



While in Death Valley it rained .5 inches over a period of two days. Gathered around the morning fire are Bill Gutherie, Tom Newfedt, Lori Stevens and Rae Baldwin.



In Titus Canyon we stopped to look at the petroglyphs left from the Shoshone Indians. Gordon Jones and Armand Rebischke are interpreting the petroglyphs.



Up in one of the washes we saw our first of many cotton top cactus. Mark Lindstrom, Andreas Luerhing, Kery McQuaid and John Snively are discussing the cacti.

## Wonders of geology, life

by Angela Wilson  
Editor-in-Chief

For many people the mention of Death Valley conjures up a variety of different ideas about a dry desolate place where nothing can survive. But as a group of 22 students- myself included, it is very different from that.

John Snively, science department chair and instructor, led the group on what was the sixteenth annual spring break trip to Death Valley. It was no vacation mind you, but a three credit science course filled with information about the natural history of the Sonoran Desert.

As we would find out, it does rain in Death Valley. The annual amount of rainfall in Death Valley is normally a mere inch and a half. While we were there it rained for two days and the area received half an inch of precipitation.

"We saw the wildest spring in Death Valley in the last century," Snively said. "To an Oregonian it's no big deal, but it rained and there was even snow in the surrounding mountains."

For the most part, although the rain was unexpected, it was looked at as an exceptional treat.

Many people on the trip expressed how lucky they were to be able to say they went to Death Valley when it rained.

"I'm impressed at how our group handled the adverse weather conditions," Snively commented. "I stayed up and worried about the weather."

"The group handled it well. Everyone got up in the morning with a smile and took it in stride," Snively added.

Although we did experience rain, there was also sunshine during the week. All the seasons of the year were seen in that week. It rained, snowed, was warm and it even got warm.

Many of the students in our course take Snively's geology class at the college and found it exciting to finally get to see the things they learn about in class up close. The first time they were able to touch a 1.75 billion year old rock and study it.

For others, like myself, this was their first lesson in geology. Some of the formations seen included recumbent folds, desert pavements, desert varnish, ripple marks, glass formations, salt crystals, inselbergs, cinder cones, alluvial fans, dried pluvial lakes, and many other sights.



During the week each person in the class had to give a different aspect of Death Valley. Andreas Luehring gave his talk on pup fish at Salt Creek.