

HISTORY OF THE BARSTOW SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTER

The Mojave Valley Senior Citizen's Club was organized in early 1976 when Wanda Bethel called together Mayor George Goldsmith and other civic leaders in Barstow and explained to them the senior citizens of Barstow were in desperate need of a building for a Senior Citizens Center. Out of this meeting came the officers for the Senior Citizen's Center; President-Wanda Bethel, Vice-President-Mayor George Goldsmith, Secretary-Martha Noll, and Treasurer John Cawdrey. The Mojave Valley Senior Citizen's Center was incorporated on September 10, 1976.

The first fundraiser for the new Senior Citizen's Center was the raffling of a doll-a small beginning, but in 1976 they were able to raise \$500. This money was used to open the Senior Citizen's Thrift Store which in 1978 raised \$1500 a month! Our Thrift Store still operates, staffed mostly with volunteers, and is a major source of funding for the Senior Citizen's Center.

Our current building was dedicated in 1979. A plaque in the front entryway reads, "This facility was provided jointly by the city of Barstow and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – A community development block grant program for the benefit of Barstow area citizens".

Currently, we have Bingo twice a week, and a dance twice a month. The Barstow Senior Citizen's Center has daily activities to include exercise programs, craft groups, game groups, Wii bowling, blood pressure and blood glucose testing. Our seniors are able to speak with representatives from insurance companies, rehab facilities, and assisted living homes. There are support groups, a travel club and even Social Security Teleconference is available here!

The Barstow Senior Nutrition Program provides a congregate meal program for lunch at the Barstow Senior Center, and also provides the Meals-on-Wheels program for the entire high desert, to include Apple Valley, Victorville, Hesperia, Adelanto, Helendale, and Phelan. Quite a large undertaking for a small facility!

From such humble beginnings we have grown into a vital part of our community. From holding public forums for candidates, to being a place for senior citizens to meet for activities and lunch, we are the place to be!