



## Sheriffs' Citizen of the Year

DECEMBER 21, 2021 – Jim Harvey, president of the Homestead Valley Community Council, had a big surprise at the December 21st meeting in Landers Belfield Hall.

Morongo Basin Sheriffs Department Captain Lucas Niles, on the agenda as a regular speaker, announced that they had chosen Jim to receive the Sheriffs Department Citizen of the Year Award, “In Recognition of Your Dedicated and Valuable Services. Signed, Captain Lucas Niles, Commander.”

Jim said later how surprised he was. He thought something might be going on and he believes everyone in the room knew about it but him. ■

## HVCC ON THE AIR



FEBRUARY 11, 2022

Gary Daigneault invited Jim Harvey as a guest on his Friday morning UP CLOSE SHOW to talk about the Homestead Valley Community Council and challenges facing rural areas and their collective needs. Harvey fielded many questions about the history and mission of HVCC.

First, Daigneault inquired about Harvey's background. Born in Elmira, NY, he moved to Chicago, where he lived for 17 years. A visit to the southwest impressed him; a friend in Johnson Valley suggested he move. The contrast with crowded urban living lured him to the desert, and he moved to Johnson Valley in 2001.

He now earns his living as a website and graphic designer with a side as a mechanic working on vintage Harley Davidson motorcycles.

The Lucerne Valley Unified School District includes Johnson Valley; Harvey has served for ten years on their Board of Trustees.

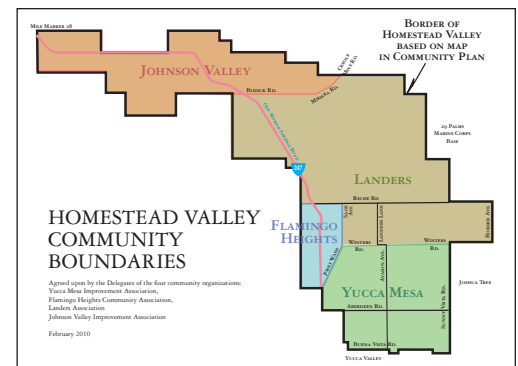
**HVCC** Established in 1978 as the Tri-Community Council representing Landers, Flamingo Heights and

Johnson Valley; the name changed when the Yucca Mesa Improvement Association asked to join in 1998.

Asked about the major challenge that HVCC communities face right now, of course the answer was illegal pot farms. Harvey pointed out the efforts on the part of Congressman Jay Obernolte to address this scourge.

Code Enforcement, the District Attorney, the County Board of Supervisors have joined forces against this plague.

Caused by the failure of Prop 64 Purpose and Intent: reducing illegal growing from a felony to a misdemeanor, Operation Hammer Strike attacks it from a civil point of view. They have found in these places all, human trafficking, sex slaves, groundwater and electricity theft, bodies, and guns. Daigneault brought out that the names seemed evidence of Mexican cartels' involvement, and that anyone buying their product is in danger of ingesting poisonous substances used for rodent control, illegal in the US. Harvey said when the operations close down they leave infrastructure behind, a dangerous eyesore. Property owners are



now being immediately cited. If they don't clean up, the County will, and the costs will be added on property taxes.

The sheriffs need community involvement, Harvey said. Complaints from the public make obtaining search warrants easier.

Asked about other challenges HVCC communities address, Harvey listed: dumping tires and trash in remote areas; industrial solar projects; traffic violations on Scenic 247 (a project of HVCC with Caltrans and Land Use Services); declining importance of the community centers; asking newcomers to understand and respect that the character of their historic communities needs to be preserved.

