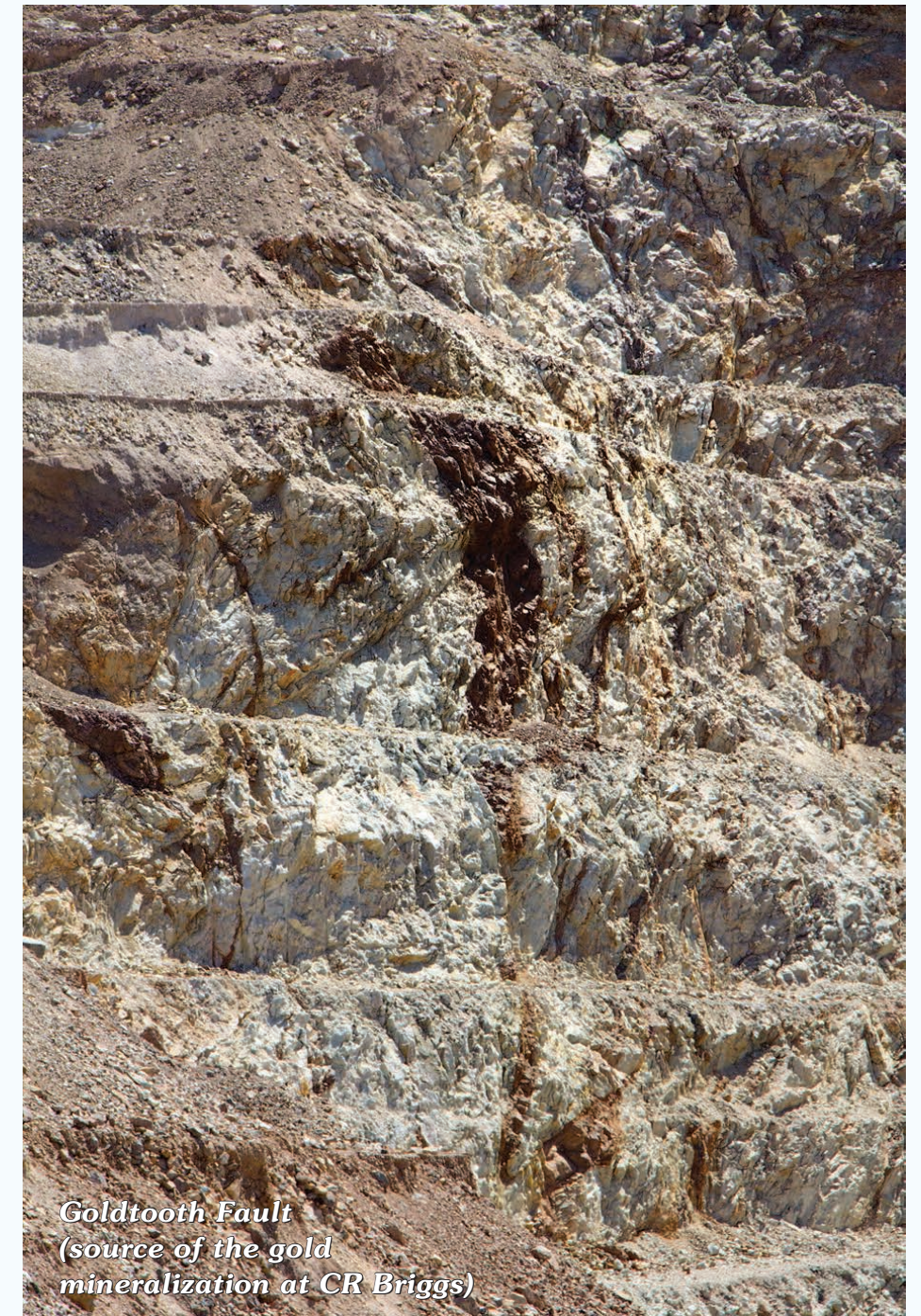
of the United States Bureau of Land Management. "The Briggs Mine's dedication to ensuring compliance with environmental requirements, resource protection, Tribal consultation, public health and safety, and worker safety, while conducting significant surface impacting operations on public lands, is exemplary of what responsible mining entails."

The letter also recites projects conducted by the Briggs Mine on-site

Continued on page 16



*Atlas CopcoDM45
Blasthole Drill Rig*



*Goldtooth Fault
(source of the gold
mineralization at CR Briggs)*



*Goldtooth Pit
(looking south)*

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Continued from page 15
and elsewhere within the Panamint Valley to help improve the condition of public lands. Briggs has developed and installed bat habitat at the Briggs Mine and bat gating at the Riley Mill Site to promote maintenance of healthy bat populations in the Panamint Valley. Briggs has significantly helped in erad-

icating undesirable water-hungry tamarisk plants at Post Office Springs. The subsequent result has been a remarkable recovery of water at the spring. Briggs has also cleaned-up abandoned mine sites in the Panamint Valley such as Dodd Camp and the Onyx Mine site. Each of these activities has enhanced the quality of public lands.

