

Mojave Max Education Program



Mojave Max

Education Program



1999—2009: The First Decade

Mojave Max Education Program

Introduction

The Mojave Max Education Program began under the umbrella of a conservation action to provide public information and education for the Clark County Desert Conservation Program.

The Education Program encompasses all of the activities pertaining to Mojave Max. These include the emergence contest, outreach, the teacher education workshops and the volunteer training programs.

The Mojave Max Emergence Contest is the central element of the education program. All of the other educational activities support participation in the contest.

The program has developed into a regionally implemented program with international recognition.

This book provides a brief history of the Mojave Max Education Program as well as its progression and accomplishments.

Mojave Max Education Program

Historical Contest Winners

- 2000** Lauren Simons, David Cox Elementary School
LAUREN GUESSED: 3/15/00 12:35 p.m.
- 2001** Kristin Siegrist, Wilhelm Elementary School
KRISTIN GUESSED: 3/19/01 12:00 p.m.
- 2002** Taylor Child, Johnson Middle School
TAYLOR GUESSED: 3/22/02 11:46 a.m.
- 2003** Jose Lopez, Whitney Elementary School
JOSE GUESSED: 3/7/03 10:25 a.m.
- 2004** Richard Raso, Johnson Middle School
RICHARD GUESSED: 2/19/04 9:59 a.m.
- 2005** Josephina Romero, Grant M. Bowler Elementary School
JOSEPHINA GUESSED: 2/14/05 11:55 a.m.
- 2006** Ryan Cicchitti, Roger Gehring Elementary School
RYAN GUESSED: 4/3/06 11:35 a.m.
- 2007** Lily Rosser, Spring Valley Christian Academy
LILY GUESSED: 3/26/07 11:33 a.m.
- 2008** Tesha Kerr, Eileen Connors Elementary School
TESHA GUESSED: 4/14/08 11:30 a.m.
- 2009** Brian Garcia, Staton Elementary School
BRIAN GUESSED: 4/7/09 3:19 p.m.

Mojave Max Education Program

Historical Emergences

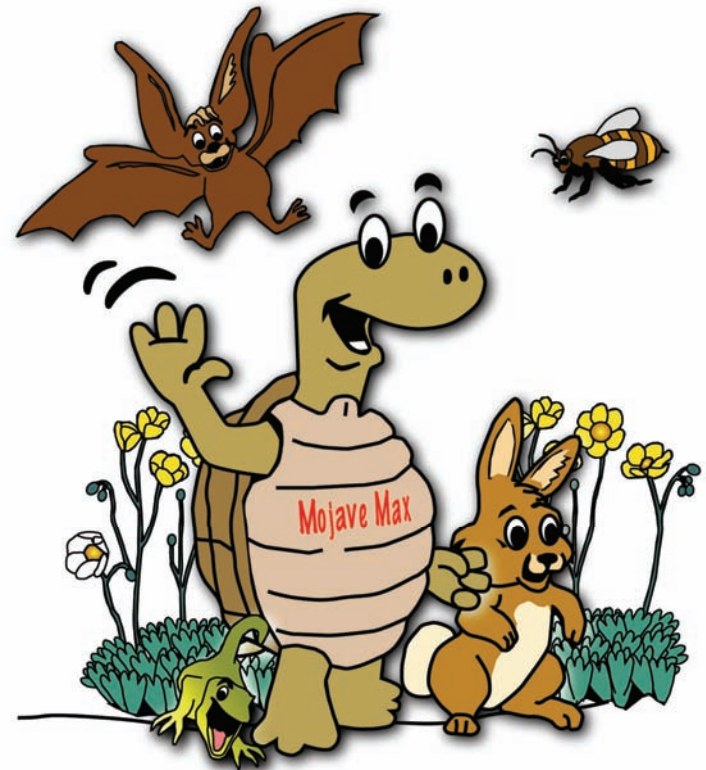
2000	3/15/00	12:32 p.m.
2001	3/19/01	8:30 a.m.
2002	3/22/02	11:46 a.m.
2003	3/07/03	10:25 a.m.
2004	2/19/04	11:14 a.m.
2005	2/14/05	11:55 a.m.
2006	4/03/06	11:32 a.m.
2007	3/26/07	11:34 a.m.
2008	4/14/08	11:27 a.m.
2009	4/7/09	2:37 p.m.

Mojave Max Education Program

Introduction

The first Mojave Max Emergence Contest took place in 2000.

Since then, hundreds of people have participated in the program through their work, volunteering, teaching and entering the contest. More than 100,000 students have been directly reached through this program.



Mojave Max Education Program

The Listing of the Desert Tortoise

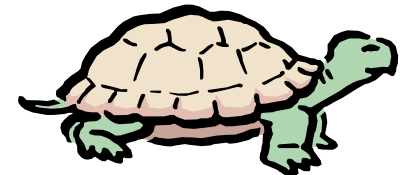
In 1989 the Clark County community was surprised by the immediate listing of the desert tortoise as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service listed the species as threatened following a lawsuit filed by local environmental groups stating that the desert tortoise was not being adequately protected. Some of the factors responsible for tortoise population declines were: illegal collection, vandalism, disease, release of captive tortoises and spread of disease, agricultural development, urban growth, landfills, livestock grazing, road construction, and irresponsible off-road travel.