Daigneault take on all this: advice to listeners, “Get involved with your community!” ■

# **HVCC Was Busy in 2021**

## **A YEAR IN REVIEW**

- **HVCC Submits Stagecoach Solar Draft EIR Comments** To California State Lands Commission - 12/17/2021 points out the inadequacies in the draft Environmental Impact Report. HVCC formed the Scenic Hwy 247 Committee to obtain official State Scenic designation for S.R. 247. Stagecoach Solar will destroy high-value scenic views along the Barstow Road section of Hwy 247.
- **HVCC Presents *The Case For State Highway 247 Scenic Designation*** to San Bernardino County Planning Commission - 12/09/2021. HVCC President and Scenic Hwy 247 Committee member Jim Harvey joined Caltrans Landscape Architect Almabeth Anderson and County Land Use Services Planning Manager Karen Watkins to present the case for state Scenic Designation to the County Planning Commission..
- **HVCC commented through the Redistricting Commission meeting** to correct the erroneous Homestead Valley community boundaries received from the census bureau and used in their mapping, during teleconference public comments, then followed up with a letter. 11/07/2021 This ultimately led to reversing the assembly district line drawn through the middle of the Homestead Valley.
- **HVCC Calls For Special Session Of The CA Legislature To Address Prop 64 And Its Failure To Achieve Its Purpose And Intent** - 07/28/2021. Governor Newsom can convene the CA Legislature in a special session to address Prop 64 and the illegal marijuana farm crisis across the state. Ourstate legislators can request he do

this. HVCC sent letters to Governor Newsom and our legislators strongly urging the special session be convened.

- **HVCC Writes and Distributes *"Illegal Marijuana Cultivation Action Guide And FAQ"*** 07/16/2021 To help people understand how Prop 64 encouraged illicit pot farms in their communities, and how to contact Governor Newsom and their Sacramento legislators to demand action and rid our communities of this scourge.
- **HVCC Supports MB MAC Resolution Honoring SB County Sheriff Sergeant Dominic Vaca** - 07/09/2021. Sergeant Vaca was killed in the line of duty on May 31, 2021. HVCC supports the Morongo Basin MAC resolution and calls for an end to the misguided calls to defund law enforcement.
- **HVCC Sends A Letter Of Support For Mojave Water Agency's Draft Resolution Calling For State Action To Address The Illegal Marijuana Farm Problem** - 06/18/2021 HVCC supports MWA Resolution, encourages the MWA board to pass it. The HVCC letter was read out at the June 24th MWA meeting, where the MWA board approved the strong resolution. "The Mojave Water Agency Board strongly encourages introduction of legislation in the California State Legislature to increase the severity of criminal penalties for illegal commercial cannabis cultivation by making this offense a felony."
- **HVCC Sends Letter To County Planning Dept Opposing the "Glamping" 640 acre Camping Resort Proposal in Flamingo Heights** - 04/25/2021 Community opposition was loud, clear, and unanimous at March HVCC meeting. HVCC Secretary Betty Munson included included in the letter

very valid reasons why this project should not be considered.

- **Homestead Valley Community Council Urges California Legislators To Remedy Prop 64 And The Plague Of Illicit Marijuana Farms It Has Caused** - 04/14/2021 Proposition 64 promised, if passed, it would put an end to illegal marijuana cultivation and distribution in California, and remove the gang and cartel influence in this illicit industry. After it passed in 2016, the illicit farm and distribution problem exploded across the entire state of California, with the desert communities being hit especially hard. Proposition 64 failed in its written Purpose and Intent, allowing the state legislature to intervene and remedy the misguided initiative.
- **Relocation of Sex Offender Lawtis Rhoden to Twentynine Palms STRONGLY Opposed by Homestead Valley Community Council** - 03/22/2021 Homestead Valley Community Council Supports The San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office and The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department in their opposition to Lawtis Rhoden, a sexually violent predator, being ordered to live in Twentynine Palms. From the HVCC letter: "The safety of the residents of the Morongo Basin, especially the children of our community who are most vulnerable to violent sexual predators like Rhoden, must take priority over any considerations for Rhoden."

**For more details about HVCC actions and to download supporting materials. visit our website at [www.hvccsite.org](http://www.hvccsite.org)**