The Briggs Mine exported over 31,000 ounces of gold in 2013 and is one of the largest employers in Inyo County. At peak production Briggs employs 135 skilled workers in positions that pay upwards of \$35 an hour. “When the mine reopened in 2009 it was calculated we had about a 4-year mine life” says Turner. “A

number of factors have come together to extend our time here another 3 years.” Atna Resources is in the process of developing another gold mining operations in nearby Nye County, which will keep the company in the area for several years to come. “We’re in this for the long term. I’ve been in the mining industry for over 35 years and I’ve learned that a lot of patience will serve you well in this type of work.” For more information on the Briggs Gold Mine visit <http://www.atna.com/s/Briggs.asp>



Conveyors for stacking ore on leach pad



Crushing Plant



Pregnant Solution Pond



Crushing Plant and Main Briggs Pit



Leach Pad

Lone Pine Off The Beaten Track

By Charles James

Lone Pine is a regular tourist attraction town. It offers various outdoor recreational opportunities such as hiking, fishing, hunting and biking, among others. It celebrates its local history with the Lone Pine Film History Museum and Coso Historical Society.

The area offers some of the most beautiful vistas and landscapes, perfect for artists, filmmakers, photographers and for those into nature contemplation. The list can go on and on. Many of these opportunities for visitors can be discovered on the Chamber of Commerce website, the Inyo County website and various publications and brochures available in town. But there is much more to experience if you are an explorer, adventurer or you like to venture off the traveled trail.

Cemeteries are a gold mine of local history. First off, the Mt. Whitney Cemetery just north of town on Highway 395 has several Lone Pine notables buried there. A book of names and grave locations is available on the west parking lot. Some people of interest are Gustave (Gus) Marsh who spearheaded the building of the Mt. Whitney Trail and the building of the Smithsonian Rock Hut on top of Whitney. At one time he spent a month straight at the top making him the man with the longest record of uninterrupted living or at least staying at the summit of the mountain.

Walter Hopps is also buried in this cemetery. He was one of the founders, writers and promoters of the art scene in Los Angeles in the 1950's. He was part of "The Cool School" and had one of the first galleries (the Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles in partnership with Ed Kienholz) that represented many of the original greats of the artistic scene

there. He loved the desert and loved Lone Pine and when he passed in 1965 he was buried here.

Felix Meysan and his family are

also in the cemetery. He is the son of the man who built the first grocery store in Lone Pine. That man's name was Charles Meysan. Felix's sister



Depot Cemetery



Pioneer Cemetery

Alice was killed the collapse of the adobe building on March 26, 1872 in the giant earthquake that knocked down most of the town. It killed fully a quarter of the population. The store was rebuilt with wood. It is located now where the Lone Star Bistro is found. The Lone Star Bistro is situated on the west side of Main Street. In fact the back wall of the original adobe building has been preserved behind the present store.

Alice Meysan was buried in the communal grave located to the north of town and west side of 395. There are two plaques there that explain the history of the earthquake. As you leave town but before you get to the cemetery, you will pass the Sherwood Forest (England) black oak with an accompanying sign. The actual fault line of the earthquake can be seen easily. Because of the lack of rain, it has not been eroded much in the years since.

The best view of the El Temblor fault line is from a road just west of the L.A. Aqueduct off Whitney Portal

Continued on page 20



Pioneer Cemetery



Pioneer Cemetery



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Pioneer Cemetery



Continued from page 19
Road. Cross the Aqueduct and turn north. You will go up a small hill and then drive east on an old turn out. You will look out on the valley from more than twenty-five feet above the valley floor. Look to your north and you'll see the geological break that exposed tons of boulders. There also signs of springs. Diaz Lake to the south was a marsh until this quake opened many springs there. The valley is a "graben" whose floor is slowly dropping away

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Depot Cemetery

between the two uplifting mountain chains.

Before we leave the cemeteries of Lone Pine, drive out Narrow Gauge Road just north of the gas company on the east side of town. Just before the big turn to the north on your right there are several graves. One of these is in Serbo Croatian. Translated it says the occupant of the grave came from Sarajevo and died of "Not natural" causes. This was to be the replacement for the Pioneer Cemetery on Inyo Road (Dump Road). It was determined to be too far from town for a wagon ride and the Mt. Whitney Cemetery, a lease from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, replaced it.

