

R-c
9-9-05

Artists' works on display during tour

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

Autumn in Markleeville causes an artistic palette of vibrant hues to be splashed into canyons and across ridges wherever aspens and cottonwoods grow.

The artists in the small town of Markleeville, some with studios surrounded by pastures and others by forest, will open their doors to the public from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Oct. 8 and 9 at the Autumn Open Studios tour.

The tour is free and a chance to see where the artists create their works of art as well as to talk to them about their creations.

Art work will range from oils, etchings, photographs, drawings and watercolors to sculptures, pottery, jewelry, fiber arts and baskets.

Participating artists for this third annual event include; Gina Gigli, Peter Chope, Sandra Baenen, Kathy Caldwell, Jeff and Jan Brees, Charles Muench, Jennifer Vaughn, Mark and Carolyn Vaughn, Ellen Martin, Kay Jobst, Todd Branscombe and Susan Flakus.

This year the event is sponsored by local businesses, as well as supported by the artists.

Markleeville artists said they would like to thank Wolf Creek Tavern, Villa Gigli, The Deli, Markleeville General Store and Mountain and Garden Bed and



Markleeville artists, from left, Jeff Brees, Charles Muench, Gina Gigli, Mark, Jennifer and Carolyn Vaughn, Sandra Baenen, Ellen Martin, Kay Jobst, Peter Chope and Todd Branscombe.

DETAILS

What: Markleeville Artists' Open Studio Tour

When: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 8 and 9

Info: (530) 694-2253 or visit www.charlesmuench.com

Breakfast for their support.

Maps guiding visitors to the artists' home studios will be presented to registrants at the Alpine County Chamber of Commerce on Main Street in Markleeville both days of the studio tour.

Linda Merrill will be serving homemade apple pie in the gar-

den of the Mountain & Garden in Woodfords from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

For more information call Villa Gigli at (530) 694-2253 or visit the Web site www.charlesmuench.com

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JONNI HILL/R-C photos

The artistic works of Mark and Carolyn Vaughn's pottery, Kay Jobst's pine needle baskets and gourds placed on top of one of Ellen Martin's fiber art lap quilts with one of Sandra Baenen watercolors behind the display.

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Grand Jury accepting recommendations

Staff Reports

The Alpine County Grand Jury 2005-2006 has convened.

Any person may contact the Grand Jury for purposes of making a citizen's complaint or for giving information. Citizens may request that the Grand Jury investigate matters relating to County Government.

All requests must be made in

writing. It is recommended that requests be made on Alpine County Grand Jury forms. Letters will also be accepted.

People are encouraged to sign the request so the Grand Jury can act more efficiently, but it is not required. All correspondence is strictly confidential. E-mails are not accepted.

Grand Jury forms may be obtained at the following loca-

tions or by writing to the address below: Alpine County Administration Building, Markleeville Library, Bear Valley Library, Bear Valley Fire House, Hung a lel ti Fire House and Education Center, The Learning Center in Woodfords and Kirkwood Fire House.

Requests may be mailed to P.O. Box 102, Markleeville, CA 96120.

Bear Valley Trial

The Bear Valley Trial will take place Saturday and Sunday. Four levels of motorcycle classes are included in this event, presented by Sacramento Pacific International Trials Society, Inc. For information, visit www.sactopits.org

Hot springs to close

Grover Hot Springs pools will be closed for maintenance and repairs Sept. 12 - 30. Delays are possible for re-opening. For more information call (530) 694 - 2248 or (530) 694 - 2249.

Fifty Plus Club trips

The Fifty Plus Club for seniors in Alpine County has the following bus trips planned:

- Sept. 14 - Carson City
- Sept. 21 - South Lake

Briefs

Tahoe

■ Sept. 28 - To be announced

Most bus trips are from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

■ Gail will host a luncheon on Sept. 29. The theme is "harvest."

For more information, call Sherri Dennis at (530) 694-2235.

Community faire

The 10th annual Woodfords' Community Faire will take place 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 17 and 18 at the yellow flashing light at the junction of highways 88 and 89. The event includes a country chili challenge, a salsa making challenge, antiques and collectibles,

arts and crafts, food, public interest group booths, horseshoes, a raffle and entertainment. A blood drive will take place in a United Blood Services Blood Mobile 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. Donors will receive a free hot dog lunch.

For information on the event, how to enter the chili or salsa challenge or how to rent a booth, call the Woodfords Store at (530) 694-2930 or Alpine Kids, (530) 694-2934. Sponsors include the Alpine Chamber of Commerce and Kirkwood Mountain Resort. Proceeds benefit Alpine Kids.

Band to play

Kirkwood Mountain Resort presents Dan Hicks and the Hot Licks at 6 p.m. Sept. 24. Tickets are \$25. For more information call (209) 258-7254.

Woodfords' Community Faire booth to benefit Hurricane Katrina victims

Staff Reports

Several months ago, a non-profit group was formed to benefit an Alpine County school considered in crisis by many of its parents and staff.

Fundraising to Preserve Education was organized by parent Robin Butler to try to save Diamond Valley School principal Katie Hadley's job. But in the end, Hadley lost her position due to lack of funding.

Butler held a couple of fundraisers and is temporarily shifting her focus to helping Hurricane Katrina's victims. She said she hopes this will teach the children to be giving.

During the Woodfords' Community Faire & Country Chili Challenge this weekend,

DETAILS

What: Community Faire

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday

Where: Junction of highways 88 and 89

Fundraising to Preserve Education will have a booth selling T-shirts with its logo, hamburgers and hot dogs. Raffle tickets at \$1-\$3 will be sold, with prizes such as, three bicycles of different sizes, a ceramic rooster from Scandia Plus in Carson City, and a night for two and a show at Harrah's. The drawing will take place Sunday afternoon.

"We're letting the kids give money to the hurricane victims," said Butler.

The 10th annual Woodfords' Community Faire & Country Chili Challenge takes place 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the junction of highways 88 and 89.

The United Blood Services blood mobile will be there all day Saturday, with a free hot dog or hamburger meal for donors.

Alpine Kids will also hold a raffle, with tickets at \$1 each.

Saturday features a chili challenge, with cooking starting at 10 a.m., tasting kits on sale at 1 p.m. and winners announced at 3:30 p.m. Sunday's salsa challenge begins at 10 a.m., with tasting kits on sale at 1 p.m. and winners announced at 3:30 p.m.

Many booths will be set up, featuring arts and crafts,

antiques, collectibles, Indian tacos and more. Games for children are available for 25 cents and a bounce house is provided.

The Alpine County Sheriff's Department will give away gun locks, Smokey Bear will make appearances and kids can shoot hoops with PAL.

Sunday an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast will take place at the Alpine Christian Community Church, 130 Old Pony Express Road. Breakfast is free, donations are accepted.

All proceeds, other than from the Fundraising to Preserve Education booth, benefit the Alpine Kids program, serving Alpine County families since 1981.

For more information, call Edie Veatch at (530) 694-2934.

Woodfords Antiques and Gifts to close doors final time

Staff Reports

This weekend Woodfords Antiques and Gifts will close its doors for the final time. The proprietess Ruth Ann Edwards is closing to return to her home in Poway, Calif., to be closer to her children and grandchildren.

Although Edwards said she loves Markleeville, the store and the people of Woodfords, she needs to spend more time with her family.

The store's entire stock will be on sale Saturday and Sunday with the exception of consignment items and the materials belonging to the Arts and Crafters of Markleeville. There will also be a porch sale in front

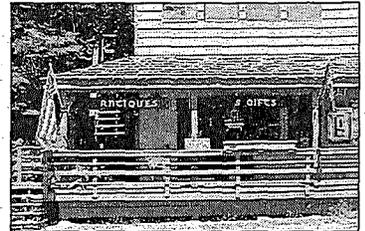
of the store with items priced extremely low, according to Ruth Ann's husband, Dick. Proceeds will benefit the Alpine Kids.

This weekend the annual Woodfords' Community Faire & Country Chili Challenge will

take place in front of the store.

Customers will have the opportunity to go to the fair and browse collectibles on sale at the store.

Woodfords Antiques and Gifts is located at 290C Old Pony Express Road.



SENIORS ROCK

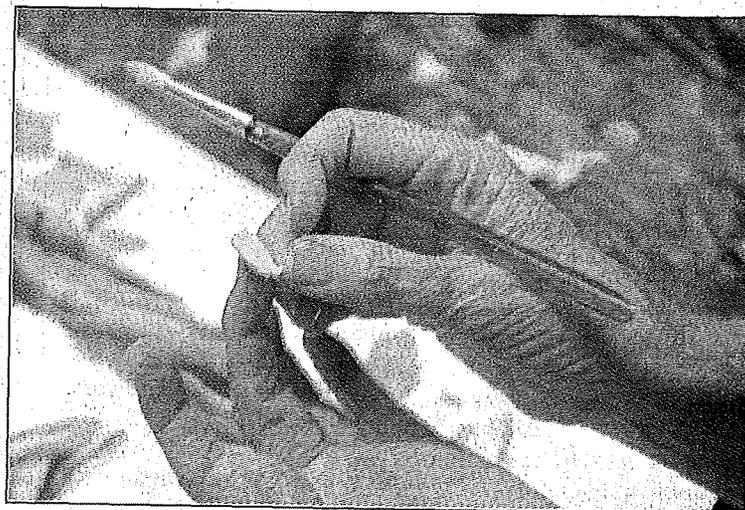


SHANNON LITZ/The R-C



Firefighter Martin Goldberg, top, talks about defensible space to Alpine County seniors earlier this month. Seniors in the Fifty Plus Club tour Sen. Dave Cox's office, middle, and the Capitol building, bottom, in Sacramento, Calif.

Artist gets ready for open studio show



Gigli offers etched collage giclée at art tour

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

Gina Gigli, as unique and individual as her art work expresses, will be one of 13 Markleeville artists to open their studios to the public on Oct. 8-9 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days.

Just in time for the fall colors to dress the valleys and canyons of Alpine County with festive arrays of golden yellows and vibrant oranges, Gigli will be presenting to the public her first giclée limited edition of 25 prints. This newest artistic venue in Gigli's prestigious career of hand-printed limited editions will be for sale at her studio/gallery during the tour.

The process Gigli incorporates in her work is centuries old and

DETAILS

What: Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios

When: Oct. 8-9, 11-4 p.m.

Where: Markleeville studios

Info: Free map available by calling (530) 694-2253

barely touched by modern technology.

"I fought the concept of giclée prints," Gigli said. "Once I have etched the plate that creates my original image, yes, there are copies of that work done on a hand-drawn press. But that image will wear out and once that happens, there isn't a way to produce any more. This process makes multiple originals,

(They are considered multiple originals because her husband Ruggero Gigli, Villa Gigli Press and printer of her original work, must re-ink the plate for each print.) Each one is individual."

Gigli will now offer a "new twist" to her traditional printmaking with what she calls her etched collage giclée. First, artist Gigli etches and aquatints her abstract images onto zinc plates, using brushes and twisted steel scribes, etching ground, lacquer sprays and nitric acid.

The next step in the process, Ruggero, hand-prints the limited edition onto various shades of white imported Italian Magnani rag paper.

Now, Gigli will create original collages by ripping selected pieces from her trial-proof etchings. She

reassembles these paper fragments into entirely new compositions by overlapping the torn edges, pasting with archival glue and hand-rolling the papers securely onto acid-free foam core.

In the fourth step of the process, Gigli hands over her original collage to Michael Nelson at GrafX 8 Media Group. The original collage of Gigli's work is scanned and printed in a limited edition of prints on pH neutral 100 percent acid free, 140-pound Hahnemuhle German Etching paper using pigmented inks with a life expectancy of more than 100 years.

The Giglis are a perfect working combination. Chef and printer Ruggero, who was born in Florence,

See *Artist* on page 2

missing



SHANNON LITZ/ R-C Photos

Top, Gina Gigli works in her Markleeville studio on a collage that will become a giclée print. Above, the artist works on her collage that will be on display during the Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios Oct. 8-9.

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Summer Concert Series wraps up Saturday

Staff Reports

Dan Hicks & the Hot Licks appear in the Summer Concert Series at Kirkwood Mountain Resort Saturday Sept. 24 at 6

p.m. on the Village Plaza.

In 1965 Hicks first appeared at the Red Dog Saloon in Virginia City where he played as the drummer for The Charlantans. In 1968, Hicks formed

Dan Hicks & The Hot Licks.

Tickets are on sale for \$25 and can be purchased by calling (209) 258-7254.

Opening band will be the F-150s.

Kirkwood raising money for hurricane

Staff Reports

Kirkwood and Share Our Strength have teamed up to donate \$20 to the Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund for every adult value and adult full pass sold before Nov. 1.

