

## Sycuan Culture Gathering 2014

By Roy Cook

Another 'New Year' with another traditional land area returned and a new page in opportunities to present Kumeyaay traditional song, gaming and tribal hospitality. The Sycuan Band has nearly tripled the size of its reservation and is utilizing it for culture gatherings and recreation. Using gaming profits, the tribe has acquired 2,000 acres over several years and annexed 1,350 acres to the reservation. Another 600 acres will be kept as separate conservation space.



Over fifty singers of all ages, bands and Colorado River tribes were on the line bringing the songs and activities to the Dehesa valley. Pit cooked beef, beans and handmade tortillas were served to all attendees. It makes my mouth water to think of missing these delights, regrettably my strained knee kept me from being there this time.





Today there are many more occasions on the reservation to learn the songs and be a part of the rich aspects of Kumeyaay culture. In the previous generation many opportunities were linked to someone's passing or the one year memorial wake. Those responsibilities are still a cultural priority but there are now other occasions for the children to participate and indelibly be a part of the Kumeyaay future for all the people.



Additional incentive for participation was a dance competition and two step quality songs were led by Paul 'Jr' Cuero. Many singers, many Kumeyaay songs and many invited guests came together for a wonderful start for a new year of possibilities.

Source: Thanks to Abel Jacome for the images of the Sycuan event.