

2017 DWL Tour Essay **SECOND Place Winner**  
Ken Brock

## **Possession**

Desolation: some view the desert that way. Of course, that's not the case. Life abounds; both natural and abetted by mankind. Nature's garden reigns supreme, with but fleeting guidance from mankind.

Creation: nature created the desert. Eons of climate change, wind, erosion and geologic upheaval have made this place special. But do humans add or subtract? Time to find out.

Contemplation: I stand aside, sit awhile. What do I see below the blue horizon?

Inspiration: a garden universe, complete.

Education: some stops featured extensive landscape designs, from altering storm water flow to just accounting for voracious critters. Other pause-points demonstrated unity in the earth, creating pathways through igneous rock landscapes or displaying how the ravages of time affect the ephemeral human footprint.

Information: evidence of my consciousness. Many locations had helpful handouts, from precisely drawn maps and plans to lists of the various cacti, succulents, yuccas, perennials, vines, shrubs, trees and grasses to be discovered within. Amazing what can survive in the desert if properly cared for—which includes not caring for it at all.

Communication: I found consensus within the community of hosts, volunteers and attendees. Some, long-time Valley residents; others, newbies to the wonders of the desert landscape. All agree with the precept of a vibrant and healthy desert environment.

Collaboration: teamwork, cooperation. Some sites were the product of hundreds of hours of work from multiple people, not to mention the unsteady alliance with boisterous desert terrain and wary partnership with ravenous critters.

Solution: when the community comes together there is no end to what can happen.