Kirkwood will donate the

funds raised to Share Our Strength who will distribute the funds directly to local organizations assisting victims in the affected areas.

In addition to the donation of funds and the Taste of the Nation dinner, Kirkwood is asking people to contribute to the

relief fund.

Donations may be made at the general store and the season pass office.

All donations will go to local organizations.

For more information, log onto www.kirkwood.com or www.strength.org.

Alpine boasts double-digit growth in home prices

by Susan Wood
R-C News Service

Mostly driven by second homeowners, Alpine County real estate has seen a surge in value that coincides with the state's steady increase in property values.

The median price for a single family home in California's smallest county has gone up by 12 percent in one year, topping \$400,000. In 2004, the price was \$350,000, up from \$270,000 in the prior year.

"They've gone up quite a bit in the last few years," said agent Patty Kennedy, who works out of the Century 21, Minden office. Alpine County real estate is tracked on the Northern Nevada multiple listing service.

The number of homes currently listed — seven — is about the same as last year, but the time they're on the market appears shorter from one year to the next, Kennedy said.

The agent has found the market of buyers is dominated by second homeowners, which echoes the trend in South Lake Tahoe.

"People don't come here to work. They come to play and retire," Kennedy said.

It's also similar to the Kirkwood real estate market where luxury homes are more abundant but are primarily bought by Bay Area residents seeking a mountain escape.

"What they're looking for here is a home other than what they have in the city — a mountain feel with mountain comforts," Kirkwood managing broker Joan Pilar said.

Kirkwood's property appreciation mirrors Alpine County and even Amador, for that matter. That county situated next to Alpine has more than doubled its median price value from the \$148,000 recorded in 2000.

But it has a ways to go to catch up to Kirkwood's style.

DETAILS

Median price for a single family home reported in July

■ Alpine County: \$400,000 (August)

■ Amador County: \$330,000 (August)

■ Kirkwood: \$1.5 million (median on market in September);

\$845,000 (average sold YTD)

■ California: \$451,000 (July)

■ South Lake Tahoe area: \$430,000 (July)

Sources: South Tahoe Association of Realtors; Coldwell Banker, Markleeville; Century 21 Minden; Amador County Association of Realtors; DataQuick Information Systems; Kirkwood Real Estate

The median price for a single family home on the market now is \$1.5 million, while condominiums list for \$628,235. A year ago, the average price of a single family home was sold at \$1.1 million. Condos went for \$612,444. Real estate offerings include the Mountain Club, Meadow Stone Lodge, Timber Ridge and Sentinel Townhomes. A new phase, Sentinel West, has been proposed in the master plan of the ski resort, which like Bear Valley, is split by Alpine and Amador counties.

Kirkwood has invested \$30 million in its real estate development. But the division of the snow-riding haven would be the first to say maintaining the night sky in a carefully planned development is the priority.

Kirkwood property are sold in timeshares, single family homes, townhouses and condos — from studios to five-bedroom units.

"We always have diversity because they want a choice. And they want them large enough for others to come up and visit," Pilar said, while overseeing the fourth annual

luxury home tour at East Meadows last weekend. The proceeds of admission were earmarked to benefit the Alpine Watershed Group, a collaboration of stakeholders in the area that put on the Markleeville Creek Days cleanup.

The single family homes on the tour ranged in value from \$1.6 million to \$3.5 million. More than 200 people from Placerville and Amador County to South Lake Tahoe and Stockton attended Sunday's event.

Some attendees like Sherri Lindner of South Lake Tahoe used the occasion to get ideas on how to revamp their home with style and elegance. She liked the alpine look in a 2,700-square-foot home with accents like upholstery swatches on the wall. The Cornice Court home also came with a gourmet kitchen, hardwood floors and tumbled marble.

The stone caught Susie and Ron Morton's eyes.

"He did a good job on the exterior," the Placerville woman said.

She shook her head to think of how long they waited to buy where they want to retire.

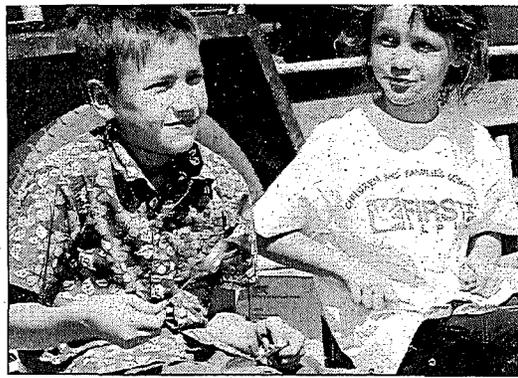
"We all should have bought years ago," she said.

Rae Charos has the land without the home. So she toured the \$1.9 million home listed on Columbine Circle to get ideas. Guests received a whirlwind tour of the four-bedroom on its spiraling three-floors. Windows dominated the top floor.

The Kirkwood Community Association receives 3 percent of the home sale proceeds to operate a recreation center with a swimming pool and spa.

On the other end of Alpine County, a proposed vacation resort in Markleeville was ordered by Alpine County to complete an extensive environmental study to build the 25-room lodge and 49-cabin resort over 36 acres.

A chili weekend

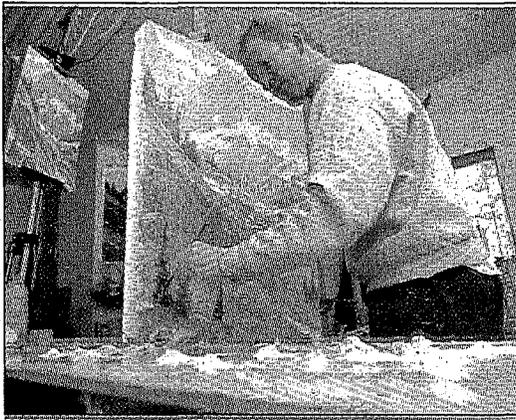


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SHANNON LITZ/R-C photos
Dean Goodfellow of Gardnerville stirs his specialty "Dean's Gunfighter Venison Chili" on Saturday. At top, Chris Graham, 10 and Cheyenne Aarons, 7, play the spoons along with the live entertainment at the Woodfords Chili Challenge.

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SHANNON LITZ/The R-C

Charles Muench works in his studio in Markleeville.

Markleeville artist featured Friday

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

Markleeville artist Charles Muench will be one of 13 artists to open their studios to the public during the Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studio Oct. 8-9.

Muench received a bachelor's degree in fine arts with great distinction from San Jose State University. He studied primarily under Maynard D. Stewart, a student of Frank Vincent DuMonds and the son of renowned Utah landscape painter LeConte Stewart.

After receiving his degree, Muench attended classes at the Art Students League with many other notable artists. In 1992, he moved to Madrid, Spain, where he painted the city and the countryside, studied Velasquez, copied master works in the Prado and attended classes at the Circulo Bellas Artes.

Muench is a plein-air painter and dedicated to capturing most of his images on site. A visit to his Web site resembles a post card tour of Alpine County, the Sierra to the foothills and the ocean beyond. His love for the outdoors is evident in every stroke of his brush. Standing out in below freezing temperatures to capture the beauty of a winter morning in downtown Markleeville is testament to his dedication. His high country landscapes are rendered with as much strength as the landmarks themselves. His aggressive stroke of the brush gives reality to his images.

"My goal is to be a pure painter. I want to put

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Artist: Plein-air

Continued from page 1

pigment on canvas in a way that captures the emotions of my visual experience while satisfying the demands of my intellect," Muench said.

His most recent work titled "Up in the High Country" will be available for viewing at the 20th anniversary reception at the Lone Tree Gallery in Minden which will take place starting at 5 p.m. Friday during the Carson Valley Open Studios Art Tour, Friday through Sunday.

Charles Muench will join Peter Chope, Sandra Baenen, Gina Gigli, Todd Brand-scombe, Jeff Brees, Jan Brees, Kathy Caldwell, Susan Flakus, Kay Jobst, Ellen Martin, Carolyn Vaughn, Jennifer and Mark Vaughn in welcoming the public to their studios. The fall tour in Alpine County will also be highlighted by the brilliant colors of "natures studios" in the meadows and canyons as the leaves come alive with vibrant yellows and oranges so anticipated every

year in the Markleeville area.

A free map of the tour will be available at the Alpine Chamber of Commerce. The event is free to the public and sponsored by the artists as well as The Deli, Markleeville General Store, The Mountain and the Garden, Villa Gigli Trattoria and The Wolf Creek.

For more information about the upcoming Markleeville Artists Open Studios event call (530) 694-2253 or go to Web site: www.charlesmuench.com

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Markleeville artist's watercolor images on display at tour

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

The best way to describe the artwork of Alpine County watercolor artist Peter Chope is to imagine all the brilliant autumn colors that surround his small California community and that would reflect his paintings.

Chope and his wife, Sandra Baenen, an artist in her own right, will be just two of 13 Markleeville artists to open their studios to the public on Oct. 8-9 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Chope describes himself as a "water colorist." His brilliant colors splash across the paper in what could be called impressionistic and yet a sense of realism makes a lasting impression.

A graduate of Chiouard Art Institute of Los Angeles in 1968 with a Bachelor of Arts in Design/Advertising, Chope owned an award-winning graphic design business in the Bay Area from 1970 to 1998. After semi-retiring to Alpine County, his brush has been busy.

"I took up watercolor painting in 1997 and attended numerous painting workshops around the world, including Ron Ranson in Italy, Jim Kosvanek in Mexico, Marilyn Simandle in Cambria (California), Tony Couch also in Cambria, Tom Lynch in France and Bridget Austin in Palm Springs," Chope said.

Chope has added several new giclée limited edition prints to his collection that will be available to purchase during the open studios tour.

Sandra Baenen is a working graphic artist with her own firm, artwerks, in

DETAILS

What: Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios

When: Oct. 8-9, 11-4 p.m.

Where: Markleeville studios

Info: Free maps available by calling (530) 694-2253

Markleeville. In addition to graphics, Baenen paints miniature watercolors as small as 2-by 3-inches.

The paintings are of flowers as well as landscapes of Alpine County and other areas that capture her imagination.

She attended both the University of Wisconsin, Green Bay and Milwaukee for Environmental Design, Graphic Design and Architecture.

Baenen is currently working on a miniature watercolor of Kirkwood in the winter that she is going to have printed into a frameable Christmas card to sell in a limited edition at the up-coming open studio tour.

"I love miniatures," Baenen said. "I can take my work with me anywhere and paint the things I see. I collect small frames from everywhere to frame them."

Like Chope, Baenen's work reflects the Alpine County area and the love they share for the mountains and historic area surrounding them.

There is a special love for their surroundings that glows in the artwork they both produce.

Peter Chope and Sandra Baenen, along with other artists on the tour, the Gigli's (Ruggero and Gina), Todd Branscombe, Jeff Brees, Kathy Caldwell, Susan

