



BORREGO SPRINGS DARK SKY COALITION 2016 ANNUAL REPORT to the International Dark-Sky Association

During 2016, the Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition publicized our dark sky community nationally and internationally, met regularly with local residents and visitors for dark sky educational outreach, monitored outdoor lighting in our downtown area and core business district, and recognized lighting excellence in our business community.

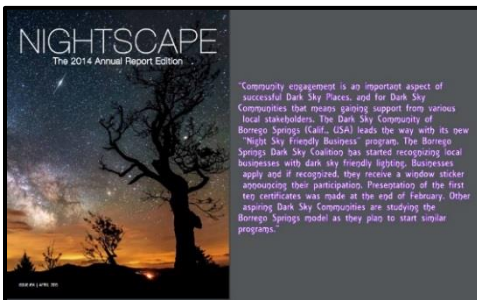
PUBLICITY

Swedish Magazines – Two articles have been published in Sweden about our Borrego Springs Dark Sky Community, with the Borrego Dark Sky Coalition (the Coalition) featured in both: magazine “Forsknings Fragor” (Research Progress) titled *The Endangered Dark Sky*, and in the online magazine “Extrakt,” titled *Protected Starry Skies—both Beautiful and Important*. <http://www.extrakt.se/forskningsfragor/skyddad-stjarnhimmel-bade-vackert-och-viktigt/>. The articles are being translated from Swedish into English and will be posted on our website. A third article will appear in August in “Norwegian Traveler.”

Architectural Record Magazine – Our interview with Senior Editor Linda Lentz of New York will be part of her Aug. 2016 article about lighting, designing, and building in the desert and a dark sky community, as well as the process of Borrego Springs becoming an official Dark Sky Community.

IDA Article – The April 2015 edition of *Nightscape (The 2014 Annual Report Edition)* has a complimentary mention of our Night Sky Friendly Business program. The IDA is headquartered in Tucson, AZ.

Car Decal – We sold 95 of the 100 car decals we printed this year with logo promoting Borrego Springs Dark Sky Community.



LOCAL OUTREACH

Farmers Market – Coalition members set up a booth at the weekly outdoor market 15 times from Nov. 2015 through Apr. 2016. Coalition members spoke with local residents and visitors about the importance of dark sky and explained what constitutes good lighting. Our two flyers, a *Homeowners Brochure* and a *Borrego Lighting Standards* pamphlet, were handed out, car decals sold well, and several donations to the Coalition were received.

Homeowners Brochure – This brochure explains that Borrego Springs is an official International Dark-Sky Community and gives examples of good lighting. We distribute the brochure to about 25 locations in Borrego Springs, including real estate offices, public library, Chamber of Commerce, and hotels.

BUSINESS INTERACTION

Night Sky Friendly Business Program – In recognition of excellence in dark-sky lighting, award certificates were presented to four businesses: Borrego Sun News, Coldwell Banker Brokerage, Regalos de Borrego gift shop, and Stanlunds Inn – with public recognition for these businesses in our local newspaper and our website.

The Center and The Mall – A few bright store signs were installed in these shopping centers. The Coalition contacted the management and owner to ask them to respect our village lighting standards and the county code, and provided examples of good store signage.

EDUCATION, PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Members of our Coalition regularly present stargazing and astronomy programs in Borrego Springs for the public. In addition, one Coalition member works at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and is the lead in preparing the state park to apply for IDA Dark Sky Park status, and another member works for the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association. Each of these members organizes stargazing and educational programs at their respective locations. One of our group presents at both the Julian StarFest and the annual Nightfall event in Borrego



Springs. We supplement the science curriculum at the local schools, participate in astronomy events at Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area, and lead full-moon walks in the desert.

WEBSITE

Our website, BorregoDarkSkies.org, is updated by a Coalition member who is a graphic designer. The homepage received 2,250 visits during the 8-month period of Oct.-May. If we include the stargazing event page, we had 3,375 visits. The site includes publications developed by the Coalition, the San Diego County lighting ordinance, publicity about Borrego's dark sky and the IDA certification, a calendar of programs and events, and listings of sky-related educational activities for residents and visitors.

Our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/BorregoSpringsDarkSkyCoalition, with 219 Likes, is another source of up to date information about astronomy events and star gazing programs for the public.

LIGHTING SUCCESSES & CHALLENGES

Fire Station – At our recommendation, the Borrego Fire District changed an unshielded mercury vapor light on the outside of the fire station to a full cut-off LED luminaire.

Downtown Parking Lot – The owner of the lot, the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association, changed four uncovered flood lights to fully shielded lower-wattage bulbs.

