

Money Well-spent

*By Suzy Hopkins*

The best scientific study of 2015 was done by a mechanical engineer and geophysicist from California Technical University named Nathalie Vriend. She brought college students to Death Valley and the Mojave Desert to study the sounds made by the sand dunes. They slid down the towering dunes on their butts (very scientific) producing a wide range of unusual sounds. Descending sand sounds they captured by many microphones on the slope and just under the surface, produced P waves that were amplified through the dune's interior creating a large boom at a frequency too low for humans to hear. They measured and recorded these booms and the other sounds the sand produced.

She received a Federal grant to do this research. Your tax dollars at work.