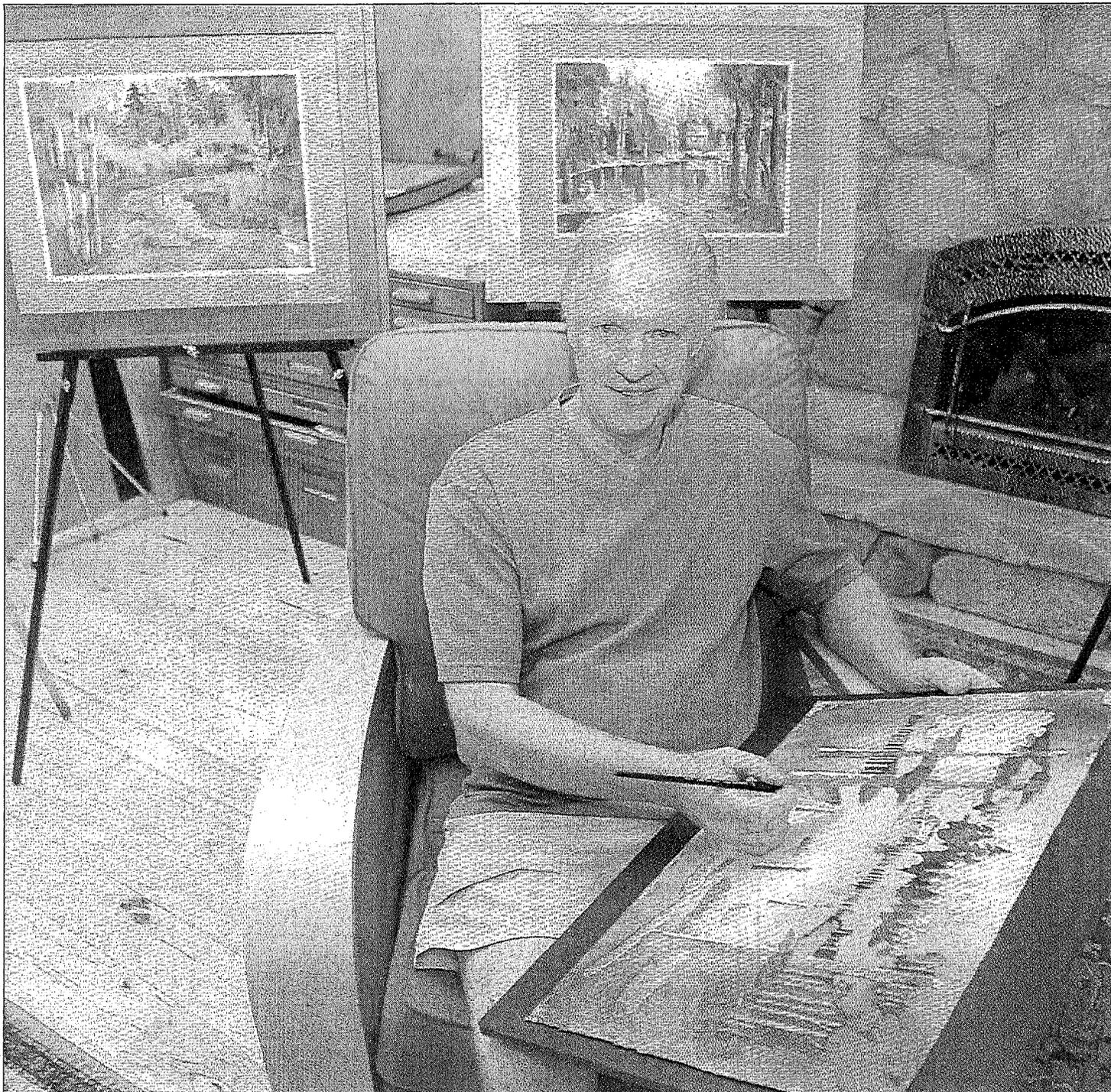
Flakus, Kay Jobst, Ellen Martin, Charles Muench, Carolyn

Vaughn, Jennifer Vaughn and Mark Vaughn will all be on

hand to welcome the public to their October studios tour.

A free map of the tour will be available at the Alpine County Chamber of Commerce. The event is free to the public.

For more information about the upcoming Markleeville Artists Open Studios event next month, call (530) 694-2253 or go to Web site: www.charlesmuench.com.



SHANNON LITZ/The R-C

Peter Chope sits in his studio surrounded by his work. He is busy creating a new painting that will be displayed during the upcoming Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios tour Oct. 8-9.

I can take my work with me anywhere and paint the things I see.
I collect small frames from everywhere to frame them.'

Sandra Baenen
Markleeville artist

Airport future takes off

by Jo Rafferty
Staff Writer

Alpine County's airport in Markleeville consists of a runway, but the airport manager sees the growth it has undergone, the benefits it offers and the potential it has for the future.

Leonard Turnbeaugh has managed the airport for 21 years, since he became Alpine County's director of Public Works. He is also the director of transportation and the executive secretary of the local transportation commission.

The runway was built in 1967 in conjunction with the construction of Indian Creek Reservoir, and in 1972 the runway was paved.

The runway was used twice this summer as a base for fire-fighting aircraft — during the Mud Lake and Airport fires — after an agreement reached with the Bureau of Land Management in June to allow for use of the airport for fire-fighting purposes.

The Civil Air Patrol also uses the airport for training and other operations, said Turnbeaugh.

The airport is funded through aviation tax dollars, which have risen from \$5,000 to \$10,000 annually over the years.

"They built the whole airport utilizing \$5,000 a year," said Turnbeaugh.

In the past there have been improvements, such as turn-arounds that have been added.

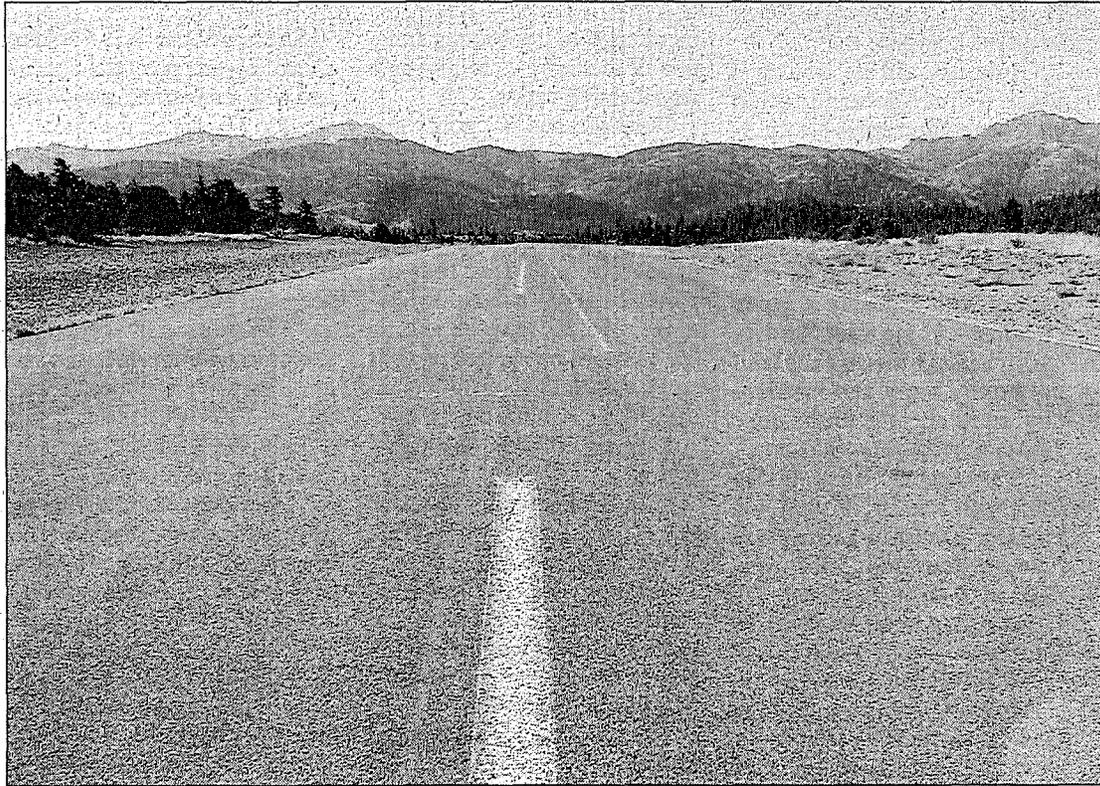
Recently, improvements to the airport have been made to meet Federal Aviation Administration and California guidelines.

Visibility improvements are among the work being done, including removing trees and brush, moving dirt and relocating a windsock.

"We're just in the process of completing improvements," said Turnbeaugh.

Turnbeaugh envisions the airport eventually having a fixed-base operation, with a permanent person there all day. He would also like to add a fuel station and hangars.

"With the growth in Douglas County, when the other area airports start to max out, there will be a need to spill over into other areas," said Turnbeaugh.



The Alpine County Airport is located near Markleeville and has been used as a base for fire-fighting.

“An airport like this would have even more benefit to recreational users and also local people.”

Turnbeaugh is planning to widen the air strip for gliders, to allow for their wide wing span.

To prepare for growth, Turnbeaugh has applied for FAA funding.

If approved, the funding would come in about 12 months, Turnbeaugh said.

“If we get it, it would allow for more improvements,” said Turnbeaugh.

The airport is currently used a couple of times a week, but Turnbeaugh said, “It will become a spiral upward.”

Pilots have expressed their appreciation for having an alternate place they can land and, according to Turnbeaugh, the runway is in a “designated flight line,” so planes frequently travel

above it.

Just a few weeks ago someone had to use the runway for an emergency landing.

“If that guy hadn’t been at the airport, he’d have been out in the trees somewhere,” said Turnbeaugh.

■ Jo Rafferty can be reached at jrafferty@recordcourier.com or 782-5121, ext. 213.

9-30-05

Alpine Democrats elect new officers

Staff Reports

Mary C. Walker, outgoing chairman of the Alpine County Democratic Central Committee, was honored at a luncheon at the Wolf Creek Restaurant in Markleeville on Sept. 10.

Guests included other officers of the central committee who presented her with a plaque for her dedicated service since 2003.

Walker will return to Louisiana, her birthplace, to marry her college sweetheart.

They will reside in her fiancé's home, which is some distance from New Orleans. At last report it suffered no major damage. She was a delegate to the Democratic State Convention in Los Angeles this spring and was elected vice-chair of the rural caucus.

The new chairman is Irving Krauss of Woodfords, and the other officers are Vice Chair Ernestine Fogarty and Secretary Jim Donald, both of Markleeville, and Treasurer Abbie Peters of Woodfords.

Krauss reported that the organization is gearing up for California's special election on Nov. 8; and is in the process of analyzing the ballot propositions.

The county's Central Democratic Committee meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Wolf Creek Restaurant.

Dinner is at 5:30 p.m., and the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Krauss invited anyone interested to join them for dinner, or to come just for the meeting.

For information call 530-694-2990.

Fifty Plus Club taking bus trips

Staff Reports

The Fifty Plus Club is taking two bus trips next week. Seniors will be taking a trip to Apple Hill on Tuesday and will

travel to the Douglas County Senior Center for lunch and bingo on Wednesday.

For more information, call Gail Day at (530) 694-2235.

Artist creates designs of metal

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

Not more than 2.5 miles from the California-Nevada border, at the very end of Carson Valley on Diamond Valley Road, is the "Steel Magnolia Studio" and the home of artist and welder Susan Flakus. One of the participating artists in the up-coming Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios, Flakus will be on hand the weekend of Oct. 8-9 at her studio to welcome visitors and answer any questions about her uniquely stylized works of art.

Flakus has been creating art her entire life. As a mother of three children and a housewife for more than 25 years, she felt the need to re-enter the work force, so, in 1999 she enrolled in a welding school. After a year she knew factory piece work was something she didn't want to do but, the artistic possibilities of the craft

appealed to her. She decided to work from her home and satisfy her creative needs with the skills she had learned in a male-dominated profession.

"I started making things for myself," Flakus said. "A couple of interesting beds, mirrors, gates and grates. People loved my work and starting paying me to do things for them. There are two (welding) shops in town; one primarily builds trailer hitches and the other makes wrought iron decorative gates. Since my work is unique, I do not think they compete in my market. Besides, I am the only one who speaks the language of 'woman.'"

"From a woman's standpoint my art is about womanhood," Flakus said. "There are no male subjects in my work."

Describing the underlying themes of her work, Flakus offered four words: "Feminine, durable, functional and inspired."

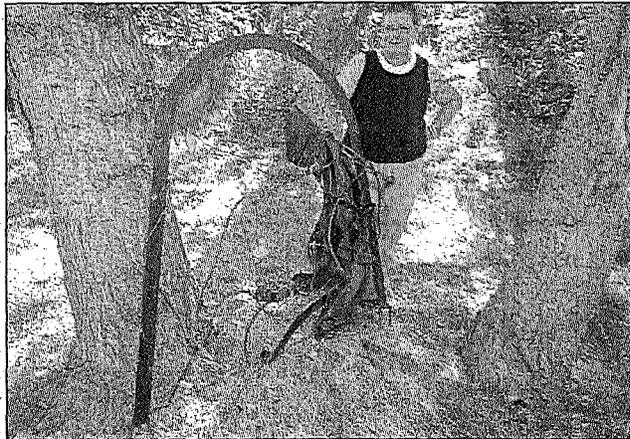
Flakus participated in the first Markleeville Artists Open Studio Tour

but skipped a year to come back and do it again this year. She said this is no easy task for her to do as she is battling breast cancer, something she found out about last January. Next week will be her last radiation treatment but her spirit is as strong as the work she creates.

In order to create a piece, she first chalks a sketch on scrap metal, usually steel. She cuts the intricate design out with a plasma cutter, then adds details like cut-outs and stenciled patterns. Subjecting the metal to various conditions — applying acid, submerging it in the river, or leaving it on wet grass to allow patches of rust to develop — adds unique finishes. Each piece takes about 40 hours to complete.

Visitors on the tour will find this a truly unique stop and for those starting the tour in Carson Valley it will be the first stop on the tour.

Flakus will join Peter Chope, Sandra Baenen, Gina Gigli, Todd Brand-



Susan Flakus stands next to one of her metal creations in her yard. Flakus is one of the featured artists at the Markleeville Artists Open Studios event Oct. 8 and 9.