Mojave Max Education Program

Ten Tortoise Questions and Answers

1. What is the name of the desert we live in?
Mojave
2. What is the name of the home a tortoise lives in?
Burrow
3. How many years can a tortoise live?
60–80 years
4. Why should you never pick up a wild tortoise?
Because it might become scared and lose his water
5. How many places can a tortoise drink from on his body?
3, mouth, nose, under shell/tail area
6. Name some food a tortoise eats in the desert?
Cactus, flowers, grass, weeds
7. What is the name of the sleep a tortoise goes through in the late fall or winter?
Brumation (reptilian form of hibernation)
8. Name some predators that could harm the desert tortoise?
Coyote, fox, eagle, raven, road runner, hawk, snake, mountain lion, ants
9. Why does an adult female or mother tortoise have long toe nails in back?
To dig a nest for her babies
10. What is the name given to a baby tortoise when it is born?
Hatchling



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Desert Tortoise Facts

A Native Species: Desert Tortoises evolved in the Mojave Desert.

An Indicator Species: Tortoises indicate the overall health of the desert. We can tell how health the desert is by how many tortoises are alive and well in the wild.

Threats to Tortoises: Development, irresponsible off-road travel, disrespect to the environment, illegal collection.

Interesting Facts:

Tortoises spend up to 98% of their lives in underground burrows.

They dig their own, or use one they find to escape extreme heat, cold, and predators.

They sometimes share their burrow with other small animals.

They cannot crawl out of their shell, they are attached.

They do not have teeth.

They are vegetarians.

Wild vs. Pet Tortoises:

For the purposes of conserving wild populations, the pet populations are treated differently that the wild. Pets must be properly cared for, as any pet needs proper care. Pets are not to be released into the wild. Wild tortoises are to be left alone.

Mojave Max Education Program

The Listing of the Desert Tortoise

The desert tortoise is an "indicator" species, which means their health is an indicator of the overall health of the desert. Therefore, the dwindling number of tortoises indicated that many species living in the Mojave Desert ecosystem, including humans, could be in trouble. The symbolic desert tortoise is important to all the Mojave Desert species and ecosystems.



Mojave Max Education Program

The Initiation of the Clark County Desert Conservation Program

In response to the listing of the desert tortoise, Clark County and other regional agencies founded the Clark County Desert Conservation Program (DCP) to provide mitigation for the species to allow for continued development in the County. Efforts were made to protect habitat for tortoises and other desert plants and animals. The other agencies included the Nevada Department of Transportation and the Cities of Henderson, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas and Mesquite.



Mojave Max Education Program

Carrie Ronning	Sherry Swensk
Sean Ross	David Syzdek
Amanda Rowland	Nancy Syzdek
Sonja Ruffin	Nathan Tannenbaum
Mary Jo Rugwell	Jana Thompson
Maria Ryan	Randi Thompson
Kurt Sawyer	Cris Tomlinson
Mark Saylor	Jennifer Trainor
Rob Scanland	Mark Trinko
Elizabeth Schenkel	Cindy Truelove
Carissa Schively	Scott Trujillo
Geoff Schneider	Megan Urban
Shaun Schoener	Virginia Valentine
Ann Schreiber	Wayne Veiock
Ron Schreiber	David Vincelette
Jerry Schupe	Dana Wagner
Jan Schweitzer	Sue Wainscott
Elsie Sellars	Lewis Wallenmeyer
Coy Shinn, Jr.	Robert Wandel
Jon Shogren	Dewey Warner
Jonathan Shogren	Rick Watson
Mark Silverstein	Chris Weir
Kelly Slade	Stacey Welling
Sid Slone	Katherine Whaley
Thomas Smigel	Leisa Whittum
Ron Smolinski	Holly Williams
Carol Snyder	Pat Williams
Athena Sparks	Robert Williams
Amy Sprunger	Melinda Winney
Anne Staley	Lori Wohletz
Sue Steele	Dan Wray
Miyoshi Stith	Dan and Very Wray
Erin Stocker	Joan Wright
Catherine Swan	Katherine Zande
Connie Suckling	and many more

Mojave Max Education Program

Nancy Kunz	Patricia Mynster
Lorna Lange	Shirl Naegle
Nancy Laussade	Linda Nations
Kristi Leavitt	Lee Nelson
Callie Le'au Courtright	Lorenzo Nichols
Aaron Leifheit	Rick O'Brien
Shonah Levin	Robert Oliver
David Linder	Martin Olson
Jennifer Lindsay	Risa Page
Barbara Little	Robin Pagenkopp
Victoria Lum	Juan Palma
Melanie Luna	Erik Pappa
Ann Magliere	Darren Peck
Ron Marlow	La Nita Pemberton
Gayle Marrs-Smith	Stephanie Pesek
Kristin Marsala	Carol Peterson
Ann Magliere	Brittany Petit
Cynthia Martinez	Cynthia Pfaendler
Gayle Marrs-Smith	Alan Pinkerton
Cynthia Martinez	John Pinna
Dale Matteson	Darlene Pond
Ed Matulis	Michelle Popek
Chip Maxfield	Jeff Porderlove
Elise McAllister	Susan Potts
Sky McClain	Elizabeth Powell
Denise McConnell	Dawn Rafferty
Sharon McKelvey	Jackson Ramsey
David Meador	John Reese
Chelsea Milko	Barbara Reeth
Dawn Minnick	Rory Reid
Kurt Mische	Charles Reifsnyder
Samantha Mooradian	Thom Reilly
Jim Moore	Vikki Ridgley
Rob Mrowka	Christine Robinson
Terry Murphy	Kay Rohde

Mojave Max Education Program

The Initiation of the Clark County Desert Conservation Program



After several years of planning, and the development and implementation of a short-term plan, the Long-Term Desert Conservation Plan was approved and the United States Fish & Wildlife issued a Section 10(a)1(B) Incidental Take Permit for the desert tortoise on August 1, 1995.

