

JUST A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

Are you ready for 2017? If you're like me (God help you if you are!), you already have to write 2017 as you schedule things into the future weeks, and at the moment you think you're doing great at remembering to use "2017", you start using 2017 for everything, even tomorrow. Then once you correct that and use 2016 properly, you lose the 2017 and all of a sudden that January event is in 2016! Such a struggle for us incompetents (or is it "Deplorables"?)!

I wondered what to put here in this space this week, and after the Christmas weekend, during which I spent significant time helping customers find things, I knew what it should be: Why we love living in Lucerne Valley. Let's see how many I can come up with. My original idea was to come up with 25 reasons to love living here, and I know there are many more than that, but I don't know if my brain can hold that many. Maybe if I write down 5 or 6, and then wait awhile, my brain will refill with 5 or 6 more.

So let's see how many I can come up with in this limited space:

1. Sunrises and sunsets. Can I count this as two separate reasons? Our setting in this bowl is perfect for viewing the theater of the heavens. Many of us who live here never tire of the drama.



2. Dirt. Who wants to live surrounded by concrete and asphalt?

3. Neighbors. Some we love. Some we don't like so much. But we know who they are.

4. Volunteers. For all of the 41 years we have been here, Lucerne Valley has been known for its unusual number of volunteers doing good and caring things for the people of the community. Whether LVEDA (Lucerne Valley Economic Development Association), the

Roadrunners, the Garden Club, the Museum Association, the Seniors, and many, many more, our life in this community is vastly better than it would be without all of the hard work contributed by a few. Additional volunteers are needed to help bear the burden, if anyone feels the tug to pitch in and help.

5. The mines and plants on the mountainside. Yes, I know some resent them tearing things up, as they see it. But these businesses do what is necessary for us Americans to sustain the life style to which we've become accustomed. The principle products are limestone, cement, and gravel. All are absolutely basic building blocks of many, many things, from toothpaste and medicines, to roads and buildings. And Mitsubishi, Omya, and Specialty Minerals contribute money and time to many Lucerne Valley causes. Our high school was built on property donated by one of these plants.

6. Hungry, pushy roadrunners demanding their treat at your door or window. Clacking beaks, pecking at the window, unbelievably charming. Hummingbirds, Blackbirds, lots of different ones.

7. Crystal clear air. How often do we see the smoke from wildfires somewhere else blow around our valley and not through it. Dewey Weatherford, a retired County guy in the 1970's, used to tell us that the air in Lucerne Valley was extra special due to those wind patterns that keep it purer than many areas.

8. Quiet. Yes, sometimes the roar of the bulk haulers on the highways can be annoying, but on a Sunday morning, and lots of times, you can sit outside and enjoy the quiet. And in many areas, you don't hear the trucks anyway.

9. The smell of the desert after a rain. There is no perfume or man-made scent so wonderful as that.

10. Joshua Trees (and NOT Saguaro cactus). Saguaro cactus are sometimes used as the universal symbol of the desert, but our symbol is the Joshua Tree in all of

its strange shapes. Do you ever wonder what was in God's mind when He created certain things? He must laugh at our efforts to so seriously study and analyze things that are simple to Him.

11. Our freedom to have 2 or 5 or 35 acres and not live squished into a densely populated development of 2-story houses with postage stamp yards.

12. Critters. Our larger yards allow us to have chickens or horses or multiple pets, gardens and trees, places for kids to play if you can rip them away from cell phones and electronic games. "Pets" is code for our beloved doggies, and we often tell suppliers that it's an unwritten law in Lucerne Valley that all households must have at least two preferably **BIG** dogs.



13. The schools and especially the school board. Our school district is overseen by five people we know by name, with whom we speak, and who meet monthly in a forum where we citizens are welcome.

14. The Leader. Our little paper is remarkable for this size town, and Peter Day tries to keep it local.

15. Neighboring places. Wherever we go, to the stores or the bank or the Post Office or the restaurants or gas stations, we almost always see people we know and have the opportunity to talk with them. I love seeing that happen here in our store. It's so refreshing.

16. The short distance to neat places to visit, like Big Bear Lake and the ski resorts; Calico Ghost Town and the many, many sights to see in the mountains around there; our own mountains and surrounding area with the beauty and rich history available if we take the time to see it.

17. Auto repair, plumbing, handyman services available from locals who are great people and care about their customers.

I'm only at #17 and I'm probably

too long for the space Kathryn allows me. I imagine she's going to yell at me when she gets this. But to gain perspective at how blessed by God we are to be here, just spend some time in this store when there are many from "down below" and listen to their comments. It's heartening to hear their appreciation and to experience the contrast between their situations and ours. We are so "lucky"!

Linda Gimmel

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Contributed. From the Web.

HOW THEY FORECAST A COLD WINTER

One day in early September the chief of a Native American tribe was asked by his tribal elders if the winter of 2011/12 was going to be cold or mild. The chief asked his medicine man, but he too had lost touch with the reading signs from the natural world around the Great Lakes.

In truth, neither of them had idea about how to predict the coming winter. However, the chief decided to take a modern approach, and the chief rang the National Weather Service in Gaylord Michigan.

"Yes, it is going to be a cold winter," the meteorological officer told the chief. Consequently, he went back to his tribe and told the men to collect plenty of firewood.

A fortnight later the chief called the Weather Service and asked for an update. "Are you still forecasting a cold winter?" he asked.

"Yes, very cold", the weather officer told him.

As a result of this brief conversation the chief went back to the tribe and told his people to collect every bit of wood they could find.

A month later the chief called the National Weather Service once more and asked about the coming winter. "Yes," he was told, "it is going to be one of the coldest winters ever."

"How can you be so sure?" the chief asked.

The weatherman replied: "Because the Native Americans of the Great Lakes are collecting wood like crazy."



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

L.V. School Board Meeting

Wednesday, Jan. 12, starts at 5:30PM.
At the Alternative Education Center,
8560 Alioto Rd up Highway 18.

The ski competition started well, but it was all downhill from there.

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