SHANNON LITZ/The R-C

scombe, Jeff Brees, Jan Brees, Kathy Caldwell, Charles Muench, Kay Jobst, Ellen Martin, Carolyn Vaughn and Jennifer and Mark Vaughn in welcoming the public to their studios. The fall tour in Alpine County will also be highlighted by the brilliant colors of "nature's studios" in the meadows and canyons as the leaves come alive with vibrant yellows and oranges so anticipated every year in the Markleeville area.

A free map of the tour will be available at the Alpine Chamber of Commerce. The event is free to the public and sponsored by the artists as well as The Deli, Markleeville General Store, The Mountain and the Garden, Villa Gigli Trattoria and Wolf Creek.

For more information about the upcoming Markleeville Artists Open Studios event call (530) 694-2253 or go to Web site: www.charlesmuench.com.

50 YEARS AGO

The Record-Courier
September 29, 1955

R-C
9-28-05

Hheavy rains, accompanied by thunder and lightning, lashed Carson Valley for several hours Friday evening, while in the mountains of Alpine County the storm included hail and snow. Considerable damage to the Kingsbury Grade road was caused by the downpour, according to George Dangberg, county road foreman. Water cut the unsurfaced road in many places and piled up debris and dirt in others. Immediately following the storm last Saturday morning, Dangberg put up the "road closed" signs on the route.

100 YEARS AGO

The Record-Courier
Oct. 6, 1905

R-C
10-5-05

While on their way to church last Sunday morning, Mr. and Mrs.

Gansburg were thrown from their buggy and painfully but not seriously injured. As they neared the Henry Heitman ranch their team frightened at some object on the side of the road and started to run and was soon beyond control of Mr. Gansberg. As they crossed a culvert, the buggy careened to one side, and threw the occupants to the ground with the result noted. Wm. Dangberg was near the scene of the accident and succeeded in stopping the runaway team before they reached the Lutheran Church where thirty or forty teams were tied and thus prevented a stampede, which might have resulted in much damage.

Ebbetts Pass scenic route gets national recognition

Staff Reports

After more than four years of work, California State Route 4 between Arnold and Markleeville was designated last week as a National Scenic Byway by Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta.

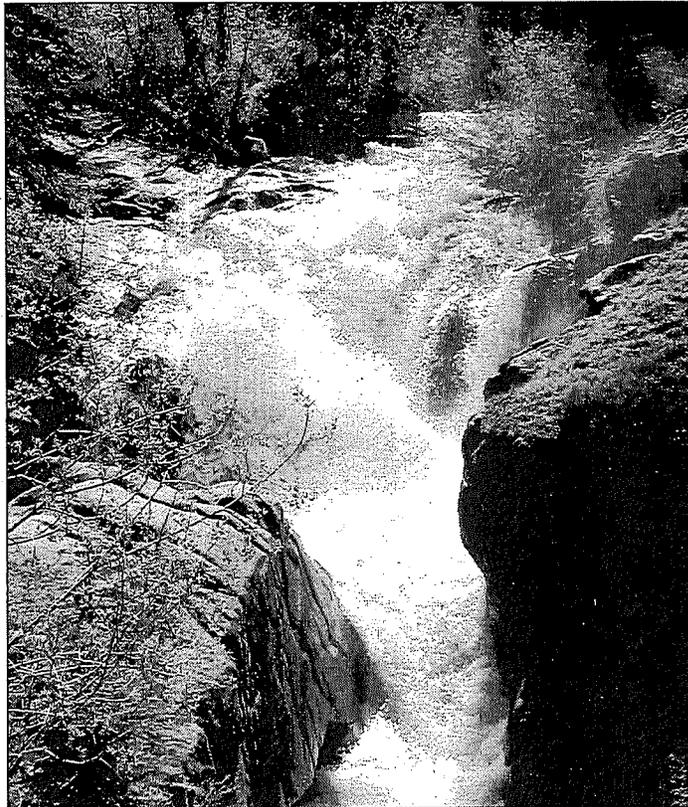
Ceremonies to announce the designation took place at Union Station in Washington, D.C. A delegation was on hand to represent the byway, including Supervisor Terry Woodrow of Bear Valley; Michelle Plotnik, Chair of the Calaveras Council of Governments; George Dondero, Executive Director of Calaveras COG, and his wife Nancy.

"It is still difficult to believe that Ebbetts was selected," said Plotnik. "We have worked for so long on this, never knowing what the outcome would be. I am incredibly happy. Words can't express the feeling."

"Both counties can be proud of the great natural wonders along this beautiful stretch of highway, and there is no doubt the designation is deserved. Having NSB designation tells travelers everywhere that Ebbetts Pass is a travel destination worth seeking," said Woodrow.

The Federal Highway Administration bestows this recognition upon selected highways across the United States which are deemed to have special and unique characteristics that set them apart. There are only six designated National Scenic Byways in California, with Ebbetts making the seventh. Ebbetts Pass was the only nomination from California to receive the designation.

Out of 51 applications, 29



KURT HILDEBRAND/The R-C
Raymond Meadow Creek roars beneath California State Route 4. The highway between Markleeville and Arnold has received a scenic designation.

were designated. Highway 1 on the Big Sur coast and Tioga Road (Hwy. 120) in Yosemite are among existing designated roads in California.

Criteria for selection include exceptional qualities in any of six categories: scenic, natural, recreational, historic, archeological, and cultural. Nominations must have completed a Corridor Management Plan accepted by the local jurisdictions. A plan was developed over a three year period, and was adopted unanimously by the Boards of Supervisors in both Alpine and Calaveras Counties in August 2004.

The Corridor Management Plan is available on the CCOG website at www.calacog.org

Benefits of NSB designation include worldwide marketing exposure, access to grants related to improving the traveler's experience on the road, and a focused collaborative approach to preserving and improving the assets of the corridor. The visibility gained through recognition is expected to strengthen the tourism industry in both counties.

A byway coordinating committee will be formed soon to begin setting priorities for future projects and funding opportunities. The Corridor Plan identifies many possible projects to pursue. For more information, contact Calaveras COG at 754-2094 or inquire at info@calacog.org

Six arrested in Bear Valley drug probe

Staff Reports

The Alpine County Sheriff's Office has been conducting a year-long narcotics investigation into narcotics trafficking in the Bear Valley community of Alpine County.

On Aug. 18, several residents of Bear Valley were arrested pursuant to warrants charging numerous drug trafficking related felonies. Further suspects were arrested on warrants as the investigation continued. There were a total of six arrest warrants issued as a result of this investigation. All six suspects have been arrested.

As another significant result of this investigation, on Sept. 28 an operating methamphetamine lab was discovered in the

Lake Alpine area.

Mikah A. Chapel, 25, was arrested and booked into jail on felony charges related to the methamphetamine lab. Due to the amount of hazardous chemicals involved, the Calaveras County Hazardous Materials Unit was called and responded to assist in the collection of evidence and to mitigate the hazardous materials. The Bear Valley Fire Department responded to stand by in case of explosion or fire.

The State Office of Emergency Services coordinated the response of a hazardous materials cleanup team, who removed the dangerous chemicals from the scene. No one was injured during this investigation and subsequent cleanup of a very

dangerous scene.

Alpine items

Caring for children class Saturday

Choices for Children is offering Stress Management for People Caring for Children 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday in the old Head Start room at Hung-A-Lel-Ti, 96A Washoe Blvd. Continental breakfast will be provided. For more information call Rachael at (530) 694-2129.

Artists' open studio tour this weekend

Markleeville's third artists' open studio tour will take place 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday in Markleeville. Come meet the local artists in their studios. Stop by the Alpine County Visitor Center, 3 Webster St., and pick up a guide to the artists. For more information call: (530) 694-2253.

Fifty Plus Club to Carson City

The Alpine County seniors' Fifty Plus Club will take a bus trip to Carson City on Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For more information, call Gail Day at (530) 694-2235.

Health insurance advocate to speak

Larry Bodiford, program manager for Health Insurance Counseling Advocacy Program, will speak at the Fifty Plus Club monthly potluck on Thursday. The topic is: Plan D — the new Medicare prescription drug program.

The potluck is 12-2 p.m. at the Early Learning Center, 100 Foothill Road, Woodfords. Bring yourself and a yummy dish. For information, call Lois (530) 694-9404 or Gail (530) 694-2235.



Alpine County's state fair entry won the superintendent's and silver ribbon awards.

Alpine County wins state fair ribbons

Staff Reports

Alpine County won the superintendent's award and a silver ribbon at this year's California State Fair.

Out of 58 counties only 38 counties participated in the expanded schedule of 22 days. The superintendent's award is awarded to one county only and stresses the importance of county community involvement in their exhibit.

The theme for this year's state fair was beach party at the California State Fair. Fair organizers wanted each county to highlight the significance of the environment, tourism, international trade and the impact of

California's coastline culture.

Since Alpine County has no beaches and no international trade, the committee decided on a watershed theme which fits into the pristine county environment. With the assistance of Laura Lueders, Alpine Watershed Executive Director, the exhibit was themed "Getting in Touch with Water".

The Alpine County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors said they would like to thank the following people who contributed their time and talent to this exhibit:

Lane Branscombe, Teresa Burkhauser, Russ Champion, Kaye Jobst and Laura Lueders

They would also like to acknowledge the following

organizations who participated:

Alpine County Board of Supervisors

Alpine County Administration — Beth Nunes

Alpine County Public Works
Alpine County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and Staff

Alpine County Chamber members

Bear Valley Business Association

California State Parks
Kirkwood Mountain Resort
U.S. Forest Service

Planning has started for the 2006 Counties Exhibit. Anyone who would like to volunteer contact the chamber office at (530) 694-2475.

San Diego Zoo and Pier 39 topiary artist shows creations in Markleeville art tour this weekend

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

Jeff Brees will be one of the Markleeville artists to open their studios to the public from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 8-9 in Markleeville.

In the world of topiary, Brees is raising the craft to new heights. Although Brees creates his smaller long-time favorites of goose, quail and piglet, some of his outstanding achievements have been the life-sized pair of elephants at the front entrance of the San Diego Zoo and the giant crab he created for Pier 39 in San Francisco.

His metal frames are artwork in themselves but as they are covered with different varieties of moss and ivy — these living plants bring the frame work to life with striking elegance.

The Brees philosophy is, "I believe that the appeal of topiary lies in its interactive and approachable nature. In nurturing a 'living' sculpture whose appearance changes in humorous, whimsical and sometimes mysterious ways, a bond develops between the caretaker and his 'pet.' I enjoy promoting these relationships."

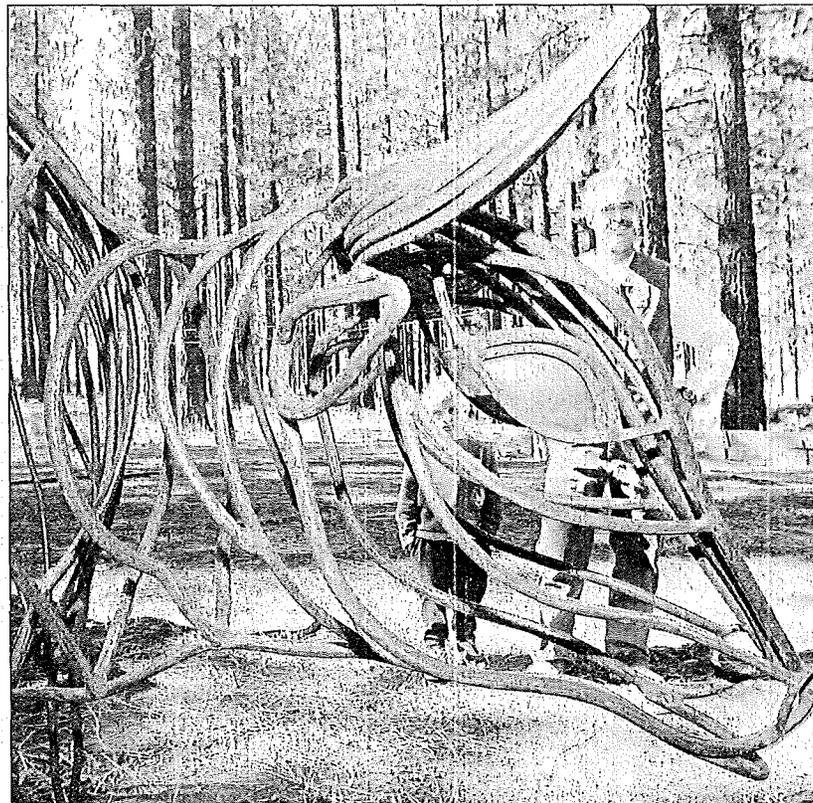
As a college student working part-time at a retail nursery, Brees became familiar with wire and moss

hanging baskets and topiary in 1976. After college, Brees apprenticed with his great-aunt, Charla Ilgner, an accomplished jeweler, silversmith and art teacher. She had begun fashioning wire topiary for Brees' parents, who had recently acquired a nursery specializing in container gardening. After a two-year partnership with his aunt, he decided to start his own business.