Mojave Max Education Program

Implementation of the Clark County Desert Conservation Program

The DCP implemented actions to "ensure survivability of species in the wild." These actions include research, habitat restoration, and public information. Therefore, a Public Information and Education Program was developed. The goals of this program were:

1. informing people of the terms of the Clark County permit
2. encouraging people to respect, protect, and enjoy the desert
3. increasing public understanding of the value of Clark County's natural ecosystems.



Mojave Max Education Program

David Donovan	Brad Hardenbrook
Barry Duncan	Shelley Hartmann
Lola Egan	Julene Hayworth
Julie Ervin-Holoubek	Sandy Helvey
Todd Esque	Lola Henio
Elaine Evans	Barb Henderson
Jane Feldman	Marci Henson
Leanne Fernald	Hermi Hiatt
Steve Ferrand	John Hiatt
Rocky Finseth	Lisa Hidalgo
Michael Ford	Darren Hildreth
Amy Foss	Karin Hoff
John Fredericks	Janelle Hopkins
(Jordan & LJ)	John Hunt
Donna Freeman	Stacy Irvin
Laura Garcia	Suzanne Jezzeny
Dan Garrison	Cynthia Johnson
Cindy Gates	Shane Johnson
Cindy Gatesy	John Jones
Tony Gaxiola	Doug Joslin
Pat Getter	Ebriham Juma
Anthony Gibson	Skip Kelley
Christina Gibson	Iris Kikuchi
Vicki Gonzales	Joyce King
Stephanie Gort	Jeanne Klackow
Linda Gray	Janis Kladec
Heather Green	Margie Klein
Phil Guerrero	Jennifer Knight
Jennifer Haley	Teri Knight
Ross Haley	Sherry Koch
Nancy Hall	Sonja Kokos
Matt Hamilton	Jeri Krueger
Deborah Hart	Dan Kulin

Mojave Max Education Program

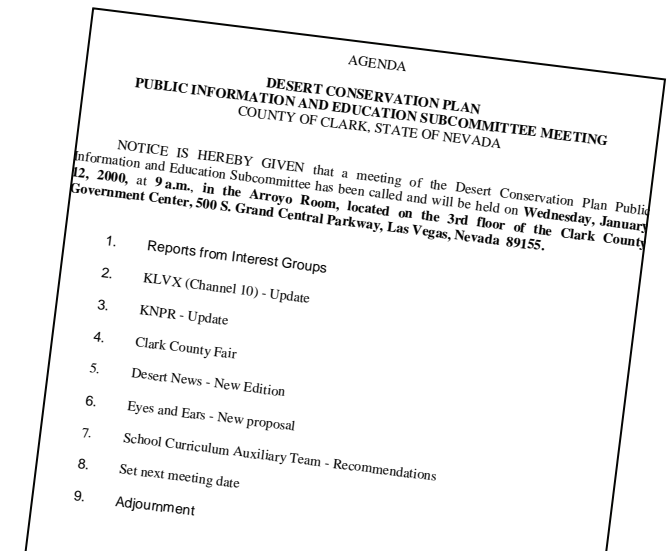
And thank you to a few more people who helped make this program a success:

Rosalia Achziger	John Brekke
Erich Albl	Allison Brody
Ellen Anderson	Anne Brookman
Hernando Ateho	Larry Brown
Jennifer Atherley	Candice Brunscheen
Kathy August	Betty Burge
Lee Avant	Gene Butler
Thomas Axtell	Michael Burroughs
Scott Bahan	Fran Byers
Janet Bair	DeAnna Campbell
Sue Baker	Kirsten Cannon
Jayson Barangan	Jessica Carillo
Helen Barrett	Joe Casillo
Susan Barrow	Jessica Clay
Nate Barnhill	Sharon Clifton
Robert Beach	Heather Clove
Jodi Bechtel	Colleen Corrgan
Blaine Benedict	Jan Craddock
Dana Bennett	Michael Creathbaum
Judy Berkowitz	Alice Crites
David Bert	Tim Crowley
Lee Bice	Wilisha Daniels
Liz Bickmore	Jim Davis
Dick Birger	Don Dayton
Kim Blanc	Roxanne Dey
Betty Blattel	Laverne Dickey
Diane Blythe	Steve Distler
Carolyn Boyle	Art Dixon

Mojave Max Education Program

Implementation of the Clark County Desert Conservation Program

A public information and education working group was created. One of their first tasks was to develop a public information campaign.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Naming Contest

Dunn, Reber, Glenn & Martinez (DRGM) was hired to develop a media campaign. An artist, Scott Matthews, designed the first Mojave Max, and in 1991, a contest was held to name the live tortoise that was moving to a new habitat at the Red Rock National Conservation Area.

This friendly tortoise was named Mojave Max, but some other great name entries are as follows:

Centurion

Dusty

Tortoisorous Rex

Nibbles

Elvis the Tortoise

Hardback

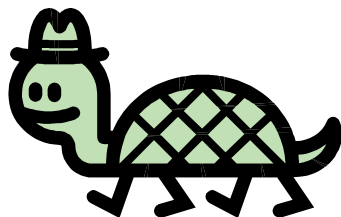
Sergeant Shell

Mobile Home

Sandy T. Hardtop

Lashellda

Ramble Gamble



Mojave Max Education Program

Special Thanks to the Following:

Teachers and Educators who brought the lessons to the students and implemented the components Mojave Max Education Program.

Students who learned about their local environment and entered the Mojave Max Emergence Contest.

Public Information and Education Committee Members for all their time, dedication and support of the program.

Joshua Tree Productions for creating the best environmental education video products possible and producing the Emmy award winning "The Life of a Desert Tortoise."

Chris Weir for providing advertising services from 2006-2009 and adding core partnership advertising.

