

SPECIAL REPORT: LEE VINING COMMUNITY PULLS TOGETHER



Record Courier 11/20/15

BELINDA GRANT/The R-C

Principal: Lee Vining High School Principal Nancy Lampson talks about the next steps after the devastating fire which burned the school.

Residents rally around after school is burned

by Linda Hiller

Students and

awaiting a hearing next week

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by Linda Hiller
Staff Writer

LEE VINING, Calif. — Driving 90 minutes south of the Carson Valley on Highway 395, you could miss Lee Vining if you sneezed.

You could miss Lee Vining if you gazed too long at the mesmerizing sight of magnificent Mono Lake just east of town, or looked too lingeringly at the spectacular wall of still snow-capped mountains west of the tiny community.

But if you were looking for a big heart, for a resounding resilience of the human spirit, you couldn't possibly miss Lee Vining — population 315 — because here in the shadow of the Eastern Sierra, a community has been tested, and so far, it looks like the grades will be high.

One week ago, on Sept. 19, the citizens of Lee Vining awoke early to smoky skies and the terrible news that the high school was burning down.

After the ashes settled, the horrifying insult-to-injury information circulated that it was not only two of the town's own who had set the fire, but two Lee Vining students who were responsible — a 14-year-old freshman and a 15-year-old sophomore who had recently left the school to be home-schooled. The two boys are currently being detained at the Inyo County juvenile detention center in Independence, Calif.,

Students and passers-by help remove books, desks, computers from the blazing building

Inside

Support pours in from outlying districts

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awaiting a hearing next week.

■ **Heroes.** Saturday morning, while the arsonists were in their homes and where they were both later arrested and confessed, other LVHS students rallied in the early dawn to try and save the burning school.

Robert Garnica, 15, a sophomore, saw the smoke early from his home in a trailer park across the highway and called his friend, Alejandro Flores, 16, a junior, to relay the

urgent news that the school was in trouble.

The boys raced to the school, now engulfed in flames, and immediately went to help other passers-by who were removing computers, books, desks and anything that could be picked up and taken out.

"We went over there and started taking things out of the classroom," Garnica said. Both boys said they knew the suspects, and the word was that alcohol was a factor in the boys' behavior, something the sheriff's department had already confirmed.

"They were drunk, they were Yogi Bearin' and that's how they got the alcohol," Flores said.

Yogi Bearin'?

"It's where they go steal the coolers of people camping, and lots of time there is alcohol in there," Garnica said.

Mono County Sheriff Dan Paranic confirmed that at least



LEE VINING HIGH SCHOOL photo

Fire: The community gathered around to help at fire scene.



Robert Garnica helped take items out of classrooms; see his poem about the tragedy on page 5



Alejandro Flores said he and fellow students are mad and sad over the destruction

one car had been vandalized Friday night and that ice chests containing alcohol had been missing from a nearby campground.

Flores and Garnica said their fellow students were anything but happy about this unscheduled school "vacation."

"We're mad, sad, disappointed and confused, really," Flores said. "We're all disappointed that they destroyed the school and caused

this situation. We all just want to get back to school."

Both Garnica and Flores have other siblings in Lee Vining schools, and both have been in the community since early elementary school.

"We have good teachers here, and we all just want to get back to normal," Garnica said. "We heard the state architect came and

See **Residents** on page 5

Residents: Rally around the school

Continued from page 1

looked at the school and it might not be fixed. It will be sad if they have to bulldoze the school."

Flores said students had mixed reactions to the fact that siblings of the alleged arsonists still remained at school.

"Some of us went up to one of the brothers who was thinking it was his fault, and we said, 'Hey, it's not your fault, you didn't burn the school down,'" he said.

After the fire, Flores and Garnica said there were students who were crying when they saw their blackened school.

Temporary classrooms. Lee Vining, the "Gateway to Yosemite," is a tiny tourist town, with two churches, one grocery market, eight gift shops, 11 motels, 10 restaurants, four gas stations, one pumice company and two schools: Lee Vining High School which housed approximately two dozen high school students and 20 junior high students and Lee Vining Elementary School.

The junior high students and their two teachers displaced by the fire will remain at a new Healthy Start building adjacent to the elementary school, while the high school students have moved to the Lee Vining

Western motel across from the high school, who witnessed Saturday's fire, wrote a check to the school, and tourists worked shoulder to shoulder with community residents in helping to remove items from the school during the fire and the clean-up that followed.

Interim superintendent for the Eastern Sierra Unified District, Bill Schmidt, said the responses from outlying school districts have

incident would not affect their friendship.

"It was hard, but I know it was the right thing to do," she said.

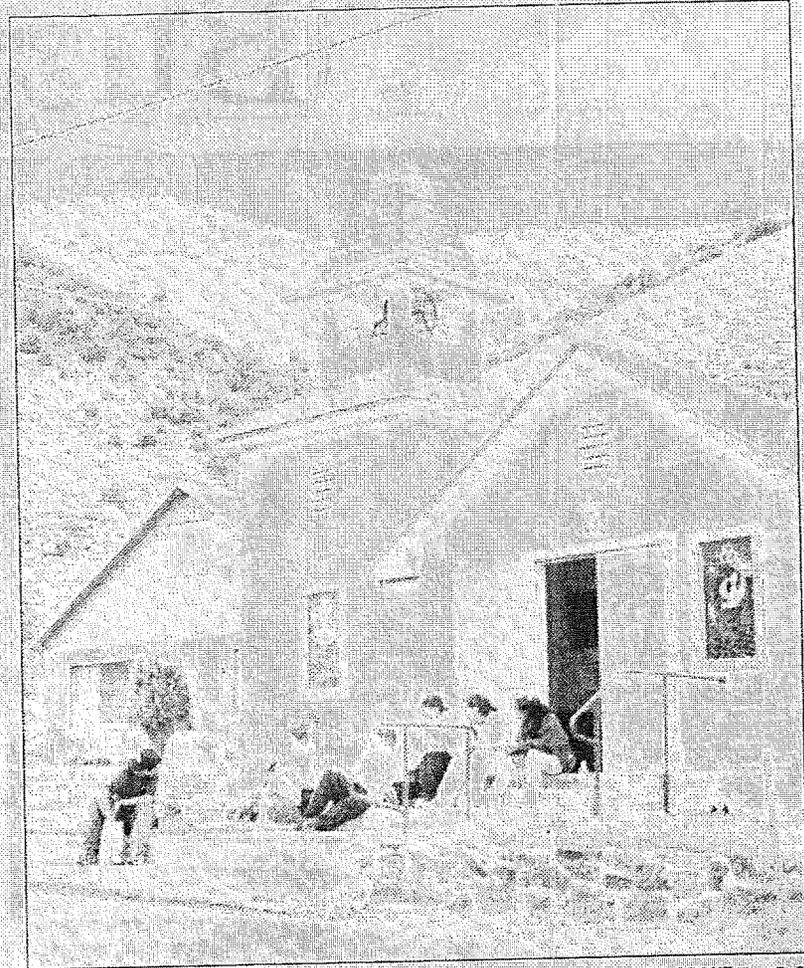
Hints that the Coleville fire department would like the opportunity to finish burning down the school if it is condemned are met with wincing from teachers and students alike.

"Their high school is exactly the same floor plan as ours and they would like the chance to practice



Jeff Putman, teacher and volleyball coach, is optimistic about his team, which is 4-0 now. Because the girls don't have a gym to practice in, they will have to ride the bus to Mammoth, a half-hour away

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BELINDA GRANT/The R-C

Temporary: Students listen to counselor Sandy Pritchett at the Presbyterian Church, where some classes are offered.

The junior high students and their two teachers displaced by the fire will remain at a new Healthy Start building adjacent to the elementary school, while the high school students have moved to the Lee Vining Community Presbyterian Church.

When portables are brought in mid-October, all 45 secondary students will move to the temporary classrooms until a new school is built.

Monday, the 25 high school students and three teachers gathered at their temporary "school," the Presbyterian church, and took a field trip to the high school site, still reeking of smoke from the fire two days prior. Puddles of water and soggy piles of unidentifiable material dotted the school's parking lot and grassy yard.

A counselor was on hand to help the students through their initial stages of grief.

"It was really helpful to have the mental health lady there," Flores and Garnica agreed. "A lot of people were crying when they saw the school."

Meredith Ford, who has taught school at LVHS for 10 years, said that beyond the disbelief, there have been lots of hugs and tears among her two dozen students.

"At this stage, we are coming away with a greater sense of pride in our kids," she said. "Although this is very sad, it has really brought the kids together."

Ford, who teaches subjects including English, social studies and Spanish, said the reaction of the students to the arsonists is complicated by the fact that the town is small and everyone knows each other.

"I think mostly they are upset and wondering, 'Why did they ruin it for the rest of us?'" she said.

BELINDA GRANT/The R-C

half-hour
away

Presbyterian Church, where some classes are offered.

I am mad
I wonder what
will happen
I hear people cry-
ing and screaming
I see the flames
I want a new
school
I am sad
I pretend nothing
I feel numb

■ **Tight quarters.** The Lee Vining Community Presbyterian Church is small, barely large enough to provide two separate teaching areas for the three teachers, including Ford, Kristin McBride, who teaches humanities and health, and Jeff Putman, who teaches math and science and is the volleyball coach to the LVHS Tigers girls team.

"We have eight girls at the school and all eight are on the volleyball team," he said, modestly adding that their record so far is 3 wins, 0 losses.

"We don't have a court for home games any more, so I guess we'll be playing at Mammoth High School," he said. Upon hearing about the fire, volleyball players at nearby Mammoth High, usually a rival for LVHS, gave volleyball T-shirts, bags of candy and cards to the girls, Putman said.

"It was especially nice since we beat them," he said with a smile.

■ **A week to heal and regroup.** In an effort to help teachers regroup and prepare for the next few months in the small church quarters, school was only in ses-

on our school in case they ever had to fight a similar fire in Coleville," Ford said. "Right now, no one can imagine watching the school burn a second time. My rooms didn't get burned, so it would mean watching them go up in flames."

The fire was started in a box of computer paper in the computer lab next to the library. All the books and computers on the south side of the building were destroyed, with early estimates of damage around \$3 million.

The chemistry classroom, where Putman taught, also went up with pops and bangs and the boys' locker room was burned, too.

■ **Heart of the community.** Nancy Lampson, principal of the Lee Vining schools — both elementary, junior high and high school — for the past four years, said the high school building was essentially Lee Vining's community center, the site for the town's open gym and the stage for many elementary school Christmas pageants and student plays over the last 37 years.

"This is where we gathered when anything big happened," she said. "This was the heart of our community."

Lampson said the school district's insurance will cover the loss, which will most likely include demolishing the old building and building anew.

The school was built in 1960 and housed the first students beginning in 1961.

"This building was supposed to last forever," she said. "We've been very innovative, with computers and integrating classes, so we've kept up with the times."

■ **A community gathers.** Tomorrow, in a ceremony which will signify a rising-from-the-ashes pride coupled with a fond farewell, a memorial called "Lee Vining



BELINDA GRANT/The R

Still standing: Principal Nancy Lamson stands in front of the school's signboard displaying lines from an Elton John song.

Thursday evening, at the school board meeting in Lee Vining, the turnout was great and the mood was one of moving forward, Schmidt said.

"We got the great news that four state portables will be delivered Oct. 14, which is unheard of to get them that soon, and at the end of the meeting, the kids came in and turned out the lights because

the girls volleyball team had just beat Coleville, making them 4-0. They were so excited. It was great because it means their spirit is staying up."

On the marquee in front of LVHS, students decided to write the words from an Elton John song that best indicated their indomitable spirit — "We're still standing. Better than we ever did."

I am sad

I pretend nothing

I feel numb

I touch nothing

I worry about our

school

I cry a lot

I am mad

I understand

there is nothing

that can be done

I say nothing

I dream about

our burnt school

I try to under-

stand everything

I hope that some-

thing good will

happen soon

Robert Garnica

Lee Vining High
School student

the girls, Pughan said.

"It was especially nice since we beat them," he said with a smile.

■ A week to heal and regroup.

In an effort to help teachers regroup and prepare for the next few months in the small church quarters, school was only in session for half-days all week.

Thursday, even though the students had been released from school at noon, many still remained on site into the afternoon, comforting each other and continuing to work through their myriad emotions.

Learning about productive ways to deal with their emotions such as anger, has been a challenge for everyone, Ford said.

One of her first moves was to write a note to the mother of the fire's instigator, telling her the

last forever," she said. "We've been very innovative, with computers and integrating classes, so we've kept up with the times."

■ A community gathers.

Tomorrow, in a ceremony which will signify a rising-from-the-ashes pride coupled with a fond farewell, a site memorial called "Lee Vining High School, Past and Future" will be held at 4 p.m. on the school's football field. Current staff, parents and students have been invited along with the many alumni who attended the high school in the past 37 years.

"For years, we were the only high school in the southern half of Mono County, so a lot of people have gone through this particular school building," Lampson said. "We felt that everyone needed some closure."

WEEKEND ESCAPES

Taking the back road from Tahoe to Yosemite

Fall is the time to explore this region of alpine lakes and historic ghost towns

By Ray Riegert

SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

BRIDGEPORT, Mono Co. — Aspens quiver and quake, meadows are splashed with orange, lakes appear ringed with fire. There are few better ways to experience High Sierra country than by following the mountain roads that lead from Lake Tahoe to Yosemite — and no better time to do it than the fall.

Autumn, when the changing foliage transforms the region into a granite-bound, high-elevation version of New England, is a quiet, magical time here. The summer crowds are gone, and the mountains blaze with color.

This "back road to Yosemite" begins along Route 89 in South Lake Tahoe, intersects with Route 395, and eventually links onto Route 120. While most associate this region with Mono Lake, there is much more than that ancient body of water to explore.

Along the way are views of bald-domed mountains, lofty and elegant, backdropped by even taller ranges.

The road courses just below the sheer eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada, where jagged peaks dominate the sky and broad valleys spread below. There are alpine meadows crowded with flowers and aspen trees palsied in the wind.

At Grover Hot Springs State Park, a 650-acre facility framed by 8,000-foot peaks, underground springs bubble up to create an outdoor hot tub in an alpine setting. These natural baths — hot and cold spring-fed pools — rest in a meadow not far from the Mokelumne Wilderness. They are particularly popular with bone-weary hikers and as autumn edges toward winter, the more adventurous trekkers bask in the hot springs and then roll in the snow.

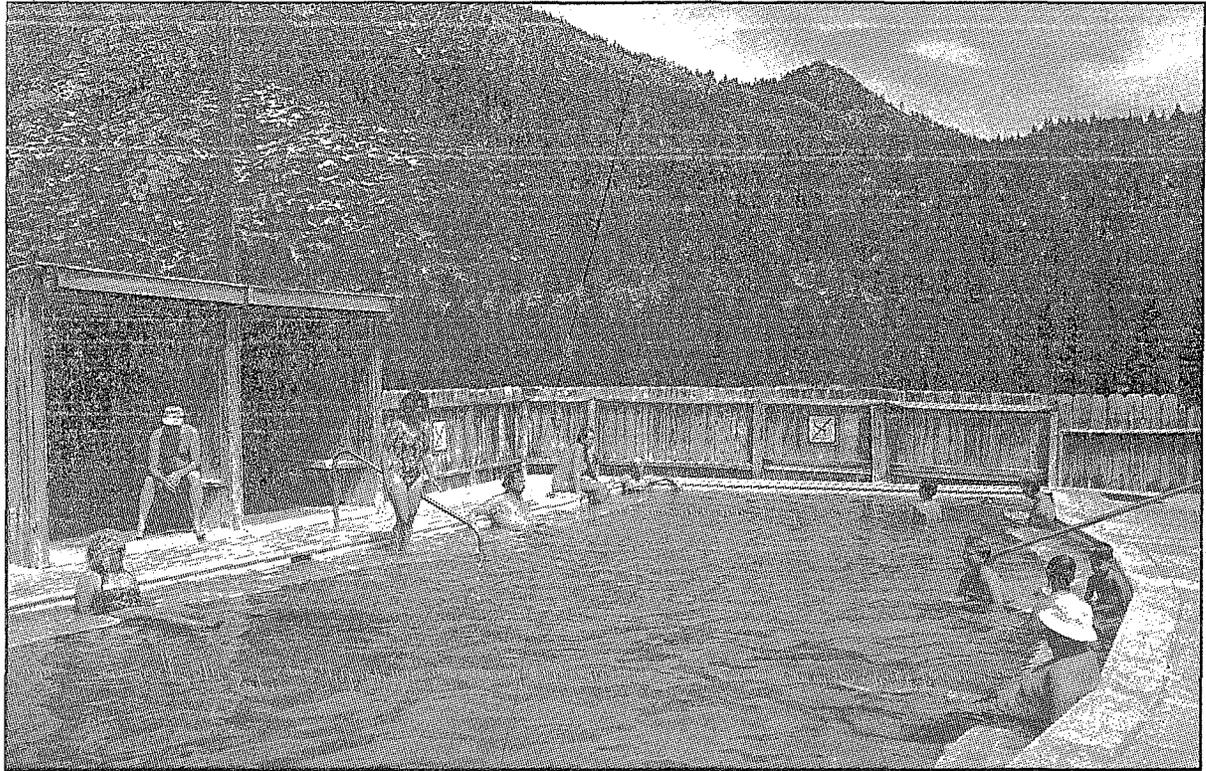
Markleeville, the county seat of Alpine County and home to virtually all of its 1,200 residents, lies to the southeast along Route 89. This rustic enclave is home to the Cutthroat Bar, a redneck rallying place where the pool table is decorated with a D.A.M.M. (Drunks Against Mad Mothers) bumper sticker. More importantly, you'll happen upon the Alpine County Museum, which features the Old Webster School, an 1880s one-room clapboard building, plus the Old Log Jail, a collection of Washoe basketry and an array of artifacts from the heyday of mining.

The route cuts through Monitor Pass, an 8,300-foot plateau across which early pioneers and gold-seek-

ers once trekked. Today it is unchanged, tufted with grass and sagebrush, like an elevated prairie. Then the highway dives into boulder-strewn defiles, along rumbling rivers with white water like lace. There are tiny towns along the way — Topaz, Coleville and Bridgeport — plus an occasional rest area.

Seven miles south of Bridgeport and 13 miles east (three of which are along a pothole-studded dirt road), Bodie State Historic Park rests like a kind of wood-frame time capsule in a high-desert setting. One of the West's finest ghost towns, this 1870s boom center, once home to 10,000 people, is now an outdoor museum filled with the houses, taverns, stores, and churches of a bygone era. Back in its youth, Bodie boasted 60 saloons and a reputation as the wildest mining camp in the West. Legend tells of shootouts on Main Street and church bells, rung once for each year of a murder victim's life, that never stopped tolling.

At one time it was the second largest town in California, surpassed only by San Francisco — so big that it had its own Chinatown. By 1885, however, the gold and silver had petered out and the townsfolk numbered fewer than 3,000. Today only about 6 percent of the original town still stands, but that totals more than 150 buildings. You can start at the Miner's Union Building, which contains a small museum. Then plan to wander past the min-



ers' shacks, stables and false-front stores that creak in the wind. And don't forget to walk out along the fringes of town and up to the ghostly heights of Boot Hill.

Toiyabe National Forest, the largest national forest in the lower 48, lies to the north and east of Bodie. It actually extends throughout this entire area, reaching from Lake Tahoe to Mono Lake and across the California border into Nevada. In addition to alpine meadows and rugged mountain peaks, Toiyabe contains coniferous forests inhabited by deer, black bear, porcupine and mountain lion. There are numerous hiking trails and trout streams. Skiing, canoeing and rafting are also popular here.

Edging past Mono Lake and the town of Lee Vining, Route 395 meets Route 120, which cuts through Inyo National Forest. Here, jagged peaks

[See *BACKROADS*, T-8]



PHOTOS BY ROBERT HOLMES

High living: Above, the naturally heated pool at Grovers Hot Springs near Markleeville, where hikers and cross-country skiers soothe aching muscles; left, cabin in Bodie, once the second-largest city in the state and now its most extensively preserved ghost town.

... the off-beat

IF YOU GO

► **WHERE TO STAY:** **Sorensen's**, the perfect mountain getaway, is a center for exploring and cross-country skiing. Here 30 cabins (including eight log cabins) and a restaurant are scattered among a grove of aspen trees. Most of the facilities are efficiency units, with kitchens and everything you need for a few secluded days in the hills. Nicely remodeled and decorated with wall hangings, they have a rustic charm. They are located at 14255 Route 88, Hope Valley CA 96120; phone: (530) 694-2203 or 1-800-423-9949. Prices range from \$70 to \$325 per night.

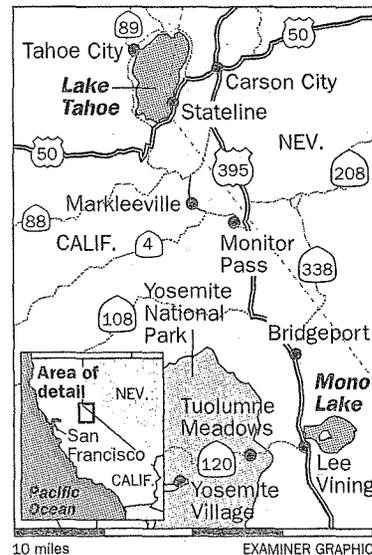
Situated at 9,600 feet elevation is **Tioga Pass Resort**. With 10 log cabins, a restaurant and other facilities, this is a perfect jumping-off place for the adventure-minded. The cabins come with kitchens and are rented on a weekly basis for \$500 and up. There are also motel units that are rented nightly in the \$60 to \$70 range. They are on Route 120 in Lee Vining; phone 209-372-4471.

► **CAMPING:** Grover Hot Springs State

Park, located off Route 89 about four miles from Markleeville, offers camping facilities (\$16 per site). For information call (530) 694-2248. Within Inyo National Forest are several excellent campgrounds that have picnic areas and restrooms. There are also lakes and streams for fishing. Particularly recommended are Tioga Lake Campground and Ellery Lake Campground, both situated on lovely alpine lakes; \$7 to \$10 per night. For information, contact the Lee Vining Ranger District at Route 120, Lee Vining; phone: (619) 647-3000.

► **BODIE:** For information on Bodie State Historic Park call (760) 647-6445. Admission is \$2. Also note that because of unmaintained roads, the park is usually inaccessible during winter. Toiyabe National Forest's facilities include picnic areas and restrooms. For information, contact the Bridgeport Ranger District at Route 395, Bridgeport; phone: (619) 932-7070.

► **MUSEUM:** The Alpine County Museum is open Friday through Monday



from noon until 4 p.m. For details call (530) 694-2317.

— Ray Riegert

◆ BACKROADS, from T-6

The back road from Tahoe to Yosemite

angle upwards so sharply they seem like fortress walls. Below the road, other cliffs dive into gorges of granite and swirling water. The waterfalls cutting into these rock faces have worked at the granite for thousands of years, barely chiseling a bed.

Then the road spirals up toward the Sierra crest, past Ellery Lake, an alpine gem set at 9,523 feet, and over Tioga Pass (9,941 feet). Eventually it begins a steady descent into a park whose name is synonymous throughout the world with granite walls, alpine forests, and sheer natural beauty — Yosemite.

Ray Riegert is the author of "Hidden San Francisco and Northern California" and "Hidden Southern California," and the publisher of Ulysses Press.

Record Courier 9/20/98

Bill Horvitz Band coming to Alpine

The Bill Horvitz Band featuring Bill Horvitz on guitar, Joseph Sabella on drums and Steve Adams on winds is heading to Alpine County.

The Alpine County Arts Commission presents this critically acclaimed trio on Oct. 3 at 7:30 p.m. at the Turtle Rock Park community building, two miles north of Markleeville on Highway 89.

Tickets are \$5 at the door for adults and \$2 for children under 16. Call (530) 694-2787 to reserve tickets.

The band has been performing together since 1992, presenting concerts throughout the U.S. and

Performance is sponsored by National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council. Cost is \$5 and \$2 for children under 16. Info: (530) 694-2787

Canada. Their most recent CD, "Dust Devil," is on the Music and Arts label. A New York Times critic said of their music, "A mix of melody, fracture and structure...an all-star big band."

Bill Horvitz, a composer and melodicist, who is an innovator on guitar, creates a rich texture for his fellow band members. He works closely with his band and creates music specific to them so that each player can fully express his unique creative voice.

Joseph Sabella, a master of percussion, moves the music into new worlds of multiple-rhythm

and improvisational freedom. His fluid, subtle and assertive style has won him honors.

He is known for his music and performance creations on Broadway for the world famous playwright Sam Shepard's play, "States of Shock."

Steve Adams, a multi-woodwind virtuoso and improviser adds an eloquent sense of melody, rhythm and harmony. He composes and plays all the saxophones and flutes. A graduate of the School of Contemporary Music in Boston, he now resides in Oakland where he also plays with the ROVA Saxophone Quartet.

This program is supported in part with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, and the California Arts Council, a state agency.

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Zanjani to talk about her latest book at Alpine library

Sally Zanjani, author of numerous articles and books on western history, will present a lecture and slide program, "A Mine Of Her Own: Women Prospectors in the American West, 1850-1950," based on her book of the same title. The program, sponsored by the Alpine County Friends of the Library, will be held on Oct. 10 at 7 p.m. in the library in Markleeville.

"Zanjani tells the stories of women miners who suffered hardships and loneliness, but who also reveled in the excitement of the mining booms of the west. She brings the tales to life with warmth and skill to change our image of the women prospectors who helped shape the American frontier," said a library spokesperson.

Descendant of a pioneer Nevada family, Zanjani received her doctorate from New York University and has been associated since 1975 with the political science department at the University of Nevada,

Reno.

She is the author of more than 40 articles and six non-fiction books.

"The Ignoble Conspiracy: Radicalism on Trial in Nevada" (1986), co-authored with Guy L. Rocha, was largely responsible for posthumous pardons granted Goldfield union radicals Morrie Preston and Joseph Smith in 1987, 80 years after their convictions.

"Goldfield: The Last Gold Rush on the Western Frontier" (1992) won the Westerners International Award.

Zanjani serves as president of the Mining History Association, the first woman to hold that position.

Discussion and refreshments will follow the presentation at the library. For more information, call (530) 694-2120. Reading lists on the California Gold Rush and area history are available at the library in Markleeville and will be given out at the lecture.

Record Courier 9/30/98

Small Creek Fly Fishing in Alpine County

BY VICTOR BABBITT

Catching small, wild trout in a natural setting can be just as much fun or even a better experience than some of the better known fisheries that most people tend to flock to trying to catch the larger, more sought after fish.

Have you ever caught a little Brookie on a 2 weight or smaller fly rod? It can be one of the more fun fly caught fish you could imagine. Fly fishing for wild trout in a small creek is one of the best ways to get started in fly fishing. The fish are eager to take the fly and they put up a great fight. Light tackle is a must and a little creative casting wouldn't hurt.

My definition of a small creek would be a piece of water that you could jump over at most points. Maybe 1 foot across to as much as 6 feet across and from 4 inches deep to 4 feet deep. Another characteristic I might add would be that the creek usually runs through a meadow at some point. In the meadow sections the banks are usually over hanging and the water tends to be a little deeper which offers greater cover for trout. These fish can also run up the creek into the shallow runs above the



VICTOR BABBITT

meadows knowing that there is cover a short distance away. I have seen fish in water no deeper than 4 inches and no wider than a foot or so.

Some of my favorite small creeks are in Alpine County. I will only name a few to keep from

being shot by all those who don't want the secret out. Some of my favorites are the upper sections of Wolf Creek (upstream of the pack station), headwaters of the Mokelumne off of hwy 4, Forestdale Creek and Charity Valley Creek off of Blue Lakes road. With a little effort and a bit of imagination, you should not have a hard time in finding these little gems and many others. It can be as simple as checking out the smallest of waters along the roads edge to hiking in a few miles to get away from the crowds. You'd be surprised at how the quality of fishing improves by getting a short distance away from the main path. Some of these waters might be familiar and others might not. But all fall into what I consider a small creek.

The main species of fish you will catch are Brookies, Browns and Rainbows (see Brookie pictures).