Since 1984, Brees' business venture took form with Garden Menagerie which evolved into Gardenworks in 1987. Over the years, frames have increased in size and complexity since custom and commercial projects fill a significant portion of the work schedule. Formerly located in Placerville and Santa Cruz, Calif., Brees has now set his workshop amongst the tall pines of Alpine County in Markleeville.

Brees will join Peter Chope, Sandra Baenen, Gina Gigli, Todd Brandscombe, Susan Flakus, Jan Brees, Kathy Caldwell, Charles Muench, Kay Jobst, Ellen Martin, Carolyn Vaughn and Jennifer and Mark Vaughn in welcoming the public to their studios.

A free map of the tour will be available at the Alpine Chamber of Commerce. The event is free to the public and sponsored by the artists as well as local business; The Deli,



RC 10-2005

SHANNON LITZ/The R-C

Four-year-old Jonah and Jeff Brees stand behind one of Brees' topiary creations in the making.

Markleeville General Store, The Mountain and the Garden, Villa Gigli Trattoria and Wolf Creek.

upcoming Markleeville Artists Open Studios event call (530) 694-2253 or go to Web site: www.charlesmuench.com

For more information about the

Alpine County artists open their studios for tour this w

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

The Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios is 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and local Alpine County artists will open the doors of their studios to the public. One of the artists, Ellen Martin, will welcome visitors to see where she works on her fabric art she calls "Re-Creations."

Martin has taken recycling and use of small scraps and pieces, adding a huge amount of imagination to take fabric art out of the realm of crafts to the world of fine art. Old shoulder pads, ric-rac scrapes, odd buttons become wall hangings of Christmas trees, Hand-crocheted doilies that were destined for the garbage acquire new life in the form of sachets and wall art. Partial skeins of threads in a multitude of colors become necklaces accented with bright beads. Even empty spools, bobbins and worn out tape measures get extended life assembled into wreaths and wall decor. "Re-Creations" can only be limited by imagination and Martin's seems endless.

Martin has been sewing since she was 10 years old.

"My mom always dressed my

sister and I alike and since I was younger, when she outgrew her outfit, I inherited it," Martin said. "It seemed like I was wearing the same thing forever.

"I also liked things that were one-of-a-kind and the only way I could have that was to learn to make it myself."

Martin has been a Markleeville resident for 29 years and is involved in the community, especially the Alpine County Museum where her creativity is evident in every corner of the museum displays.

Diamond Valley School had arranged for the students to spend a day at Webster School, located on the museum grounds. The idea was to let the children know what it was like to attend a one-room school and what it would have been like 100 years ago. Through research, Martin had the children dress in period clothing, which she designed and made for the event. The clothing is now on display in the Webster School, hanging on hooks in the front entrance like they might have been when the school was open.

The Old Webster School as well as the Alpine County Courthouse have just been honored by being placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and Martin is proud to know she had



JONNI HILL/The R-C
Ellen Martin displays some of her "Re-Creations" made from recycled items. Shoulder pads, empty thread spools, old hand-crocheted doilies trimmed with buttons, ric-rac and other trims are incorporated into her artwork.

a hand in doing that.

When Martin isn't working at the museum and "Re-Creations" she is giving quilting classes as well as doing custom sewing and alterations for people.

Martin will be joined by

stained glass artist, LeeAnn Burkwall at her studio for the weekend. Burkwall does stained glass jewelry, suncatchers and custom soaps.

Martin will join fellow artists Peter Chope, Sandra Baenen,



Carolyn, Mark and Jennifer Vaughn will be available during the Markleeville Studios this weekend.

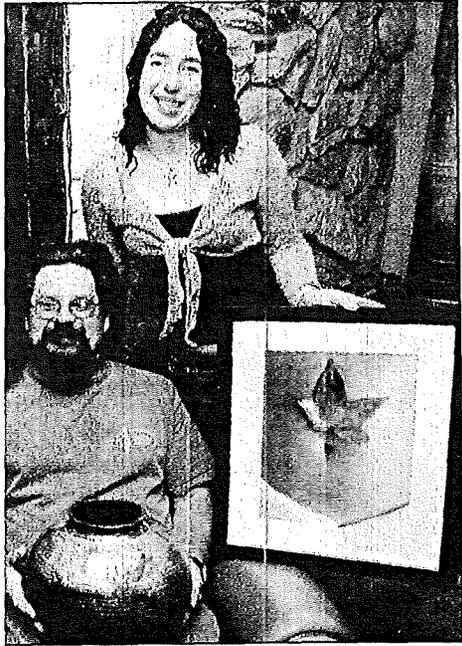
Gina Gigli, Todd Brandscombe, Susan Flakus, Jeff Brees, Jan Brees, Kathy Caldwell, Charles Muench, Kaye Jobst, Carolyn Vaughn, Jennifer Vaughn and Mark Vaughn in welcoming the public to their studios.

A free map of the tour will be available at the Alpine Chamber of Commerce. There is no cost for the event, sponsored by the artists as well as local business:

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SHANNON LITZ/The R-C

nnifer Vaughn with their artwork, which
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■ Jonni Hill can be reached at
782-5121, ext. 217, or by e-mail
at jhill@recordcourier.com

The Recor

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Fire department gets new member

RUHENSTROTH RAMBLINGS

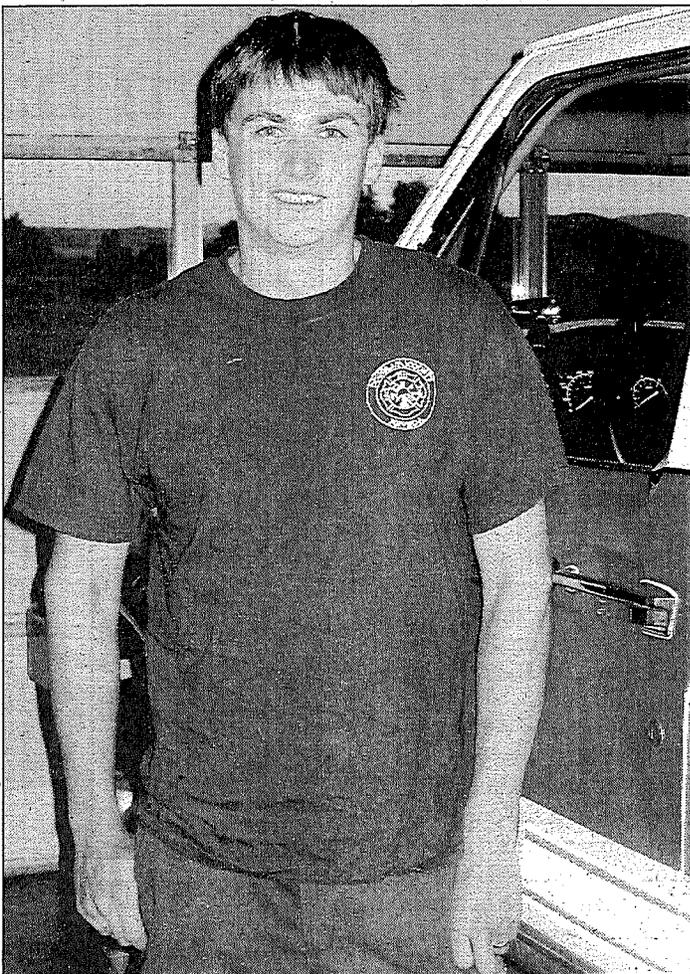
by Gail Davis

I would like for you to meet one of the newest members of our Ruhenstroth Volunteer Fire Department: Eamonn (pronounced AyeMun) Embree. He has been with the department for ten months and was previously with the Alpine County, California, Volunteer Fire Department for a year and a half. He is still in training with the East Fork Fire District, having completed two of the four required entry-level firefighting training classes, HazMat as well as Wildland. He still has to complete classes on fighting structure fires and Emergency Medical Services.

When asked his reasons for becoming a firefighter, Eamonn said he has always been interested in helping others and believes in the volunteer system. He is also interested in becoming a full-time firefighter in the future.

Most memorable response: Eamonn said, "It would be hard to pick a particular incident, but the domestic violence calls are the ones that are the hardest to forget because those crimes are always behind closed doors and usually swept under the rug. They just aren't talked about," he said, "and that seems to add to the emotional impact around those types of calls."

Eamonn is a newcomer to the Valley, coming here two years ago with his wife, Brandy, and their two young children. In his spare time, he enjoys four wheeling in the Pinenut Mountains as well as



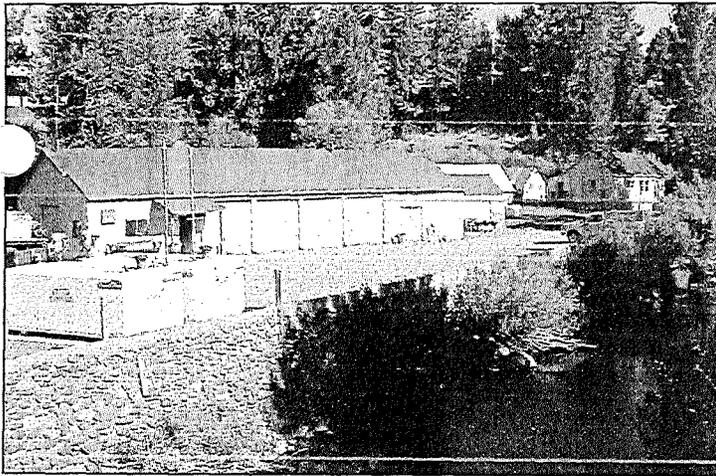
Eamonn Embree is the newest member of the Ruhenstroth Volunteer Fire Department.

exploring the mines around Virginia City.

When I asked him if he had any recommendations for his neighbors, his answer was, "Be safe and obey the law and keep fire where it belongs. Also, I've noticed how many drivers are tailgating and passing illegally. In light of the recent fatal accidents over the summer, I would like to ask people to take it a little slower and be more cautious when driving." An excellent suggestion, Eamonn. Welcome to the Carson Valley. There have been two funds

set up at area Bank of Americas for the families of the two soldiers from our Nevada Army National Guard that were killed Sept. 25 in Afghanistan. If you are interested in contributing to Patrick Stewart's family, the account number is 004971028272. The account number for John Flynn's family is 004970795551. Their children range in age from five to fifteen years.

■ To contact Gail Davis e-mail hilltoppranch97@charter.net or call 265-1947.



JO RAFFERTY/The R-C

The U.S. Forest Service Guard Station as it looks today. Markleeville Creek is in the foreground.

Forest Service guard static

by Jo Rafferty
Staff Writer

After decades of flooding, the U.S. Forest Service Guard Station in Markleeville is going to be moved to Turtle Rock Park.

The guard station, built in 1933 on six acres next to the Alpine County Sheriff's Department and courthouse, was subject to flooding as early as 1937. The most recent flood occurred in 1997.

"The flood of 1997 reemphasized the need to relocate,"

DETAILS

The U.S. Forest Service Guard Station in Markleeville will be moved to Turtle Rock Park after Alpine County received \$4.5 million in federal funding for the project.

said Alpine County Director of Public Works Leonard Turnbeaugh. "The guard station went under water. It had a lot

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Guard: Park would present

Continued from page 1

An existing community center building at the park could be used as a command center during a forest fire. Camping sites are available that fire crews could use and the parking lot could accommodate a helicopter landing.

"It has many things going for it," said Turnbeaugh.

According to Alpine County Museum documents, a former forest ranger from 1950-1959 Lyle Smith, reported that he had seen the guard station underwater three times during his employment — in 1950, 1951 and 1953. In this 1994 interview, he also said the Guard Station flooded in 1963.

Rock walls, built in the 1930s along Markleeville Creek, will be torn down in an effort to restore the creek.

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture reports, utilities and a sewer pond placed in downstream locations in the 1960s "have been threatened by flooding impacts exacerbated by the stream channel structures (a retaining wall and a footbridge) at the Markleeville guard station."