The Pioneer Cemetery is on Inyo (Dump) Road. There you will find Charles Begole the father of Lone Pine. He also has a street named after him near the Frosty Chalet. Meysan laid out the wide streets that grace Lone Pine today. Also located in this cemetery are the Diaz Brothers who have the lake south of town named after them because their ranch was there.

If you want to venture out of town, go to the Interagency Visitors Center at the corner of Highway 136 and 395. If you follow 136, it becomes

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Highway 190 and continues out to Death Valley. You will pass Keeler on the way. It has the very early Depot and station for the narrow gauge Carson and Colorado RR. It is in the center town. It is fun to see the old community swimming pool which was quite nice in its day, but isn't now. It is in the southeast corner of Keeler. Just east of Keeler is the road up to the Cerro Gordo Ghost Town. Four-wheel drive vehicles are advised. If you go, you will need to bring a jacket because the camp is at 8300 feet and usually significantly cooler than on the valley floor.

The Jim and Beverly Rogers Lone Pine Film History Museum at 701 South Main Street is definitely worth a visit. They have an orientation film about the film history locally, and a self-guided tour of movie locations. The Museum also has several focused tours described carefully in new brochures that are worth a look.

Out on Narrow gauge Road is also the broad gauge Southern Pacific RR Station. If you look carefully, you will see where Japanese American citizens carved their names as they made their way to Manzanar up the road.

Many other out of the way places can found if you simply ask an informed local how to find them. The Sand Trap where sand is removed from Lone Pine Creek water before it enters the Aqueduct is easy to find with a little bit of help. There can be good fishing there. Also the Salt Tram that went to Saline Valley can be located with sharp eyes, or a little bit of help. It is on the way to Keeler on the north side of Highway 136. Also there in Swansea below on 136 is the old stagecoach stop.

If you are the adventurous type, Lone Pine has many out-of-the way locations that are fun to find. If all else fails, ask a local Lone Piner. They are friendly and usually don't bite.

Independence

By David Woodruff

For years Independence has been considered by many travelers to be a place to pass by quickly on the way to greater destinations. But for those that take a moment to explore "Indy" and the surrounding area, a wealth of adventure, culture and history are soon revealed.

Independence is the county seat of Inyo County, the second largest county in California. Though big in area, the quaint little town has only slightly more than 600 residents. The magnificent Inyo County Courthouse sits grandly in the center of town. It was designed by architect William Weeks in Classical Revival style and was built in 1921. It is one of a select group of county courthouses listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Independence boasts one of the best collections of historic buildings in Inyo County. The Edwards House on West Market Street was built in the early 1860s. The adobe portion is the oldest structure still standing in Inyo County. The "Commander's House" was originally built at nearby Fort Independence, also in the 1860s, and was later moved into town where it still stands today.

Mary Austin lived in Independence for several years in a home on West Market Street and completed her book, *Land of Little Rain*, in this house in 1903. A California State historical marker in front of the private residence (not open to the public) describes her ties to the valley and town.

The Eastern California Museum, three blocks west of the courthouse, houses much of the region's rich history. The museum displays a large collection of artifacts, historic photographs, an extensive Native American

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basket collection, mining and farming equipment, the history of Los Angeles and its aqueduct in the Owens Valley, a local history research library, the Mary DeDecker native plant garden and a bookstore. The museum can also provide you with a map of the town, highlighting the many historic buildings and points of interest you can visit on a short walking tour.

Dehy Park at the north end of town is a popular gathering place for community events. Visitors will find delightful Independence Creek flowing gently through the Park providing a cool place to relax. A playground adds to the enjoyment children can

find at the Park.

The Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery lies just 3 miles north of town. Starting in 1915, the citizens of Independence began a local fundraising drive to purchase a site for a proposed state fish hatchery. \$1,500.00 was raised and an ideal 40-acre site was purchased on Oak Creek, just north of the town. Fish and Game Commissioner M. J. Connell instructed the design team "to design a building that would match the mountains, would last forever, and would be a showplace for all time." The walls of the building are constructed using native granite collected within a quarter mile of the



Independence Courthouse



Mt Whitney Fish Hatchery

760.878.2127

Just north of Independence

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site. The massive walls are two to three feet thick.

Today the Hatchery and its beautiful grounds are operated and maintained by the non-profit Friends of the Mt. Whitney Hatchery. The shady grounds and main pond are excellent for relaxing, a picnic, and fish viewing. New restrooms are available. Volunteers staff a gift shop and give tours inside the hatchery during the summer. This is an excellent place to stop and take a few minutes to enjoy the beauty and the history of the Eastern Sierra.