Dale Matteson (Matteson Marketing Group) for providing advertising services from 2001-2005. Initiated the school assembly program and brought incredible enthusiasm to the program.

Steve-N-Kids for providing the most entertaining mascot services.

DRGM (Dunn Reber, Glenn & Martinez) for developing the original artwork and advertising concepts

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Education Program Partners (continued):

Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association administers volunteer teaching program and school assemblies. Provide care for the live Mojave Max and his habitat at the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.

United States Bureau of Land Management developed and implemented volunteer teaching program. Awarded the first place "Excellence in Interpretation and Environmental Education" Award (the highest award the Bureau of Land Management has for educational programs) for this program in 2003. Provides care and housing for Mojave Max.

Southern Nevada Agency Partnership supports the program by providing volunteers, educators and administrative support.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Character Development

Created by the Clark County Desert Conservation Program, and named through a school naming contest, the Mojave Max cartoon character was developed in 1994. Mojave Max became an icon, as well as the name of the famous live tortoise.



Mojave Max Education Program

The Live Mojave Max

The live desert tortoise selected to be Mojave Max moved to a new home at the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area 1994.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Education Program Partners:

Clark County Desert Conservation Program initiated the program. initiated the program as part of the MSHCP public information and education effort, provides funding, hosts the mojavemax.com website, manages the media messages (press releases, etc), holds the copyright to Mojave Max. Administers and funds most of the program.

Clark County School District hosts the student entry database, and supports the development of related lesson plans and classroom activities that provide fun ways to learn about our desert while also improving their English, art, and math skills.

Desert Managers Group administers the Mojave Max Education Program in Southern California.

Friends of Red Rock Canyon for all of their assistance and support caring for Mojave Max and aiding the education program.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Education Program Components:

School Assemblies

A minimum of 12 assemblies are presented to Clark County schools each year providing environmental education, and related materials to students.

Contest

An on-line student entry form for students to enter their predictions of when Mojave Max will emerge each year. The winner and their class receive a plethora of prizes including t-shirts, Olympic style medals and the field trip to see the live Mojave Max.

Teacher and Volunteer Education Programs

Professional Education Courses, educator training and educator handbooks have been developed and are provided to teachers and volunteers each year.

Classroom Programs

Volunteers and educators take the lessons on desert tortoise lessons and activities to approximately 6,000 students per year.

Mojave Max Education Program

The Live Mojave Max

This particular reptile was a pet named Lester prior to his new career as Mojave Max.

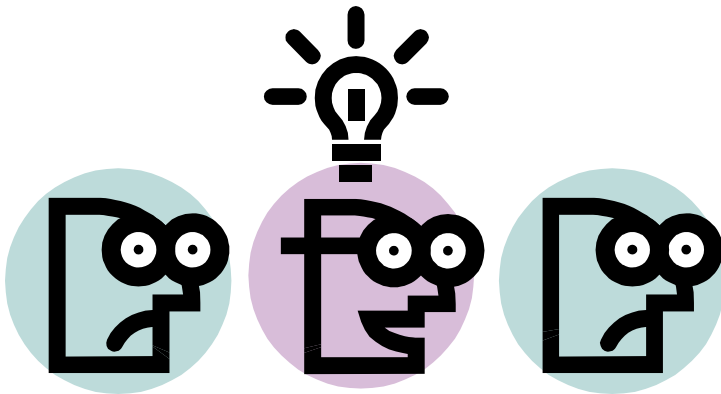


The ambassador of "environmental education for the Mojave Desert" began a very memorable journey.

Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program

Then, in 1997, a weather forecaster, an environmentalist, and an off-road enthusiast converged on a fabulous idea!!!!



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009

And the field trip was great.



Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program

Nathan Tannenbaum, a local weather forecaster made a statement on the air:

"While that groundhog back east may work for easterners, it's time we had a weather prognosticator for the southwest."



Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program



Ron Marlow and Jim Moore (both biologists and environmentalists) remarked:

"We think it's a great idea for Las Vegas to have it's own version of Punxsutawney Phil - to signal when Spring arrives in the Mojave Desert and that could serve as the spokesman for the entire Desert Conservation Program. We could then have a contest with the school kids to guess what time and date he emerges from his burrow each year."

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009

Clark County Commissioner Larry Brown and Miyoshi Stith, BLM Acting Field Manager made a special visit to the third graders of Staton Elementary School to congratulate Brian and his class.



Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program

An off-road enthusiast remarked:
"That is a great idea, let's do it."



Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program

Christina Gibson, the administrator of the Public Information and Education Program for the Clark County Desert Conservation Program paused, "Are you kidding? How is a desert tortoise, slowly coming out of his burrow going to be exciting?"



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009

Brian's teacher, Ms. Jorgenson said she had entered her class almost every year, and this was the first time one of her students even guessed the correct date.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009

Brian Garcia, third grader at Staton Elementary School won the 2009 Mojave Max Emergence Contest.



Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program



Community leader Ann Schreiber supported the program from the beginning and was instrumental in getting the Mojave Max Emergence Contest going. Later, she introduced Mojave Max to the Clark County Fair and Rodeo.



Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program

Discussions continued among interested parties for awhile: "That's a great idea"....."How will this ever work"..... "Really, this is the best idea I've heard of for conservation messaging" "Are you for real?"



And the discussions continued even more: "How will this ever work"..... "This is such an exciting idea".... "But".... "I have a dream, kids all over the country shouting Mojave Max"... "Are you for real?"

