



Susan Frugé

Susan Luckie Reilly

Minerva Hoyt



Ruth's moment of **truth**, a link to Susan Frugé, the path to putting down roots/commitment to a place.



- 1979 move to Morongo Basin
- Spring of 1980 riding my 175cc Yamaha dirt bike chasing Steve and my brother in-law. **I still can see the lavender carpet beneath me and smell the wonderful fragrance as the tires of my motorcycle crushed the blossoms of the Sand Verbena. I knew I was in the midst of true beauty.** Something clicked and I realized with just a few more riders like me, all the beauty I saw and felt that day could be destroyed. I wrote myself a letter that found its way into an issue of the Sierra Club magazine in 2001 that talked about those critical **“Moments of Truth”**.
- **We did give up our dirt bikes. We should have burned them!**



- **Attend Copper Mountain College geology class** when there was no campus, but incredible instructors in various locations through out the Morongo Basin.
- Learn that the existence of Copper Mountain Campuses were a grassroots effort of the locals...Folks who became friends like Tony Dindio, Owen Gillick, General Ernie Reid and many others.



- **Susan Frugé becomes a collector of Steve’s art and an example for me to try to follow.**
- Susan shares with me that she met August the first time when she was an editor for the University of California Press at the UCLA campus and August came from the Berkeley campus where his office as director of the Press was. She heard his voice and glanced down to see his **red socks** before seeing his face. She fell in love with his voice and was determined to marry that man with the **red socks**.

Susan and August did marry. Susan moved to Berkeley where she and friends started the California Native Plant Society.

August retired after 32 years at the Press and asked Susan where she wanted to live. She chose her mother’s cabin that she inherited in 29 Palms.

August and Susan guided the JTNPA book store inventory for some years. Susan and Roberta Moore started the Joshua Tree Art Festival that just had its 25th event. Susan was a long time member of the JTNPA board and was responsible for me being a board member in the 90s. The Frugés bequest to the JTNPA led to the recent publication of the book “Preserving the History of Joshua Tree National Park”, by author Lary Dilsaver.

MBCA SHORT VERSION



Early 1969 throbbing, drumming, thumping helicopters break the calm over Susan Luckie Reilly's home next to Joshua Tree National Monument.

Susan learns that SCE has plans for a transmission line from a coal fired plant in Arizona on its way to the substation in Devers. She discovers that Edison is buying up property along the prospective route and convinces her neighbors that the threat to their quality of life is real.

November 1969 articles of incorporation are filed forming the Morongo Basin Conservation Association as a 501c4 organization.



1980--11 years later MBCA's mantra "**Take the lines south of the Monument or north of the Base**" won the day. During this period MBCA was active in the review process that created the BLM's California Desert Conservation Act. The act defined a network of designated energy corridors leaving out a corridor along HWY 62. However, the CDCA plan left some options open called **contingent corridors**. One became known as **Green Path North in 2006**.

Some more issues that MBCA has put their shoulder to over the past 48 years.

Opposed the 1978-1983 SCE effort to build a fossil-fuel burning combined-cycle power plant in Johnson Valley.

Opposed Edison's choice of a coal burning plant site at Cadiz.

US Ecology chose Yucca Valley as one possible site for a low-level radio-active dump. You can image what MBCA's response to that was. No and HELL NO.

MBCA opposed the Bolo-Rail-Cycle Dump at the edge of the JTNP and all that has followed....We'll cheer the day that all properties removed from JTNP in 1950 are returned to the Park.

MBCA's first steps to community educational out-reach began with small grants to Joshua Tree National Park's intern program and MBCA continues their support of Cindy Zacks Ecology class's Environmental Club. The first **Ruth Denison Environmental Conservation Scholarship will be awarded in 2017 to a local Morongo Basin high school student as the result of a generous bequest from Ruth's trust.**

MBCA Today



Today, we're about community out-reach and education and collaborating with other organizations that have grown up around us. For seven years we've been growing the **Desert-Wise Living Series** and hope some of you have in mind to go on **The Desert-Wise Landscape Tour tomorrow and Sunday.**

MBCA remains an all-volunteer organization with recent 501c3 status. We're proud that the Morongo Basin remains a place where one person can make a difference.