5 miles south of Independence is the National Historic Site of Manzanar. One of 10 internment camps

built during World War II where the US Government incarcerated over 110,000 Japanese Americans. Today, the National Park Service does an excellent job preserving and interpreting the legacy of Japanese American incarceration in the United States. The Visitor Center is truly world class with its exhibits and displays. The Park Service also has constructed two replica barracks for visitors to see firsthand how the Japanese Americans lived with interned here.

Adventure awaits you east and west of Independence where camping, hiking, fishing, and hunting abound. An extensive system of hiking trails provides entrance into the High Sierra backcountry. There are several camp-

grounds near town and in the mountains. Anglers will find abundant trout fishing in the local creeks.

Independence is a great place to stop and spend a few hours or a few days. It has plenty of room for the soul to expand and the imagination to soar. From the clouds called the Sierra Wave to the brilliance of the nighttime stars, Independence is more than a rest stop. Independence is a place of quiet beauty that is rarely found, but can be greatly treasured. Come and discover for yourself the wonderful town of Independence.

Another example of the spirit of Independence is the classic celebration on Independence Day, the 4th of July. The celebration extends all day and

sometimes beyond with breakfast in the park, a Bar B Que dinner, a parade, ice cream and pie, kids games, and of course fireworks. The entire town becomes involved and unlike so many festivities that promote only to bring in tourist dollars, the celebration in Independence welcomes all visitors to a genuinely hometown experience.

Quirky as it may sound, Independence in recent years has become renowned for its Fruitcake Festival usually observed in December. *Fruitcakes are Welcome* can be seen on license plate frames and bulletin boards around the small town.

Independence features a world-class museum, historic cemetery, hometown atmosphere and plenty of charm. Several campgrounds and motels in the area provide the amenities needed for a true adventure to the great outdoors. *Through Hikers* on the Pacific Crest Trail have discovered that Independence is a convenient resupply town. The majestic views of the Eastern Sierra seem to beckon the adventurous. The great Winnedumah Monument on the ridge of the Inyo mountains to the east provides adventure and history of another flavor to those who wish to explore why Native Americans still treasure the pine nuts and obsidian, and why western settlers thought they could eke out a living by mining the various minerals so beautifully displayed and buried in the variety of canyons that are the Inyos.



Mt. Whitney Hatchery



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BIG PINE

By David Woodruff

Big Pine is the hub for exploring some of the grandest areas in the region, from the Sierra Nevada in the west to the White Mountains in the east.

In the center of town is Crocker Street heads west and climbs into the Sierra. The road ascends the mighty escarpment and enters Big Pine Canyon, winding along Big Pine Creek to campgrounds, cabins, a supply store, and a pack outfit for horseback excursions into the backcountry. At road's end, lace up your hiking boots and head up trails that lead to unparalleled scenery and adventure including one of Big Pine's several claims to fame: the Palisades Glacier, the largest glacier in the Sierra Nevada.

The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, high in the White Mountains,

is home to specie of trees that are among the oldest living things on earth, dating to over 5000 years old. A good paved road via Hwy 168 leads to the Schulman Grove from the north end of Big Pine. A Visitor Center here provides daily interpretive talks and natural history lectures mid-June through Labor Day. Three interpretive hiking trails lead visitors to close up views of these grand trees and stupendous views of the far off Sierras. Be sure to bring a camera for one of a kind photos. Informative interpretive signs will help you understand the uniqueness of this noble species as you meander along. Nearby Grandview Campground makes for a delightful base camp to explore the nearby region.

The Owens Valley Radio Ob-

servatory is located just a few miles northeast of town. These large white discs, seen from Hwy 395 are owned and operated by Caltech and provide astronomers the ability to conduct extensive research of the stars and our solar system. Further up Hwy 168 is CARMA (The Combined Array for Research in Millimeter-wave Astronomy). CARMA is also operated by Caltech and has 23 smaller antennas used in combination to image the universe at millimeter wavelengths that provide crystal clear images for researchers. Located on a high-altitude site in the Inyo Mountains, it is currently the most powerful millimeter array in the world, with unmatched imaging capabilities. Caltech offers occasional Open House events for the public to tour these

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Palisades Glacier area



Big Pine Tree with Palisades Glacier in background

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fascinating research facilities. You can learn more at <http://www.astro.caltech.edu/events/>

Some of the Eastern Sierra's finest fishing is found in and around Big Pine. Throughout the bounteous Big Pine Creek are numerous fishing spots, starting just a couple of miles outside town and continuing all the way to the end of the road 17 miles away.