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The California Alps

FISHING

FALL 1998

SMALL CREEK FLY FISHING IN ALPINE COUNTY

- Continued from Page 1

pending on which creeks you find to fish you might catch Cutthroat, Golden or Mountain Whitefish as well. Usually the Golden will be found in the higher elevations. The size of the fish in these creeks is predominantly small from 4 to 10 inches and a 12 incher being a good size fish. The colors of these smaller wild fish are brilliant and well marked. It is not unheard of to catch numerous fish in an afternoon.

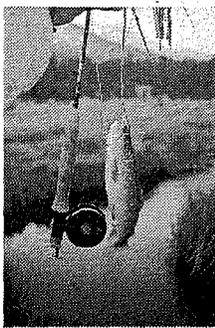
Another bonus to fly fishing in small creeks is the fact that the fish will readily take dry flies and they are usually not very picky. You can throw just about anything at them and they will respond with aggressive rises. The fish come from nowhere and all of the sudden you're hooked up with an acrobatic and energized fish that will fight with the best of them. Some patterns to try are Royal Wolffs, Elk Hair Caddis, Trudes, Yellow Humpies or just about any other attracter pattern that you might have in your box.

For the most fun, stick with the smaller rods and reels. My favorite is the new Sage SPL 0-weight rod that offers a lot of fight and some good casting punch when

you need it. I would suggest a fine leader of about 6X or 7X in a 7-foot length. Any rod in the 0-3-weight range will make for a lot more fun than using a 5 or 6 weight rod. Your rod length should be anywhere from 6 foot to 8 foot due to overgrown areas where you need the shortness for control.

Fly fishing small creeks in Alpine County and or any other small creeks can be very rewarding when approached with the right equipment and the right attitude. Next time you're out fly fishing give the small creeks a try, I'm sure you won't regret it. For information on these creeks or any other fly fishing in the Alpine County area, Call or stop by **Tahoe Fly Fishing Outfitters** (see our ad below) and we can set you up with whatever you might need for a pleasant day of fly fishing. Please Remember to Catch and Release all of YOUR Wild Trout.

VICTOR BABBIT





A lively conversation takes place around the hood of a parked truck in downtown Markleeville.

Photo by Taylor Flynn

Markleeville

Small town ~ modest dreams

By Catherine Abel

At first glance, Markleeville looks much the same. It has a wide main street where a sleeping dog would not be out of place, a few tourists strolling past 100-year-old buildings, plenty of parking spaces. Looking closer, you'll see a new

store in an old cabin. The long-closed gas station is open for business. Visitors fill tables outside the deli, and the general store is bustling. A "bed and bagel" unit is attracting city-weary travelers.

The sleepy town is stretching and waking.

A loose organization of

merchants has been meeting for several months to talk about boosting prosperity for all. "If we could just extend the summer season for a few more weeks into the fall, maybe we wouldn't have to take other jobs to get through the winter," says Dee Anne Jang, who with her husband Warren Jang owns the deli.

Others express equally modest ambitions. "We don't want to see Markleeville go from 150 people to 1,500," said Bob Anderson, executive director of the Alpine County Chamber of Commerce. "Our strategy as a chamber is that we market to people in Tahoe and Reno: we benefit from the

destination visitor who has an extra day to spend. Just like people visit Reno and go to Virginia City for the day. The hot springs is a big tourist draw, and we have a nice museum. And people in town here get to have their cake and eat it too, when the tourists leave at the end of the day."

There are very few lodging rooms at Markleeville, Anderson said, but that may change. He points out a slope above the chamber offices. "A developer wants to put a 40-room lodge on that eight acres," he says. "The Planning Commission will look at it sometime this fall."

A very real growth-stopper at Markleeville is the fact that about 95 percent of all land in the county is owned by the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the state, leaving very little room for expansion. The population of the entire county is only about 1,200, Anderson said.

Marsha Bennett and Ed Ross are two of those people, having moved up from Gardnerville, Nev. a few years ago to a cabin in Woodfords, four miles from Markleeville. Bennett had been on the lookout for a place to open a coffee house similar to the one she ran in Nevada.

Finally the Frostee soft ice cream place came up for sale. Now the old building has been transformed into M's Coffeehouse, with a large deck out back where customers can enjoy specialty coffees, bagels (supplied by Rude Bros. in South Lake Tahoe), sandwiches, and yes, they still have snow cones. On Saturday nights there's a barbecued salmon feed that people from the Carson Valley have discovered.

On a recent Friday morning locals and tourists find their way to the deck, which overlooks a steep bank where Ross has planted a riot of bright flowers. Some 50 feet below, Markleeville Creek bubbles over boulders as a Huck Finn look-alike tries out a fishing pole. Al Pettit, editor of the local monthly newspaper, the Alpine Enterprise, wanders in and joins the conversation. "I really commend Marsha for what she and Ed have done here," he says. "All the business owners in town seem to be doing well."

Those business owners, however, would like to do better.

"We don't want to change Markleeville," Bennett said, "and we don't want our meetings to get too formal. We've come up with about six issues, things like providing little maps of the town, doing more recycling, getting some of the sign clutter down, maybe paving a little bike path...we want to make the town friendlier, more inviting. We're trying to get people to paint and clean up."

"We don't really have a budget, just dues of 50 cents. It's sort of a grass roots movement. It sort of started when we got a grant to start a plan—there was no money to do anything, just for a plan."

"If we have a hundred people in town, we'll have a hundred different ideas," Moss said. Bennett agreed, "Rugged

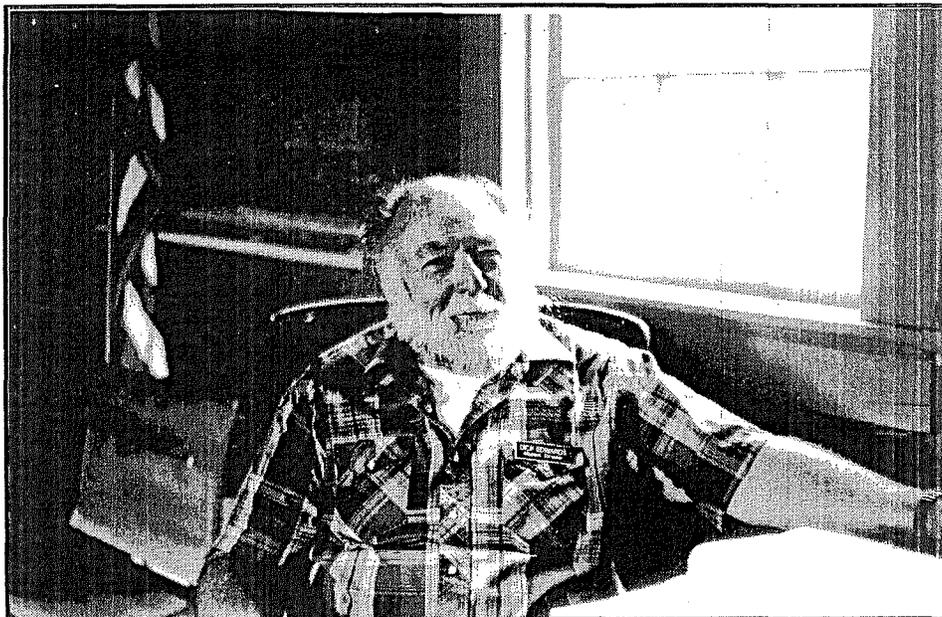


Photo by Catherine Abel

Dick Edwards poses at the teacher's desk in the 1882 school house, part of the Alpine County Museum complex which he manges (and loves).

individualism is alive and well here."

"It's improvement we need," Pettit said, "not big changes. The old-timers resent big changes."

"When people get here from the city," Bennett says, "I make them go down to the lower deck by the creek and sit for 20 minutes to de-escalate before I even let them unpack!"

A labor of love—and lots of just plain labor—has become the "Bed & Bagel" lodging next to M's Coffeehouse. Ross, a retired teacher, is clever with tools. He and Bennett bought the 70-year-old small house, which had a former life as a car repair shop among other careers, and have restored and improved it into a cozy, unique

guest house.

"When people get here from the city," Bennett says, "I make them go down to the lower deck by the creek and sit for 20 minutes to de-escalate before I even let them unpack!"

In developing the food and lodging businesses, Bennett said, she's had "helpful and generous" advice from John and Patti Brissenden, who operate the successful Sorensen's Resort, 12 miles and 2,000 feet above Markleeville. "They send us their overflow—I love 'em a lot."

J. Marklee Toll Station, on the east end of town, has been owned by Wayne and Sandy Matlock since the early 90s. Wayne works for CalTrans out of South Lake Tahoe, plowing snow in winter and running his business summers. The motel's five rooms are open all year. A single cabin and the restaurant—breakfast and lunch only—close down in the fall.

The busiest time is early June, when the Death Ride comes to town. "I could fill up 150 rooms then," Matlock said.

He was "not invited" to meetings with other

merchants, he said, but "I would like to see the county get involved, get together with the merchants and help clean up Markleeville. Bishop is an old town like this, but when you drive through, it looks so nice and clean." Ross, of M's Coffeehouse, said he had visited Alpine County for some 20 years before moving there. "This little community has thrived, on and off," he said. "There used to be community fairs, rubber duck races in the creek, all kinds of things. Then the crank-sniffing weirdoes moved in...they're gone now, but it's been hard to get people to come up here, especially in the winter." Improvements are needed, he said, but "nobody wants to make it yuppified."

"People who live here are here by choice. They love the

tranquility; they're not into shopping and going to casinos."

Pettit said he discovered Markleeville on a trip from Marin County to his home in San Diego. "My wife had never seen Lake Tahoe, so we looked at a map and took what looked like a shortcut over Monitor Pass. We zoomed through here. But the next year we remembered the little town we'd seen and said let's go back and explore.

"We started coming up once or twice a year until we moved here 11 years ago."

He thrives on running the newspaper, although when asked what's the most fun thing about his job, replies, "Leaving the Board of Supervisors meeting when it's over.

"Public hearings are fun. We're the government watch dogs."

"Bureaucrats can get to power-tripping," Bennett said. "Al keeps us all honest. He tells us the truth."

"Tourists are our livelihood," Bennett continued. "We want them to have a wonderful time, and a real experience, not like Disneyland. City people are so busy taking classes on how to relax they don't have time to relax.

"Most people have the idea that we have horrible winters. We don't. This elevation [5500 feet] is just perfect. And in the fall, with the cottonwoods, we have wonderful color."

Camilla Olsen is living her

"Markleeville"

Continued from Page 17

dream. Two months ago she opened Olsen Soap Works in a small building next door to M's Coffeehouse. "I can't believe I've actually done this myself," she says, looking around the fragrant shop overflowing with soaps displayed on an antique bureau, small gift items on walls and shelves... and a bee hive on a small table smack in the middle of the room.

The narrow glass-sided hive is abuzz with bees, kept inside by a wooden plug. Olsen explains that she has two such hives. One is outside in the backyard, open so the bees can go about their business, while the other is displayed in the shop. They're exchanged daily.

She sells honey, and uses honey and beeswax in her soaps. "The wax turns into oil and honey is an antiseptic. I love my soaps...they're 30 to 40 percent natural glycerin, good for the body and soul." The soaps are made with a wide variety of natural scents. And if you've a hankering for handmade paper, Olsen will sell you some or teach you how to make it yourself.

The county-wide chamber of commerce has 85 members, Anderson said. It shares an

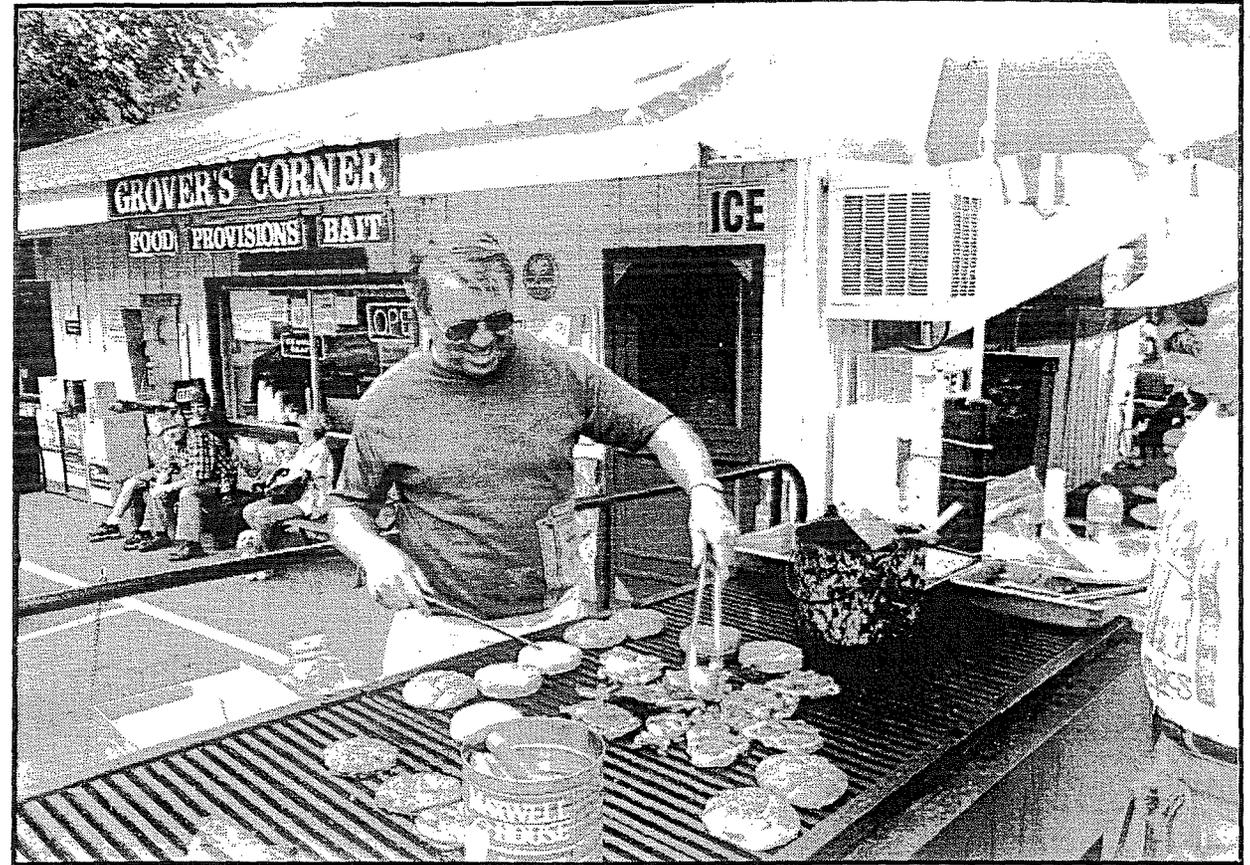


Photo by Taylor Flynn

Mike Gard (left) and Bob Dunn fry up some burgers on the outdoor barbecue during another busy day at Grovers Corner Grocery.

office with the Forest Service, and when their people are busy, Anderson lends a hand with campfire permits and information.

"The Death Ride is a big part

of what we do," Anderson said. "I work on it for four or five months out of the year, and it pays half our annual budget." The Ride attracted some 2,600 mountain bikers

this June, he said, in a grueling endurance event that takes place up and down the rugged peaks of the county. It is not a race; the idea is to complete the course.

Alpine County's income has fallen in recent years due to a decline in Forest Service timber sales, a portion of which is allocated to local governments. "The bottom

line is that Markleeville is dealing with infrastructure issues," Anderson said. "There's still some pretty basic needs."

Kirkwood, some 24 miles and 40 minutes away, is a major source of county revenue through property taxes and some skiers who find their way to town. The South Tahoe Public Utility District pays the county about \$106,000 a year for the privilege of pumping treated

sewerage into Harvey's Place Reservoir there, and another \$15,000 to stock Indian Creek with trout.

"This is an appropriate transitional time to look at these issues,"

Anderson said. "For 150 years the county lived off extractive industries—mining, lumber, ranching. Now we're looking

for ways to keep Alpine County from falling off the financial map. I'd like to see our tourism improve and become a year round product.

"I think the residents of this county fall into very specific groups," Anderson said. "On the one hand we have very traditional families; then we have a newer group that is more environmentally concerned.

"It's going to be interesting. Most of the growth is around Woodfords, where there are some new homes north of the highway—a lot of Tahoe people and big city retirees.

"More important, we only have 500 voters in the county, which means that 100 votes control a supervisor seat.

"Nobody wants it to be Yosemite or Tahoe. We don't need a TV in every room. We

have enough synergy that we don't have to lose the essence of Markleeville. It's a place where you feel comfortable walking around."

And in strolling about the town, it's hard to miss the Comstock relic Alpine Hotel, which houses the Cutthroat

Villa Gigli, a short drive from downtown, is an Italian restaurant and art gallery that caters to an upscale patronage. It's open only on weekend evenings, by reservation, but has been discovered by people from Tahoe and the Carson Valley seeking a different kind of dining experience.

Owner Ruggero Gigli makes his own pasta, bread, spumoni and biscotti.

The Carson River Resort, formerly the East Fork Resort, has a new owner who is making improvements, fixing up the cabins and campground for trout fishermen and "leaf peepers" who come for the fall colors.

One tourist draw is the county museum complex on School House Hill, overlooking the

town. Dick Edwards, the director, and his assistant, Ellen Martin, are county employees who run the place. The main building, Edwards explains, was designed as a museum. It has several spacious rooms: a recreation of a 1920's country store; a mining exhibit, and much more. Next door on the windy hilltop is the original Markleeville one-room school house built in 1882 by local residents and used until 1929. Complete with original student art on the walls, pot-bellied stove, and well-used desks in different sizes, it looks as if the kids will come trooping in from recess at any moment.

Nearby the 1800's log jail house is open. It emits a chill even on a warm day,

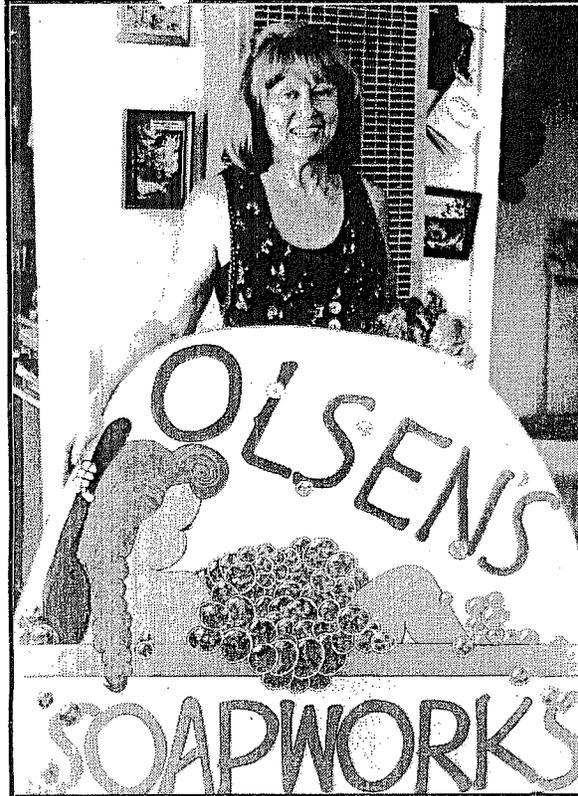


Photo by Catherine Abel

Camilla Olsen makes a living in Markleeville running a soap making company.

Saloon and Marcy's restaurant, serving full home-cooked meals in a dining room vaguely reminiscent of the 1940's. (This reporter had one of the best cheeseburgers

"We only have 500 voters in the county, which means that 100 votes control a supervisor seat."

**Bob Anderson, Director
Chamber of Commerce**

ever, at a tiny price.) The Cutthroat is a regular stop for many high-end motorcyclists, often big city couples riding tandem on gleaming \$30,000 machines, escaping to the mountains for a day or a weekend.

Continued on Page 21

Fall
1998

MOUNTAIN NEWS COVER STORY

"Markleeville" Continued from Page 19

especially when you step into one of the two cells, with walls and floor completely made of sheet metal.

Edwards would like to develop a docent program, with demonstrations of wood carving, black smithing, and "knapping," the ancient art of working with stone. "I can make a fair arrowhead," he said.

Steve McEwen is one of less than a dozen sheriff's deputies who patrol Alpine County's 850 square miles, as well as the town of Markleeville, which is unincorporated and has no police force. The sheriff's officers are

supplemented by four volunteer fire departments, a volunteer search and rescue team, Forest Service enforcement officers, and security teams from Kirkwood and Bear Valley. Local crime is "a little bit of everything," McEwen says, pointing out that the county sees some three million tourists a year.

Back downtown, Dee Anne Jang, whose parents own Rudden's General Store next door (open all year), says she and her husband started the deli seven years ago. "We work at it pretty hard, seven

who don't speak to each other, but when you need something, everybody is there for you."

Jang and her husband Warren have been actively involved in the movement to improve business at Markleeville.

One idea is to persuade CalTrans to keep Monitor Pass open in winter, which would route some tourists through town on their way to Tahoe or Yosemite.

"Brian Peters, our Planning Director, is really good, and he's working on it," Jang said. "We're also working with people in Mono County—they really hurt when the passes are closed. It comes down to dollars, but they keep Echo open, and Highway 80."

"It's a challenge," Peters agrees, "the seasonal nature of business here. We do fairly well in the summer, but it's almost dead in the winter."

"We do have the hot springs, and people find them all winter. We need to figure out some way to get more activity. But not too much."

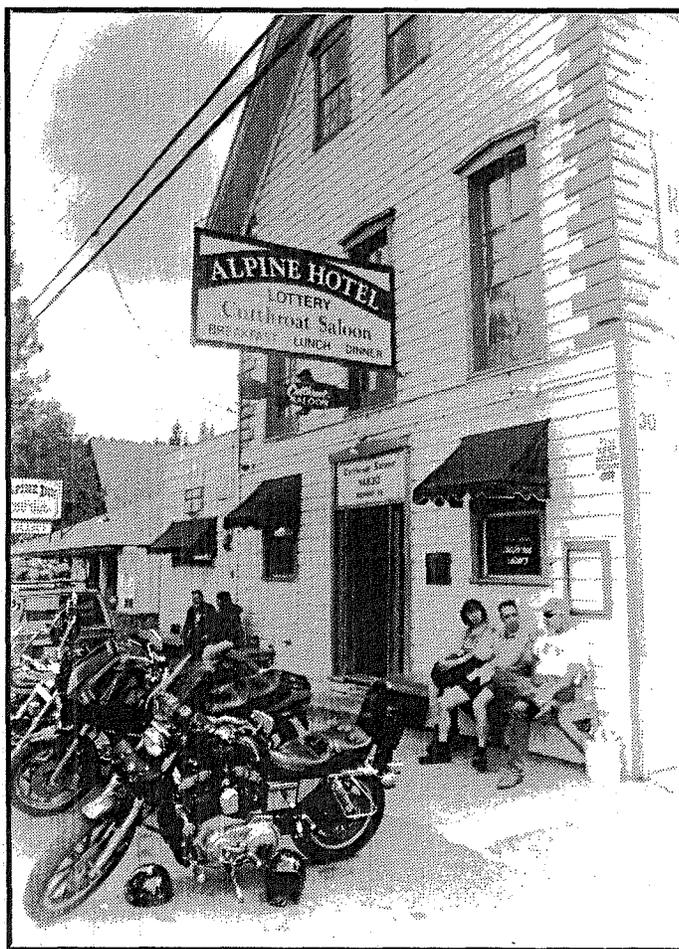


Photo by Taylor Flynn

The Cutthroat Saloon is a longtime attraction for bikers - real ones and weekend warriors alike.

days a week from the end of April to the middle of November.

"The most fun thing about it is the people. I enjoy the locals—lots of times you can walk down the street and hear the laughter coming out of here. With only 165 people in town, you know everybody. Sometimes you get people



State librarian heads to Mono, Alpine counties

Dr. Kevin Starr, California State Librarian, will visit the Alpine County area on Oct. 9. He will travel from Mono County, crossing over Monitor and Ebbetts Passes, and arrive in Bear Valley about 11:15 a.m. to address the public in the Bear Valley Branch Library.

After lunch at the Bear Valley Lodge, he will stop in Markleeville for a dessert reception at 2:30 p.m. in the library.

Starr is a well-known author, historian and scholar, and is known as a very inspiring speaker. The public is invited to hear his remarks about "The Library of California," the sesquicentennial

of California's Gold Rush and his programs for rural libraries.

Call the library in Markleeville, (530) 694-2120, for more information. Seating for lunch in Bear Valley will be limited, so make reservations early.

Starr is the seventh state librarian of California since the turn of the century. His "Library of California" will open the doors of 8,000 libraries through an electronic network for citizens across the state.

"The benefits of such a virtual library are many, especially for our geographically remote areas," according to Alpine County Librarian Diane Brigham.

Record Courier 10/13/98

ences on Edges.

Alpine County Autumn Cleanup coming up

The annual Alpine County Autumn Cleanup will be held Oct. 10 and 11, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Alpine County Public Works Yard, Woodfords #1, and Turtle Rock

Park #2. The cleanup is for Alpine County residents only, and the service is provided as a courtesy. Dumpsters are provided by Douglas Disposal to Alpine Coun-

ty as a part of its franchise, the cost of which is a part of their customers' monthly rate. (No taxpayer dollars are used.) For information, call (530) 694-2140.

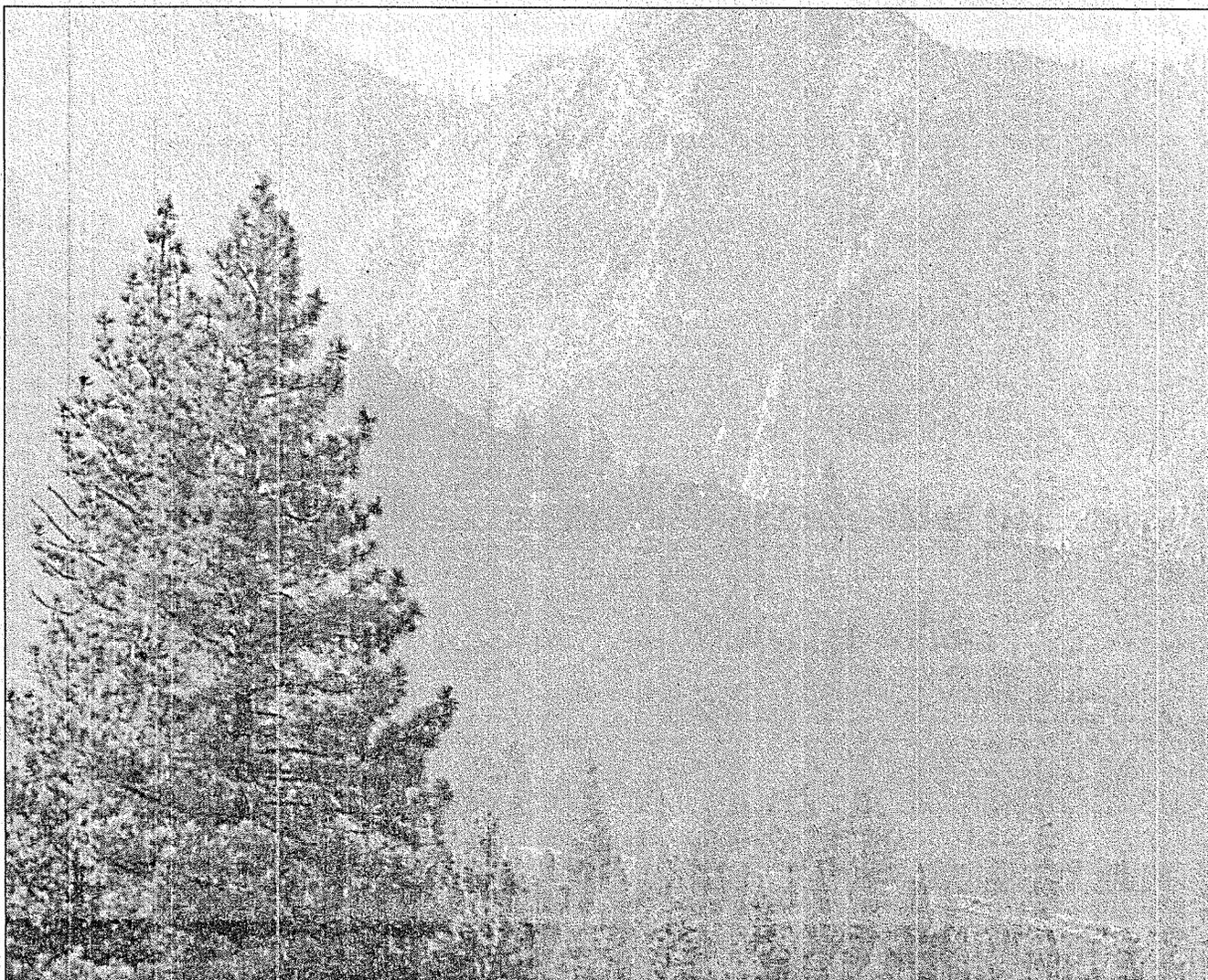
Record Courier 10/3/98

OCT. 12, 1997

THE CALIFORNIA PAGE

SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

SPOTLIGHT ON: ALPINE COUNTY

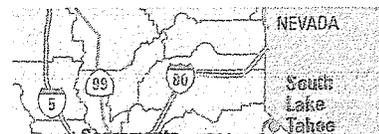




PHOTOGRAPHS BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

ine County, population 1,200, relies heavily on the logging industry for income to pay for its schools and roads. With decline in timber harvesting, some local officials are looking to the federal government for a new funding formula.

