

Mountain Views

By Harry J. Lee

(Ed Note: Harry Lee is on vacation. We have as guest columnist this week "Big Ears, Old Jud," the lead mule in Bruce Morgan's 20-Mule Team. Newspaper people make asses out of themselves on occasion, but this is the first time we've made a newspaperman out of an jackass. Guess there's not much difference.)

Been reading in the Bishop Register where some mule-eared jackrabbit has been sending you stuff to print about the doin's in Upper Inyo, so I thought I'd put you up to date on the main part of the county.

Us jackasses down here been having a right pleasant winter. Good weather and plenty of rain. Then just when the grass is gettin' nice and green this Bruce Morgan, who owns us, gets the idea of takin' another try for the big cup at the Elks Helldorado celebration over in Vegas. Seems like Charlie Scholl, some wheel in the Pacific Coast Borax Co., thinks that big cup would look nice in the Furnace Creek Inn hotel lobby, and since we won it twice straight-hand walking, one more win will give them permanent possession of the hardware.

Anyway, they hooked us up, and took off from Furnace Creek ranch and drove us all the way to Vegas. Took seven days of steady travel to make it. Went right down through that atomic testing country and some of them soldiers thought they was seein' a mirage.

Some of our old jerkline pals were workin' in that big western that Warner Bros. been makin' in Lone Pine and couldn't make the trip, but we had Bruce Morgan, Leppy Diaz, Con Zuniga, and Wendell Gill and they all know mule talk so we moved right along.

I can tell you that old corral down below the Cashman Field rodeo grounds looked mighty good when we got there.

The craziest people in the country filled that town. Their chamber of commerce advertises "Come Have Fun In The Sun." Then they "play all night by artificial light." Makes you mighty proud of being just an ordinary jackass when you see some of them humans in the morning.

Next day was the Old-Timers parade. Nothing motor-driven in it. But lots of the oldest things on wheels and some of the purtiest horses in the world. Never saw such silver mounted stuff. Then there came a long-necked, long-legged bird hitched to a car. Hate to race him. Folks said he came from Africa. Long ways to go to a parade.

In a minute here came another cart with funniest lookin' mules I ever saw pullin' it. They was little fellers but they was sport jobs. Grey with black stripes running around 'em. Scared some of us country boys plenty. They said they was zebras and came from Africa.