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009



Mojave Max Education Program

The Very Beginning of the Mojave Max Education Program

And, the concept took shape. The concept was: Mojave Max is a live tortoise that resides at the Red Rock National Conservation Area. His emergence every year indicates the beginning of spring in the Las Vegas area. Every spring, Mojave Desert reptiles, including desert tortoises, respond to warmer weather and more daylight hours by emerging from their winter's sleep, so Mojave Max is a good representative for all the animals of the Mojave Desert.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2000

In 2000, Mark Trinko, said "I'm not waiting any longer, let's have the first Mojave Max Emergence Contest this year."



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009



SNAP (Southern Nevada Agency Partnership) partners helped the Mojave Max Education Program deliver the messages to the children.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2000

So, the first Mojave Max Emergence Contest was held in 2000.

Local public radio station KNPR sponsored the first contest. They ran advertisements for the contest, collected the contest entries via fax, and provided a station tour and t-shirts to the winning class.



Sixth Grader Lauren Simmons from David Cox Elementary School won the first Mojave Max Emergence Contest. Lauren and her entire class won a field trip to Red Rock National Conservation Area to learn more about the desert tortoise and to see the live Mojave Max.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2001

In 2001, Kathy August, Interpretative Ranger for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management initiated a volunteer training program. Through this program, volunteer teachers were recruited to complete a training program. Following training, they were scheduled to deliver the Mojave Max Education Program to classrooms in Clark County. This was the beginning of a huge partnership with the Bureau of Land Management and the Red Rock Canyon Interpretative Association joining the program.



"Dress up like a tortoise" was a popular activity of the Mojave Max Education Program.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2009

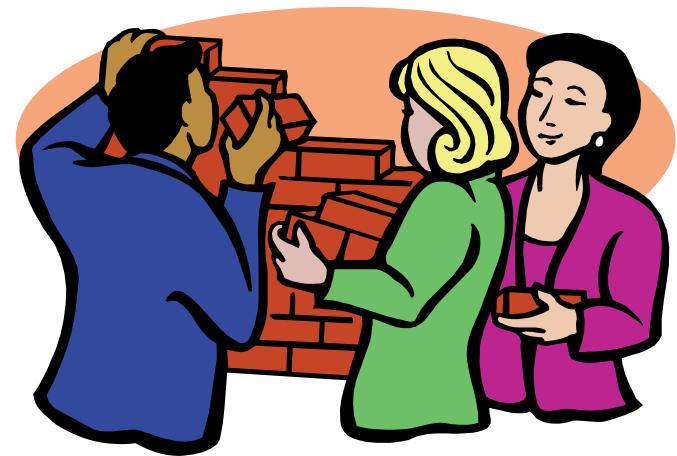


In the tenth year of the Mojave Max Emergence Contest, 2009, we began to realize the fruits of our labor. The regional awareness of the program was at its highest level. Requests for school education programs and Mojave Max mascot appearances skyrocketed.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2001

Partners and participants began adding facts, information and concepts to the education program.



Mojave Max Education Program

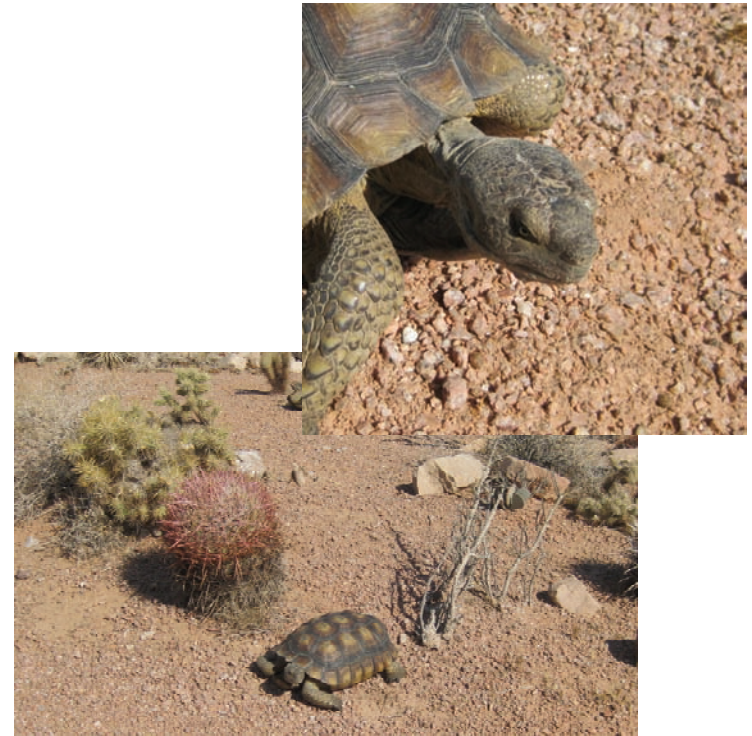
Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2001

The second year of the Mojave Max Emergence Contest found a shy second-grader named Kristen Siegrist from Wilhelm Elementary School. Her school librarian encouraged her to enter the contest.



Mojave Max Education Program

A Mojave Max Successor is Chosen



The new Mojave Max was turned in to Clark County's desert tortoise pick-up service in 2005. He was marked and translocated into the Large Scale Translocation Site near Jean, Nevada. He escaped this fenced-in area and traveled onto I-15. Some California travelers picked him up and took him to Southern California with them. They turned him in to local officials who found his identification tags and returned him to Southern Nevada.