"A technical advisory committee has been formed to



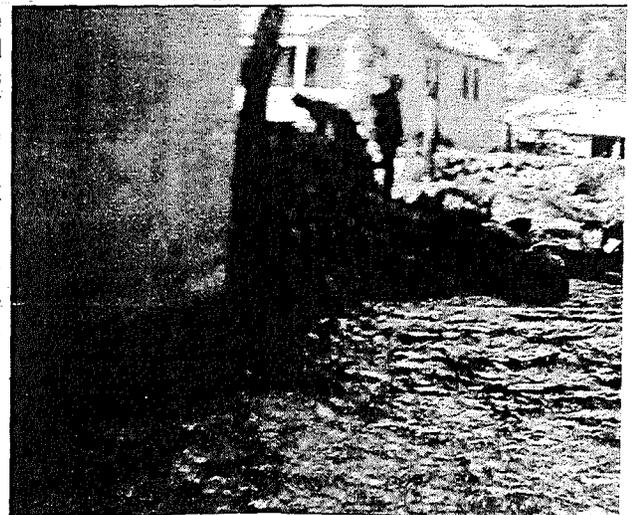
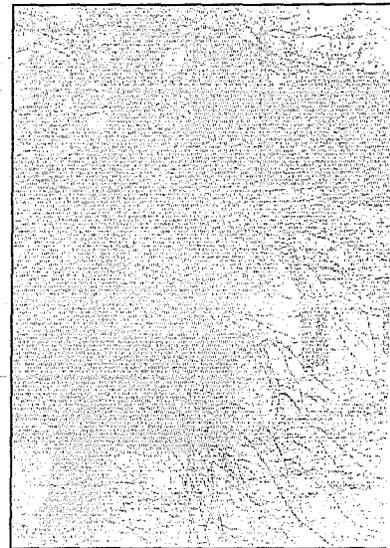
design a restoration plan," said Alpine Watershed Group Coordinator Laura Leuders.

The committee consists of representatives of the U.S. Forest Service, Alpine County, the Alpine Watershed Group, Central Sierra Resource Conservation & Development, Western Nevada Resource Conservation & Development and Caltrans.

"The TAC will be meeting periodically over the next two years," said Leuders. "We will hire a consulting firm with experience in river restoration design."

Above, the USFS guard station was flooded in 1997 (left) and in the 1930s (right).

At right, rock walls were constructed in the 1930s to prevent further flooding at the station.



I station relocation planned

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Turnbeaugh received \$4.5 million in federal funding for the project. The first \$1.5 million was made available in October, with an additional \$1.5 million collected annually over the next two years.

Turnbeaugh met with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management two weeks ago to discuss having 15 acres of land at Turtle Rock Park transferred to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

“Three agencies are working cooperatively on getting this

all together,” said Turnbeaugh.

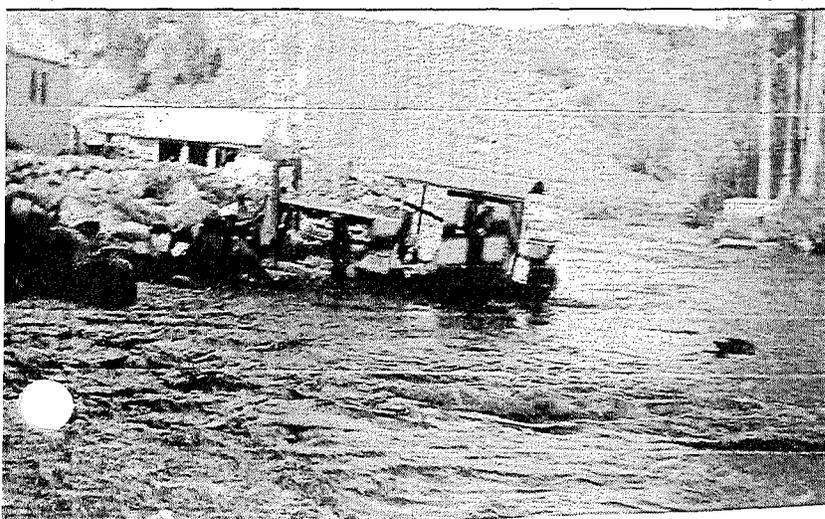
The first phase will include moving and beginning of construction at the park.

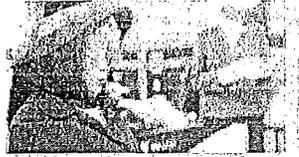
Turtle Rock Park, according to Turnbeaugh, was the best site the agency looked at. It is centrally located along Highway 89 between Woodfords and Markleeville, and the elevation is higher than the two towns.

“It has a downhill response to Markleeville or Woodfords,” said Turnbeaugh.

See **Guard** on page 2

ent advantages





Move 'em out



Fall means herding cattle for Scossas

by Jonni Hill
Staff Writer

As a second warning of impending winter dusted the highest peaks of the Carson Range above the Carson Valley, local rancher, Russell Scossa marked this noticeable event with his own "farewell to fall" ritual.

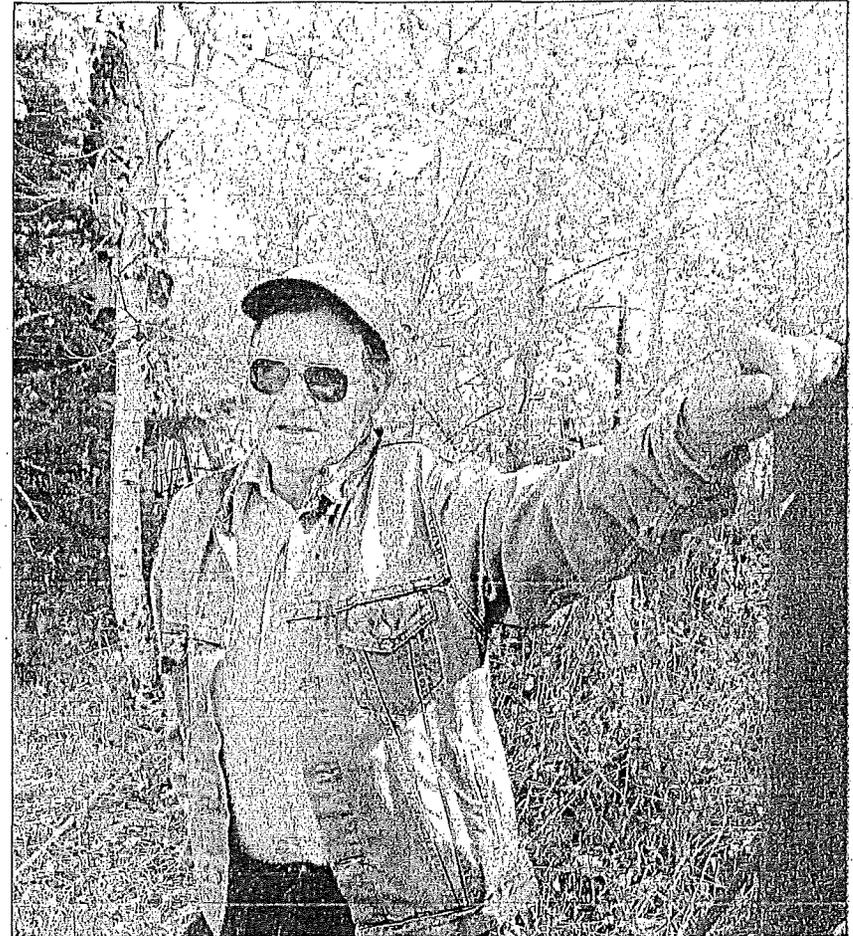
As the faded glory of autumn colors in the high country of Alpine County, blow from the birch and aspen trees, creating a rustling carpet of yellows and browns on the forest floors, Scossa, with his family and workers are busy rounding up the Scossa herd to bring them out of the high country and to

of growing fields of alfalfa, grass hay from seed to harvest for winter feed for the herd.

Inside an old cabin at the cow camp, spring and fall dates for the herd's "arrival to" and "departure from" the high country, have been recorded and signed by the Scossas since the 1970s. This diary of seasonal changes shows that some of the dates of departure extend into the first weeks of November, indicating the snows, for those years, had not been sufficient enough to force the herd to be removed early.

"This year due to the late snow melt last spring, the cows did not come on the allotment until late," Scossa said. "This

ranchers, past and present, using permitted lands for graze, have been stewards of the land, a fact argued by environmentalists who would prefer to never hear the gentle clinking of cow bells on national forest lands. According to Scossa, the existence of grazing on national forest and Bureau of Land Management lands for more than a century have been proven beneficial to the health of our forest lands and yet environmentalists argue the forest should remain untouched. As just one sound reason for continuing this age old practice of grazing rights, the very presence of a foraging herd goes a long way toward wildland fire protection by



Alpine County, blow from the birch and aspen trees, creating a rustling carpet of yellows and browns on the forest floors, Scossa, with his family and workers are busy rounding up the Scossa herd to bring them out of the high country and to the home ranch in the Carson Valley. Here, they will spend the winter in the lower elevations until next spring.

This is a bi-yearly event for the Scossa family, spring and fall, one that has been repeated, uninterrupted, for five generations. The Scossa Cow Camp on Highway 4 heading to Ebbetts Pass is the gathering place for the herd of more than 100 head. Here they will be counted and loaded on to huge transport trucks for their trek to the home ranch on Foothill Road between Sheridan and Fredricksburg.

The summer range is located in the Humbolt-Toiyabe National Forest. The Scossas ride an area that ranges from Noble Canyon to Silver Mountain Peak and Raymond Peak. Scossa cattle have roamed on that allotment in Alpine County since the late 1880s, long before forest service organized the allotment system for the ranchers. For Russell Scossa and now his son Jeremy, it is a way of life. As soon as the snows melt in spring and the high country meadows start to rejuvenate, the herd is transported from their Valley ranch and released for a summer of carefree grazing in the mountains.

Carefree for the cows, maybe, but for their human guardians, it will be a summer of endless riding to keep track of their location, moving them to different areas so over-grazing does not occur, tending to sick or injured animals, check-

indicating the snows, for those years, had not been sufficient enough to force the herd to be removed early.

"This year due to the late snow melt last spring, the cows did not come on the allotment until late," Scossa said. "This will allow us to extend our time in the meadows providing the weather holds."

Things have changed through the years. More rules and regulations, higher grazing fees, environmentalist issues, are all just a few of the things that make a hard job just a little harder. For the Scossas, ranching is a full-time, year-around job and for Russell Scossa, his heart is in his work.

"I can't really imagine doing anything else but what I do," Scossa said. "This is all I have ever done all of my life."

"It used to be fairly easy at roundup, years ago, but it seems like lately there are more predators out there. We have had an increased bear population in the last few years. Now if we are out one or two head, we can't be sure if they are just stray or if they are dead. You could ride for days and never find a trace of a carcass or even a few bones and bits of hide.

"I'm not complaining," he said, "It's just the way it is and I am sure it has been that way in the past."

Scossa, like so many of the

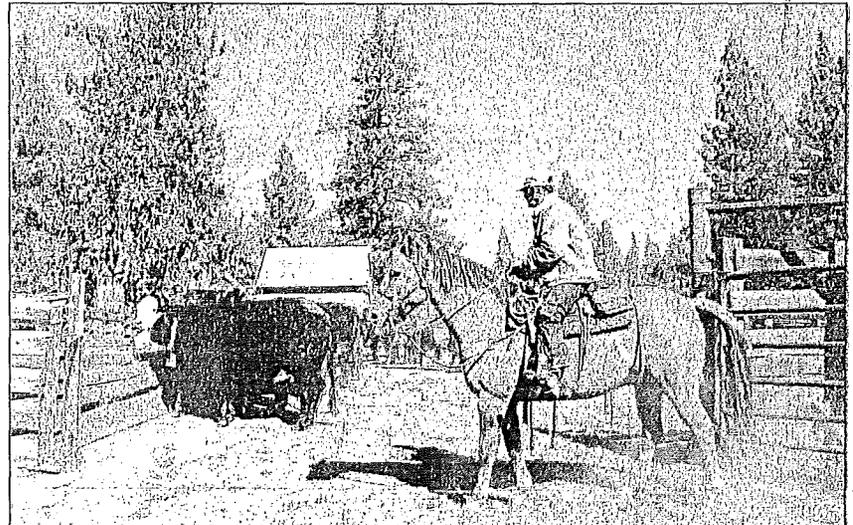
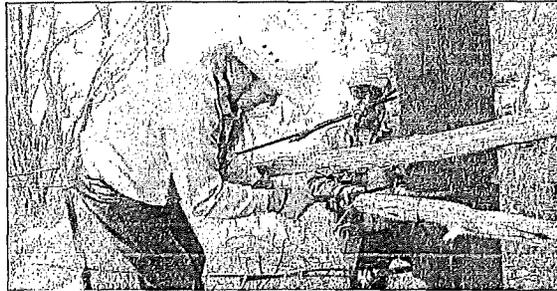
ranch and yet environmentalists argue the forest should remain untouched. As just one sound reason for continuing this age old practice of grazing rights, the very presence of a foraging herd goes a long way toward wildland fire protection by grazing down the forest scrub which would be ladder fuel in the event of a fire. Without their existence on the land, meadows would soon disappear as forested lands encroach. Streams would eventually become swamp meadows as they are clogged with an over-growth of grasses.