Current Board of Directors

President - [Sarah Kennington, Pioneertown](#)

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Founding Director

Susan Luckie Reilly,

Twentynine Palms

Directors Emeritus

Esther Herbert,

Twentynine Palms

DJ Masker, Twentynine

Palms

Many, many volunteers

contribute hours without which MBCA could not do what it does.

California Desert Coalition a Committee of The Summertree Institute takes on LADWP's Green Path North 2006-2010

TOGETHER WE CAN STOPPED LADWP GREEN PATH NORTH



Los Angeles Department of Water and Power hand delivers a letter to our Morongo Basin communities on **March 10, 2010** that is addressed to the BLM explaining that they are withdrawing the request for a permanent energy corridor from Devers to Hesperia and abandoning their intent to build a 500 KV electric transmission line.

For me personally as member of the CDC committee/team this 4 years was one of the most intense periods of my life. From this personal experience, I dare to make the following generalizations about Grassroots organizing.

Bringing focus to the waving grasses.. Dream Big..Work Hard..
Be for something not just against something...



**CONCEPTION/
SEEDS**



Someone
calls a
meeting

OOPs I think
we have just
started
something

Maybe we're
pregnant with
an idea?

JESTATION/FETUS

Defining the road
forward

Learning about
what needs doing

Making a
plan/strawman

Identifying a
team of doers
that accept
responsibility

BIRTH

Going public
with the
scheme

Discover
critical
decision
makers with
power.

Identify likely
supporters--
particularly
politicians.

GROWTH

Gathering the
voices/grasses
of support

Use every
means to
spread the
message:
Town halls,
All media,
Politicians,
Organizations,
Social media,
etc, etc. and
more

ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH! And, be prepared for critical moments.

We're all in this together

Foundation of volunteers willing to spend 20/30 hours a week behind the scenes doing the thankless jobs that make everything else possible.

Legal experts

Political savvy/outreach folks

W

The Truth Tellers
Researchers/Writers/Artists

Website/media designers

E

Event planners and fund raisers

Individual(s) with disarming public persona that tell the story.

CRITICAL MOMENTS

When Truth Wins

LADWP, manager comes to Yucca Valley High School. He 's caught on camera flustered and exasperated with the huge gathering and April Salls' winning cry of "We've got a lot to fight for."

Spring street meeting at LADWP's 14th floor office when David Nahai is caught in front of Mayor Villaraigosa's staff and about 40 others in an **untruth**. He has told the Governor and the BLM that a contingent corridor had in the past become a designated corridor. **Not True**. Thanks to CDC committee member, Donna Thomas, who had uncovered the truth, we read from her letter that was destined to be mailed the following day to all parties that had received LADWP's letter..

Manager Nahai is replaced by David Freeman. CDC representatives visit David on the 14th floor at Spring Street on a rainy January day. We're prepared to argue our case for the path along Hwy 10. He settles us into comfy chairs and he walks around in his wet stocking feet and settles in too. Tells us it's over. A few days later he calls us to find out how his staff should pull the plug on GPN with the BLM. We were prepared for that one!!

REWARDS

Enduring friendships

Tears followed by cheers

Success is the pay check

Some more Grass Roots—Do you know these???

The Grass Roots music group from the 60s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGMtSlPTqgl>

“GrassRoots” movie 2012 available on netflix



This magazine is becoming my favorite. These folks are telling some truths.

Landscape Architecture Magazine, Bradford McKee, editor says in his 4/2017 editorial: *“For the grassroots, in topsy-turvy environment such as this, it’s critical to know who your allies are, and that they may not be the allies that have traditionally first come to mind.”*