More green in forest,



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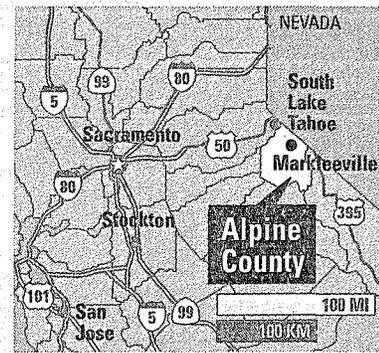


PHOTOGRAPHS BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Alpine County, population 1,200, relies heavily on the logging industry for income to pay for its schools and roads. With the decline in timber harvesting, some local officials are looking to the federal government for a new funding formula.

More green in forest, less green in the till

Decline in logging threatens budgets



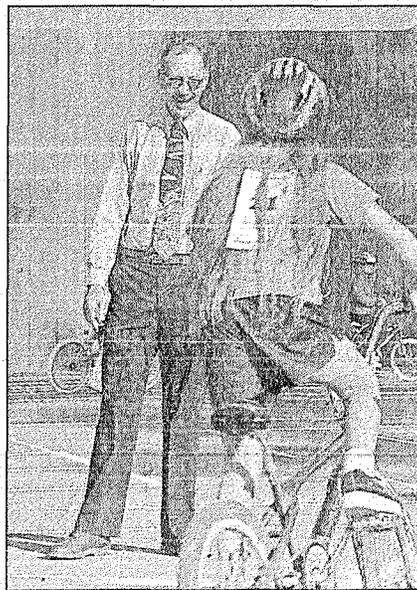
MERCURY NEWS

JOHN HOWARD
Associated Press

WOODFORDS — Tiny, mountainous and remote, California's least populated county is waging a fierce campaign to replenish its lifeblood — the fast-dwindling money for schools and roads that for more than 90 years has come from logging national forests.

The people of Alpine County — all 1,200 of them — are scattered thinly across the Sierra Nevada in a region of cliffs, chasms and peaks that resembles Switzerland more than the Wild West. It is snowbound half the year (one of the school buses is a Chevrolet Suburban with studded snow tires) and it has some of the steepest stretches of public highway in California. The county seat is Markleeville, population 165.

This very small community is at the center of a very large national debate over the so-called "timber receipts" law, which has been on the federal books since 1908. It provides that 25 percent of the proceeds from U.S. Forest Service timber sales and grazing fees be divided among counties that have national forests within their environs.



Timber revenue funding for schools dropped from about \$500,000 to \$120,000, "and I watched a quarter of my budget disappear," said James Parsons, superintendent of the Alpine County Unified School District.

Alpine County, where more than nine of every 10 acres are owned by the government, has pieces of the Toiyabe, Stanislaus and El Dorado national forests.

But as timber harvesting has declined throughout the Sierra, the receipts have dropped — dramatically. Now, schools and other public agencies that depend on that money are looking to the federal government for a more reliable source of cash.

In 1987, the 39 California counties entitled to receive timber receipts got a total of about \$53 million, according to the Forest Service. Last year, they got just \$30 million.

Alpine County's share plunged from \$835,000 to about \$330,000, and much of that went to keep up the roads.

"Three or four years ago, it dropped from about \$500,000 to \$120,000 for schools, and I watched a quarter of my budget disappear," said James Parsons, superintendent of the Alpine County Unified School District.

The entire county has about 200 school-age children. There is no high school.
See *ALPINE*, Page 5B

Looking for stability in timber country

■ ALPINE

from Page 3B

school, so most of the roughly 45 high school-age students go "down the hill" to Nevada for class, and a few attend school in nearby Calaveras County.

The other students are educated at small elementary schools in Alpine County, including two one-room schoolhouses. One of these is in the basement of a condominium complex at the Kirkwood ski resort; the other is in isolated Bear Valley, which often has snowdrifts as high as 10 feet.

Because of the school district's size, any fluctuations in the timber receipts have a disproportionate impact. It recently laid off its classroom aides and two of 15 teachers. The others' salaries were frozen, and two of the three bus drivers were let go.

"The public has told us in very clear terms that they would like to see more emphasis placed on recreation and fish and wildlife and less emphasis on intensive timber production," Forest Service spokesman Matt Mathes said.

"In the old days, timber harvesting was primarily clear-cutting old growth," he said. "These days, it is generally thinning out stands of smaller-diameter trees, so there is less timber coming off each acre. The bottom line is that in the old days, the driving force was the production of boards. Now, it is the restoration of the ecosystem."

The county's public works department is in similar straits.

"I'm deficit-spending \$265,000 this year alone," public works director Leonard Turnbeaugh said. He provided a litany of road woes — too little maintenance and repair, no new construction and inadequate striping.

'The driving force was the production of boards. Now, it is restoration of the ecosystem.'

— Matt Mathes, U.S. Forest Service

"I'm down to the point where there are no centerlines left," Turnbeaugh said.

The solution, county officials say, is a stable revenue source.

The Clinton administration has proposed completely replacing the timber receipts with a stream of federal tax dollars. Other proposals before Congress would retain a linkage to timber but ensure a minimum level of federal funding pegged to the county's highest three-year average. The various plans have some bipartisan support, so it is likely a compromise will emerge from Congress.

Some within the forestry industry believe that severing the ties to timber could erode forest harvesting over time, loosening the industry's leverage over local communities and disturbing rural culture.

"Decoupling these county payments is bad for taxpayers, and it rips the socioeconomic fabric holding these rural communities together," said Chris Nance of the California Forestry Association.

But in Alpine County, where schools are community centers and roads are the ties that bind residents together, people are weary of the fight for money.

"There's just not much money here anyway, and it affects . . . everybody with children or grandchildren," said Bob Rudden, owner of Markleeville General Store.

Oct 10, 1998

The Record-Courier ■ Gardnerville, Nevada

Davey Crockett and Andrew Jackson, battlefields of the Civil War, the slavery-era, Underground Railroad and the Cherokee Trail of Tears, Tennessee has a rich history to study and share.

Moving to Douglas County was more of a fluke than an actual choice of the place I call home. After living and working in Douglas County for a year, I see the best of all the places I have lived. I see a small, safe community with all the outdoor activities I have grown to love and rich history that lends itself to a community pride like no other I have ever seen.

Thank you for making me feel such a strong sense of community and belonging. I just hope that I am able to give back as much to my new hometown as it is giving to me.

Bob Koreski
Gardnerville
Oct. 6

Toy run

EDITOR

The third annual Markleeville Toy Run Committee would like to thank the following businesses in the Carson Valley area for so graciously donating raffle prizes for our event: Sharkey's, Crystal Kaleidoscope, JT Basque Bar and Dining Room, Two Guys From Italy, Topaz Station, Classic Catering and Deli, Aladdin Flower and Gift Shop, The Grooming Shop, Carson Valley Veterinary Hospital, Coast to Coast, NAPA Auto Parts, Joyce's Jewelry, Nik-N-Willies, Uniformity and Bouquet and Bouquet.

Because of their willingness to help, needy children in Alpine County will have a wonderful Christmas. We would also like to thank all of the brave (and wet) souls who ventured out to attend this event. We couldn't have done it without you! We hope to see you again next year.

Markleeville Toy Run committee
Oct. 6

To members of Washoe Tribe, Lake Tahoe is the center of their world



R-C NEWS SERVICE file photo

Resort area: The Washoe Tribe was awarded lease of U.S. Forest Service land at Meeks Bay and operation of the marina.

mitted to preserving the lake's clarity.

■ **Protect values.** "We value every opportunity we get to project our traditional values in any discussion related to the environ-

ment," Wallace said.

"We have the ability to bring a lot to the basin. A more powerful part of it is the knowledge we can provide, ancestral knowledge we've had from the beginning of

time, from our perspective. From our first day."

Wallace said, while Lake Tahoe may be very important to many people, it is most important to the Washoe Tribe.

"Some people have said we were born to die for the lake. That's how strong we feel about Lake Tahoe," Wallace said. "It's central to the Washoe religion — Lake Tahoe."

Lake Tahoe is a lot of things to a lot of people.

It is home to thousands.

It is appreciated and enjoyed by millions.

To one group of people, however, Lake Tahoe is the center of their world.

For more than a century the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California has not owned or had access to property in the heart of its ancestral land — *Da owa ga*, or the "edge of the lake."

This has changed as recently as this year, with the tribe leasing about 400 acres at Meeks Bay and a process under way to officially have access to another significant portion of land on South Shore.

To the Washoe Tribe, it's progress.

■ Step in the right direction.

"They are steps in the right direction," said Brian Wallace, Washoe Tribe chairman.

"But, we certainly hope we don't become victims of gradualization — small steps."

The Washoe Tribe was awarded the lease of the U.S. Forest Service's land at Meeks Bay earlier this year.

With the busy summer season ending, Wallace said the tribe's first year of operating the Meeks Bay Marina and Resort has been great.

"It gives a new direction to the Washoe Tribe. Up until now, our economy has been focused on agriculture and vegetation. This moves us more into tourism and our heritage," Wallace said. "It's been a tremendous opportunity for us to refocus."

The resort occupies about 50 acres. Another 350 acres of meadow sits behind the resort, where tribal members are planting vegetation, preserving the area and putting their "hands in the earth."

The Meeks Bay area is important to Washoe culture.

"Everyone's pretty happy, not only in a business sense but also psychologically. Washoe and non-Washoe were uplifted about our return," he said. "People who were born in Meeks Bay and are still alive were very happy to see it that they were able to return to the place of their childhood."

About 150 acres of property on South Shore is in the permit process, and may become available to the Washoe Tribe.

Wetlands and stream zones around Taylor Creek, Baldwin Beach and Cascade Creek will become available for Washoe restoration work. A long-planned Washoe Cultural Center could be built on the land.

"What we're trying to do is



Brian Wallace says Tribe's operation of Meeks Bay resort is the right step

repatriate our homelands. There is a large number of people born into this area, that, up until recently, were treated as trespassers," Wallace said. "This has a tremendous amount of meaning for them."

The traditional homelands of the Washoe Tribe exceeded 1.5 million acres in Nevada and California. Thousands of Washoe members occupied those lands, returning each summer to Lake Tahoe.

Early settlers had little regard for the tribe, however. Lake Tahoe was clear-cut, the valleys were over-grazed by livestock and rivers and streams were polluted from mines. The supply of fish, game and plants was exhausted.

■ Tribe rebuilds itself. By the late 1860s, there were about 300 Washoe members left. The tribe rebuilt itself, starting from about 40 acres of land south of Gardnerville.

Now, there are 1,749 Washoe members. Four communities are housed in Carson City and Douglas and Alpine counties, and the Washoe Tribe has recovered more than 70,000 acres of its ancestral homeland.

Wallace said the tribe takes advantage of acquisitions outside of the Lake Tahoe area, too. Once acquiring land — either purchasing it, leasing it or receiving it as a gift — the members work to restore it.

"We're going to continue to fortify our resource management infrastructure, literally getting more people out on the land to do traditional stewardship and conservation, from cleaning up acid mine waste sites to protecting bracken fern populations in the Tahoe Basin," he said.

Acquiring and preserving land for the Washoe is not the tribe's only conservation-oriented goal. Because of the lake's importance to the tribe, Wallace said, the Washoe have an interest in preserving its natural beauty.

The Washoe Tribe is another piece of the partnership — made up of the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers, the California Department of Transportation, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and many others — com-

Antelope Friends of the Library starts big

Claudia Bonnet, president of the newest Friends of the Library Chapter, hosted a reception for the California State Librarian, Dr. Kevin Starr as the final stop of his tour of Mono County Libraries on Friday, Oct. 9, at the Meadowcliff.

Speaking to members and guests of the new chapter, Dr. Starr said, "I was supposed to be here four years ago, but I needed these four years to understand your system. Mono County's is one of a kind."

No one else among the 172 public library systems in California has the complicated structure we have. Libraries are run under contract between Mono County board of supervisors and the superintendent of public education and trustees/library authority board.

According to Starr, that may work, "if the board was independent and not a rubber stamp."

He praised citizen participation as the safeguard for the libraries.

The present Coleville County branch is shoe-horned into Coleville High School, which is under the authority of the Eastern Sierra Unified School District and another superintendent.

Retired librarian Arlene Reveal, architect for the unique arrangement, explained that it came about in 1977 after the Mono County treasurer told her he would not release money to run the county libraries.

"It was a good idea at the time," Dr. Starr agreed. However, he predicted the system might be replaced as the county grows and becomes more sophisticated.

The Friends of the Library orga-

Antelope Valley News

by Selma Calnan



SELMA CALNAN photo

Library event: Library Friends President Claudia Bonnet asks a question of Kevin Starr.

nization had been suggested following a fact-finding visit by the California Library Team. It was founded in August 1977 upon the recommendation of Arlene Reveal.

Seated at the head table with Reveal was special guest, Dorothy Palmer, who had been its first community chairman. Another familiar name among the founders is Helen Silvester, still volunteering at the Antelope School and Healthy Start. Members of the new chapter in attendance were Gerry Chichester, John McCann, Olga Gilbert, Kathi Fulstone, Lee Bolton and Selma Calnan. Visitors were Vincca Hess, Caroline McCaffrey, and from

Markleeville, Barbara Howard and Diane Brigham.

The Antelope Friends mulled their next move at a meeting on Monday evening. Call 495-2453 for information.

■ **Haffa Culpa.** Valley news put the acCENT on the wrong syl-LAB-le when identifying the librarian of Nevada County. Instead of "Francis Kopinelli" his name is Francisco Pinelli.

■ **There's something about black bears.** There are lot of them in California, and they're smart. Between 16,000 and 24,000 of them roam from the northern boarder, along the coast and through the Eastern Sierras as many of us know. Your friendly game warden Kent Harrison has pamphlets giving lots of suggestions and information, but self-preservation should tell you not to store your food close to where you are sleeping if you are a camper and not to leave pet food next to your back door if you are a resident.

A surprise is that storing your food inside your locked car isn't enough. You should "disguise the shape." Also the pamphlet reveals that bears are romantics since "the scent of toiletries can attract them."

■ **For the cooler days ahead.** Antelope Elementary's Healthy Start office has started the Clothing Closet where donated clothing for all ages and most sizes are available for free.

A Marine wife made the suggestion after watching her children grow out of their clothes before they are worn out. Call 495-2198 for shopping hours.

STATE LIBRARIAN VISITS



CATHLEEN ALLISON/The R-C

Visit: The California State Librarian Kevin Starr addresses a group of library supporters at the Alpine County Library in Markleeville on

Friday. He also visited Mono County. See Antelope Valley News at left.

Alpine Children's Center offers food program

Alpine Children's Center announces the sponsorship of the Child Care Food Program.

All children in attendance will be offered the same meals at no separate charge with no physical segregation of or other discrimination against any child because of race,

color, national origin, age, sex or disability.

The Child Care Food Program is available without charge to all eligible participants.

If you believe you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex or

disability, write immediately to Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Va. 22302.

For more information, contact Alpine Children's Center, 49 Hawk-side Drive, Markleeville, Calif. 96120, or call (530) 694-2390.

25 YEARS AGO
The Record-Courier
October 25, 1973

Record Courier
Oct 21, 1998

Lost students found after Sierra blizzard in Alpiuo. Eighteen high school students and their two instructors feared lost in a Sierra blizzard during a mountaineering expedition were found safe Tuesday after spending the night in a cabin.

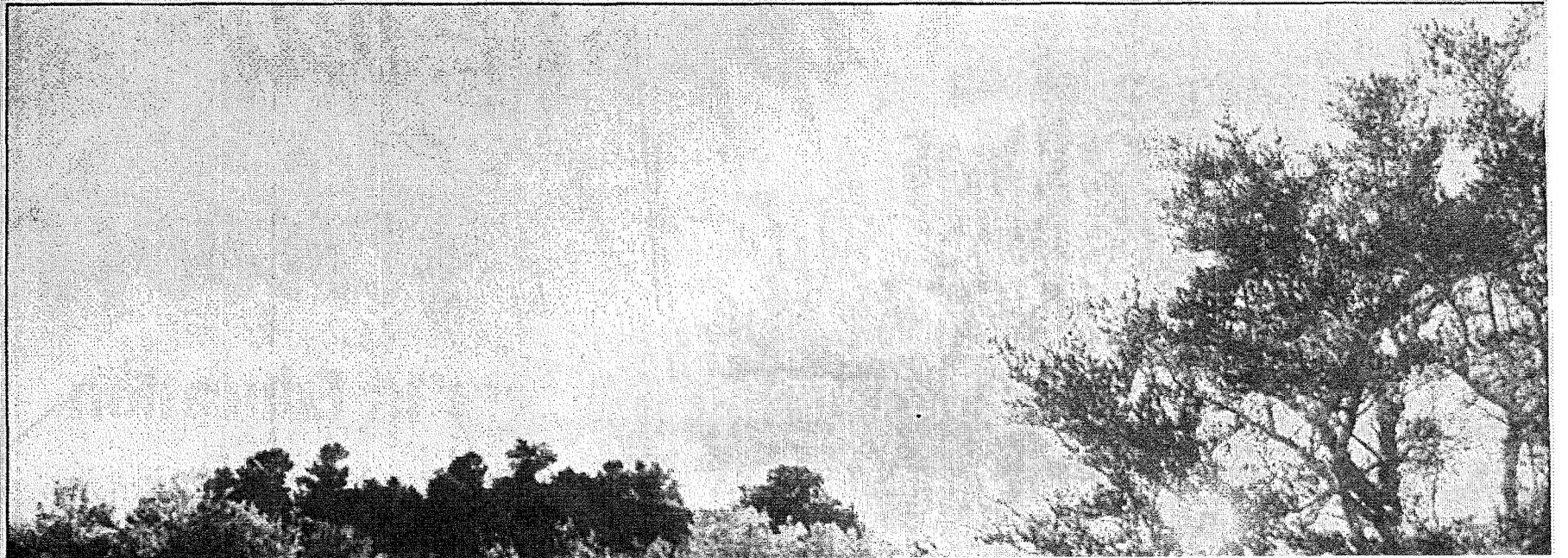
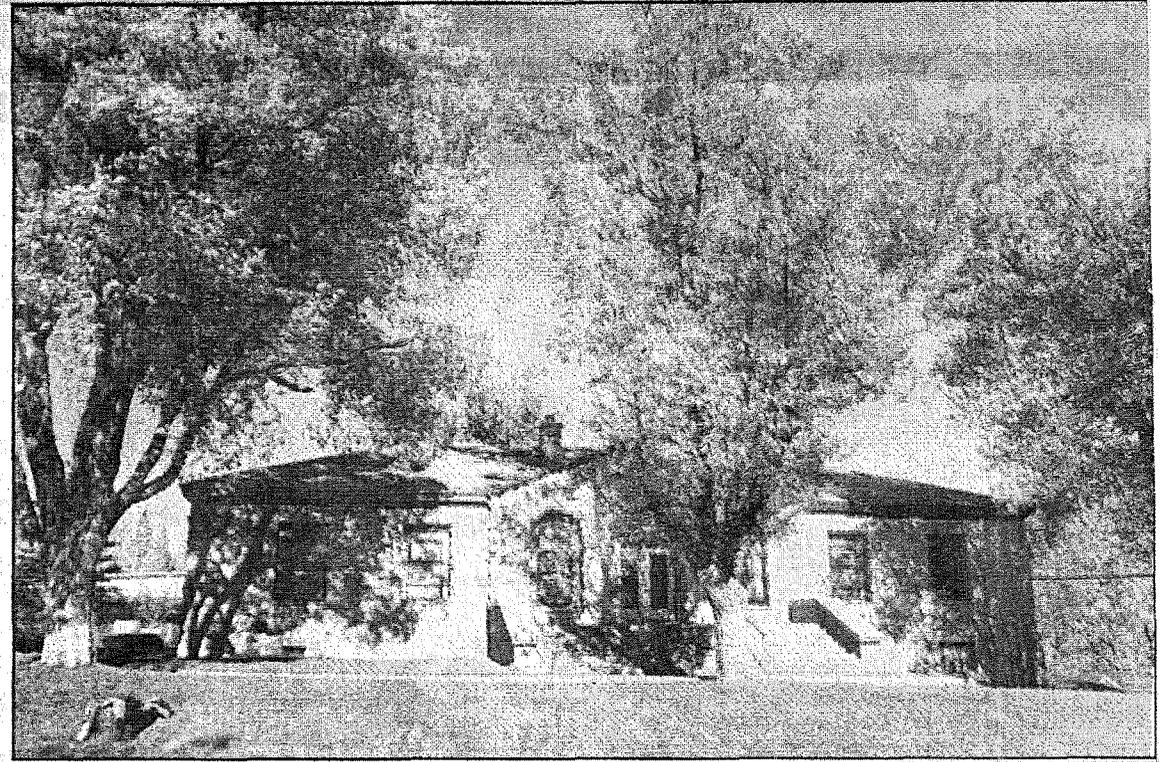
Alpine County sheriff's deputies said the group, from Woodside High School in the San Mateo County community of Portola Valley, was forced to abandon its camp late Monday by heavy snow and winds gusting up to 50 miles an hour at about 10,000 feet altitude.

■ **Fund raiser.** Dennis Hellwinkel, chairman of the Chip Hyden Memorial Scholarship Fund, presented a 30-06 Winchester rifle to James Martin, of Gardnerville. Drawing for the rifle was held at the annual Carson Valley 4-H Awards Night Dinner held last Sunday.

10 YEARS AGO

Tahoe Daily Tribune

10/23-25/98





BY JANICE FINNELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHACO MOHLER

November
1998

IN DEE

SCENE: L Bar, The Lodge at Kirkwood,
South Lake Tahoe, California

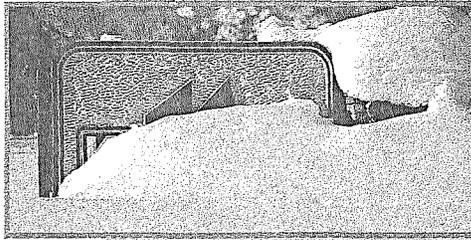
DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 1998

TIME: Happy Hour

BARTENDER (WIPING OFF THE
COUNTER): "Storm comin'
in on Thursday."

GUY AT THE BAR: "Is that a
small storm or a big storm?"

BARTENDER: "Haven't seen
a small storm yet."



Locals call it the "K factor." Whopper storms pushing East off the Pacific get stuck at Kirkwood, get pissed, and hurl sick amounts of snow. This is why Kirkwood, conveniently shaped like a catcher's mitt, palm facing west, constantly gets **clobbered**. The resort averages 500 powder inches a year, more than any other area in Tahoe.

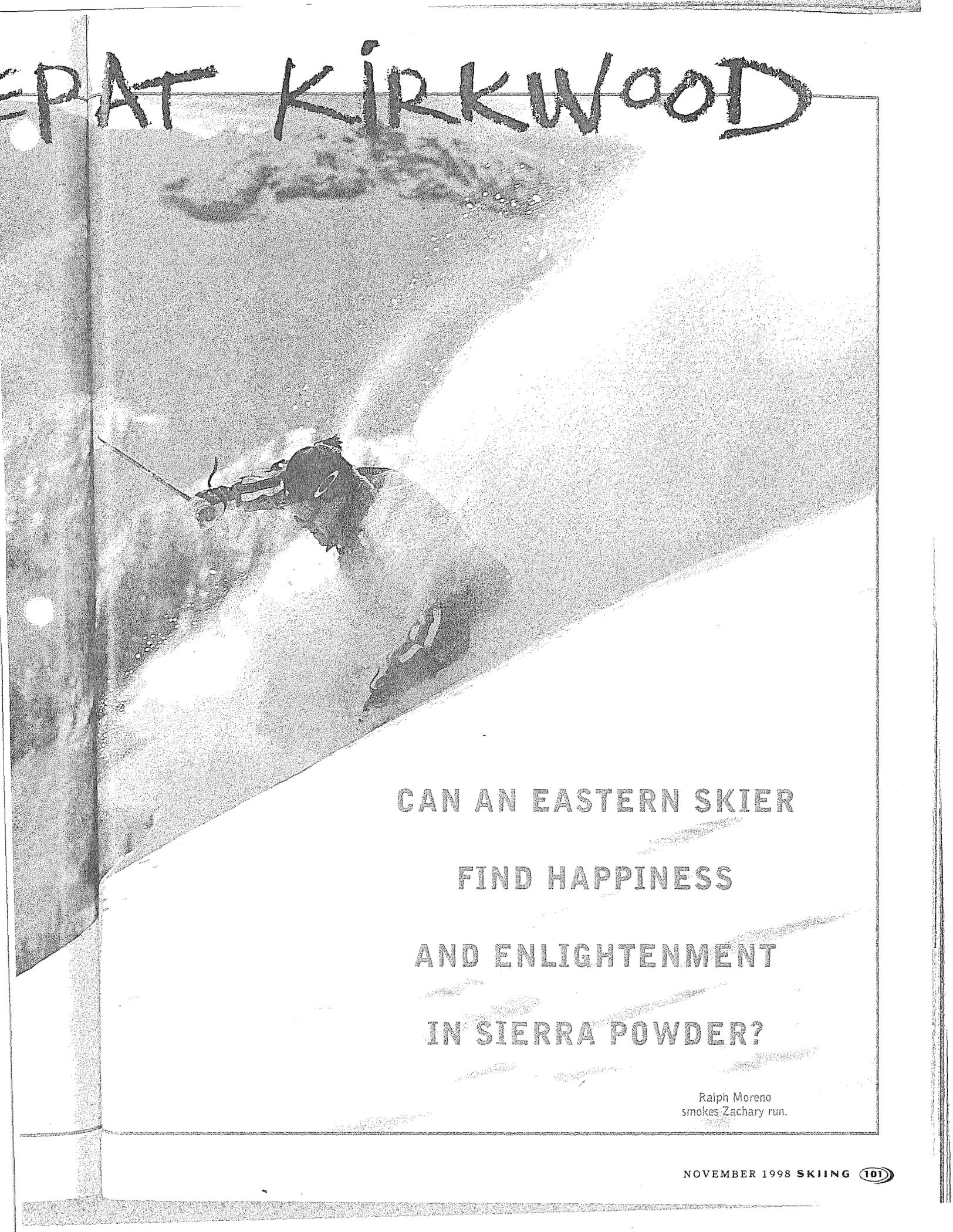
I learned this four years ago, on a trip from back East with Ian, the guy I share my Chinese takeout with. We had heard how soft and bountiful the snow is. How Kirkwood is a long ridge of five luscious bowls that feels more backcountry than lift served. How there are steeps galore, headed by hairy cliff bands and sinister slots and a jillion jumps.

As born-and-bred New England skiers, we were basically powder virgins. We had come to Kirkwood because it was time. Time to move beyond the groomed and the granular. Time to unravel the mysteries of the Sierra deep.