Close to town is the well-stocked Baker Ponds: turn west on Baker Creek Road, go about a mile to the campgrounds and from there the ponds are easy to find. Owens River, about a mile east of Big Pine on S.R. 168, abounds with trout and warm water species like catfish, bass and others.

There is also a "back road" to Death Valley National Park from Big Pine; be cautious, though, because the

road is mostly of dirt and there are no facilities, but the scenery is wonderful and 75 miles farther is the north end of the Park near Scotty's Castle. The list of "things to do" while in Big Pine could go on and on. Take the time on your next visit to the Owens Valley to experience some of this world class and one of kind adventures with friends and family. They'll provide memories for a lifetime.

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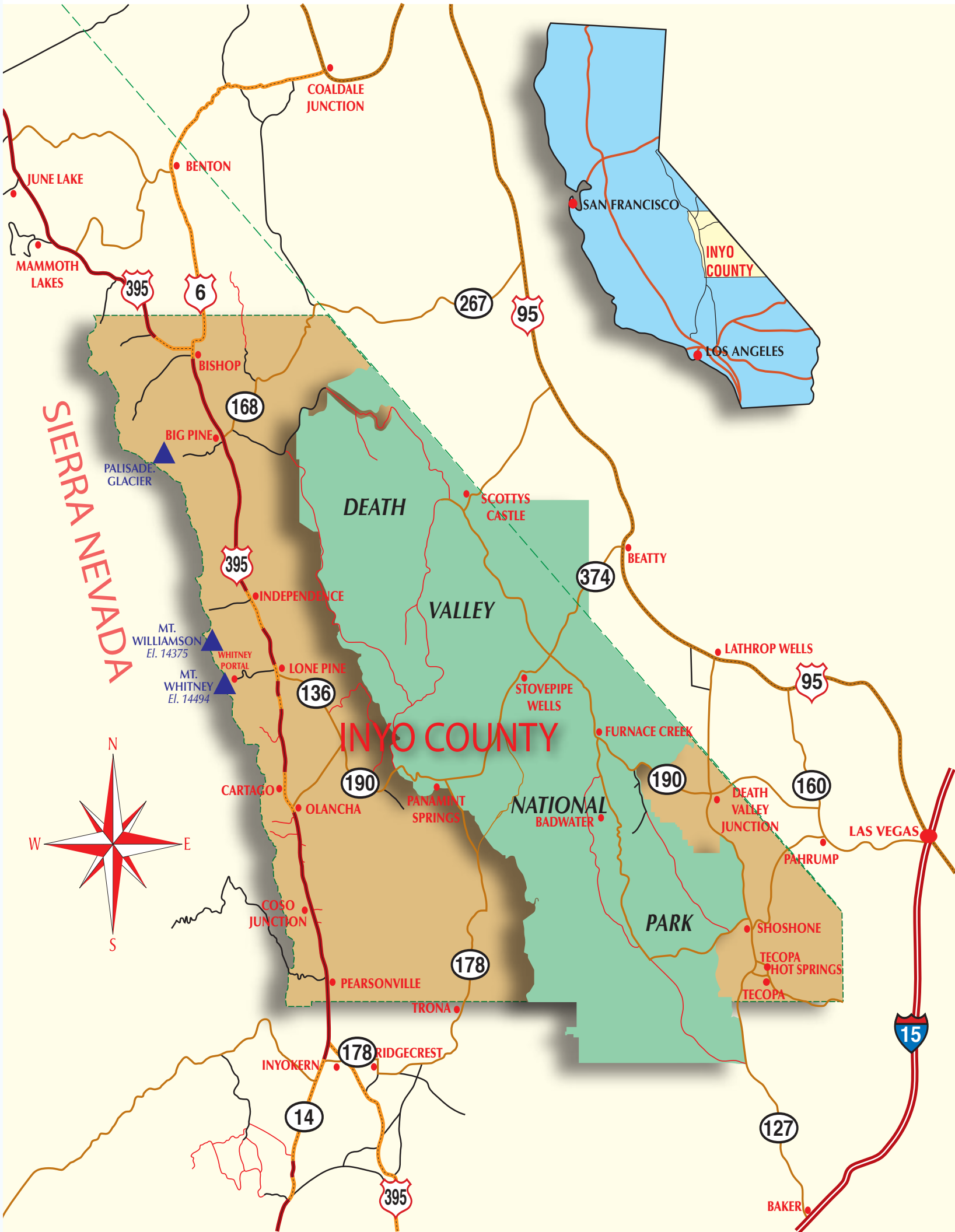
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