"The pendulum seems to be swinging back the other way," Scossa said, referring to forest service specialists who have been examining the environmental changes where grazing rights have been denied.

The last signature of autumn has autographed the end of another season. The herd is now home for the winter and waiting for spring to return to the high country. For the Scossas, there is still more riding to do. They are short two cows in the count, but with the rains and light snow, finding them will be a little easier. Their tracks will be more visible if they are still wandering around out there. The Scossa Cow Camp must be boarded up and closed for the winter to wait for one more spring to continue the tradition.



Russell Scossa takes a moment from his chores at the Scossa Cow Camp on Highway 4, Alpine County, to talk about permittee grazing in the high country.



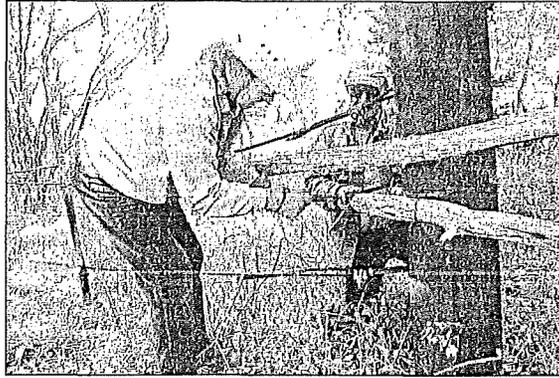
and from his son Scossa, it is a way of life. As soon as the snows melt in spring and the high country meadows start to rejuvenate, the herd is transported from their Valley ranch and released for a summer of carefree grazing in the mountains.

Carefree for the cows, maybe, but for their human guardians, it will be a summer of endless riding to keep track of their location, moving them to different areas so over-grazing does not occur, tending to sick or injured animals, checking and repairing drift fences, putting them up in the spring and dropping them to the ground in the fall — all a tough but rewarding lifestyle. Meanwhile, back at the Valley ranch, days are filled with the chores

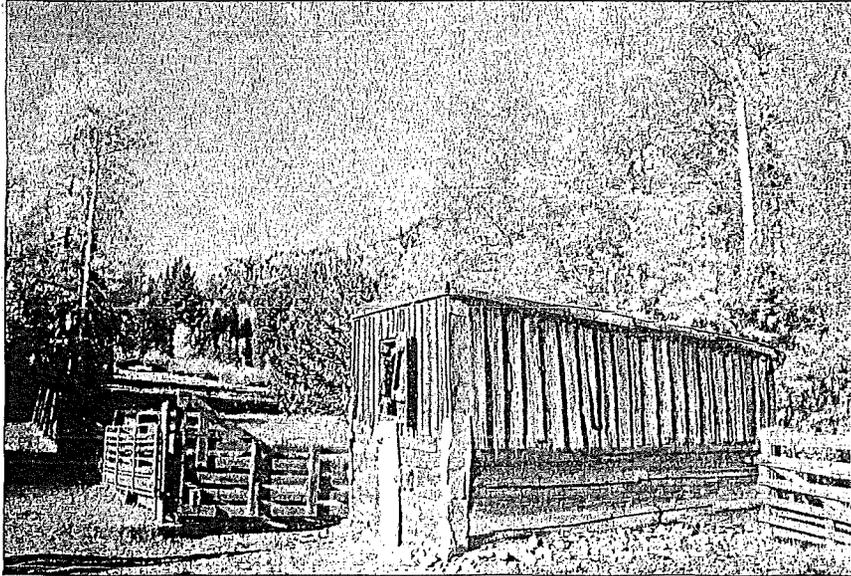
am sure it has been that way in the past.”

Scossa, like so many of the

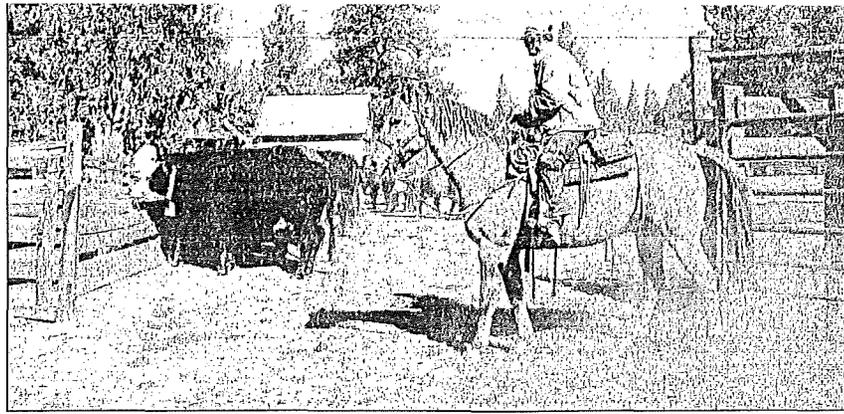
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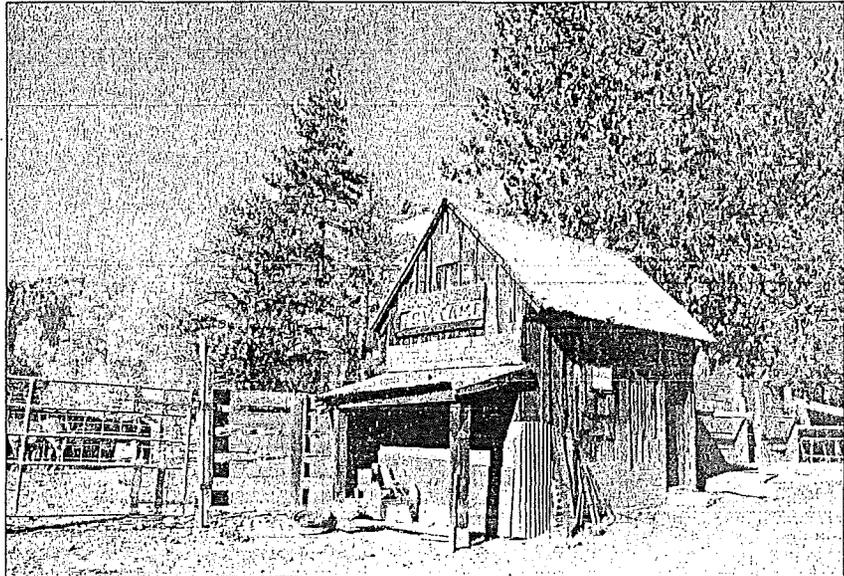
Fence repair is one of the many jobs on the Scossa Cow Camp. Caretaker, Marsha Phillips helps Russell Scossa do the repairs.



This old shed stands out against the golden colors of fall at the Scossa Cow Camp.



Bringing the cows into the corrals at the cow camp, Russell Scossa is at home on his horse. He has spent his life as a rancher.



The old tack shed stands out against the fall colors of an Indian Summer in the Sierra of Alpine County.

Photos by Jonni Hill

Alpine County topic of new history book

R-C
10-28-05

by Kurt Hildebrand
Editor

A new book focusing on the history of Alpine County goes on sale Monday.

The book, "Alpine County: Bear Valley, Kirkwood, and Markleeville" was compiled by the Alpine County Historical Society and published by Arcadia Publishing's Images of America series.

Alpine County Museum Director Dick Edwards said the book contains more than 200 archived photos.

"Nobody has seen these pictures before and there's a ton of them in there," he said. "They tell a good story of the community. To see this many photos someone would have to sit down with me and go through the archive."

Alpine County librarian Bessie Platten was approached by Arcadia about the book.

"She got a hold of the historical society and because there was no money up front, we decided to do it," Edwards said. "We spent the better part of spring and half of summer working on it."

The 128-page softcover book consists entirely of photos and captions ranging from the life of Washoes to the mining camps to modern day.

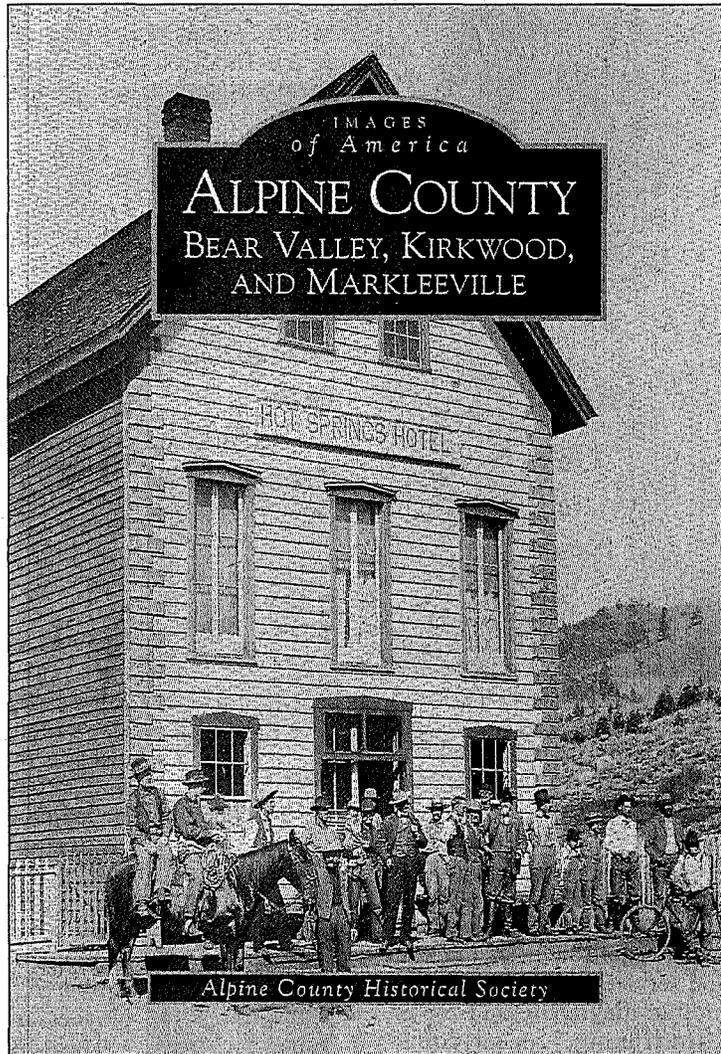
Edwards said the book was a team effort with Historical Society President Mike Makely writing chapters 1 and 6.

Attorney Karen Dustman wrote chapter 2, Patty Brisbin researched and wrote chapter 4, Nancy Thornburg provided text for several chapters. Edwards scanned the photos from the archive.

"We all got in there and tried to cover every base," Edwards said. "We got all our major and minor communities involved."

The books won't be out for sale before the Alpine County museum closes on Sunday, but they will be available through the Alpine County Chamber of Commerce in Markleeville.

The books will be available



The Hot Springs Hotel as it appeared on the corner of State Highway 89 and Montgomery Street in Silver Mountain. Today it houses the Wolf Creek Restaurant in downtown Markleeville.

DETAILS

Title: 'Alpine County: Bear Valley, Kirkwood, and Markleeville'

Price: \$19.99

Available: Alpine County Chamber of Commerce

when members of the Alpine County Historical Society gather Nov. 17 for their annual membership meeting.

Edwards said the estimated 150 members will get a 10 percent discount on the book, which will be the topic of a Power Point presentation at the

5:30 p.m. meeting in Turtle Rock Park.

The society formed in 1963 to restore the old Webster School House. Two-thirds of the society's membership live outside the county and the society has a mailing list of more than 200 people.

"We have a heck of a nice museum," Edwards said. "We are fortunate that the county maintains the building and the grounds."

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Markleeville book club takes on Martell

Meeting monthly in the downstairs activity room of the Alpine County Library, a loosely knit group of Markleeville and Woodfords residents have discovered a way to expand their horizons.

The Alpine Library Book Club came into existence in 2002 as an answer to the mutual wish of a group of library patrons to diversify their reading selections.

"Hearing the varied opinions of my neighbors about an interesting book makes me realize that we learn as much about ourselves and each other as about the book," said Grover Hot Springs State Park Lifeguard Linda Frost.

"I like reading a variety of

books and sharing opinions of the author's style and skill," said artist and retired teacher Eileen Merrill, who arrived in Woodfords in 1950 to help her husband Stuart Merrill manage the family resort.

Alpine County Clerk Barbara Jones appreciated the "stimulating conversations expressing other views from my own."

Alpine County Librarian Bessie Platten added, "Our members are open-minded, and we read books that we probably wouldn't read on our own."

The large windows of the library activity room frame views of creek side aspen trees with their golden leaves quivering in the soft breeze, contrasting with the oceanic setting of

Alpine Portfolio

by Gina Gigli

the book under discussion, "Life of Pi," by Yann Martell.

"Many of the themes are my favorites, including facing demons, animal and human relationships, and spirituality," said retired teacher Joyce Devore, who appreciates the rural lifestyle of Alpine County and equestrian recreation.