Alas, not this time. We had taken only a few warmup runs when—**kerblam!**—Kirkwood disappeared into a total whiteout. The lifts closed indefinitely. Route 88, the one way out, closed indefinitely. We spent our remaining days hoarding groceries from the general store and playing Scrabble. I could only imagine what it would be like to actually **ski** in all that swirling stuff.



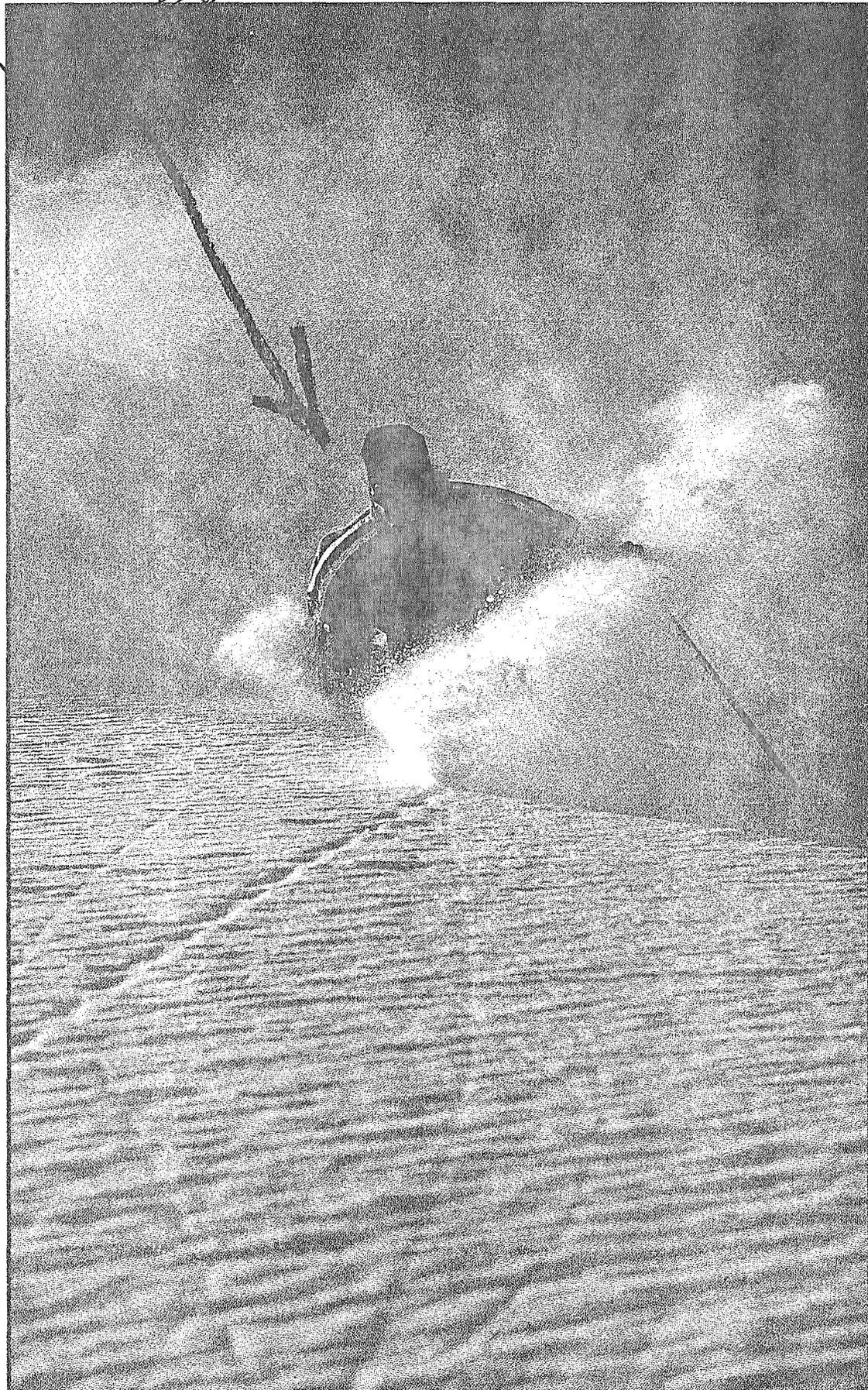
PAT KIRKWOOD



CAN AN EASTERN SKIER
FIND HAPPINESS
AND ENLIGHTENMENT
IN SIERRA POWDER?

Ralph Moreno
smokes Zachary run.

3. DEEP.



When Kirkwo-
gets snowed i
daytrippers bu
down in the Lo

Ralph More
gets deep in
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WHEN WE RETURNED TO KIRKWOOD last February, El Niño had been busy bombarding the place. Kirkwood's base was 282 inches (23.5 feet). According to the TV weather guy, this was, as usual, the deepest in all of Tahoe.

Driving the 70 miles from Reno Airport to Kirkwood that crystal night, we watched the snowpack rise along with the altitude. By the time we approached the village, we were hemmed in by fortress-high walls of snow, sliced smooth by machines. The walls had been built storm by storm, and each stratum of snow was a different shade of white—virgin, eggshell, linen. We started counting layers,

again. Were we in for another pummeling? Would we have to hang our skis and bring out the Scrabble board? And would the joy of skiing powder continue to elude us?

THE MORNING BROKE CLEAR, AND AS WE followed the sun toward Sunshine Bowl, our powder hopes soared. After a few simple warmup runs on a wide blue groomer, we initiated ourselves into a Kirkwood tradition: traversing. You gotta work for freshies here. Sun-

shine Bowl was worth it, though. It was as expansive as Alaska, as sunny as Spain, as treeless as Kansas, as ungroomed as, well, Kirkwood. There was one long lip at the top called the Wave, which really resembled one just about to crest. Viewed from afar, its windswept snow was all squiggly, like sand patterns on an ocean floor.

Staring into the sea of snow, taking in the enormity of it all, Ian and I freaked. We had been humbled in powder on a few previous trips west,

and up close Sunshine looked more daunting than it had in 35 mm. Would we be able to ski this stuff? Invoking the memory of a long-ago powder lesson, I half-smiled at Ian and dove in. Rolling my skis from side to side, I actually linked two turns. Through sheer determination, and with far too much energy expended, I managed to stay afloat. Ian followed, with all the focus of a man facing his mortality.

On those first runs, two powder truths emerged. First, falling in feather-down snow is a whole lot nicer than skidding and tumbling on Eastern hardpack. This makes it easier, psychologically, to take risks. Second, you have to

take risks. Powder slows you down, so you have to ski slopes that are steeper, much steeper, than anything you might ski in faster snow. We skied steeps that would have been way beyond our means in other conditions.

Soon, we were imagining ourselves to be quite the powder skiers. We swept down black and double-black chutes at the edges of Sunshine. All were largely untracked, untamed, and sublime. But we were soon beat and took a burger break at Sunrise Grill.

Making our way back along the ridge, we grabbed a soda from the unmanned ski-patrol ice chest. A sign suggested \$1 DONATION A CAN. We found this reliance on the honor code most refreshing and happily paid up. Then we watched from afar as one in a long line of California crazies tried to jump Kirkwood's Heart Cornice. The cornice crowns a heart-shaped snow pocket that collects between two impressive rocks; the pocket ends in a blade-thin, rock-lined exit from the bottom of the heart—and 20 feet of air over more rocks.

A hushed crowd had gathered, squinting into the sun, as a lone boarder—the size of a pea from where we stood—climbed to the edge, put on his board, chickened out, tried to deboard, and—*whoops!*—fell right over the edge, bouncing off a cliff and smacking his head on the way down. Somehow, as the Kirkwood ski patrol later informed us, he survived unscathed.

Heart Cornice put our powder morning in clear perspective.

DINNER WAS AT THE KIRKWOOD INN, down the access road a ways. Built in 1864, it's dark and woody and sits right on the dividing line of three counties: Alpine, Amador, and El Dorado. During prohibition, the owners set the bar on wheels, so when the Alpine county sheriff came, the inn could be rolled into Amador County. And when the Amador county sheriff came, they rolled it into Alpine.

The place was Wild West, but the food was Upper East Side: baked brie with toasted garlic and thyme, short

QUICK,
KISS ME.
NO ONE'S
LOOKING.

Kirkwood snowed in, pers bunk the Lodge.



trying to figure out how many storms had preceded us, but we didn't finish.

Our condo in the new Lodge at Kirkwood, with its knotty pine walls and overstuffed furniture, was pretty swank for such a rough-hewn place and had a mountain view. Make that used to. Every window was now swathed top to bottom in snow drifts, which made our sprawling suite feel downright cocoon-like. Previous visitors had put all this snow to good use; the drift had a bunch of beer-can-sized holes in it.

And no sooner did we arrive than we heard about another incoming storm from the L Bar bartender and, to echo Yogi Berra, had déjà vu all over

ph N...
s deep into
rm's Nose.

ribs in orange sauce, free-range chicken. The chef, a do-or-die oenophile, even changed our wine order without telling us. He had a prize bottle of Gallo Spectator Merlot in back, rated an 86 in the *Wine Spectator* guide, and it had our name on it.

By the time we swilled our last, lovely sip, snowflakes were falling. And by the next morning, a full gale-force snowstorm was in effect. I lightly kissed Ian good-bye—he had a nasty cold—and hooked up with Pam Simich, SKININGS art director, who was here scouting photos with shooter Chaco Mohler.

Pam loaned me some fatties and agreed to my plan to tempt our fate on the front face. As we rode the wind-rocked lift, I eyeballed the bloated boards on my feet and questioned my sanity.

The top of Sisters Chute—as in “so long, sisters”—felt steep. How steep I couldn’t tell; the wind was wild and visibility was a big fat zero. As we slogged across the expanse, fully exposed to the storm, I wanted to bail. But Pam was somewhere nearby, and if I was ever to face my coworkers again, there was simply no backing out.

So we two sisters skied blind. This was probably a blessing. I was choking on snow so thick I felt like I was upright in an avalanche. But I kept moving, motivated by the faint vision of trees below, and the thought that if I stayed where I was, I would die.

It’s a funny thing, fear. On the chute I pushed right on through it, chasing Pam. Usually I’m a slave to form, but at this moment I didn’t give a damn how I looked. I just skied.

And then a beautiful thing happened: We reached tree line. The trees screened the wind, and suddenly, it was silent and still. As we skied the trees, I realized that the fatties made floating easier. I stopped fretting about my tips nosing into the snow. I began to feel comfortable and started to really dig powder, though not so much that I lost awareness of the trees—these suckers are huge, not something you’d want to kiss.

Still, I was working hard. By the time we reached the flats, my legs were liquid. I relaxed for a second and did a

split, then a full 360-degree pirouette, and then a full-frontal body plant. I was beat. Pam, on the other hand, looked ready to run a marathon.

It occurred to me then, as I flopped about trying to get up, that skiing the powder had been exhilarating fun—but only for brief moments. The rest of the time, it was just too damn much work. I was jealous of Pam’s apparent ease in powder. I wanted to float effortlessly, too, to achieve a more spiritual level of skiing. And I knew there was only one way to do it. I bid Pam good-bye and set off for a powder clinic.

SHANE, MY INSTRUCTOR, WAS A SAUCY New Zealander who wears tie-dyed shirts and lives in a cabin with no electricity. Pop up and down, he said; swing your ski tips like a pendulum, get into a rhythm. And it worked.

Halfway through, though, the weather overwhelmed me. The wind and snow felt like someone was using a belt sander on my face, and my gloves were like rags dipped in ice water. Plus, I had insisted on wearing my favorite Eastern outfit, a fleece jacket, and it was thoroughly caked with

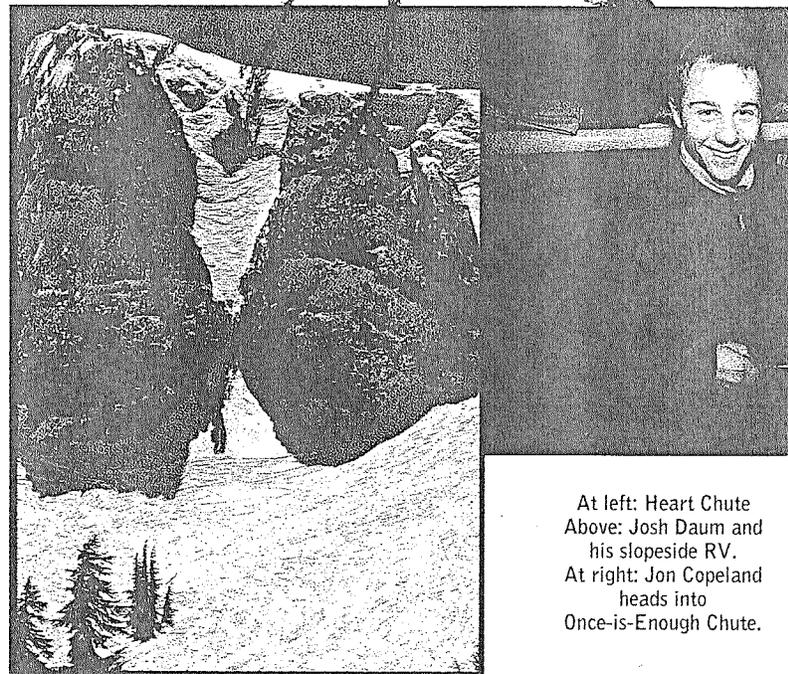
snow. But when I suggested to Shane we run for our lives, he just sm “What’s a little weather?” he said.

A little weather? Back East, F would have been on full alert. I suppose as far as storms go, this didn’t register too high on the I wood scale. Heck, the roads were open. Plus, rumor had it that the storm wasn’t supposed to hit for more days. “Aw, come on, let’s I together,” Shane smiled. So we And as we skied through a bliz more ferocious than any I had experienced, I thought about my ern ski buddies who love to com about the severe weather condit back home, and smiled to myself.

THE NEXT DAY THE SUN SHONE AND mountain was a calm sea of whi had snowed two feet, and Kirkw was on full freshie alert. I made pla catch up with Ian later—poor guy

still under weather—ran to catch first chair. Waiting for the to open, I met C an especially r powderho Gary had a r glued to his

*TUNA SHOELACE SOUP.
GOOD STUFF!*



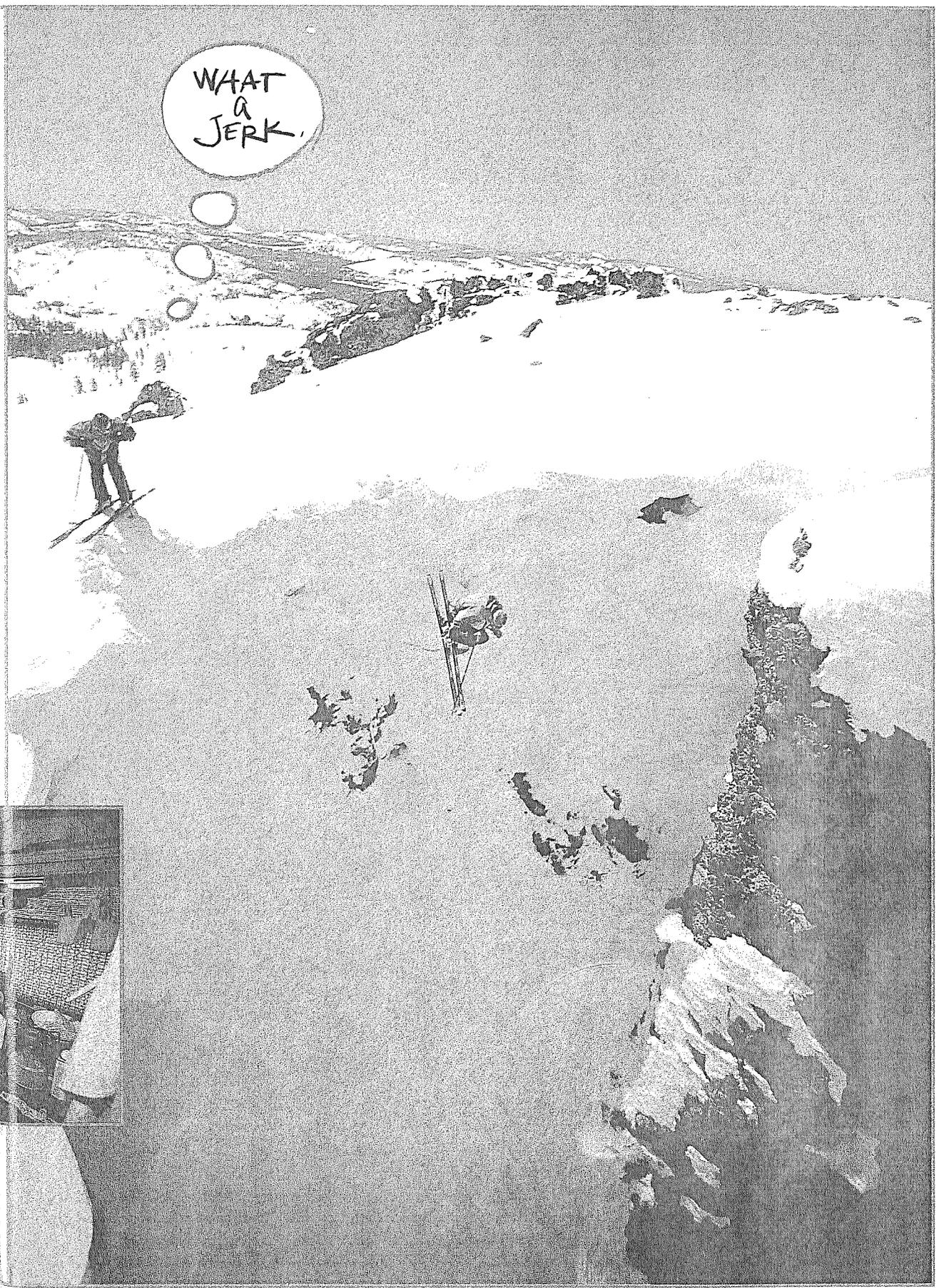
At left: Heart Chute Above: Josh Daum and his slopeside RV. At right: Jon Copeland heads into Once-is-Enough Chute.

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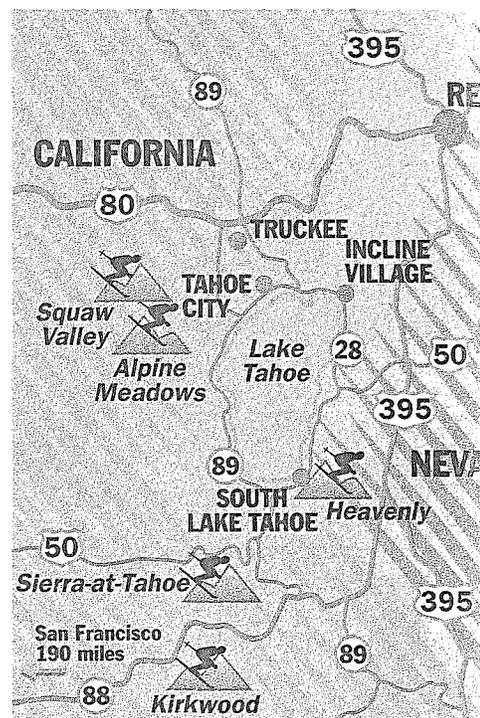
waiting to hear which chair would open first. His goal, he said, was "bowling 300." On a powder day, he explained, you try to be the first one up on each chairlift. "It's like bowling a perfect game," he said. His radio crackled and he whooshed over to Chair 6.

I shared my first chair with Josh Daum, who works nights at Kirkwood Lodge and who had brought our bags to our room. Josh was studying astrophysics and loved Stephen Hawking, the cerebral author of books on the cosmos. On the other hand, Josh was also a bonafide ski bum, skiing every day, as long as his "butt could take it." He was taking the winter off from the University of Oregon and was living in a 26-foot Dodge motor home in a snowed-in parking lot in the village.

"Stop by for a visit," he said as he darted off, his black Boeri helmet disappearing over a cornice.

I found myself atop a completely untouched powder field, a black diamond called Conestoga. I'd never seen anything so pure, so white. And I'd never felt so alone. There was no noise, no wind, no people, just the muffled silence you get after a snowfall. Unlike my first day on Sunshine, I now felt confident I could ski this snow. I settled into a rhythm, imagining that I was skiing in Shane's tracks

JANICE
WAS
HERE!



CONTINUED ON PAGE 183



DESTINATION: KIRKWOOD

VITAL STATISTICS

Top elevation: 9,800 feet
Vertical drop: 2,000 feet
Annual snowfall: 500 inches
Skiable acreage: 2,300 acres
Terrain: 15%● 50%■ 35%◆
Lifts: 1 quad, 7 triples, 2 doubles, 2 surface
Information: 209-258-6000
Reservations: 800-967-7500
Website: www.skikirkwood.com

GETTING THERE: From the Reno airport, take U.S. 395 south to Highway 88 west (90 minutes). From South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 89 south to Highway 88 west (35 minutes). Kirkwood is three and a half hours from San Francisco, two hours from Sacramento.

PRICES: Full-day adult lift ticket, \$45; ages 13-24, \$35; ages 6-12, \$7; children under 6 ski free; 60 and over, \$23. Multiday discount programs are available.

LODGING: Kirkwood Lodging Services rents privately owned slopeside condominiums, studios to three bedrooms, in a half dozen complexes. For the newest, most deluxe units, ask for The Lodge or one of the other just-built condos. Sample rates: \$164-\$325 nightly for one-bedroom units, \$339-\$490 for three-bedroom units.

FOOD & DRINK: The Kirkwood Inn, built in 1864, looks like something straight out of F Troop and has excellent food. For breakfast try the scrambled eggs with andouille sausage or Pony Express pancakes, which are the size of Frisbees. At Caples Lake Restaurant, a five-minute drive away, the friendly chef of 15 years serves delicious dinners and an amazing dessert called Semi Freddo, with zabaglione and fresh fruit. At the Cornice Cafe in the village, noteworthy items include the warm spinach salad, pasta with prawns, and dense chocolate cake.

NIGHTLIFE: Best described as low-key. There are bars at the Cornice Cafe and Kirkwood Inn, and live music at Whisky Run on weekends. For dancing or gaming action, South Lake Tahoe is 35 miles away.

PRO TURN CLINICS: Kirkwood has replaced the standard lesson with these 90-minute clinics (\$15). Each is designed to accommodate the skier's needs and interests on the skier's choice of terrain.

BACKCOUNTRY TRAINING: The North American Ski Training Center runs multiday Alpine and backcountry total-immersion clinics. Program includes top-notch coaching, video analysis, and classroom sessions. Class size is limited to six, and you must be an intermediate or better. Information: 530-582-4772, www.adventurewest.com/pub/NASTC.-J.

IN DEEP AT KIRKWOOD
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 106

and having cosmic thoughts about time. Suddenly, skiing felt liquid. I wasn't turning my skis, they were turning me. It was a skiing rush like I'd never had before.

WE HAD TO LEAVE SATURDAY MORNING to catch our flight back to New York. I felt happy to have done Kirkwood right this time and relieved that we had avoided the rumored Big One. As we were completing our packing, though, the wind picked up and started rumbling. Snow suddenly filled the sky like a blast of baby powder. I ran down to the front desk for the road report, and wouldn't you know it, Route 88 had just closed. Déjà vu all over again. We were stuck.

I couldn't get back to our room—the elevator had just broken down—so I called Ian to give him the news. "Hello, Donner Party," he answered.

To kill time, I put on my goggles and trudged through the storm to visit Josh. I quickly found his RV, which was up to its mud shields in snow. He pushed open the door, introduced me to a couch-surfing friend, and gave me the grand tour. Here was a man in need of a maid. The sink was full of dishes he couldn't wash; the water pipes were frozen solid. "There's the shower," he said over the hum of a generator. "It doesn't work, but it's there." Judging from the odor in the RV, the pipes had been frozen for a while. The guest bed was somewhere over the driver's seat, under a pile of clothes.

Josh and his pal were contentedly sucking down spaghetti, heated over a propane stove. "Can't wait for some of the snow to melt," Josh said, "so I can drive this thing to the grocery store." There was no TV, but no matter, Josh was totally into his current book: Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time*. Here, inside this Martha Stewart nightmare, all that mattered were two

things: the truly cosmic questions of existence and the exquisite subtleties of the powder turn.

BY THE TIME I MADE IT OVER TO THE DAY lodge, it was packed with daytrippers. (Make that former daytrippers.) Tim Cohee, Kirkwood's president, was announcing that everyone might as well get comfortable; CalTrans was beginning to blast, but the roads would be closed for a while. "You're welcome to stay overnight," he said, adding that there were blankets on hand and that the cafeteria would stay open. There were a few groans, but most folks simply went on chatting, or playing cards, or getting drunk on freebies at the bar.

I returned to our lobby and Ian, and saw that every inch of space—tabletops, couches, floors—was now strewn with skiers. Some had stripped down to their ski skivvies, and clothes lay in piles. The place smelled of beer and socks. "Now

I know what it's like to be a wife," Ian said.

Kids were fast asleep, heads resting on their snowboard bindings. The wind shifted down the fireplace, spewing fine ash all over everything. A guy wandered around with his trumpet, playing soft jazz. We joined the huddled masses on the carpet, having quiet conversations and sharing some laughs, while a guitarist strummed Spanish folk songs. It was Woodstock minus the mud.

The next day, the roads would open and everyone would be on their way. But that night, I came to appreciate the real nature of Kirkwood. Skiers come for the truly karmic skiing. And sometimes, they don't leave. Not when they plan to, anyway. But as long as the skiing's great, who cares if your fleece is weighted down with ice balls the size of pinecones? Because, as those of us who love Kirkwood know, adventures in skiing go hand in hand with adventures in weather. And here's the beauty of the thing: Nobody really seems to mind. <

I'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING SO PURE, SO WHITE. AND I'D NEVER FELT SO ALONE.

PURE ESCAPE



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Escape to an undisturbed box canyon, surrounded by 14,000 foot peaks. Discover miles of uncrowded slopes and diverse terrain. Here, you'll find a charming slopeside Victorian town and a ski-in/ski-out alpine mountain village—all the ingredients for an incredible winter vacation. Plus, Telluride is accessible from across the nation by more flights than ever before. When you're ready to get away from it all, ski Telluride. The perfect place to make your escape.