Mojave Max Education Program

A Mojave Max Successor is Chosen



After the sad passing of Mojave Max I, partner representatives gathered and chose a Mojave Max successor. The new desert tortoise was a healthy 19-year old male.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2001

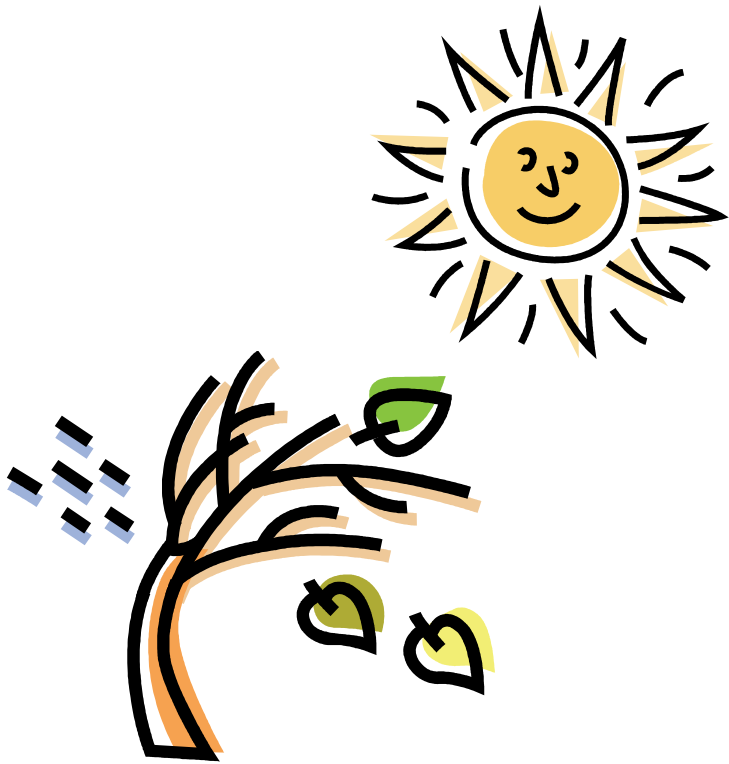


The first Mojave Max Mascot was created in 2001. The new mascot joined the winning class on their field trip to Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, and made appearances at community events.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

The third year of the contest continued rather smoothly. Additional components were added to the program: the Clark County School District became a partner hosting the online student entry database. Clark County also began supporting local advertising and encouraging local weather forecasters to highlight Mojave Max's weather related behavior in their newscasts.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Passes Away



SOME KID'S QUOTES:

"He was awesome and a great inspiration for kids to learn about the environment they live in. I will be sad. I am curious to know what they are going to do now." Coy, age 12

"Mojave Max will always be remembered for his awesomeness." Haley, age 10

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Passes Away

In the summer of 2008, we were all stunned with the unexpected passing of the first live Mojave Max.

BLM Nevada News

Las Vegas Field Office- 2008-10

FOR RELEASE: July 1, 2008

CONTACT: Kirsten Cannon (702) 515-5057;
kirsten_cannon@blm.gov

Mojave Max Dies of Natural Causes

Las Vegas – Yesterday, Mojave Max, the approximately 65 year-old-year old male tortoise that resided in a special habitat at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area was confirmed to have died of natural causes.

For the past nine years, students were encouraged to estimate the time that he would first exit his burrow after brumation (reptilian form of hibernation.) The successful event had thousands of students in the valley researching species, temperature and cycles of the Mojave Desert.

More than 100,000 schoolchildren were introduced to the Mojave Desert Ecosystem through the Clark County Desert Conservation Program, which includes a cartoon version of Max.

A successor to Mojave Max will be announced at a later date.

#

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

In 2002, Mojave Max's burrow received some improvements including a thermometer to indicate the temperature in the burrow, in the shade, and in the sun.



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Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

An appropriate sign was created and placed at Mojave Max's habitat at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.



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Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008



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Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008

In 2008, Mojave Max was invited back to a Las Vegas 51's game on Family Day.



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Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

The first contest brochure was developed.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

In 2002, Mojave Max made a grand debut...



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Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

at the Clark County Fair & Rodeo.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

Sixth-grader Taylor Child of Johnson Middle School won the contest in 2002. His teacher, Ms. Cote', had been following the contest since the beginning, and stated that she was so excited when she heard that her class had won that she could not sleep for a week. Taylor was able to take his entire class on a field trip to see the live Mojave Max. This year, the field trip included a pizza party and novelty yellow Mojave Max t-shirts. Taylor also won a personal game system, and his teacher was rewarded with a personal computer.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008

The field trip was picture perfect. Max was out, the weather was great, and everyone had a fabulous time.



















Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2002

A "sing and dance" song was composed.

The Mojave Max Song

Mojave Max		(Clap, Clap)	
Mojave Max		(Clap, Clap)	
He has a shell		(Stomp, Stomp)	
Upon his back		(Stomp, Stomp)	
Mojave Max		(Clap, Clap)	
Mojave Max		(Clap, Clap)	
He goes to sleep		(Shhh, Shhh)	
Wakes up – It's spring!		(Jump, Jump)	

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003

In 2003, the school assembly program was added.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008

The actual winner of the 2008 contest was Tesha Kerr of Eileen Connors Elementary School.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003

The traveling trophy for the winning school was added.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003

Suitcase covers were donated for the program.



Bureau of Land Management Park Ranger Gina Mele displays a donated suitcase cover for the Mojave Max Education Program.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008

In 2008, a glitch in the system had us announcing an additional contest winner.