Christmas Circle Community Park – The board of the nonprofit organization that operates the park reduced the amount of landscape lighting by removing the upward-facing bulbs that were illuminating the palm trees, and turning off an annoying barn light. The changes resulted in a significant decrease in their electric usage. *(The blue line on the graph represents reduced power use after some lights were eliminated.)*

Street Lights – Thirteen street fixtures have been replaced with bright white LED lighting. San Diego County has taken no action at this point to reduce the wattage in spite of our complaint and their promise to do so. We continue to be in contact with the staff person in charge traffic safety and street lighting for San Diego County.

Over-lit Outdoor Café – The cafe installed very bright string lights. At our request, the owner unscrewed some of the lights and agreed to turn out the lights at the close of business, which made an improvement. However, he is not willing to

fully abide by the county lighting ordinance; hence, a nuisance report was filed.

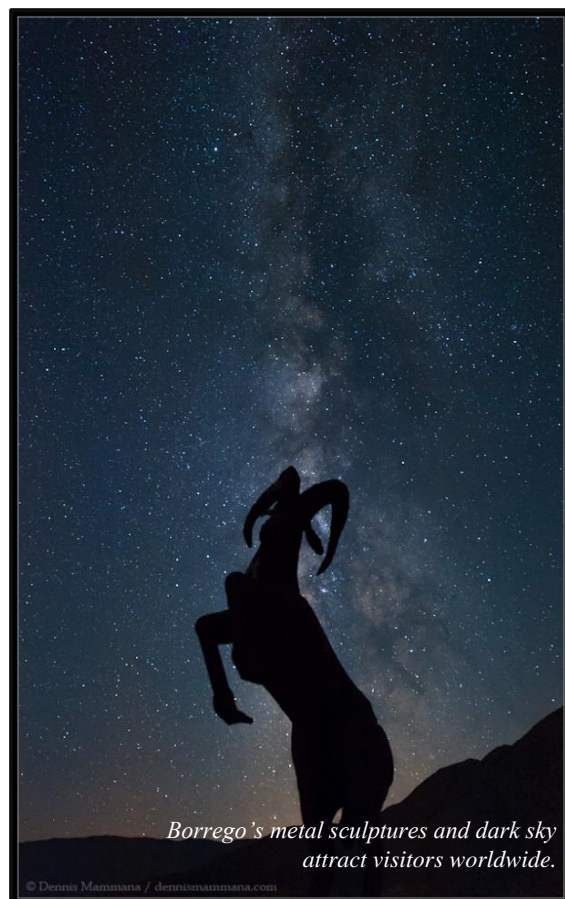
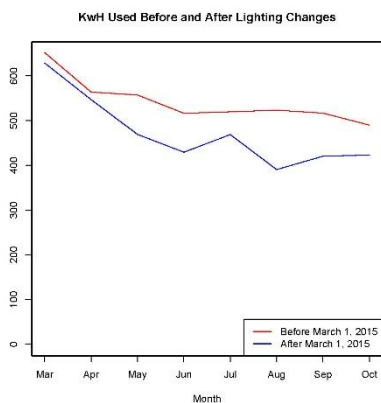
COALITION DETAILS -- The Coalition currently has eleven members. We hold six meetings yearly. When not in Borrego, three members attend by Skype. Within our Coalition is a designated committee chair for community lighting standards. Two members phone in to attend some meetings of the San Diego Chapter of the IDA.

STRATEGY FOR 2017

With the goal of continuing community education, the Coalition plans to email local businesses with an explanation of our work and attachment of our *Borrego Lighting Standards* pamphlet. We will follow up with the county about the thirteen street lights with the white LED bulbs, and continue to make assessments of the lighting in town and approach the owners with suggestions for improvement.

We will work with the community to publicize and educate about dark skies, continuing to take advantage of opportunities to participate in community events. We plan to add information to our website about night lighting for safety and security (including options that utilize newer technology), and other pertinent information for anyone interested in protecting our dark night skies.

Submitted by Betsy Knaak, Chair, P.O. Box 310, Borrego Springs, California 92004-0310, www.BorregoDarkSkies.org, on behalf of the Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition Members: Maris Brancheau, Dorothy Hogan, Dennis Mammana, Christopher O'Keefe, Dr. Jim Rickard, Grace Rickard (Committee Chair, Community Lighting Standards), Sally Theriault, Clark Volmar, Jean Volmar, and Sam Webb. (Dark Sky photos by Dennis Mammana). July 15, 2016.



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