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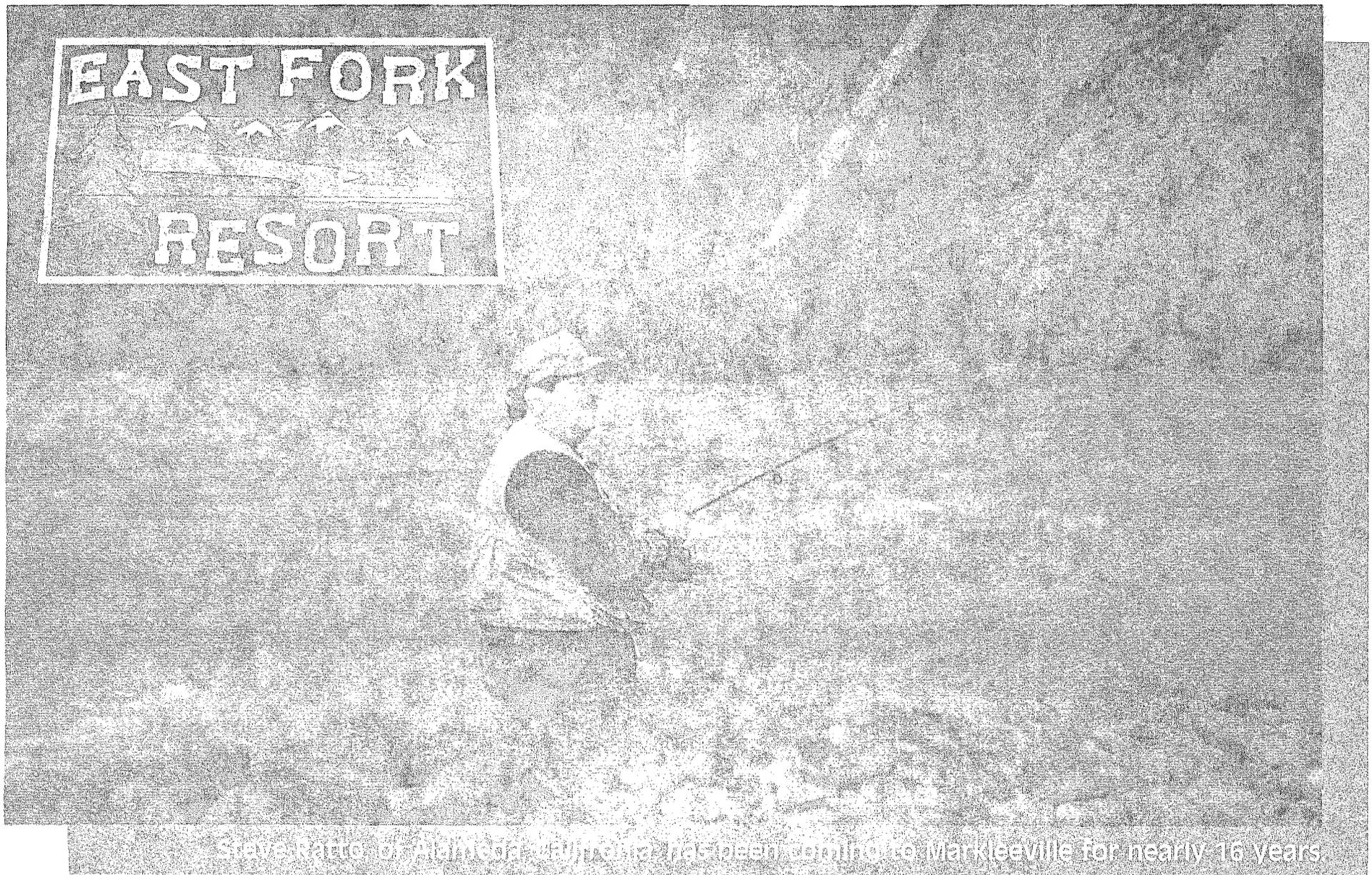
Real & Rustic In Markleeville

story by **Jim VandenHuevel**

photographs by **Don N. Olea**

Nevada Sports Authority 17

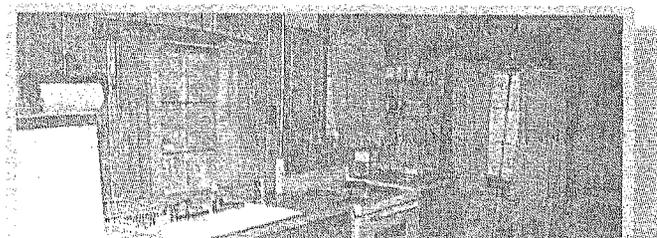
Nov. 1998



Steve Ratto of Alameda, California has been coming to Markleeville for nearly 16 years.

For most city dwellers, the outdoors and the mountains surrounding where we live define escapism in its truest form. Summer or winter, spring or fall, the mountains combine the elements of relaxation and recreation to deliver enjoyment and diversion for the masses.

The Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority (RSCVA) understands the seduction of the mountains and have taken steps to build an image of relaxation and recreation around their new motto, "The Treasure of the Sierra Nevada". If Reno-Tahoe is the treasure, then a ride to Markleeville,



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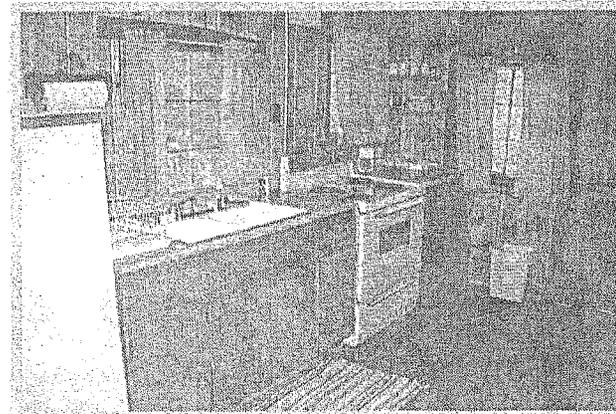
Markleeville is a favorite destination spot for families and groups from throughout northern California and Nevada. Predominately a summer destination in the past, a few outdoor entrepreneurs are planning to change the focus in Markleeville from a summertime fishing mecca to a year-round sports playground. The pieces are there to make that happen.

Brad Davis and Kathleen Roberson run the East Fork Resort just south of Markleeville. Brad and Kathleen were nuclear engineers in Phoenix before the lure of the Sierra Nevada hooked both of them. Brad was on a ski trip to Lake Tahoe the first time he experienced the Markleeville area. "I've always wanted to run a recreational park and when I was up here on vacation, the opportunity to invest in the East Fork Resort presented itself," explains Brad. "I decided to become a partner and a short time after I did, Walt Boitano, who was the long-time manager of the resort, died. I was back in Phoenix when Walt passed away and I was really stressing out about what to do with the resort. Kathleen kind of set me straight there."

"When Walt died I noticed that Brad was having a real difficult time figuring out what to do," suggests Kathleen. "I couldn't believe it! I told Brad 'You've got this gift from God sitting there . . . and you're losing sleep?' I guess it may have shook something loose in his mind because he decided to take on the project himself."

Brad did take over the East Fork Resort and Kathleen followed him a month later. "Kathleen is the most avid hiker I've ever met," Brad continued. "She has some great organizational skills and loves the outdoors. It was a great fit for her."

"I decided to take a three month sabbatical from my nuclear engineering job in Phoenix and come up here to help Brad," explains Kathleen. "After three months, I went back to Phoenix and told them 'I'm GONE!'. Where else can I write my own hours, hike every day and still earn a living? I was



Believe it or not, this is the interior of cabin #7. The exterior is shown on the previous cover page.

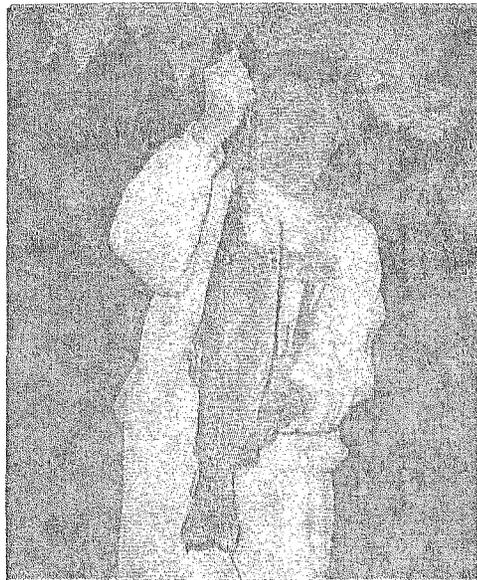


in heaven."

Brad and Kathleen have big plans for their resort but like the small town they live in, they are going to take it slow. The East Fork Resort has 155 acres of land available for development with the existing facilities situated on five acres. The accommodations include seven cabins, 25 RV spaces and a campground. "We're upgrading all of our facilities over time and our long range plans will be consistent with what the city wants to see out here," says Brad. "Because of our added focus on winter, we will need to insulate and winterize all of our existing facilities and a face-lift on some of our cabins may be in order."

The seven cabins at the East Fork Resort are great examples of real and

Here's what they're catching at the East Fork Resort:



**K.C. • Rainbow • 21" • 4lbs.
Power Bait • 8/19/98**



**Walter Bush • Rainbow 20 1/2"
4.2 lbs. • Nightcrawler • 8/15/98**



**Vernon Waring • Rainbow • 20"
4lbs. • Rooster Tail • 9/5/98**

rustic. Don and Peggy Olea, the publishers of Nevada Sports Authority, had the opportunity to stay in one of the East Fork Resort cabins. "We must have drove by the place three times," explains Don. "There was a 'Keep Out' sign posted near our cabin and the outside was *really* rustic. I sent Peggy in to check out the place and we were both shocked to find a very comfortable, beautifully rustic cabin. It was incredible!"

Built from 1948 Sears and Roebuck 'kits', the cabins at the East Fork Resort include full kitchens with modern appliances and two double beds. The cabins include cooking utensils and dishes as well. "We really enjoyed our stay there," explained the Oleas.

The allure for most people heading to the mountains is the outdoor recreation. There's



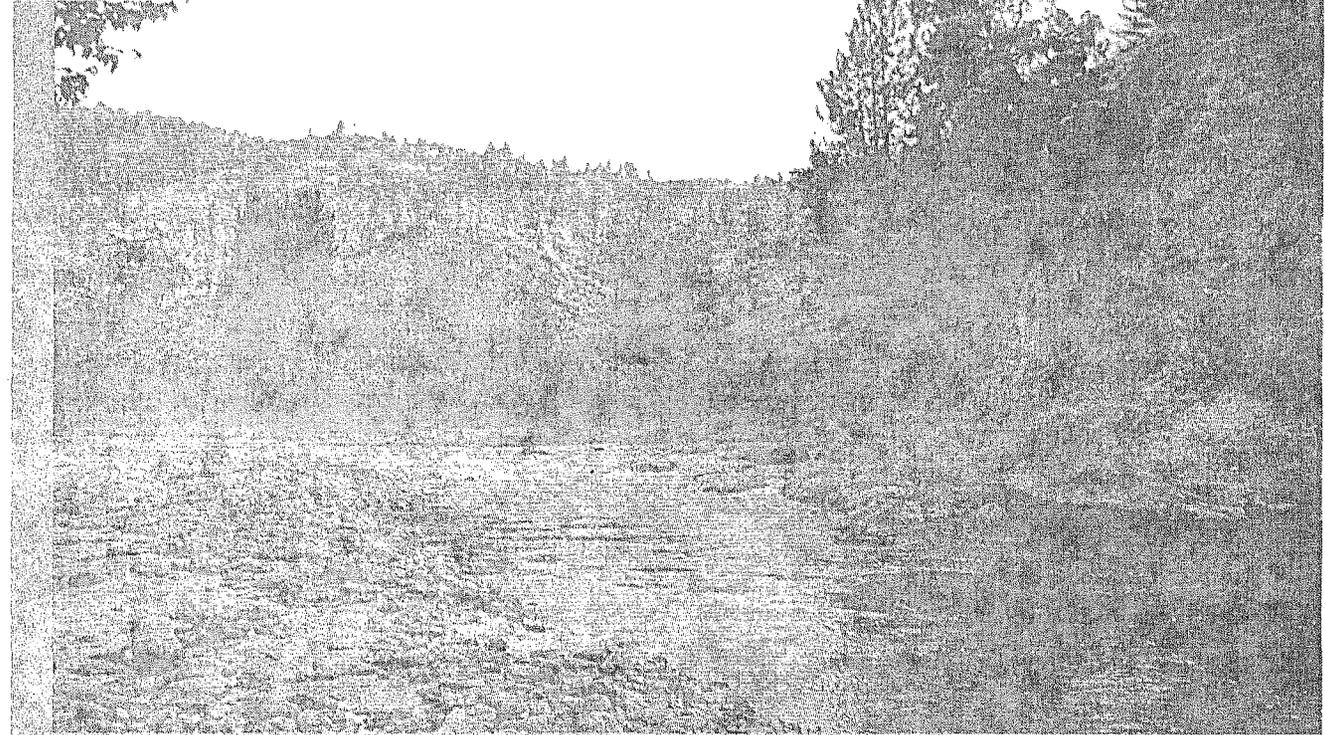
Resort cabins. "we must have drove by the place three times," explains Don. "There was a 'Keep Out' sign posted near our cabin and the outside was *really* rustic. I sent Peggy in to check out the place and we were both shocked to find a very comfortable, beautifully rustic cabin. It was incredible!"

Built from 1948 Sears and Roebuck 'kits', the cabins at the East Fork Resort include full kitchens with modern appliances and two double beds. The cabins include cooking utensils and dishes as well. "We really enjoyed our stay there," explained the Oleas.

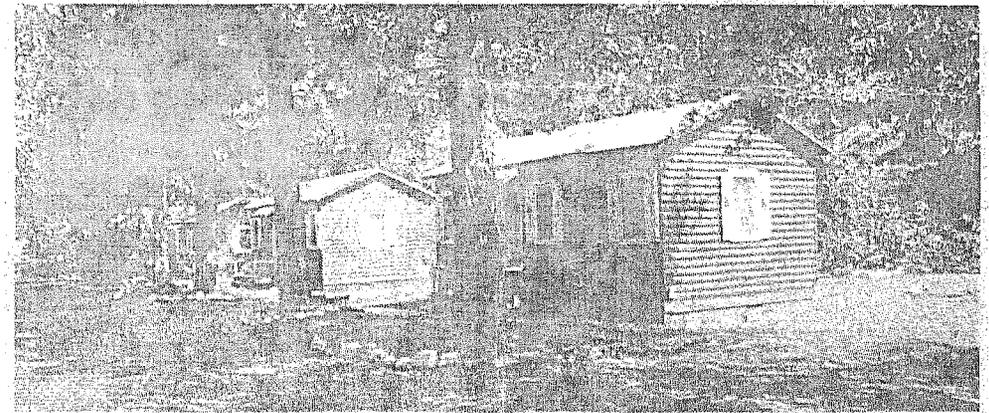
The allure for most people heading to the mountains is the outdoor recreation. There's plenty of it within a cast of the East Fork Resort. "This area is a very popular hiking spot with the locals from Gardnerville, Genoa and Carson City," explains Kathleen. "We've tried to customize hiking packages for groups within their abilities." Brad adds, "We even service a family reunion that has come up here for the past 30 years. They take all of the cabins for a few days and really enjoy themselves."



**East Fork
Resort Owner,
Brad Davis,
is all smiles
in his new
found paradise.
Can you blame
him?**



This picturesque view of the east fork is looking south from cabin #7



These cabins were built from a kit bought through the Sears & Roebuck catalog in 1948.

Prescribed burns set for Sierra

Jerry Grevstad, Carson District Ranger of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, announced that a 500-acre prescribed fire project is planned for mid-November in the Carson Iceberg Wilderness. The project is approximately 15 miles

southeast of Markleeville, Calif., near the Soda Springs guard station. The project will provide fire hazard reduction by removing the accumulation of dead vegetation and ladder fuels in a wildland fire prone area.

11/11/98

Ronald Cooper



Frankland Joyce Higgen bothum 11/14/98 JAY ALDRICH photo
Home Health: Nurse Julie Grimes works with a patient. Record
hospital costs. Recovery time may including: Courier

Volunteers make repairs on elementary books

Workshop held: Using funds from Wells Fargo Bank, crafter Sandy Wright teaches art of book repair

by Nancy Hamlett
Staff Writer

Treat books with respect. Handle them carefully. Somewhere in our memories we all remember a librarian's warnings.

So then why was a group of adults in the library at C.C. Menley Elementary School with Exacto knives poised above the spines of some of the books?

Dianne Rogers, the school's librarian, explained. "Wells Fargo Bank approved a \$500 grant submitted by Pam Petite at Gardnerville Elementary School to be used for repairing books in our elementary schools," she said. "These are volunteers learning the

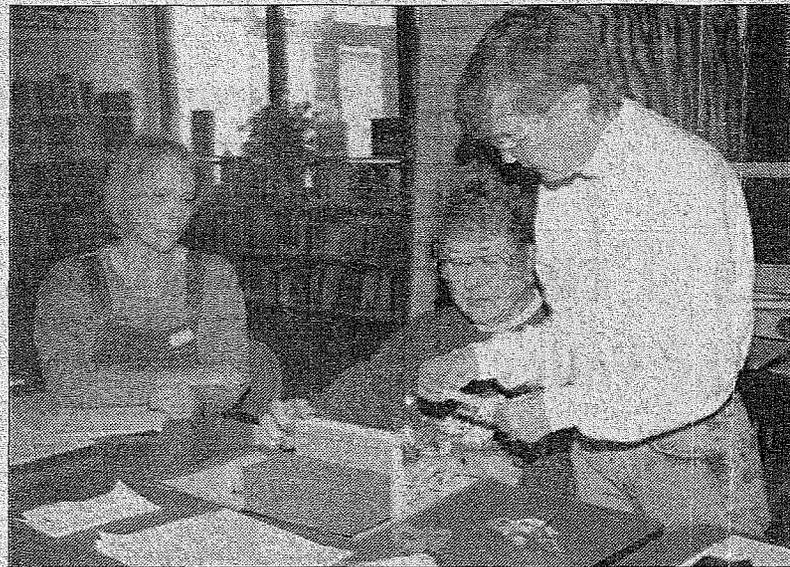
proper techniques."

The workshop, taught by Sandy Wright from Alpine County, Calif., was held on Nov. 7 and 14 in the CCMES library. Wright, who is a crafter specializing in leatherwork, learned the art of repairing books by using the trial and error method. She shared her expertise with volunteers from several schools in the district.

■ **In between part.** "Taking apart the book is easy and putting it back together is easy," said Wright. "It's the in between part that takes the time and the attention to detail."

Wright began the session by identifying the different parts of a

See **Volunteers** on page 10



CATHLEEN ALLISON/The R-C

Book repair: From left are Carol Reid, Jane O'Hara and book repair instructor Sandy Wright of the Alpine County Library.

Record Courier Nov 18, 1998

Kirkwood set to open today

Staff reports

Kirkwood Ski Resort is scheduled to open for the 1998/99 season today with three lifts offering access for skiing and snowboarding, as well as trails for cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

Early season lift tickets will be reduced to \$25 for adults, \$20 for young adults, \$15 for seniors and \$7 for children 6 to 12; kids 5 and younger ski free.

Kirkwood Cross Country will offer 10 kilometers of groomed trails in the meadow and 15 miles of

snowshoe trails. Trail passes will be reduced to \$7 for adults and \$3 for kids.

Kirkwood's Stay and Ski Free packages are available through Dec. 17. Call (800) 967-7500 for details.

Kirkwood's Ski Report Hotline can be reached by calling (209) 258-3000.

■ Heavenly update

Heavenly will open its Dipper Express and Comet Express chair lifts on the Nevada side of the resort this weekend. The lifts will provide access to more than a half-dozen

intermediate and expert runs on the upper Nevada side.

Heavenly currently is offering skiing and snowboarding on more than 10 miles of terrain on 17 trails, which represents 28 percent of the available Mountain Trails, with a base depth of 2 to 4 feet.

On the California side, the Aerial Tram, Gunbarrel Express, Patsy's Chair, Waterfall Chair and Sky Express lifts are all open.

For more information about the conditions at Heavenly, call (702) 586-7000.

Library in Alpine sets Book Fair

Diamond Valley School of Markleeville will hold an Osborne Book Fair Nov. 30-Dec. 4, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily except Friday, Dec. 4, when it will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

A special "Santa Shopping" event will be held Thursday evening, Dec. 3, from 6 to 8 p.m.

To get to Markleeville from Minden, take Highway 88 south to Markleeville and turn left on Highway 89, then left on Diamond Valley Road. The school is one-quarter mile on the right. R.C. 11-25-98

25 YEARS AGO

The Record-Courier
December 6, 1973

Dec 2, 1998

Alpine wants no part of college district.

AThe Alpine County board of supervisors will decide by the first of the year whether to contest a March 5 community college district election in the courts, according to board chairman Jack Doyle.

Doyle said the supervisors are also exploring legislative action at the state level as a means of getting out from under the community college district which he says would cost the county an estimated \$80,000 a year in additional school taxes.

A state law passed in 1970 puts all of California's counties into regional community college districts and subjects them to a support tax of 70 cents per \$100 assessed valuation. But Doyle says the state neglected to take into consideration the effect this would have on mountainous and rural counties with small numbers of community college students.

10 YEARS AGO

The Record-Courier

Dec 2 1998 Record Courier

Art, crafts in Alpine County this weekend

The Alpine County Arts Commission will host a Christmas Art Exhibit and Crafts Boutique this weekend, Dec. 5 and 6.

The exhibit runs Saturday, Dec. 5, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an opening reception for the artists, which is open to the public, from 4 to 5 p.m.

On Sunday, Dec. 6, the exhibit is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The exhibit takes place at the Turtle Rock Park Community building, two miles north of Markleeville on State Route 89.

Regional artists will display arts and crafts for sale. Works include Washo beadwork by Carmen Jones and Carol Galbin, hand-made wooden bowls by Kristi Hamilton, fabric work by Marie Bravo, Guatemalan handicrafts and ceramics.

DETAILS

What: Christmas Art Exhibit and Crafts Boutique

Where: Turtle Rock Park, 2 miles north of Markleeville

When: Dec. 5, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Dec. 6, 4-5 p.m.

Regional artists Barbara Beaudreau, Jan Howard, Vienna Colodsin and Barbara Garbin, all from the Arts of Bear Valley group, use nature as a theme of departure in watercolors as well as oils. Garbin's work in the genre of Western art have garnered worldwide acclaim. Paintings of natural beauty by Greg Drinkwine of Gardnerville capture the essence of the Sierra and the Carson Valley. Dick James, chairman of the

Alpine County Arts Commission, specializes in photographs of the Sierra Nevada and the Gold Country. His work has appeared in California tourism materials used worldwide, a California textbook for social studies, "At a Glance Worldwide Calendar 1999" and National Geographic is reviewing his photos of bird watching sites in the Tahoe/Reno area for an upcoming article. He will have photos, cards and calendars for sale. Dianne Lipscomb, executive director of the Arts Commission and a professional artist and teacher, will exhibit monotypes and drawings, and arts commissioner Jim Lyons will have pen and ink drawings.

This event is made possible, in part, with a grant from the California Arts Council, a state agency.

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Overheard Dec 5, 1998 Record Courier

■ **Nolan Smith** of Minden, a freshman at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, received the Julia Klug Scholarship. Smith, a computer science major, is a 1998 graduate of Douglas High school.

■ Army Pvt. **Erin N. O'Reilly** has entered basic military training at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C., this fall. She is the daughter of Carin Nelson of Gardnerville and James O'Reilly of Las Vegas.

During the eight weeks of training, O'Reilly will study the Army mission and will receive instruction in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid, Army history and traditions and special training in human relations.

■ Marine Sgt. **Landon J. Dykes**, son of Robert and Donna Dykes of Gardnerville, recently was promoted to his present rank while serving with Marine Corps Security Force, Bahrain.

Dykes was promoted based on sustained superior job performance

and proficiency in his designated specialty.

■ Army Pvt. **Joshua M. Stern** has graduated from basic military training at Fort Leonard Wood, Waynesville, Mo.

Stern is a 1998 graduate of Douglas High School and is the son of Janyce and John Stern of Minden. During the training, Stern received instruction in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid and Army history and traditions.

■ **George L. Tinseth**, son of Scott and Lenny Sue Tinseth of Woodfords, Calif., graduated from basic training in Missouri at Fort Leonard Wood on Aug. 20. The graduation was attended by his parents.

Tinseth remained at Fort Leonard Wood School of Engineering to complete his advanced individual training and was scheduled to graduate Oct. 22.

■ Army Pvt. **Adam K. Roney** has entered basic military training at Fort Sill, Lawton, Okla.

Roney, a 1998 graduate of Douglas High School, is the son of Terry Roney of Gardnerville and Randi Pezzuto of Henderson.



George Tinseth graduated from Army basic training recently

■ Marine Pfc. **James A Royce**, son of Bruce and Mary Royce of Minden, recently completed basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.

Royce successfully completed 12 weeks of training designed to challenge new Marine recruits both physically and mentally.

He joins 41,000 men and women who will enter the Marine Corps this year from all over the country.

■ Navy Seaman **Craig S. Miller**, son of Kenneth and Ethel Miller of Gardnerville, and Navy Seaman Apprentice **Jonathan W. Harmer**, son of Ian and Jennifer Harmer of Gardnerville, recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill. Both are 1998 graduates of Douglas High School.

WEEKEND ESCAPE

Slowing down, chowing down in Alpine County

Cross-country skiing,
hot springs enliven
tiny Markleeville

By Christopher Hall
SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

MARKLEEVILLE, Alpine Co. — "I wonder what they use to flip these things," said Mac, pointing his fork at our stacks of platter-sized pancakes.

With their slightly chewy texture and warm, yeasty aroma, the enormous cakes were proving the perfect breakfast for a wintry Sunday in the High Sierra.

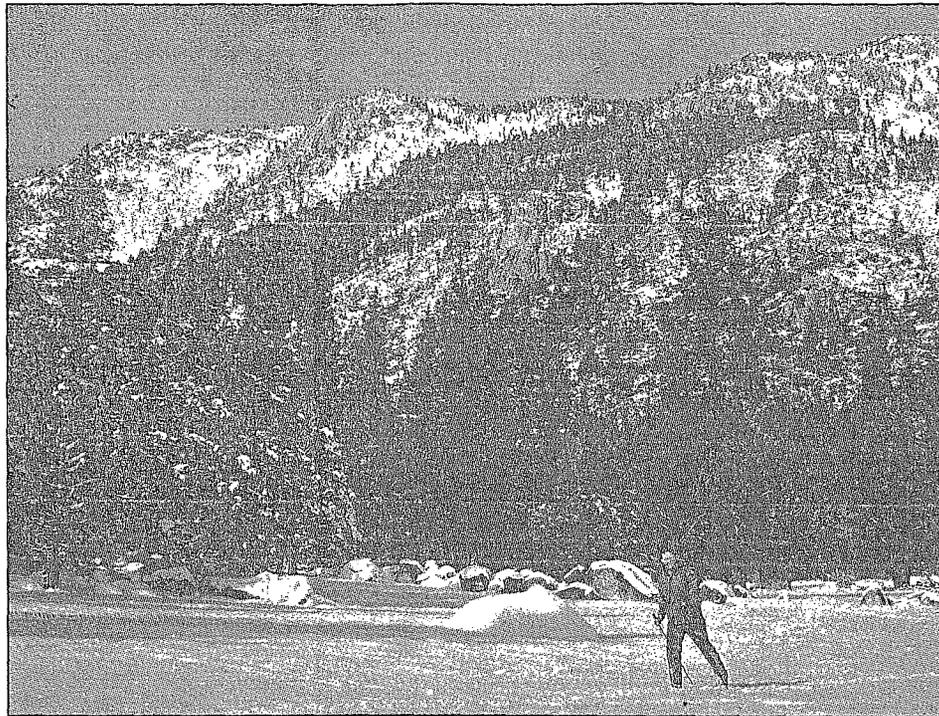
Through the lace-trimmed curtains of the Alpine Restaurant in Markleeville — population 165 — I could see snow flurries blowing past an old, clapboard house, silently

adding another layer to the white blanket that already covered the town.

Inside the small, wood-walled dining room, which we had to ourselves, steam rose from pots of coffee on a hot plate, and the fire in the Franklin stove softly popped and sputtered. In all respects, it was a lovely way to end our weekend in this remote and beautiful corner of the state.

As California's population surges toward 33 million and life in our congested cities seems only to grow more hectic, it's nice to know there's still a Markleeville. The town is the seat of Alpine County, which at 700 full-time residents is the least populous county in the nation's most populous state. There's only one traffic light — a flashing yellow signal — in the entire 727-square-mile county.

Markleeville sits at an elevation of 5,500 feet, 34 miles southeast of Lake Tahoe. I first stumbled on the



CHRISTOPHER HALL

Making tracks: Cross-country skiing trails abound in the Markleeville area. Hope Valley and Carson Pass, which both offer great nordic skiing, lie nearby.

town several years ago during a spring drive from Mammoth to San Francisco via Tahoe. Highway 89 over Monitor Pass had just opened, and as I drove through Alpine County and its tiny seat, I was impressed

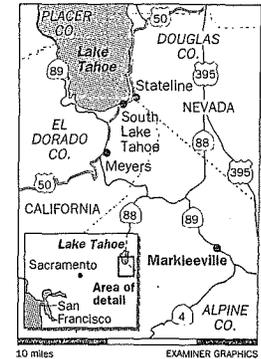
by the scenery and the utter lack of crowds. I returned a few weeks later with a group of friends and my cross-country skis, and I've been back three times since.

Markleeville is surrounded by

forests, rivers and craggy granite peaks, and during the summer it's a center for trout fishing, hiking and rafting. In the winter, though, when snow closes the high passes south

[See MARKLEEVILLE, T-7]

IF YOU GO



► **WHERE TO STAY:** The J. Marklee Toll Station is on Highway 89; phone: (530) 694-2507. Doubles are \$50.