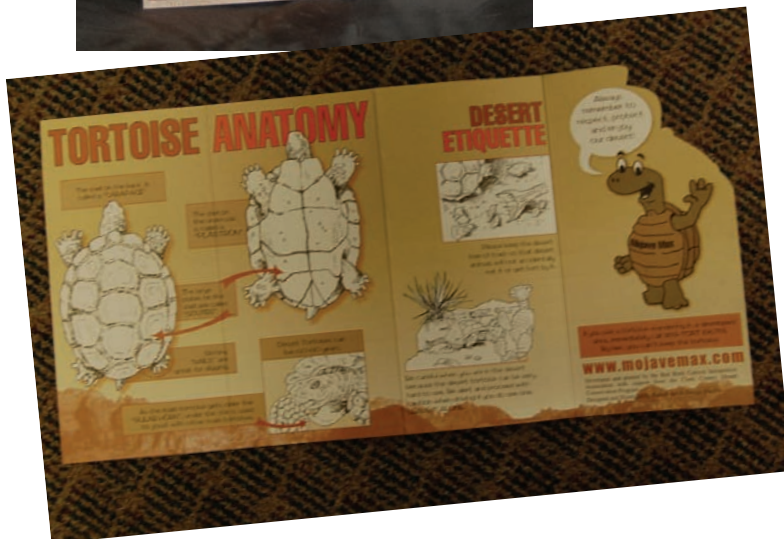


So, Anthony Carro was the official honorary Mojave Max Emergence Contest entrant for 2008.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008

Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association developed a new educational brochure for the program.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003

In 2003, The Mojave Max Education Program received the first place "Excellence in Interpretation and Environmental Education" Award (the highest award the Bureau of Land Management has for educational programs).



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003

The 2003 winner was Jose Lopez of Whitney Elementary School.



Commissioner Rory Reid assisted with the award ceremony for Jose.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008

The volunteer and teacher education programs continued to improve and grow..



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003

Mojave Max also found a brand new mascot costume and more community support in 2003.



The winners also received a tour of Univision, Ch. 15 television studio that year.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008



Participation and support for the program continued to increase.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2008

The school assemblies continued into 2008.

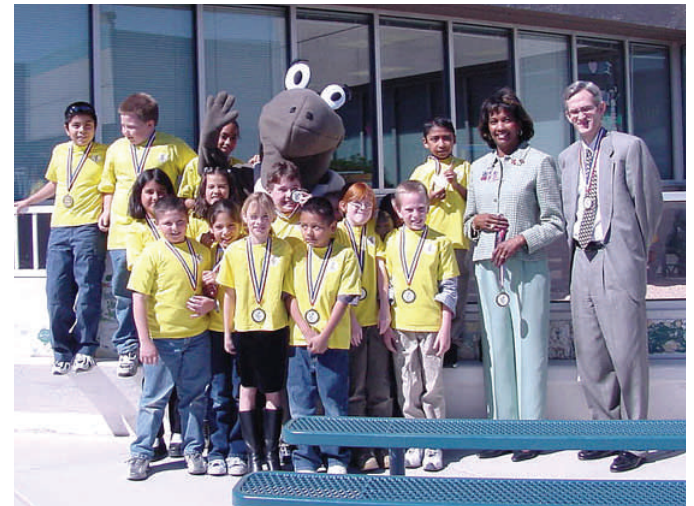


Mojave Max got an updated image with a new costume.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2003

The shirt signing tradition officially began.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2004

In 2004, Requests for Mojave Max to appear at community outreach events increased.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007



They highlighted Mojave Max on a segment of the international television show, "Bindi the Jungle Girl."

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007

Terri and Bindi Irwin visited Mojave Max in 2007.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2004



Mojave Max became very popular (more recognizable than the Governor according to a survey).

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2004



Richard Raso of Johnson Middle School won the 2004 contest.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007

All in all, it was a great day at the ballpark.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2004



The sixth graders of Johnson Elementary School surprised program staff when they announced that three sixth grade classes all worked together to determine their best guesses of Mojave Max's emergence and they would all like to participate in the celebration. This was the second time that a sixth grade class at Johnson Elementary School won the contest. Science teachers had thoroughly implemented the education program.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2004

The news of Mojave Max's emergence was covered by the Associated Press and run on CNN, USA Today, and media across the country.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007



But Cosmo didn't have his own tattoo table either.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007

In 2007, Mojave Max had the honor of throwing out the first pitch for the Area 51's baseball game on Family Day. Cosmo seemed to be a bit jealous that more kids gathered around Max than him.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2004

ASSOCIATED PRESS

02-20-2004 14:07

**BC-WST--Mojave Max,
Bjt,0580**

**Forget groundhogs;
Nevada desert tortoise
says spring has sprung
AP Photo LA806**

By SANDRA CHEREB



The decades-old desert tortoise, who makes his home at a Southern Nevada conservation area, poked his scaly nose out of his den at 11:14 a.m. Thursday _ less than four months after he burrowed down for the winter on Oct. 28.

Unlike the furry groundhogs who make a show _ or no show _ of seeing their shadow on Groundhogs Day to predict the end of winter, Mojave Max just shows up when the time is right.

"Shadows? We don't need no shadows," joked Phil Guerrero, spokesman for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. "Mojave Max is the real deal."

The 15½-inch long, 15-pound tortoise is the poster reptile for the Clark County Desert Conservation Program, an effort that was launched to protect desert environments _ and the threatened desert tortoise _ from development sprawl.

"He's just a fabulous, charismatic character," said Christina Gibson, the program's coordinator.

Mojave Max lives on an acre compound at the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area outside Las Vegas, along with 10 other tortoises.

Biologists estimate the wrinkled-face Max is 50 to 60 years old. In the wild, desert tortoises live to about 70, but they've been known to reach 100 in captivity.

Mojave Max has become a Southern Nevada celebrity among school children and may be the only reptile to boast his own Web site. For the past five years the conservation program, in conjunction with the Clark County School District and others, has hosted a contest where students guess when he will emerge from brumation _ the reptile form of hibernation.

