

# Guide's packed with facts

By Vern Lawson

Nature abhors a vacuum.

Despite the natural beauty of Antelope Valley and its remarkable projects and amazing achievements, for many years there was no single place to find all-encompassing information about this region. Now, Bonnie D. Stone has filled that information-age vacuum by publishing “San Andreas Ain't No Fault of Mine — Fun and Fact-Filled Guide to the Antelope Valley.”

The 122-page book provides a concise but comprehensive history of the region from the time that local residents included just four groups of Native Americans through the first half decade of the 21st century.

Padre Francisco Garces visited the area in 1775 and 1776, the year the Declaration of Independence was born.

Stone quotes John C. Fremont, a member of the elite Army Corps of Topographical Engineers, who rode into the Valley on April 15, 1844, and noted in his journal that “we me among the fields of flowers which consisted of the rich orange-colored poppy, mingled with other flowers of brighter tint. ... Several antelopes were seen among the hills and some large hares.”

The first land yacht was built in 1902 and was used for sailing across the flat surfaces of what is now Rogers Dry Lake.

The history section of the book concludes with the winning of the Ansari X-Prize by the team that built and flew Burt Rutan's SpaceShipOne in late 2004. The ship became “the first private manned spacecraft to exceed an altitude of 328,000 feet twice within the span of a 14-day period.”

The book contains a lengthy list of places to see and things to do in the greater Antelope Valley. It's the perfect answer for local residents who have visitors come, hoping to see some of the local landmarks and attend community events.

Stone includes in her list “The world's longest-running festival— the Wind Festival which begins Jan. 1 and ends Dec.31 each year.”

Information on local Joshua trees, tumbleweeds and the legendary jackalopes is included.

The book has a compendium of milestone flights at Edwards Air Force Base and an alphabetical list of movies that were shot on location here. Perhaps the first movie filmed in the Valley was “Whither Thou Goest” in 1914. Maps are provided to locate various tourist attractions.

Stone has written a number of books and articles and has taught writing classes. She founded the Antelope Valley Writers in 1986.

The AV guidebooks are available at Burns Pharmacy, the Whole Wheatery and the museum/art gallery, all in Lancaster; Charlie Brown Farms in Littlerock; the Apple Shed in Tehachapi; and local Barnes & Noble and Waldenbook stores.

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