► **WHERE TO EAT:** The Alpine Restaurant (phone: 530-694-2150) is open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Dinners are \$9 to \$13. The Cutthroat Saloon is in the same building, which sits at the corner of Highway 89 and Montgomery Street. The Villa Gigli (145 Hot Springs Rd; phone: 530-694-2253) is open for dinner Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Three-course meals are about \$18, excluding wine and tip. Reservations are suggested.

► **WHAT TO DO:** Winter hours at Grover Hot Springs State Park (phone: 530-694-2249) are 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekends; pool admission is \$4 for adults and \$2 for kids under 17.

► **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Alpine County Chamber of Commerce at (530) 694-2475; fax: (530) 694-2478; e-mail: alpcnty@tells.org

— Christopher Hall

◆ *MARKLEEVILLE, from T-6*
**Slowing down in
 tiny Alpine County**

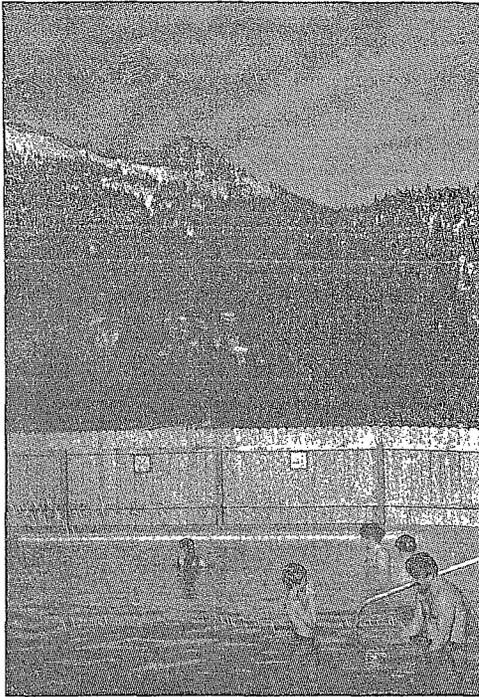
and east of town, there isn't much to do but cross-country ski and soak in an outdoor hot springs pool with a view of the Sierra — which was just fine by us.

Knowing we wouldn't be arriving in Markleeville until late Friday night, we'd made arrangements with the trusting owner of our motel — the J. Marklee Toll Station — to let ourselves in.

The motel is named for town founder Jacob Marklee, an apparently ornery fellow who in 1861 built a toll bridge across the local creek. Jacob was shot and killed two years later while arguing with another hothead, who avoided a murder rap by pleading self defense.

Our room at the motel was simple and clean, and although the heater was already running when we arrived, it didn't seem quite warm enough. We slept through a cool night, piling on blankets and wearing wool watch caps, and only the following day did we realize we'd simply failed to turn on the heater's second gas jet. So much for big city sophistication.

On Saturday morning, after fueling up on huevos rancheros at the Alpine Restaurant, just off the town's commercial street, Highway 89, we bought picnic fixings at the Markleeville General Store, threw our cross-country gear into the car and drove four miles to 700-acre Grover Hot Springs State Park. The sun was out and we skied for nearly two hours through pine and cedar



CHRISTOPHER HALL

Steamy: A soak in the outdoor pools at Grover's Hot Springs is a great way to wind down after a day of cross-country skiing.

woods and along the bank of a half-frozen creek dotted with snow-capped boulders. We met no other skiers, but here and there we did spot the massive, cracked trunk of a ponderosa pine or a stand of leafless, quaking aspens, whose branches had shimmered with gold not too many weeks before. Along the way, the only sounds we heard were the rhythmic swoosh of our skis and a soft thud whenever snow slid from the trees and hit the ground.

We ended in a broad meadow ad-

acent to the park's two outdoor concrete pools — the first fed by six hot springs and kept at 104 degrees F., and the second filled with chlorinated water heated to 75 degrees F. The mineral water here contains very little sulfur, so there was none of the often associated with natural hot springs. Mac and I changed into our trunks and spent a good hour with a dozen other bathers, most of whom appeared to be downhill skiers from Kirkwood Resort, about 40 minutes away.

We shuttled back and forth between the pools, heating up in one before cooling down in the other, all the while gazing at the ring of snowy crags that loomed over us. The pools weren't fancy and the changing rooms were definitely no-frills, but as I floated in steaming water under an open sky, watching the sun hit the 10,023-foot summit of Hawkins Peak, I honestly couldn't have wished for anything more.

That night, before dinner, we stopped on Highway 89 for a pint of beer at the Cutthroat Saloon, which occupies part of a building first erected in 1862 in a neighboring town, then dismantled board by

board and reassembled in Markleeville in 1886.

The saloon's dark, wood walls were plastered with deer heads and snapshots of regular customers having a good time. The place had a slightly rough feel — the dozens of bras dangling from the ceiling are what passed for a feminine touch — but the patrons were friendly. The bar does a land-office business in lottery tickets, and since it was Saturday night and the crowd was primed for the big drawing, we caught the fever and bought a couple of plays ourselves.

Figuring we were millionaires until we learned otherwise, we tucked the tickets into our wallets and drove a quarter mile up the road to Villa Gigli, a combination Italian restaurant and art gallery recommended to us by the motel owner and run by transplanted Tuscan Ruggero Gigli and his artist-wife, Gina. The 24-seat restaurant is located in the couple's former art studio, and from the tiny, open kitchen where he does all the cooking, Ruggero chatted up the customers. I felt like we were eating in the home of a dotting, white-haired Italian uncle —

one who insists on making his own pasta, bread, sauces and even red wine vinegar.

We ordered a bottle of Pinot Noir and started with fresh vegetable soup. Our main courses were cannelloni — thin sheets of pasta rolled into tubes, stuffed with cheese and vegetables and topped with an earthy, porcini mushroom sauce — and a marinated, sautéed chicken cutlet finished with a dash of Amaretto and served with wide noodles in a complex sauce of vegetables, tomato and cream. Coffee and homemade spumoni and biscotti ended the meal.

Before we left, Ruggero sauntered over to the table with his glass of red wine and asked what we'd been doing to keep ourselves busy in Markleeville. It took only a few seconds to describe our day, and when we finished he smiled.

"Life can be a little slow up here in the winter," he said. Somehow, though, I got the feeling he didn't mind.

Christopher Hall is a San Francisco-based writer whose last story for the Travel Section was about San Jose.

Junior skiers race at Kirkwood

Staff reports

Junior racers from Heavenly, Kirkwood and other ski resorts around the Tahoe Basin, competed in the Jeff Walters Warm Up Race last Saturday at Kirkwood.

This was the first race of the season for the 12-year-old and younger racers, who begin their season-long series races in January.

In the J-5 age group, it was visiting Park City racer Sierra Quitiquit placing first in the J-5s and overall in the race. Placing fourth in the J-5s was Kirkwood's Shelby Hawthorne, with teammate Brittany Cotter taking

eight place.

Heavenly team member Kindall Northrup finished in second in the J-4 age group, followed closely by Kirkwood's Katie Sawaya in third. Courtney Carmicheal of Heavenly placed fifth, while Kirkwood's Casey Rise cracked the top 15 with an 11th place in the J-4s.

In the boys' J-5 division, it was Kirkwood's Bryce Wehan with a victory over teammate Nick Cohee. Marty Harris of Heavenly was third, while his teammate PJ Bacon finished fourth.

Other local J-5 racers with top 10 results were Kirkwood's Holden Sapp (ninth) and

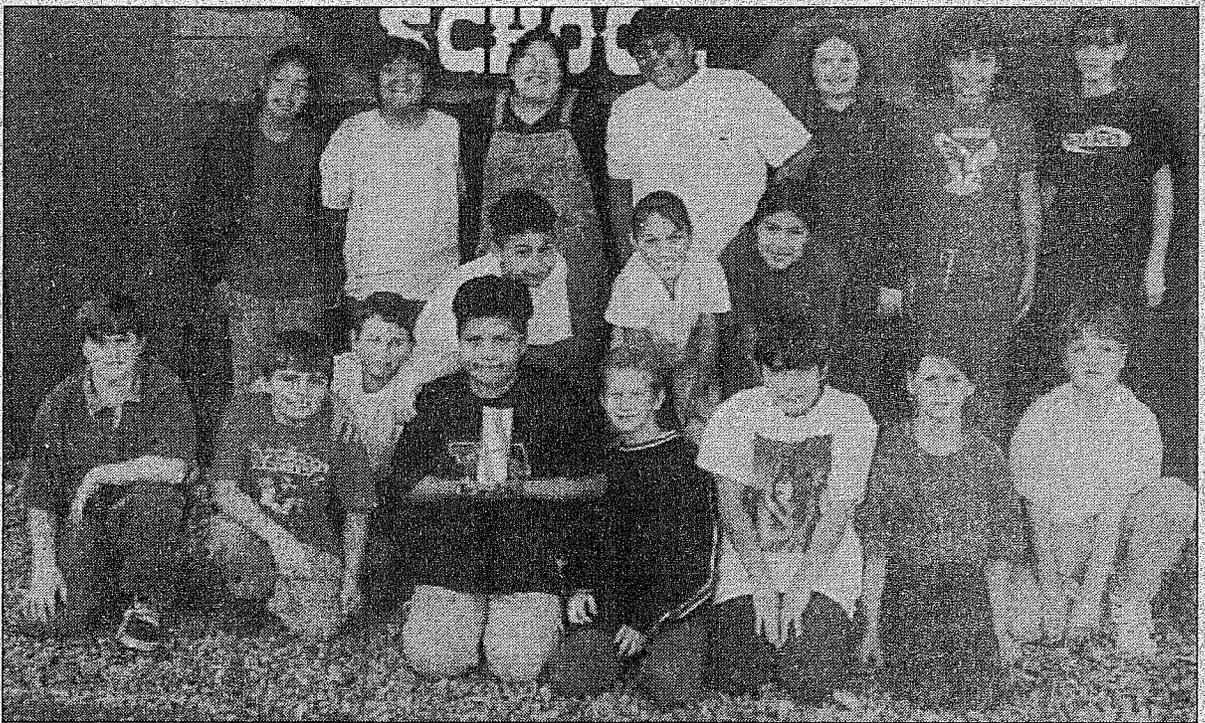
Heavenly's RJ Gardner (10th).

Beal Valley's Greg Bartels finished on top, just edging out Mt. Rose Falcon Procter Hug in the J-4 age group. Taking fourth place in the J-4s was Heavenly's Kyle Kracht. Popular J-4 Kirkwood racer Parker Cushing finished with his first top 15 result where he finished 15th, with teammate Chasen Cohee (16th) right behind.

Unfortunately, the second day was weathered out for the young racers, but with the Christmas break in place and some new fresh snow to be skied, the young athletes were looking forward to a great skiing vacation.

Dec 26, 1998

The Record-Courier ■ Gardnerville, Nevada



ANNA MARIE COLETTI/photo

Diamond Valley students: Back, from left, are Krystal Blackowl, Leon Christensen, Brittany Cruz, Anthony Caldera, Michelle Edwards, Jessica Bennett, Jocelyn Myers; middle, Anthony Wed-

lock, Brittany Meyers, Nicole Bennett; front, Chad Wickenburg, Tyler Garcia, Dillon McLaughlin, Ramsey Horse (holding money), Craig Byrne, Matthew Rey, Bryce Wehan, Ben Wood.

Diamond Valley students donate \$80 to victims

The 4th, 5th and 6th graders at Diamond Valley School in Alpine County raised over \$80 for the vic-

tims of Hurricane Mitch. The students decided to raise money for the victims instead of having a gift

exchange at school. "We are very proud of these students!" said teachers Ms. Coletti and Ms. Osgood.

Kirkwood, skiers ready to ring in the new year

Staff reports

Kirkwood will offer a variety of activities in the next few days to help skiers ring in the new year, enjoy the outdoors and improve their skiing skills.

On Thursday, Kirkwood will host a New Year's Eve torchlight parade and fireworks show. The evening will start at about 5:30 p.m., with a bonfire near the base of Chair #5, and will include a parade of skiers making their way down the mountain while carrying torches.

Following the parade, a fireworks show that uses "The Wall" as a backdrop will cap off the outdoors activities.

Live music and dancing will follow from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. in Zak's Bar.

On Friday, Kirkwood Cross Country will host a full-moon tour and party. The tour is open to cross-country skiers of all ability levels. The group will meet at the Cross Country Center a little before 7 p.m. The cost is \$15 with equipment rental and \$8 if you have your own skis. For reservations and information call (209) 258-7248.

Eva Twardokens, a former Olympian and world technical champion, will lead one-day workshops for women on Saturday and Sunday. Registration is from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. each day at the Ski School Desk. The 4-hour workshop begins at 10 a.m., and costs \$50 for the workshop only, \$75 for the workshop and a lift ticket, and \$85 for walk-up registration. For reservations, call (209) 258-7245

SKI BRIEFS

or stop by the Skier Development Desk.

On Sunday, a telemark clinic hosted by some of the top telemark instructors in the region will be offered for skiers of all levels. The cost is \$65, which includes a lift ticket. Rental equipment is an additional \$10. The clinic will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. For reservations or information, call (209) 258-7248 or stop by the Cross Country Center.

■ Diamond Peak instructor honored

Borg "BJ" Houston, a ski instructor at Diamond Peak, is listed in January's "Elle Magazine" among the country's hottest ski

instructors.

Houston, a 16-year veteran at Diamond Peak, is the most requested instructor at the resort and leads the For Ladies Only Program, which meets on Tuesday mornings.

She says patience is the key in teaching skiing.

"I like to loosen my students up by making them feel relaxed and never push too hard," Houston said.

The For Ladies Only Program begins Jan. 26 and continues every Tuesday (except Feb. 16) through March 9.

For more information about the For Ladies Only Program, or to schedule a private lesson with Houston, call Diamond Peak at (775) 832-1177.

Record Courier 12/30/1998

Office is moving, but cats won't be able to go along

by **Christy Chalmers**
R-C News Service

A cat person once said that cats are what make a house a home, gradually becoming its visible soul.

Since 1993, two cats have had that duty at the Alpine County Social Services Department, which until Tuesday occupied an older two-story house on Main Street.

The department is moving into a brand-new office building closer to Woodfords. Department Director Kathy Kerr is excited about the move because the building provides much-needed space, access for people with disabilities, and a more formal, professional atmosphere.

But she's also sad that the department's cat, Eddie "Biscuit" Bauer, won't be making that

'We're really going to miss this guy.'

Kathy Kerr
Social services director

move.

"I think he's got a sense that he's not going to be able to do this any more," said Kerr. "It's kind of the end of an era."

Eddie was the department's official office/therapy cat, the second since the original cat started in 1993. The fluffy orange kitty has been a welcome presence, comforting clients and staff and developing his own following in

See **Alpine cat** on page 8



CATHEEN ALLISON/The R-C

Cat: The social services department in Alpine will move soon, but Eddie "Biscuit" Bauer won't be housed at the new office.

From Page 1

Dec 30, 1998

The Record-Courier ■ Gardnerville, Nevada

Alpine cats: Office is moving, but cats won't be going along

Continued from page 1
the community.

DETAILS

Alpine cats: Office is moving, but cats won't be going along

Continued from page 1
the community.

The department's first cat was Mr. Bobcat Biscuit, whose moniker derived from the cat's likeness to bobcats and his penchant for kneading with his paws, or "making biscuits."

Kerr found Mr. Biscuit and her predecessor encouraged Kerr to bring him to the office. The cat immediately ingratiated himself with all he met.

"He would sit in the office and the minute they hit the door, he would talk to them," Kerr said. "He just seemed to have a sense of just knowing when to come and curl up with somebody."

Mr. Biscuit succumbed to kidney failure in 1996.

Eddie "Biscuit" Bauer (he also likes to knead) came into Kerr's life shortly after as a refugee from a mall parking lot in Sacramento. He was sick, and Kerr brought him to work on what was meant to be a temporary basis as she nursed him back to health.

Eddie took over from there.

"He just would go to anybody," Kerr said of the mild-mannered cat. "I thought, it's like he's a little miniature Mr. Biscuit. It's just like there's this innate sense of when to come up there and make your

DETAILS

What: Cat adoption

Contact: Kathy Kerr

Where: Alpine social services department, (530) 694-2235

presence known."

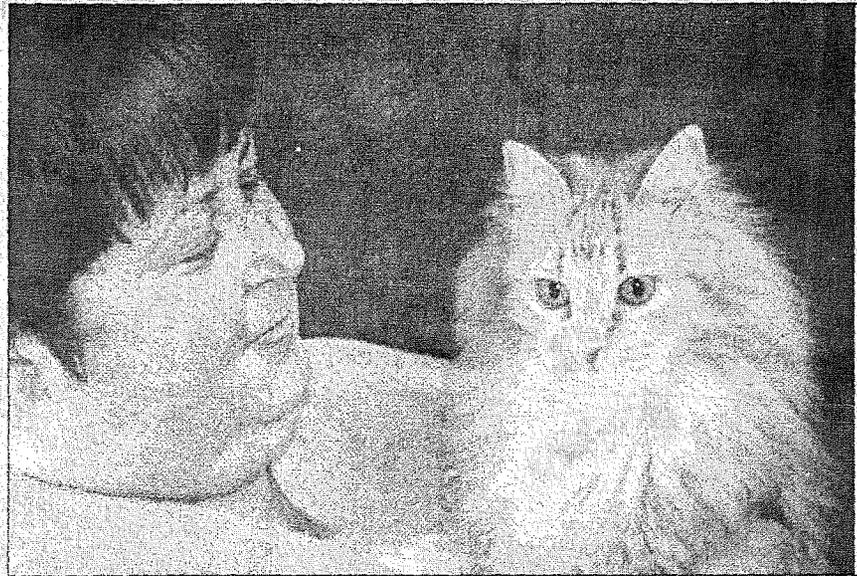
■ **Invaluable tool.** Kerr and her colleagues agree the cats have been an invaluable tool.

"It helps build a rapport," said Jackie Casey, the department's eligibility supervisor and employment training worker, who sometimes brings her black Lab, Amy, to work. "It lets them know we're real people too, that we have feelings."

"It's a stress relief for the staff," said Kerr. "When one of them has been out having a bad day, they need a way to come back in to work and vent and deal with it."

Kerr said no one has ever directly complained about the feline presence — even the woman whose nylons were shredded by Eddie, who also managed to leave enough orange hair on her black skirt to color it tortoise shell.

"She just kept saying 'I invited him up here. It's OK,'" said Kerr,



CATHLEEN ALLISON/The R-C

Friendly feline: Kathy Kerr found Eddie "Biscuit" Bauer in a parking lot.

laughing.

Even so, the department's move means Eddie won't be working there any more. The decision came partly because of the brand-new building — Kerr wasn't sure how county leaders would react to having a cat in the sparkling new digs — and partly because Kerr recently learned she won't be able to keep Eddie and her other three cats due to allergies.

Eddie and one of the others,

Elvis, whom Eddie rescued as a kitten, are going to a new home Thursday.

Kerr is searching for a home for the others, a calico named Callie and a 5-month-old gray tabby named Fussy. She's bracing for a tough transition, both at home and work.

"We're really going to miss this guy," said Kerr. "He's been a good way to let everyone learn about each other."

Alpine Co. now has MTBE concerns

by Andy Bouelle

R-C news service

The South Tahoe Public Utility District's problems with the controversial fuel additive MTBE have spread — to Alpine County.

The district — which provides sewer and water service to most of South Shore's residents — discovered MTBE this month in Harvey Place, a 100-acre irrigation reservoir in eastern Alpine County. The district transports its recycled water through a pipeline 26 miles to the reservoir, where the water is used to irrigate more than 2,000 acres of ranch land.

The levels of MTBE — methyl tertiary butyl ether — detected in the reservoir are below 1 part of the additive per billion parts water, well below any state or federal health guidelines.

Still, officials are concerned.

"One of our biggest concerns is what does this do to our beef cattle — and the hay produced with this in the ground," said Herman Zellmer, the chair of the Alpine County Board of Supervisors. "What happens then? That's a big concern of our ranchers."

How did the MTBE get there? It's a long story.

Several South Shore gas stations have plumes of MTBE coming from their facilities. In their clean-up efforts, the stations pump contaminated water out of the ground, treat it with a carbon filtration system and pump the clean water into the sewer system.

However, the MTBE can have "breakthroughs" in the filtration system.

Lisa Dernbach, associate engineering geologist of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, said it is sometimes a "guessing game" as to when a breakthrough can occur.

"It's like an oil filter in a car. It only has a certain amount of life," she said. "At some point, it just won't filter."

Dernbach said several South Shore remediation efforts — including those at the USA Gas

DETAILS

What: Meeting of the Alpine County Board of Supervisors

Where: Alpine County Administrative Building,

When: Feb. 2, 10:15 a.m.

'One of our biggest concerns is what does this do to our beef cattle.'

Herman Zellmer
Board chair

Station at the "Y," South Lake Tahoe's Beacon and Tahoe Tom's — have experienced breakthroughs.

It is avoidable, however. Lahontan has been in charge of the clean-up efforts at the Meyers Beacon for months, and the board — using an air-stripping tower rather than a carbon-filtration system — has had no problems.

The gas stations with remediation efforts under way are required by STPUD to obtain a special permit to release the treated water into its sewer system. Because of the recent problems, STPUD will be more strict in its permitting process, according to STPUD Information Officer Dawn Forsythe.

"Double treatment, better testing, more frequent testing," she said. "They've got to prove to us their systems can adequately remove the MTBE."

Dernbach said Lahontan officials are looking into whether the agency has the authority to fine the parties responsible for the breakthroughs.

"We're fully supportive of the district and all the regulations they are putting on their pump-and-treat systems," Dernbach said.

In recent summers, several researchers have found traces of MTBE at various levels in Lake Tahoe. Those levels decline and disappear in the fall. STPUD officials hope the results will be simi-

lar for Harvey Place and the MTBE will have dissipated before summer when the ranchers use the water.

"We're going to be watching it very closely over the winter months," Forsythe said.

Although Alpine County is concerned about the problem, Zellmer said county officials don't blame the district.

"I don't think there is anyone upset with (STPUD)," he said.

The Alpine County Board of Supervisors plans to hold a public hearing on the issue Tuesday morning, and Zellmer said the board likely will petition California legislators for a ban of the additive.

"Another concern we have is not just for Alpine County. This is a problem statewide," Zellmer said. "Our concern is we need to stop (the use of MTBE). There is no way it can be used in our gasoline without being a danger to someone somewhere."

MTBE is a synthetic chemical oxygenated fuel additive used extensively in California gasoline to reduce air pollution. However, it is classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a possible cancer-causing agent. California has set a taste and odor threshold of 5 parts per billion for MTBE-contaminated water, because it smells and tastes like turpentine.

STPUD's water system supplies about 30,000 people through about 12,500 connections, and at times, because of tourism, the total population served is as high as 60,000. Since September 1997, STPUD has closed more than one-third of its drinking water wells because of the threat of MTBE contamination.

STPUD required water-usage restrictions for much of the 1998 summer. To date, MTBE-related costs for the district are about \$1.5 million. STPUD filed a lawsuit in November 1998 against several major oil companies and local gasoline providers. It could take up to two years before the suit goes to trial.

LA Times
2/2/99

Cuts in Logging Chop Funds for Rural Schools

By FRANK CLIFFORD
TIMES ENVIRONMENTAL WRITER

The Bear Valley School in Alpine County north of Yosemite National Park isn't supposed to be a one-room schoolhouse, but with seven students and one teacher left, it might as well be.

It's not the only country school in trouble.

Surrounded by national forest and dependent for nearly 100 years on timber revenue, Alpine County and many similarly situated school districts throughout rural America have become unintended casualties of a revolution in forest policies and practices.

As logging in national forests has been dramatically curtailed over the past decade, related federal payments to counties have fallen nearly 40%. Rural school district officials in several states say they've had to lay off teachers and counselors, suspend music and art programs and do away with most extracurricular activities. In eastern Oregon, officials in at least one county have gone to four-day school weeks.

Please see LOGGING, A11



ROBERT DURELL / Los Angeles Times

Bear Valley student Shealyn McMullen, 12, works at her Alpine County school, which has only six other students.

LA Times
2/2/99

Continued from A1

The historic dependence of rural school districts on logging revenue from national forests has created a significant impediment to forestry reforms aimed at protecting the last old-growth trees and disappearing wildlife.

The Clinton administration has proposed in its budget for the next fiscal year to bail out the schools. In the process, the administration has vowed to end the linkage between school funds and timber cuts.

"There is no reason the richest nation on earth should be funding the education of rural kids at the expense of our national forests," said a spokesman for U.S. Forest Service chief Michael Dombeck.

"We're simply not going to turn the clock back and allow levels of timber harvesting that the forests can't sustain."

But a political alliance between rural officials and the timber industry is fighting any attempt to change the way the schools receive their funds. They fear that a federal program that simply sends money to the schools would further reduce the government's incentive to promote logging.

Under a 1908 law, counties with national forest land receive 25% of the money that the federal government gets from the timber companies that operate in those forests. Today, counties in about 40 states get logging payments, which they split between school and road budgets. Both are declining as a result of diminishing timber harvests.

Thirty-nine of California's 58 counties receive the school funds. Until 2003, some schools will also receive supplemental funds directed to areas where logging was curtailed because of the need to protect the endangered northern spotted owl. According to the state's Department of Forestry, the schools hardest hit by the logging slowdown are those in thinly populated counties, such as Alpine, whose tax bases are too small to make up for the loss of timber revenue.

More than 90% of Alpine County's land is in government ownership and exempt from property taxes, according to Supt. of Schools James Parsons.

With the drop in forest receipts, Parsons said, the school district has lost a quarter of its budget.

Parsons said that if supplementary funds aren't found, at least one of the five schools in the district may be closed.

The kindergarten-through-eighth-grade Bear Valley School is in greatest danger. With its one teacher, one aide and a bus driver who fills in as maintenance man, the school has lost 80% of its enrollment over the past five years.

Education isn't all that suffers when rural schools are shuttered.

"In some of the more far-flung mountain communities, where you haven't got much more than a gas station and a general store, the schoolhouse is the hub, the one place that provides a sense of community," said Marvin Locke, a former Tehama County school superintendent who recently helped organize the Forest Counties School Coalition to lobby for increased financial aid from the federal government.

Counties have been receiving logging payments since 1908 as compensation for the loss of millions of acres of taxable land that was incorporated into America's fledgling national forest system.

Most of the counties that receive the funds today are rural, but even the Los Angeles Unified School District, which borders national forest land, gets a bit of the money—about \$14,000 a year.

During peak logging years, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, total per-pupil spending in some of California's heavily forested counties was up to 200% higher than it was in Los Angeles, said William



ROBERT DURELL / Los Angeles Times

The entire student body of Bear Valley School poses with teacher Trish Fedderly, left rear, and aide Carol Brown.

Stewart, an economist with the Department of Forestry.

The sharp decline in logging and payments follows unprecedented efforts to protect spotted owls and other endangered species and has pitted rural educators against environmentalists.

There are other reasons for the downturn in logging besides enforcement of environmental laws such as the Endangered Species Act. Foreign competition has flooded the U.S. market with cheap timber and past over-cutting has cleared out the biggest, most valuable trees from some forests.

Nonetheless, saving the schools has become the latest battle cry of forest communities and timber interests, which charge that environmentalists are putting the welfare of trees and birds ahead of the needs of rural people.

In north-central Pennsylvania, a number of school districts have raised \$30,000 in legal fees to fight conservation groups trying to restrict the logging of black cherry trees in the Allegheny National Forest.

Despite a 70% decline in logging in national forests, the industry still generates \$2 billion for local economies, according to the Independent Forest Products Assn., a trade group that represents family-owned sawmills.

Many of the affected school districts have come out against a proposed bailout by the Clinton administration that would guarantee a high level of funding in perpetuity but would appropriate the money from a new source. The plan would sever the connection between logging in national forests and county school and road budgets.

While officials debate what to do about the school funding crisis, civic groups pitch in to save school athletic programs in some counties, and some state legislatures provide stopgap funding.

And James Parsons and other school superintendents scramble to keep schools like Bear Valley open.

"We're year-to-year up here," Parsons said.

Record Courier 2-10-99
Kirkwood gives donation to Alpine Museum

Funds will be used to get digital camera for records

Responding to a pressing need at the Alpine County Museum, the Kirkwood Resort Company's Executive Committee recently gave the Historical Society of Alpine County a grant of \$2,500.