The winner's class gets a field trip and pizza party, and the school gets to display the "Mojave Max Cup" for a year in its trophy case. The class also gets Mojave Max T-shirts, medallions, and a trip to a water park. The winning student gets a year's pass to the park.

The goal, Gibson said, is to get children interested in earth sciences.

This is the earliest Max has emerged in the past five years. Last year he ventured from his burrow on March 7.

"He's a month ahead of what we had anticipated," said Kathy August, education coordinator at the Red Rock Visitors Center. A female tortoise also made a brief appearance Thursday, she said.

Length of daylight, warming temperatures and their own internal body clock tell tortoises when it's time to wake up, she said.

When it comes to predicting spring, "They're pretty reliable," August said.

If that's the case, northern Nevada has a ways to go before winter makes its exit, said Chris Healy of the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Healy and his family in Reno adopted two desert tortoises, Geeze and Louise, as pets several years ago.

To protect them from the cold, Geeze and Louise spend their winters in a cardboard box padded with shredded newspaper and stored in a closet out in the garage. The Heals start listening for movement around mid April.

"Last year they didn't come out of the box until May 15," Healy said. "It was a cold wet spring."

On the Net:

Mojave Max: www.mojavemax.com

Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area: www.redrockcanyon.blm.gov

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005

In 2005, the education program expanded to include more biology, weather and fun. The assembly program continued to attract more attention and Mojave Max, the mascot, began to develop his own unique mascot moves.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007



Prizes!!!!

And the field trip to Red Rock was its usual success.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005

And the children loved Max.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007



Spring Valley Christian Academy was the first private school to win the contest. Lily and her teachers attended the Clark County Board of Commissioner meeting that year for special recognition.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007

Lily Rosser of Spring Valley Christian Academy was the winner of the 2007 contest.



Upon announcing that Lily was the winner, she stated "I don't remember entering."

Thank goodness her teacher said, "yes, I remember you entered at home and then told me that you did." Whew! We thought we had the wrong person.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005



They really, really loved Mojave Max.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005

Mojave Max seemed to show up everywhere.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007



CBS covered the story of Mojave Max on a show called "Coast to Coast," which aired on the travel network.

Mojave Max Education Program

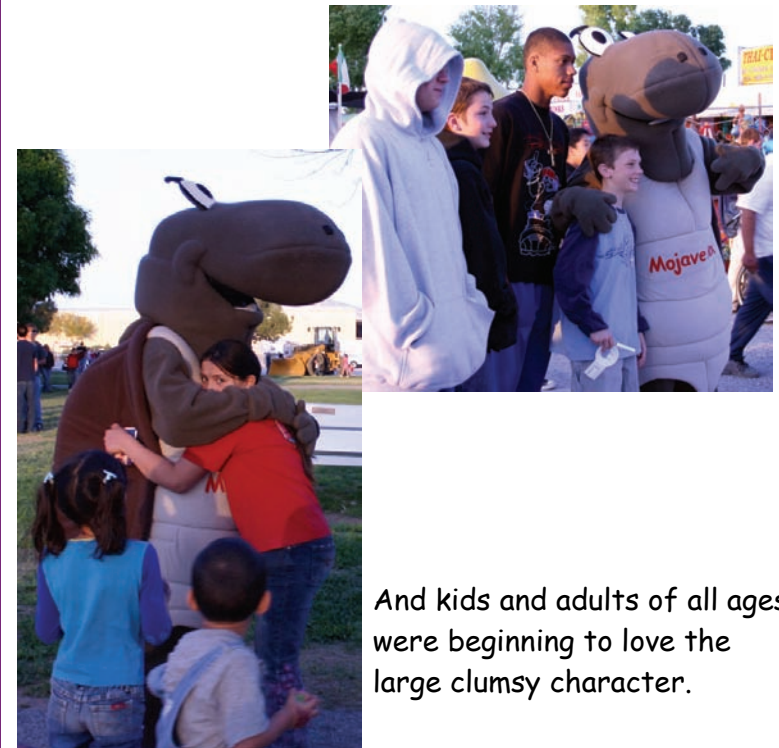
Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2007

In 2007, the Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association improved and administered the volunteer and teacher education programs.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005



And kids and adults of all ages were beginning to love the large clumsy character.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005



2005 was an exceptionally "wet" year marking record rainfall for the valley. Mojave Max emerged early and muddy.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006

In 2006, the live Mojave Max hesitated about coming out in the spring.



Sixth Grader Ryan Cicchitti won the 2006 contest. He exclaimed "Nothing like this has ever happened to me before, maybe my luck is changing." Ryan's father had recently passed away, so bringing him some good news brought tears to a few eyes.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006

Mojave Max starting hanging out with all sorts of odd characters.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005

However, the winner's field trip was anything but a wet day.



2005 marked the beginning of better documentation of the program. Since the students began coming on field trips with digital cameras, staff decided it was time to catch up with technology.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005



Elise McAllister took an extra role in helping out with the education of the rural northeast area, and it paid off.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



Everyone was clamoring to get near the famous Mojave Max.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



Mojave Max's popularity continued to soar when Southern California hosted their first annual Mojave Max Emergence Contest in 2006.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005



Josephina Romero of Grant Bowler Elementary School won the contest in 2005. Everyone in the rural Moapa town and valley was excited about her winning.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005

Again, the field trip was very fun.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



Thom Reilly, Clark County Manager spoke at one of the assemblies.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2005



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



In 2006, local weather forecasters participated in some of the school assemblies.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



The classroom education programs also grew in size and strength.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



Mojave Max was loved.

Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006

The school assembly program continued to improve.



Mojave Max Education Program

Mojave Max Emergence Contest 2006



Dr. Joyce King demonstrates "he goes to sleep" portion of the Mojave Max Song.