Accepting the grant from Kirkwood Director of Marketing Bret Smith, historical society president Ruggero Gigli expressed his gratitude to Kirkwood for helping to



Donation: From left, Ruggero Gigli, Bret Smith, Dick Edwards.

bring the museum into the 21st century.

Museum director Dick Edwards explained that the funds will be used to purchase a digital camera and computer program so that every artifact, photograph and document in the museum collection will be permanently recorded.

Since the museum has just joined the world of the Internet, information about historical Alpine County will now be accessible to historians, educators, writers and genealogists.

Record Courier Feb 13, 99

Dat So La Lee baskets, stolen 20 years ago, released to state

Sheila Gardner
Staff Writer

The latest chapter in a 20-year mystery is closed Thursday with the release of three baskets created by legendary Washoe weaver Dat So La Lee to the Nevada State Historical Society. The artifacts — now valued at close to \$1 million — were stolen from the museum in 1978.

“We’re very happy they’re home now, and we’ll take good care of them,” said Dr. Peter Bandurraga, director of the Nevada Historical Society.

Four baskets and other Indian artifacts were stolen from the Nevada Historical Society in Reno on Nov. 13, 1978. Attempts to recover the missing items began in 1980 when a Santa Cruz, Calif., attorney contacted the museum, saying he represented a third party who might be

able to return one or two of the baskets to the historical society for a finder’s fee.

“There was some discussion back and forth, and a curator brought back a basket in January 1981 for \$2,500. By February or March, 1981, when the attorney was contacted again, the three missing baskets went underground,” said Bandurraga, a Minden resident.

In 1998, Prof. Marvin Cahodas of the
See **Baskets** on page 2



Dat So La Lee was a famous Washoe basketmaker. Her photo is on display at the Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center

Record-Courier. Subscribe by calling 782-5121. See our Web site at Tahoe.com

Baskets: Released to state

Continued from page 1
University of British Columbia received a request from a California dealer for an appraisal of three Washoe baskets.

Cahodas is considered a leading authority on Washoe baskets, Bandurraga said.

"Professor Cahodas immediately recognized them as the historical society baskets. We had been watching the market forever; they rarely come on. He called us immediately, and we contacted the Nevada Attorney General's office, which contacted the FBI," Bandurraga said.

Twenty years ago when the baskets disappeared, the FBI didn't get involved because the agency had no proof that the artifacts had crossed state lines, Bandurraga explained. Now, there's a new statute which makes it a federal offense to steal cultural and museum objects. And since the baskets surfaced in California, the artifacts obviously had crossed state lines.

■ **Traced to Tucson.** The stolen baskets were traced to Tucson, Ariz., to collector Paul Shepherd, an art dealer, who surrendered them in exchange for a \$50,000 settlement.

Museum officials in Arizona and Nevada were concerned how long the FBI would keep the baskets as evidence while the case was inves-



Baskets: Dr. Peter Bandurraga of Minden, director of the Nevada Historical Society, shows the recovered Dat So La Lee baskets as J.R. Hill of

the Federal E
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Reno office.

tigated.

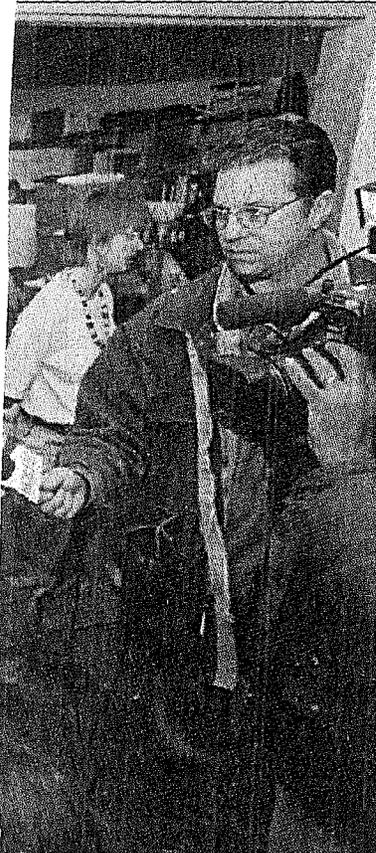
"They are reasonably fragile," Bandurraga said. "The FBI was planning to put them in a gun vault because it was a secure place. I became concerned with that because with guns, rust is a big problem, they need low humidity. That's exactly wrong for storing baskets, which need dry storage."

Bandurraga spoke with Arizona Historical Society officials, who

volunteered to pack the baskets properly. Eventually, however, the FBI said the items could be returned to Nevada for storage as long as they were under lock and key.

So, in February 1998, Bandurraga and historical society registrar Andrea Mugnier found themselves on their way to Phoenix with the FBI to bring the baskets home.

■ **Child's fare.** Bandurraga paid



K.M. CANNON/R-C News Service

...au of Investigation looks on dur-
...erence Thursday at the society's

child's fare for three seats for the baskets packed in special boxes, strapped them in and brought them home.

"It was fabulous to see them at last," Bandurraga said.

On Jan. 27, 1999, the U.S. Attorney's office in Arizona decided there weren't enough facts to warrant prosecution and the baskets could be released.

That happened Thursday at the

historical society in Reno.

"They are not in pristine museum condition, but they are in fine shape," Bandurraga said.

He said the museum is in the middle of a "giant remodeling project," and the baskets will be prominently displayed this summer in a secured glass case with the other seven in the collection. A second set of 10 baskets is on display at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City.

He speculated that the missing baskets had been in a private collection.

"I believe they probably were in private hands. Just looking at them, they could have been on display in somebody's living room. Some fading patterns on them indicate they were in a glass case or on a shelf where they got regular sunshine with some shadows. Wear around the rim looks like they were grabbed and dusted in the same place regularly," Bandurraga said.

Dat So La Lee was a renowned Indian basketmaker who lived from about 1850 to 1925. She made approximately 120 baskets from willow branches, roots and bark.

"She was truly remarkable as an artist. She took what had been a domestic craft and pushed the technique. She was not alone," Bandurraga said. "Her relatives and other Washoe women went to remarkable levels and are continuing to do that. In my estimation, she was certainly the best, but there are others of superb skill, and they created something of a market. What had simply been a domestic skill generated income in a very changed

social environment. None of them benefited much."

The Washoe Tribe today is headquartered in Gardnerville and has a collection of baskets and artifacts at the Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center.

■ **Personal milestone.** The return of the baskets represents a personal milestone for Bandurraga. Investigation of the theft was unfolding when he first started work at the museum nearly 20 years ago.

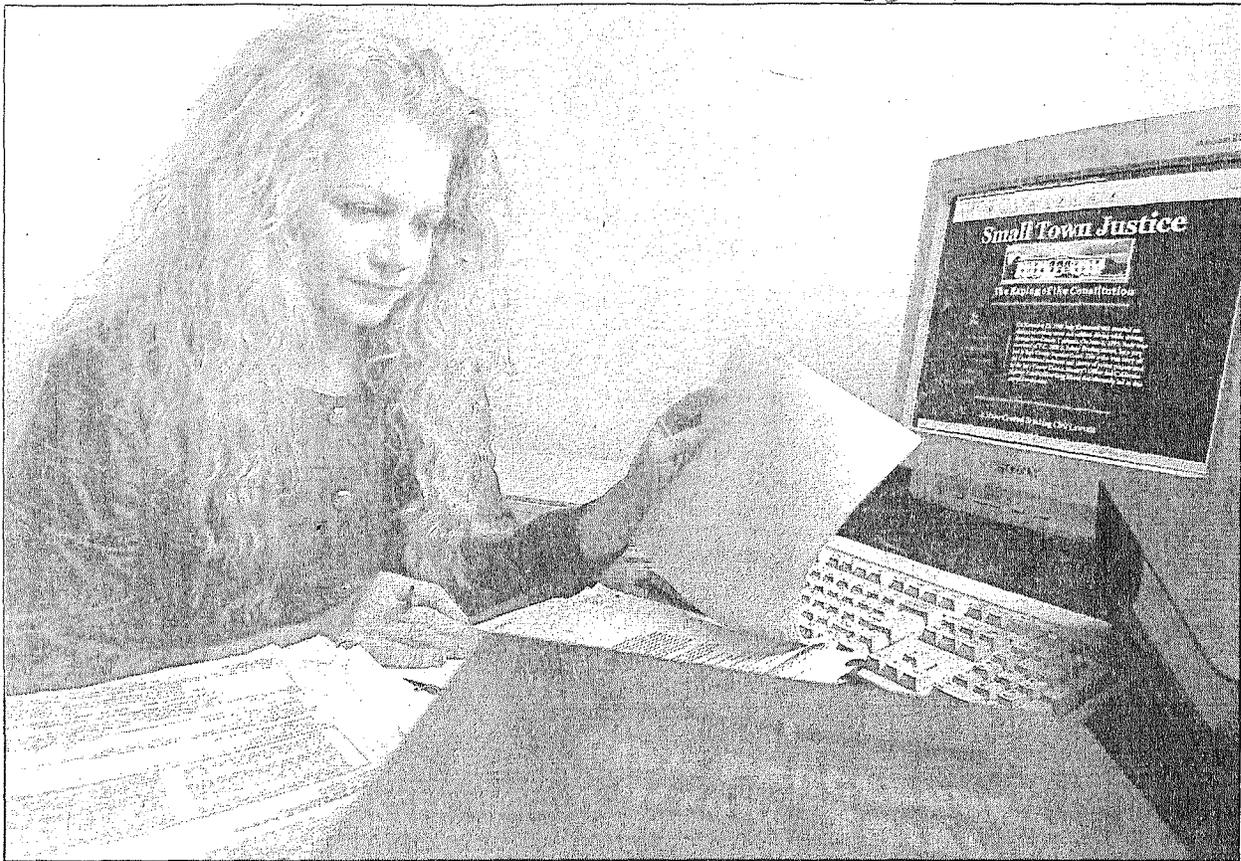
"I arrived as this was all going down. We collected a certain amount of insurance money, and my task was to replace the stolen baskets. There was a time limit on the insurance money and I acquired a very nice collection of southern Paiute baskets," he recalled.

At the time of their theft, the baskets were valued at a total of \$40,000. Today, they are worth between \$250,000 and \$300,000 each, Bandurraga said.

"Native American material of high quality is always high priced and has been for 30 years," Bandurraga said. "We're not in the business of buying and selling our collection, but there would be no purchase funds for an acquisition like that."

Bandurraga said art theft is a thriving business, but the FBI has created a national registry of lost and stolen artwork, and museums and historical societies are encouraged to list their missing pieces.

"That kind of artwork is difficult to sell legally," Bandurraga said. "How are you going to sell the Mona Lisa to somebody if you stole it?"



CHRISTINE COTTER / Los Angeles Times

Judy Komaromi looks over legal papers arising from libel suit filed by CHP officer named on her Web site.

Feud With Officer Pursued Online

■ **1st Amendment:** Patrolman's suit over woman's Web page could break new legal ground.

By ERIC BAILEY
TIMES STAFF WRITER

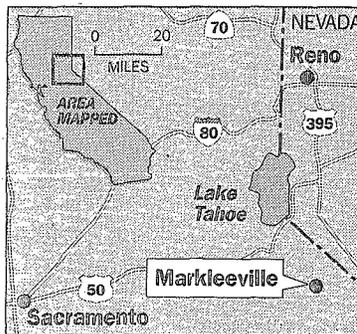
MARKLEEVILLE, Calif.—The squat stone courthouse hunched in this tiny Sierra town may look antique, but these days it's hosting a new millennium battle over cyberspace. This is the case of the cop, the woman in a Corvette and a collision on the Internet.

It began in 1993, along isolated U.S. 395 in Inyo County on the way to Mammoth. Behind the wheel of a canary-yellow Corvette, Judy Komaromi led California Highway Patrol Officer Gregory Mason on a 45-mile chase, topping 145 mph on the high desert highway. When the exhaust cleared, the Fullerton woman was arrested and ultimately served nearly four months in jail for fleeing a peace officer.

Case closed? Not a chance. Infuriated over her treatment, Komaromi's husband created an Internet Web site bashing Inyo County as a haven of "good old boy" justice and accusing Mason of roadside sexual harassment. Komaromi admits she was wrong for speeding, but argues that her punishment far exceeded any crime.

Her computer Web page outraged Mason, a 15-year CHP veteran. When his teenage daughter was harassed about it by some classmates last year, the officer decided enough was enough and sued Komaromi for libel.

"This is an electronic lynching," said Mason's wife, Valerie. "She's created a hate forum and put my husband and family in a fishbowl. I don't think the Internet was intended to be a crime scene."



Los Angeles Times

Komaromi, 32, said she has no plans to drop the site, seen by more than 70,000 Web surfers so far. "As a citizen of this country, I have the right to voice my grievances," she said from her Orange County home. "They took my freedom away. Now I'm having to fight for my free speech."

The case, set for preliminary arguments Monday, is emblematic of the tug of war between defamation and free speech in the age of the Internet. Experts say Mason vs. Komaromi could break new ground in cyber law.

Our defamation laws came of age in the era of the newspaper and the TV anchorman, and courts are now scrambling to catch up with the new wrinkles of the World Wide Web. Although rare, Internet libel cases can turn nasty, like White House aide Sidney Blumenthal's bitter legal scrap with cyber-muckraker Matt Drudge over an inaccurate online report of spousal abuse.

Jonathan Zittrain, executive director of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School, said the feud between Komaromi and Mason represents "the sorts of burrs" the public has not faced since Revolutionary days, when aggrieved persons retaliated by distributing disparaging pamphlets.

"When society was small, you could reach everyone with the hand-cranked printer," he said. "Now, with the Internet, the hand-cranked printer has caught up, so we're back to it."

Please see WEB, A15

Los Angeles Times Feb 17 1999 OAZ

WEB: Woman's Feud With CHP Officer

Continued from A3

Certainly the Internet has become a ready forum for critical free speech that tests 1st Amendment limits. In Portland, Ore., a federal jury recently awarded a Planned Parenthood chapter and doctors \$107.9 million in a lawsuit against a Web page that posts personal details about abortion providers, then crosses off those attacked or killed.

Police are hardly immune to bashing. Cyberspace is littered with dozens of anti-cop Web sites, and sometimes the criticism has turned potentially dangerous for law officers.

In Bellevue, Wash., a computer junkie incensed at local police established a Web site giving the names, salaries and the home addresses of some officers. "Basically, he had his right to exercise free speech," said Bellevue police Capt. Bill Ferguson, "even if it was a rather deplorable thing to do."

Komaromi's site, dubbed "Small Town Justice," offers her version of events in Inyo County, alleging that a network of police and prosecutors engaged in lies and misconduct to secure a guilty verdict.

The springboard for all the hubbub was a drive up lonely Interstate 395 a few days before Thanksgiving 1993. Komaromi was accompanied by a young female friend, who documented the occasion by videotaping as they drove north.

In her Web page, which is the prime exhibit in Mason's lawsuit, Komaromi acknowledges that she was speeding. Early in the trip, the narrative says, "Judy opened up her beautiful, yellow 1990 Corvette ZR-1, the fastest, best handling production car built in America, just cruising at 130 mph."

At a gas stop, the Web page said, Komaromi was leaning over to check the car's oil and "the short dress she was wearing undoubtedly rode up her thighs a bit." Mason, she charges, pulled up alongside in his patrol car and commented that she had nice legs. "Judy turned around quickly," the Web page read, "glaring intently at this vile officer."

A few miles up the road, Komaromi passed Mason as he ticketed another motorist. Komaromi says she slowed to about 35 mph to let her friend videotape the CHP officer. In his report, however, Mason said Komaromi flew by at more than 100 mph.

Komaromi stepped on the gas, the Web text said, "to put a safe distance between her and the officer." Mason chased the Corvette at more than 145 mph, court documents say, but couldn't get close. Komaromi contends the officer never activated his red lights or siren to alert her until the end of the pursuit.

The Web page says Komaromi was fearful Mason might rape her, but finally stopped after reaching

two other law officers poised to nab her. With guns drawn, officers handcuffed Komaromi and her passenger.

In the Web text, Komaromi contends that Mason made another pass on the drive to jail, rubbing her leg and saying he could drop the whole thing if she "worked" with him.

Mason, through his attorney, denied all the allegations.

Komaromi's videotape, which included footage of the chase, was a prime piece of evidence for prosecutors. It showed her insulting local drivers for going slow and detailed inflammatory remarks she made about Mason as he pursued the Corvette. None of it sat well with the Inyo County jury.

In her Web page, however, Komaromi claims that the videotape was doctored to remove segments where she expressed fears Mason might assault her.

"This is a speeding ticket gone terribly astray," Komaromi said in an interview. "The whole thing was exaggerated."

After her conviction, Komaromi appealed all the way to the state Supreme Court, arguing that law officers had illegally confiscated the videotape. By the summer of 1997 the appeals were denied and she went off to Inyo County Jail, leaving an 18-month-old daughter with her husband, Karl Hoelscher.

It was then that Hoelscher thought up the idea of a Web page.

Although the couple had considered filing a formal complaint against Mason, Hoelscher said, they figured it would end up in the trash.

"Read the Web page," he said. "This is our complaint."

Charges of Harassment

The Masons have their own set of complaints.

Even before the Web site went up, court documents say, Mason and his wife believed that Komaromi had been targeting the officer and his family.

Exhibits in the libel case say a yellow Corvette matching the description of Komaromi's car cruised by their house on several occasions a few months after the arrest. In another instance, according to court documents, a woman and man inquired at a local grocery store about Mason's children. The Masons also received repeated prank phone calls, court records say. And almost a year after the chase, several hundred leaflets labeling Mason a law enforcement "predator" were posted at rest stops along the route he patrolled.

Komaromi denies that she or anyone she knows put up posters or harassed Mason in any way. "He's making that up to try to gain sympathy," she said, "as if he's the victim."

Mason, meanwhile, would not comment on the case, which seeks unspecified monetary damages, saying he wants it resolved before he speaks out.

But his wife is willing to detail her family's woes. Valerie Mason said the harassment prompted them to move on five different occasions and change their phone number half a dozen times.

The family, which has included a dozen foster children over the years, ultimately ended up in Alpine County, a pine-studded region that is California's smallest county. After another CHP officer alerted them to Komaromi's Web page, they decided to sue in the county seat of Markleeville, population 165.

"From the beginning of this ordeal, people were telling us to sue her," Valerie Mason said. "We'd say, for what? Lawsuits are a pain in the neck. But then when this Web site came out, we'd had it. You get tired of running."

What she fears most is that Komaromi's Web page could put a bull's-eye on her husband. Mason is the only black Highway Patrol officer in the southern Sierra, and Komaromi repeatedly refers to his race on the Web page.

"My fear is that something terrible is going to happen to Greg," Valerie Mason said, "that some opportunist will do something because of this."

She is also disappointed with the CHP brass. Although the rank and file have supported the officer, Highway Patrol leaders declined to help fund his lawsuit against Komaromi, reasoning that it was a private matter. Incensed, Mason named the CHP and the Highway Patrol union in his lawsuit for negligence, but the case against both was dismissed.

Mason's lawsuit isn't the first legal attack on Komaromi's Web page. A jail guard she accused of "unprofessional" behavior sued in small claims court. It was dismissed over a venue issue, but the case was later heard on TV's "Judge Judy" show, where Komaromi prevailed once again.

Komaromi's Web page also was challenged last year by Inyo County probation officials, who demanded in a letter that "the continued harassment and discrediting of Officer Mason" in cyberspace be stopped. A judge refused to order Komaromi to shut down the page because of free speech concerns.

"The public can judge for themselves," Komaromi said. "They can go to the Web site, they can read the documents and judge for themselves."

But on the other side of this feud, Valerie Mason just wants Komaromi to go away.

"This woman has been relentless," she said. "I want Judy to get a life. Get a real life."

Agency, Washoe to meet

By Andy Bouelle
Tribune Staff Writer

Washoe Tribal member Darriel Bender remembers stories of when his father and two other tribal men traveled to Cave Rock in the 1930s and inquired about why there were crews preparing to blast a tunnel through the formation.

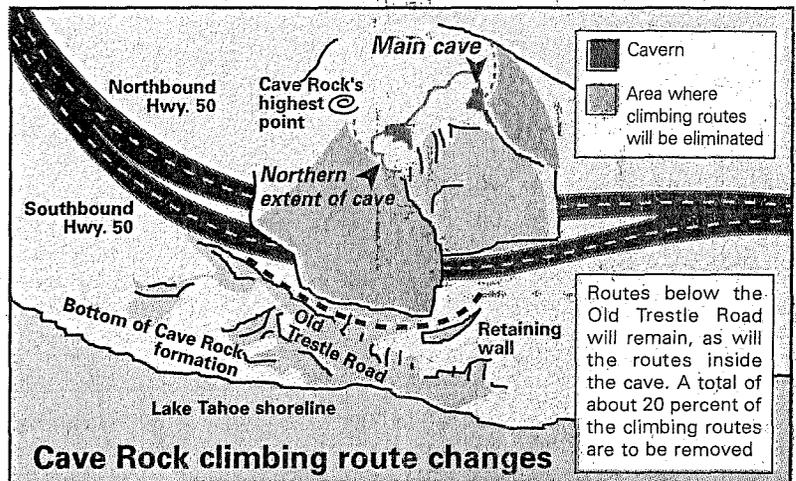
The Washoe men were run off by the construction boss, Bender says.

"Nobody listened to Indians in those days. Indians didn't count," he said.

More than 60 years later, activities of non-Washoe people at Cave Rock have again drawn the Tribe's attention — as well as much of the nation's. But this time, people are listening.

"This is the first time an agency has gone to the Washoe Tribe for their feelings on anything at Lake Tahoe," Bender said.

For that, the Washoe are thankful. For the U.S. Forest Service's recent proposed action concerning the future of Cave Rock, however, the tribe is not satisfied.



Source: US Forest Service

Chris Morris/Tribune Graphic

"This is the first time an agency has gone to the Washoe Tribe for their feelings on anything at Lake Tahoe."

— Darriel Bender
Washoe Tribal member

"The Washoe people — we have to fight for this. It's part of Washoe culture. We can't sit by and have it continued to be desecrated and used in this way," Bender said. "There's not one group of people on the earth who could compromise on something like that."

The future of Cave Rock — an ancient volcanic rock formation on Lake Tahoe's east shore — has become controversial in recent years. Rock climbers love to scale the formation; it provides some of

the most difficult climbing routes in the country. However, the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California says that the rock is a powerful spiritual place.

In 1997 the U.S. Forest Service ordered all rock climbing at the site halted because of its cultural significance to the Washoe Tribe. But because of the outcry from rock climbers who threatened a lawsuit, the forest service lifted the ban.

See **Rock**, Page 2A

Tahoe Daily Tribune 2/22/99 (back page also)



Rock

Continued from Page 1A

Several public workshops were held from January through May 1998 to obtain public input from both sides.

The result was a proposed action issued by the Forest Service this January. The action calls for the elimination of about 20 percent of the climbing routes bolted to the rock and a prohibition of any new bolt installation. Maintenance of the existing routes could continue.

The proposed action is not a final decision and marks the beginning of a formal public participation process.

When issuing the proposal, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Forest Supervisor Juan Palma published a statement: "While I hope that additional people will choose to avoid Cave Rock out of consideration for the feelings of the Washoe Tribe, my proposed action does not mandate complete human avoidance. I cannot dictate the viewpoints of those who

Rock talk

For a copy of the proposed action: Call Lisa O'Daly (530) 573-2669

What: Public workshop concerning Cave Rock proposed action

When: Thursday, 3 to 7:30 p.m.

Where: Kahle Community Center, 235 Kingsbury Grade

do not share Washoe beliefs, nor can I deprive the public of use of public lands."

Many climbers agree with the action.

"I think it's really positive," said Terry Liliénfield, a South Shore resident and rock climber. "It encourages us to share the resource."

Liliénfield said she recognizes that the Washoe Tribe does not want climbers there and sympathizes with

them. On the other hand, "We really love it and try to take care of it — and respect it," she said.

Many climbers are working to educate the climbing community about the rock's importance to the Washoe Tribe, Liliénfield said. They want to encourage climbers to leave the rock if a member of the Washoe Tribe is there, wanting to use the site for a spiritual reason.

"I know it's not enough; I know the Washoe don't want us there at all," she said. "But we feel like we're not doing the rock any harm."

The Washoe Tribe has about 1,600 members today in Nevada and California, and while that number fell as low as 300 in the 1800s, the population of the Washoe Tribe is believed to have been about 3,000 to 5,000 prior to European settlement. The traditional homelands of the Washoe Tribe exceeded 1.5 million acres, and Lake Tahoe was considered the center of their world.

Bender said Cave Rock was a spiritual place that most Washoe members

avoided. Only Indian doctors, or medicine men, traveled to Cave Rock. Indian doctors continued to visit Cave Rock into the early 1900s.

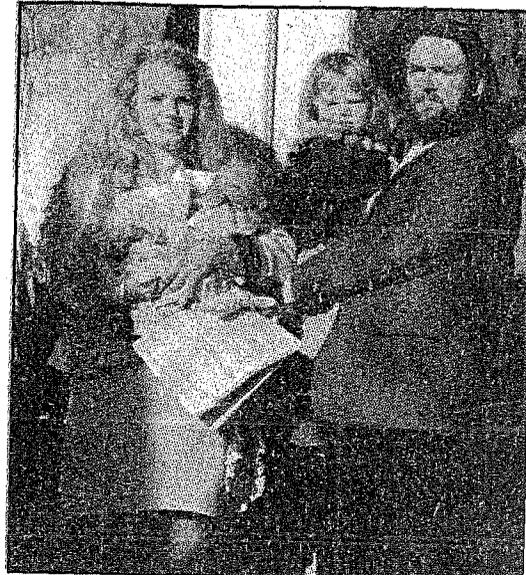
"They came into communication with the Maker, the creator of all things," Bender said. "It was like a renewal. What they did or said — we don't know."

Even though two tunnels have been bored through the formation, the Washoe still see it as a powerful place.

Jim Landis, manager of a climbing gym in Truckee called Gravity Works, said he feels sympathy for the Washoe Tribe but knows many climbers will lose an important part of their lives if all climbing is banned.

"It is one of the few really rad climbs in the area. It's cutting edge; that's why climbers don't want to lose it," Landis said. "My customers would definitely miss it. It's definitely the premiere climbing location in this area."

The public comment period on the proposed action ends on March 1.



Rick Chandler/Tahoe Tribune
Judy Komaromi and Karl Hoelscher carry their children and a summons on the courthouse steps in Markleeville on Monday.

Small town, big Internet lawsuit

By Rick Chandler
Tribune Staff Writer

MARKLEEVILLE — A civil defamation lawsuit being heard in California's smallest county is raising big questions about Internet law and the right to free speech in cyberspace.

It was a rather odd sight at Monday's preliminary hearing, as network television camera crews from Inside Edition, The Today Show and Good Morning America converged on this tiny, tree-studded Alpine County town — all jostling for elbow room to keep tabs on the case that has it all.

And it really does. There's an attractive blonde in a yellow Corvette, charges of racism, resisting arrest, a high-speed car chase, cloudy Internet law and a grandfa-

"We will fight this thing all the way through the court system, because our First Amendment rights are at stake."

— Judy Komaromi

therly, white-haired judge who dispenses homespun wisdom in a small stone courthouse.

In the suit, South Lake Tahoe-based California Highway Patrol Officer Gregory Mason is suing a Fullerton woman over her Internet site, dubbed "Small Town Justice," on which she is accusing Mason of roadside sexual harassment. The Web site, www.smalltownjustice.com, has

received more than 70,000 hits.

Mason, a 15-year CHP veteran who patrols in rural Inyo County, is asking for \$1 million in damages, according to his attorney, James Mason. He also wants the Web site taken down. The defendant, Judy Komaromi, says she has no intention of removing the site, citing her right to free speech.

Gregory Mason is black, Komaromi is

white.

In a preliminary hearing on Monday in Alpine County Superior Court, Judge N. Edward Denton agreed to proceed with the case, throwing out attorney Mason's motion for a default judgment.

Mason had claimed that Komaromi had ignored a summons to appear on the defamation charges — and should thus be held liable on the charges by default. Komaromi claimed that she was not properly served, and did not have enough time to prepare a defense.

In setting aside the default, Judge Denton has cleared the stage for the real trial to begin. Komaromi must appear again within 60 days.

See *Internet*, Page 2A

Internet

Continued from Page 1A

Both sides were claiming victory on Monday.

"We are not going to be steamrolled by these people, and we are not going to give up our right to free speech," said Komaromi, who represented herself along with her husband, Karl Hoelscher, who actually constructed the Web site.

"It was scary (in court), but the truth is always the best defense," Komaromi said. "We will fight this thing all the way through the court system, because our First Amendment rights are at stake."

Following the hearing, Officer Mason and his wife, Valerie, would not exit the court building until Komaromi and her husband had left.

"Well, now I guess we go to court," said Gregory Mason, who sat impassively

throughout the contentious proceedings. "Other than that, I had just better say 'no comment.'"

Valerie Mason, however, had quite a few comments, as she held court with the national press on the courthouse steps.

"They call this a civil defamation case, but this case has never been civil," Valerie Mason said. "There has been so much hate directed at (my family). We are here to prove that stalking and harassment are still crimes."

"Our forefathers would roll over in their graves if they could see the way these people are using the First Amendment for their own gain."

It all started a few days before Thanksgiving in 1993, when Komaromi was arrested by Mason and two other law enforcement officers after a high speed chase on U.S. Highway 395 between Bishop and Ridgecrest. Komaromi, who reached speeds of 140 mph in the chase, was later

convicted of speeding and felony evading arrest. She served four months in jail in Inyo County, with five years probation.

While she was incarcerated, Komaromi's husband, Hoelscher, constructed a Web site which related details of the arrest and conviction of Komaromi, plus other perceived injustices at the hands of Inyo County officials. Also included was information on Mason, such as his badge number and hometown (Markleeville).

The site refers to Komaromi's arrest as "The Raping of the Constitution." Included at one time on the site were Komaromi's accounts of the events leading to the chase, including, she says, lewd comments and sexual advances made by Officer Mason toward her.

Komaromi claimed that she fled at high speeds to avoid being raped. At one time, the Web site made reference to the fact that Komaromi was frightened because Mason was a black man.

"This has been a nightmare for Gregory Mason and his family," said their South Lake Tahoe-based attorney, James Mason. "It's no secret that the Internet has to be regulated, because of situations like this. When a convicted felon is allowed to harass a police officer, something has to be done."

"If this were any other type of media; newspapers or television or magazines, she would not be allowed to get away with this. People are afraid of the Internet, because it's so new. But it's still intimidation, and it's going to stop."

"I'm just happy that all of the nonsense is over, and we can now go ahead with the trial."

Komaromi, however, has no intention of shutting up.

"My husband and I feel we have the right to free speech, and we are being harassed for speaking out," she said. "In this country we have the right to criticize government officials. They don't want the

truth to come out, that's what they're afraid of."

The case represents a legal black hole, according to Internet attorney Al Gidari, a partner at Perkins Coie in Seattle. "This is all still a gray area, it's not clear right now," he said. "First of all, the truth is an absolute defense. It's not defamation if it's true. But this case raises some interesting questions about right to privacy, especially since it involves a police officer."

"It could establish an important precedent."

For his part, Judge Denton seemed unimpressed with the national media attention. At one point during the hearing, he asked both parties to stop arguing, imparting an old story once told to him by his mother.

In his later ruling, he said, "I'm not even sure what to call this case. On the Internet, would it be libel or slander or what? These are issues we will get to eventually."

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Future of Cave Rock st

People are listening: Native peoples say this is the first time officials are paying attention to Washoe tribal concerns

by **Andy Bouelle**
R-C News Service

Washoe Tribal member Darriel Bender remembers stories of when his father and two other tribal men traveled to Cave Rock in the 1930s and inquired about why there were crews preparing to blast a tunnel through the formation.

The Washoe men were run off by the construction boss, Bender says.

"Nobody listened to Indians in those days. Indians didn't count," he said.

More than 60 years later, activities of non-Washoe people at Cave Rock have again drawn the Tribe's attention — as well as much of the nation's. But this time, people are lis-

The Record-Courier. Subscribe by ca

ill being debated by tribe, climbers

tening.

"This is the first time an agency has gone to the Washoe Tribe for their feelings on anything at Lake Tahoe," Bender said.

For that, the Washoe are thankful. For the U.S. Forest Service's recent proposed action concerning the future of Cave Rock, however, the tribe is not satisfied.

"The Washoe people — we have to fight for this. It's part of Washoe culture. We can't sit by and have it con-



JIM GRANT/R-C News Service

Cave Rock is sacred to the Washoe people, but climbers like to scale it

tinue to be desecrated and used this way," Bender said. "There's no one group of people on the earth who could compromise on something like that."

The future of Cave Rock — an ancient volcanic rock formation on Lake Tahoe's east shore — has become controversial in recent years. Rock climbers love to scale the formation; it provides some of the most difficult climbing routes in the country.

See **Cave Rock** on page

iling 782-5121. See our Web site at Tahoe.com

Alpine site of 'Net lawsuit

BY RICK CHANDLER

Nevada Appeal News Service

MARKLEEVILLE — A civil defamation lawsuit being heard in California's smallest county is raising big questions about Internet law and the right to free speech in cyberspace.

It was a rather odd sight at Monday's preliminary hearing, as network television camera crews from Inside Edition, The Today Show and Good Morning America converged on this tiny, tree-studded Alpine County town — all jostling for elbow room to keep tabs on the case that has it all.

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In the suit, South Lake Tahoe-based California Highway Patrol Officer Gregory Mason is suing a Fullerton woman over her Internet site, dubbed "Small Town Justice," on which she is accusing Mason of roadside sexual harassment.



RICK CHANDLER/Nevada Appeal News Service

Judy Komaromi and Karl Hoelscher hold their children and a summons on the courthouse steps in Markleeville.

Mason, a 15-year CHP veteran who patrols in rural Inyo County, is asking for \$1 million in damages, according to his attorney, James Mason. He also

wants the Web site taken down. The defendant, Judy Komaromi, says she has no intention of removing the site, citing her right to free speech.

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Please see **ALPINE, B2**

Alpine

Continued from Page B1

said Komaromi, who represented herself along with her husband, Karl Hoelscher, who actually constructed the Web site.

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Alpine County, Forest Service sign agreement

RECORD COURIER 2-27-97
by Sharon Carter
Staff Writer

For the first time in their histories, Alpine County and the U.S. Forest Service have signed an agreement to work together and keep the lines of communication open between them.

The agreement for coordinated land planning between Alpine County and the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest's Carson Ranger District was finalized at the Alpine County Board of Supervisors' February meeting.

"We will be kept informed about things like gating and closing roads, winter recreation uses on the forest and land trades," Herman Zellmer, chairman of the Alpine board, said Wednesday. "And we'll have some input regarding them."

In particular, Zellmer said, mixed use-type issues like that of Forestdale Road, on Highway 88 near Red Lake, would be addressed before things got too far out of hand.

Two groups, the Sierra Club and Friends of Hope Valley, are appealing a recent Forest Service decision which mixes winter recreation uses in the Forestdale area — the decision allows snowmobiles on one side of the road

and keeps the other side for non-motorized uses like cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The environmental groups want the entire area restricted to non-motorized uses.

■ **Job's Peak trailhead.** Another concern, Zellmer said, is the new Job's Peak trailhead which will access the Faye-Luther Canyon area.

"The trailhead is in Nevada along Foothill Road, but most of the canyon is in Alpine County," Zellmer said.

"We want to make sure we get a good deal for the public — and if it will be available to horseback travel and how clean up will be enforced with regard to back country users," he said.

Zellmer said since there have also been several changes in local administration in the Carson-Bridgeport District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Alpine County wants to make sure the relationship and communications continue.

"We like to be aware of things that affect us before they happen — and since 95 percent of the county is public land, what the Forest Service does concerns us," Zellmer said.

■ **Coordinate efforts.** Forest Planner Dave Loomis of the Car-

son Ranger District office in Carson City said the idea is for forest planners and county officials to work together to determine areas where different uses can or should occur.

"The (Humboldt-Toiyabe) forest planning project we're doing encompasses a lot," Loomis said. "Things like the Carson River watershed and recreation management — how snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, mountain biking and equestrian areas will be managed. We want to identify areas where we can have horseback use, and backpacking, where there can be livestock grazing, and where we want wildlife and watershed protection."

Loomis said the Forest Service's mission is to provide for and manage a "whole gamut" of uses.

"We'll also be working out a structure for doing land trades," Loomis said. "There's a lot of common ground between our mission and what Alpine County would like to see — forest health and fire protection are other areas of joint concern."

Loomis said Alpine County and Forest Service officials plan to hold joint public workshops on a regular basis and will share information and resources.

Internet lawsuit in Markleeville gaining some national attention

by Rick Chandler
R-C News Service

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In a preliminary hearing on — C.D.

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has to be regulated, because of situations like this. When a convicted felon is allowed to harass a police officer, something has to be done.

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"Well, now I guess we go to court," said Gregory Mason, who sat impassively throughout the contentious proceedings. "Other than that, I had just better say 'no

- cont.

Climbers hang on to hope

By Andy Bourelle
Tribune Staff Writer

Tahoe Daily Tribune
Feb 26-28, 1999

While the volcanic rock formation on Lake Tahoe's east shore is a sacred place for the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, that same word also can describe its importance to rock climbers, a South Shore resident said Thursday at a U.S. Forest Service-sponsored workshop.

"As a climber, it is also a sacred place in our realm," said rock climber Colleen McDownough. "We don't feel we're desecrating it."

The future of Cave Rock has become a controversial issue. Rock climbers love to scale the formation. However, the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California says that the rock is a powerful spiritual place.

An open house was held Thursday, so the Forest Service could gain additional

comment on its recently proposed action. The proposal calls for the elimination of about 20 percent of the climbing routes bolted to the rock and a prohibition of any new bolt installation. Maintenance of the existing routes could continue, and the Forest Service would discourage increased public use of the site, whether it is rock climbing or any other type of recreation.

The Washoe Tribe have indicated an unwillingness to compromise, but many rock climbers think the proposal is headed in the right direction.

"I'm for the proposed action. I believe the climbers in the community would be willing to compromise on any level in order to be able to have continued access to the climbing area," said Larry Sabo, co-owner of Clip-In Climbing in South Lake

See **Climbers**, Page 2A

Climbers

Continued from Page 1A

Tahoe. I think the proposed action offered is one form of compromise, and I think the climbers in the community are certainly open to any suggestions other than a complete ban."

Cave Rock was once a place where Washoe medicine men communed with spirits. Highway tunnels were bored through the rock in the 1930s and 1950s, and rock climbers in the 1980s paved the floor of the cave.

Before rock climbers started using the rock, the area was filled with litter and graffiti, which the climbers have cleaned up, McDownough said.

Climbers now have offered to remove the floor, remove the routes proposed by the Forest Service and change the rock climbing slings from bright to rock-like colors, said Mike Reeves, a South Shore resident and frequent climber.

"We are willing to do a lot of stuff," he said. "Throughout all the meetings, we have been saying we are willing to compromise, but we still want to climb."

A lot of people think there is no room to compromise, however, not

only Washoe people either.

"I'm going to recommend they respect the right of the Washoe, that it's a special site," Philip Steinberg, a South Lake Tahoe resident who is neither a rock climber or member of the tribe, said at the meeting. "There should be no compromise. There should not be climbing on that rock."

A series of public workshops were held in early 1998 concerning the management of Cave Rock, and the proposed action marks the beginning of a public scoping process. The public comment period on the proposed action ends on March 1. The public is supposed to have another opportunity to comment on the management direction when a draft environmental impact statement is released later this year. A decision regarding the long-term management of the Cave Rock area is expected by the end of 1999.

A closure order issued at the end of December 1998 is still in effect, which prohibits any activity, including the installation of new climbing bolts, that damages or defaces the surface of the rock. Rock climbing using existing bolted routes is currently allowed.

The meeting was scheduled for 3 to 7 p.m. As of 5 p.m., no members of the Washoe Tribe had attended.

Tahoe Daily Tribune Feb 26-28, 1999

A Brief Congestion

A couple of years ago, we noted that Alpine County, the least populous of California's 58, was enjoying a period of remarkable stability. According to state Department of Finance estimates, Alpine's population at the start of 1997 was exactly what it was in January of 1996: 1,180 souls. We have now discovered that Alpine had a growth spurt during the first half of 1997, booming to an estimated 1,200 at midyear. Since then, however, there's been a drop-off back to 1,180. There were seven births and seven deaths. Twenty people moved away. Must have seemed downright crowded for a while.

Alpine is a 739-square-mile enclave—slightly smaller than Orange County—south-east of Lake Tahoe. It abuts Nevada to the

east. There are three population centers, so to speak: the villages of Woodfords and Markleeville on the east and, across 8,731-foot-high Ebbetts Pass on state Route 4, the area around the Bear Valley ski area.

Alpine was one of a dozen California counties losing population during the year ending July 1, 1998. All but one, Imperial, are in the mountain or foothill regions of Northern California. Alpine is in no danger of losing its least-populous status even if there's another boom. No. 2 is Sierra County with 3,310 residents.

As small as Alpine County is, it's far from the least populated in the country. That honor appears to go to Loving County, Tex., with 106 residents. Now that's real elbow room.

L A TIME

2-99

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Feds give \$2.5M for Tahoe sewer

For line replacement: System has had several leaks over the years.

By Jeff DeLong
RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

The federal government awarded \$2.5 million Tuesday to a Lake Tahoe utility to replace an aging and spill-prone sewage export line.

Coming several months

after the South Tahoe Public Utility District complained the Environmental Protection Agency was renegeing on financial promises, Tuesday's news was welcome, said Duane Wallace, a member of the utility's policy board.

"With this major step on

the road to protection of Lake Tahoe, we're that much closer to finality," Wallace said. "We appreciate EPA's support as the project continues."

The \$2.5 million will be used to complete replacement of one of the more sensitive portions of the line between the South Lake Tahoe wastewater treatment plant and a pump station at the base of

Luther Pass.

The 27-mile line transports roughly 1.7 billion gallons of treated sewage from South Lake Tahoe to Alpine County for storage each year. The line has experienced numerous leaks over the years, and even treated wastewater is rich with the nutrients that cause algae to flourish in Lake Tahoe.

President Clinton vowed to

secure funding for the replacement during his environmental forum at the lake in July 1997. Total cost of replacing the pipeline is estimated at more than \$37 million, with the project slated for completion in 2005.

"This funding will allow work to continue on a project that will reap great environmental and economic benefits for Lake Tahoe and

Alpine County," said Felicia Marcus, regional administrator for EPA. "When completed, this project will translate into a safer, cleaner Lake Tahoe for those who live, work and play around this treasured natural resource."

The utility is expected to seek \$3.2 million more in appropriations from Congress this year to proceed with the project.

Man is charged in murder

*Record Courier
3-29-99*

**by Merrie
Leininger**
Staff Writer

A California man has been charged with a 15-year-old Alpine County murder.

Henry Howell, 41, of Santa Clara, Calif., was found shot dead in the early morning hours of Sept. 1, 1984 next to his car on Highway 88.

Loren Herzog, 33, of Linden, Calif., was charged with five murders this month.

Herzog and a high school buddy, Wesley Shermantine Jr., 33, of Stockton, were arrested March 18 in connection with the murder, kidnapping and rape of Cyndi Vanderheiden, 25, of Clements, Calif., who has been missing since Nov. 14. Her body has not been found.

Shermantine was also arrested in connection with the murder of Chevelle Wheeler, 16, who disappeared in 1985.

In addition, Herzog was arrested in connection with the September 1985 murder of Roberta "Robin" Ray Armtrout and the November 1984 double murder of Henry King, 34, of Lathrop and Raymond Cavanaugh, 31, of Stockton. The men were found shot to death next to King's car just east of Stockton.

Arraignments were scheduled for March 30 in a court in Stockton.

See **Murder** on page 9

**15 years
ago:**

Motorist was
found dead
next to his car
on Highway
88 in 1984

199

Murder: Man is charged in 15-year-old case

Continued from page 1

■ **Alpine investigation.** Sheriff Henry Veatch said after two men were arrested in San Joaquin County, Calif., he sent a deputy to investigate any possible connection.

"I got a call Sunday night that said the people arrested, or one of them, may have been involved, and I sent a deputy there, but he didn't come up with anything concrete," Veatch said.

He said the forensic evidence has been turned over to state and federal crime labs.

Veatch said the case is one of two unsolved murders the depart-

ment reassigned every couple of years to look for new developments.

Henry Howell, a Native American, who at the time lived in Santa Clara, Calif., in the Bay area, was apparently driving home from a gambling trip to Stateline.

One early September morning, the sheriff's office got a call that a man was lying next to a car on Highway 88 in the Hope Valley area.

Veatch said he was one of the deputies who responded to the call that night to find the man shot to death.

"We followed what leads we had and didn't come up with any forensic evidence in the vehicle at the time. We are now hoping the state and federal crime labs will be able to assist in processing the technical and scientific side of whatever else was collected," Veatch said.

He said it could be weeks or months until the crime labs give Alpine County results of their investigations.

■ Randal Thompson of the Lodi (Calif.) News-Sentinel contributed to this story.

Search and rescue

Teens get into the act

by Merrie Leininger
Staff Writer

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Alpine County has recreation safety problems unique to remote, high-altitude areas that are popular with snowshoers and backpackers — as a result, snowshoers and backpackers often get lost there.

The volunteer heroes who make up the Alpine County Search and Rescue Unit often have to drop everything to look for a lost hiker or dig for someone buried in an avalanche.

Last weekend, the next generation of heroes conducted an all-day field exercise that included simulated events they might face someday.

The Venture Group members are 14-to-18-year-olds who have been training for about six months with members of search and rescue and the California Highway Patrol in all the areas the search and rescue team is needed.

Meeting at Blue Lakes recreation area off Highway 88 early Saturday morning, seven of the 12 Venture Group members, Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School and Douglas High School students, were briefed that a plane had gone down somewhere in the area.

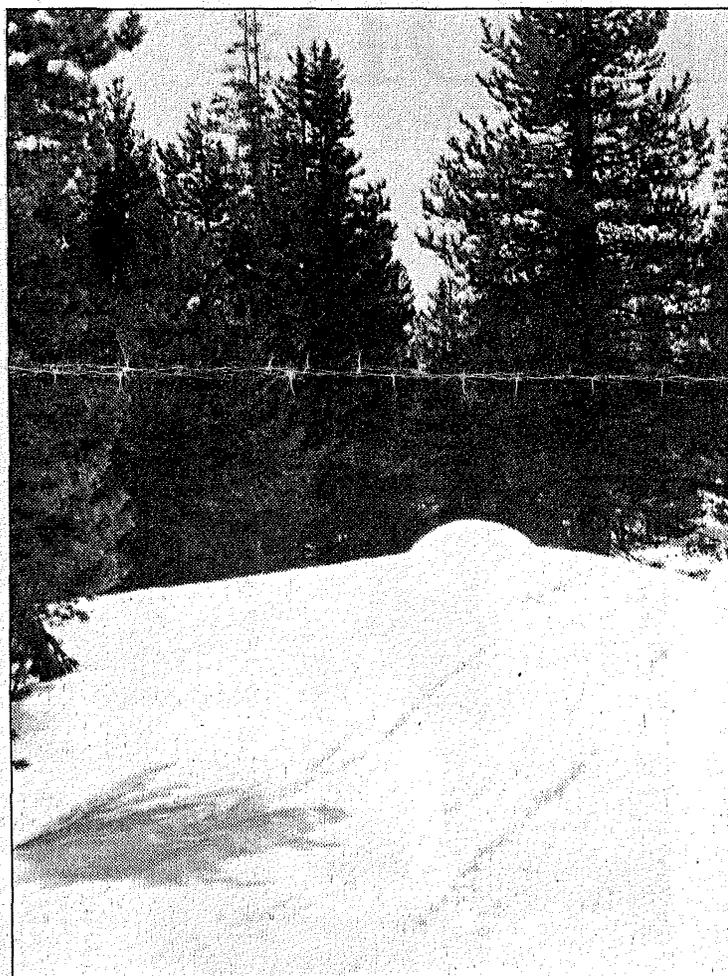
Donning helmets, four group members set off in teams of two to search for the “plane” — tin foil crudely shaped into a small plane — while the rest of the Venture Group acted as the communications post.

The teams were given two hours to find the plane using a signal from a box that is usually in the tail of the plane. The box, an electronic locator transmitter, or ELT, in a downed plane emits a signal gives rescuers the plane’s location.

Driving snowmobiles, (and followed by two adults for safety) the teams split up and find a high point to take a reading on their own latitude and longitude.

Dan Gleason, 14, a student at Pau-Wa-Lu, and his teammate Steve Watson, 16, who attends Douglas High School, were the first to find the plane.

“We knew we were close, so we were looking all around here and we kept going right by it. Then I lost Steve and he drove right over it,” Gleason said, bragging that his team managed



to find the plane even though his hand was injured recently in a snowmobile training session.

Once the group was together at the plane crash site, the teen-agers were told the passengers of the plane were trapped in an avalanche.

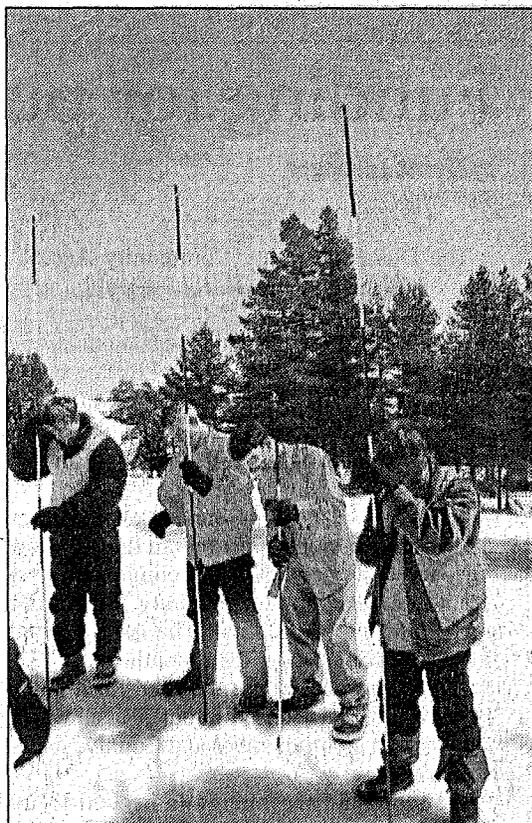
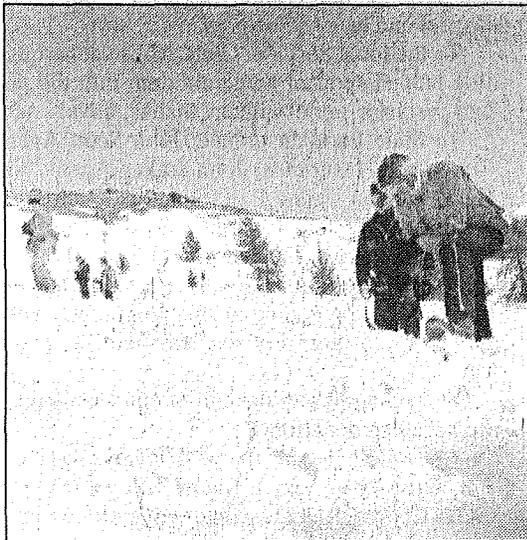
Jumping into action again, the group got out their electronic rescue transceivers and, spread out in a grid, attempted to find the first of the buried “people.” In actuality, what was buried was an avalanche transceiver that was transmitting a signal.

The next victim would be more difficult to find because he did not have an avalanche transceiver and the Venture Group used long poles to push into the snow until they came upon something solid. Digging frantically, the students found their second victim — a scarecrow.

The next step in the training was getting the victim to a California Highway Patrol rescue helicopter.

Clockwise from top Snowmobiles are heading toward the downed plane; Dan Gleason looks at the avalanche rescue receiver, as his father Ron of the California Highway Patrol assists him; Dwayne Summerhill, left; Dan Gleason, Ryan Griffith and Steve Watson poke poles into the snow, searching for an avalanche victim; and Ryan Griffith, left, holds the GPS instrument and Dwayne Summerhill holds an electronic locator transmitter.

Below: The CH helicopter with Chuc Dunbar, flight officer and paramedic, talking to the student.



'It's fun for them, and it gets them to work with adults. It also helps their self-worth. They've already been on a couple of searches.'

Ron Gleason
CHP officer

Helicopter pilot Kevin Vinatieri and flight officer and paramedic Chuck Dunbar landed the helicopter in a flat area known as Charity Valley.

Vinatieri gave the teen-agers instructions if they really need a helicopter in an emergency situation.

"We need to know a lot of information about the landing area such as wind direction and hazards such as power lines," Vinatieri said. "Once we come in for the approach, back away and cover the patient."

CHP Officer Ron Gleason, father of Venture Group participant Dan Gleason, started the group with the help of Alpine County Sheriff's Office Deputy Dan Doyal.

"It's fun for them and it gets them to work with adults. It also helps their self-worth. They've already been on a couple of searches," he said.

He said the 12 teen-agers are isolated from their school mates by living in Markleeville or Woodfords and don't have a lot of recreation options there.

By getting training in snowmobiling, first aid and avalanche safety, they are not only keeping busy, they are becoming the next generation of search and rescue volunteers.

Gleason said about half of the student's families are involved in Alpine County's search and rescue.

One of those students is Dena Cate-lani, 14, a student at Pau-Wa-Lu, who said her whole family has been involved in search and rescue.

"I like that I can help people — (we get) a lot of missing people up here," she said.

Sheena Watson, 14, who is the sister of Venture participant Steve Watson, said she joined to have something to do.

"I thought it would be fun — a nice after-school activity," she said.

50 YEARS AGO

The Record-Courier
May 6, 1949

Dial phones for Alpine area near.

Dial telephone service for the residents of Alpine county, smallest and most sparsely settled California county, before winter comes again, loomed as a distinct probability this week.

There is also a remote possibility that residents of the Lake Tahoe vacationland area of Douglas county may also have dial telephone service before too many months pass.

■ **Kingsbury improvements eliminate danger spots.** First major changes in the general contour of the historic Kingsbury canyon highway since the days when the pony express and stage lines used the road were nearing completion this week.

Five dangerous corners have been eliminated. The road has been materially widened in many places. Surface has been improved by the removing of outcroppings of granite from the roadbed. Total cost of the improvement will be between \$1,000 and \$1,200.

50 YEARS AGO

5/5/99

Record Courier

Hubert, Merle Bruns celebrate 60th anniversary with dinner

Hubert and Merle Sheppard Bruns of Fredericksburg, Alpine County, Calif., celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Friday, April 16, with a family dinner at their Foothill Road home. They were presented with a memory book by their children, Shirley of Sacramento and Linda and Bruce of Alpine County and friend Ida Glazier, also of Alpine County. The book is being filled with the many cards and letter received by the couple from friends and relatives commemorating this milestone in their lives.

Mr. Bruns is a third generation Alpine County cattle rancher, having been born in the house where the Brunses live. He took over operation of the ranch from his father in 1939. In 1963, he was named "Farmer of the Year" by the Alpine County Soil Conservation District, and in 1973, he was named Carson Valley's "Man of the Year." He served on the Alpine County Board of Supervisors for 32 years, and was appointed to the California-Nevada Interstate Water Compact Commission in 1955. Mr. Bruns also served as a director of the Lahontan Region of the State Water Quality Control Board and has become a respected authority in the field of water legislation. He is a past president of the Minden Rotary Club.

Mrs. Bruns was born and raised in Amador County and was working with the Internal Revenue Ser-



Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Bruns

vice in San Francisco when her sister introduced her to her future husband. The couple was married at the Sheppard family home in Sutter Creek, Calif., on April 16, 1939.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Bruns remain actively involved in the daily operation of the ranch. They were joined in the business by their son, Bruce, following his graduation from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, in 1977. Their younger daughter, Linda, is also associated with her parents in the ranch. Their older daughter, Shirley, a registered nurse, works for the State of California and is involved with health care fraud detection for the Department of Health Services.

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