Irving Krauss, professor emeritus of sociology, said that Martell's book raised the question of reality.

"Did the tiger really exist, or did it dwell only in Pi's imagination?" he asked.

Is Alpine County a place to stimulate imagination and creativity?

Merrill said it is.

"I love the complete changes of the scenery with each season — from the beautiful fall colors, to the icy snow scenes, to the fresh green pastures of spring, with never ending inspirations for painting," she said.

Krauss chose to live in Alpine for "the beautiful locale, small community, and pleasant, interesting residents."

Jones likes the geography and the uniqueness of the peo-

ple.

"I think we all accept each other in spite of our idiosyncrasies," she said.

Frost describes Markleeville as being "a small, quiet town, very beautiful, charming, with lots of water and very few people."

Devore is intrigued by the county's evolution, "geologically, economically and culturally."

Platten extends a cordial invitation to residents to participate in the book club.

"We meet the last Wednesday of the month, from noon to 1 p.m.," she said. "Even with the relatively slower lifestyle exist-

ing in Markleeville, our members get involved in other activities, and the number of participants fluctuates."

The first book we read, in January 2002, was "Lord Jim," by Joseph Conrad, followed by such selections as "The Red Tent," by Anita Diamant, "Good Earth," by Pearl Buck, "Mistress of Spices," by Chitra Divakuruni, and "Billy the Kid," by Robert Utley.

Unlike most book clubs, where members buy books, our members borrow books lent to us by other libraries.

■ Gina Gigli may be reached by e-mail at ginagigli@gbis.com

DOLL MAKER

R-C 11-4-05



JOYCE HOLLISTER/Special to The R-C
Doll maker Madeline John of Woodfords and her granddaughter Stella John of Lake Tahoe at the basketweaving event in Stewart on Saturday.

Kirkwood predicts Nov. 19 opening

R-C News Service

Wintry weather in the high Sierra has Kirkwood Mountain Resort predicting a Nov. 19 opening day.

This storm should bring a lit-

tle more snow at higher elevations than last week's storm, said meteorologist Ray Collins. Kirkwood Mountain Resort reported 6 inches at the tops of their mountains during that storm.

"We are going to see, more wind with this storm," Collins said, "but there's going to be a lot of precipitation, too."

As of Thursday, there was 2-6 inches of snow according to Kirkwood's Web site.

Grant will aid in detection of Alpine mothers at risk

Staff Reports

Babies born to mothers who abuse drugs or alcohol during pregnancy may pay a high price for their mother's abuse.

Children exposed to drugs and alcohol before birth are at greater risk for delayed development, small birth weight, mental retardation and serious health problems throughout their lives. Capri of the Sierras, a non-profit in El Dorado and Alpine counties, is dedicated to improving the health and well being of children and mothers that are at risk due to perinatal drug exposure.

The organization has

received \$50,000 from the California Endowment to begin a strategic response to this crisis in the Sierra.

"This award is the catalyst Capri needed to bring this vital program to our counties," said Capri President Cindy Hannah. "We are grateful to the California Endowment for their efforts to improve the health of babies in our communities."

The funding will provide for two assessors who will begin a screening process that will identify women at risk of substance abuse during pregnancy. Dr. Ira Chasnoff, president of the Children's Research Triangle and a professor of Clinical

Pediatrics at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Chicago, has authored several books on the subject of substance abuse during pregnancy and has received several awards for his work with high risk women, children and families. He has developed a screening tool which will be used by the Capri program. Women identified to be at risk will be given a comprehensive risk assessment in the prenatal care provider's office or other safe environment.

For more information, contact Hannah at cindy@hhs.alpinecountyca.com

Alpine Fall Health Festival takes place Saturday

by Jo Rafferty
Staff Writer

About 150-200 people usually attend the Alpine County annual Fall Health Festival, now in its seventh year.

This year's health festival takes place Saturday at the Early Learning Center, 100 Foothill Road in Woodfords. About 35 vendors, including state agencies, education and prevention agencies and the Alpine County Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol, will participate.

In addition there will be raffles taking place every 30 minutes, with the grand prize benefiting the winner's utility bill.

"There will be lots of raffles," said Cindy Schemenauer, who took over as director of the Alpine County Health Education Program about six months ago. "The grand prize is worth over \$250 in energy credit."

The \$250 would go toward the winner's utility bill, according to Schemenauer.

Flu shots will be available for \$10 for Alpine County residents, Barton Memorial Hospital will be doing free finger-

prick blood testing and dental screenings and physicals will be provided for children ages 0-5 years.

A personal trainer from Nevada Fitness will be there conducting exercise assessments. Nevada Fitness also donated four three-month passes for the raffle.

Other businesses that are donating to the event are Jamba Juice, selling 16-ounce smoothies for \$3 to benefit the program, and Starbucks, which donated coffee, snacks and gift baskets for the raffle.

"It's all about health and wellness," said Schemenauer.

Record-Courier Nov. 4, 2005

California closes 2005 fishing season

R-C News Service

California closes many of its streams, creeks and rivers for the 2005 fishing season on Tuesday. Those waters will not re-open again until April 30,

2006. Waters closing include the West Fork of the Carson River and Red Creek in Hope Valley, the East Fork of the Carson River and Markleeville, Silver and Wolf creeks.

Those staying open include

Indian Creek Reservoir and Upper and Lower Blue lakes, Upper and Lower Lost lakes, Twin Lake, Meadow Lake, Tamarack Lake, Upper and Lower Sunset lakes and Wet Meadows.

Alpine roads will all be plowed

Staff Reports

State budget concerns won't have a substantial effect on how Alpine County's roads are plowed, Road Maintenance Superintendent Dale Robinson said Thursday.

"The roads will be cleared," he said. "It will affect how the roads are plowed, but not all that much."

A Record-Courier story appearing on the Alpine County page in the Nov. 11 edition incorrectly indicated that budget consideration would determine whether roads would be plowed.

"We will have them cleared," he said.

According to the Alpine County Road Department, snow removal is paid for from state gas tax revenues and doesn't receive any money from county

taxpayers.

Airport Road, Douglas Way and driveway berms won't be plowed until after a storm is over and other roads are open.

According to the policy, anytime the road department has to close a road, they will notify the Sheriff's Office, the fire departments, school and try and notify anyone living along the road.

In case of emergency on a closed road, the road department is asking residents to call 911, so the Sheriff's Office can contact the department. Sanding will be limited to steep hills and sharp curves after storms.

Chain and snow tire restrictions will be more frequent.

Snow removal will begin when the snow reaches 3 inches in any area.

For information on road closures and to report safety issues, call (530) 694-2140.

Alpine report

Alpine turkey bingo is Saturday

Turkey bingo to benefit the Alpine Children's Center will be 7-10 p.m. Saturday at Turtle Rock Park.

For more information call (530) 694-2934 or (530) 694-0570.

Grover goes on holiday hours

Grover Hot Springs will be closed Thanksgiving Day but will be open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday.

The Hot Springs will be closed Wednesdays during Christmas break, Dec. 19-30 and will close at 3 p.m. on

Christmas Eve and 5 p.m. on New Year's Eve. The park will be closed both Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Hours are subject to change. For more information call: (530) 694-2249

Kit Carson Lodge mid-week specials

The Kit Carson Lodge is offering a midweek ski package.

Those who stay 2-3 days Sunday through Thursday will receive one free ski pass at Kirkwood Ski Resort and Kirkwood Cross Country Center and save up to 20 percent on additional passes.

Those staying 4-5 nights will receive two free ski passes.

For more information call (530) 676-1370 or visit www.kitcarsonlodge.com

Sitting on a bench and observing Markleeville

Downtown Markleeville consists of a wide road, with tourists in cars, campers and motorcycles often speeding through town without seeing the surrounding creeks, mountains, pastures or trees.

The Cutthroat Saloon asserts itself by virtue of its strategic corner location and by bar patrons who sit on benches brandishing beer cans and ashtrays. Cooks, waitpersons, and dishwashers grab some time-out by sitting on benches alongside Wolf Creek Restaurant.

Law and order takes place kitty corner to the Cutthroat in an historic square-cut stone courthouse, where judges sit on the bench in the courtroom on the first floor, and where the sheriff and deputies headquarter in the basement.

Vying for attention is the Markleeville General Store next to the courthouse, with a repetitive jingle-jingle, bang-bang issuing from front door slamming. Kids and adults alike enjoy slurping ice cream while sitting on the benches of the old, covered front porch and watching the world go by.

Alpine Portfolio

by Gina Gigli

Everyone meets at mail-time at the post office down the road whether picking up bills and packages inside, or buying newspapers from the stands outside. Next to the post office, Coldwell Banker Real Estate provides a rustic bench for lingerers.

Coffee drinkers and smokers perch on benches outside the J. Marklee Toll Station at the northern end of town.

Winter hours are in effect in parts of downtown Markleeville, with the Deli closed until spring; Rudden's General Store will be open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; the coffee shop at J. Marklee Toll Station will be open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; the Visitors Center will be open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

On the way to Grover Hot Springs, the Alpine County Museum up on the hill, with veranda benches, has closed for the winter. The grand re-opening of the museum will take place on May 27, during Memorial Day Weekend.

Further up the hill, Villa Gigli, with deck benches, has also closed for the winter, with re-opening scheduled for May 6.

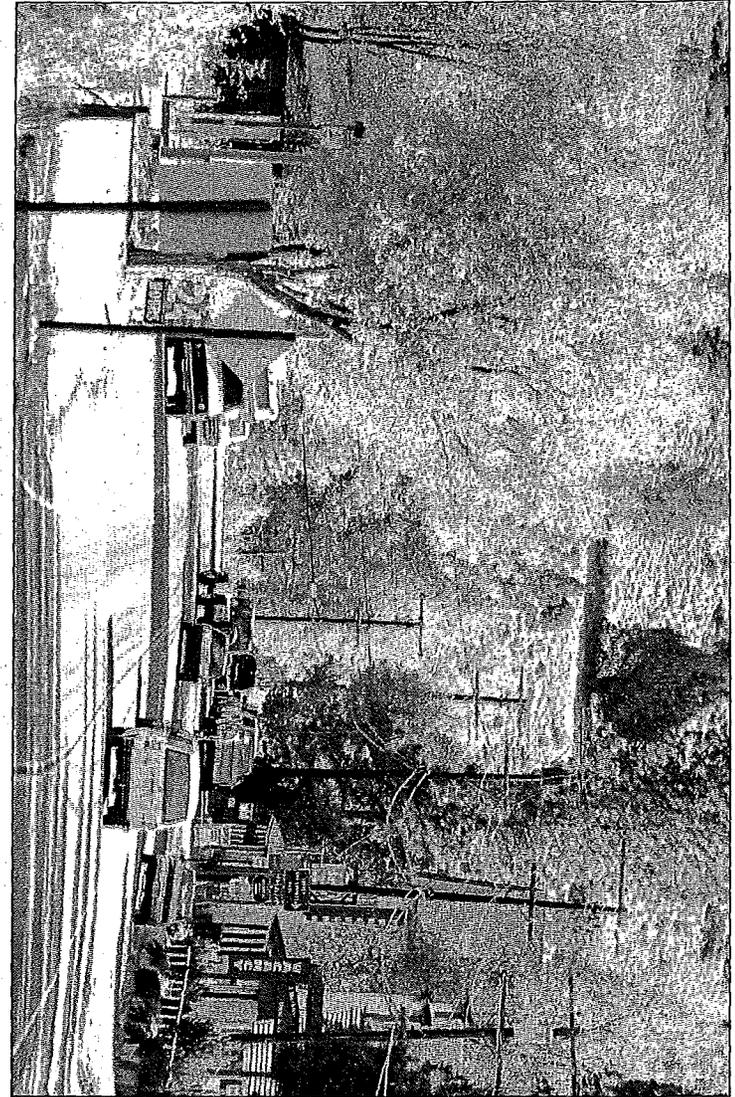
At the end of Hot Springs Road is Grover Pool, with benches built along the protective fences around each pool, so that hot water soakers and cold water swimmers can decompress. Winter hours are from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays (closed Wednesdays) and from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends.

Bench-sitters, whether they be bird-watchers, car-counters, people-observers, deep-thinkers or nature-lovers are always welcome in Markleeville.

■ Gina Gigli is a Markleeville resident.

Downtown Markleeville in fall 2004 hasn't changed much in the past few years.

JESSICA COMBOS/R-C file photo



R-C
11-8-05



R-C
11-8-05

JESSICA COMBOS/R-C file photo

Downtown Markleeville in fall 2004 hasn't changed much in the past few years.

A great day for art in Markleeville

R-C
11-12-05

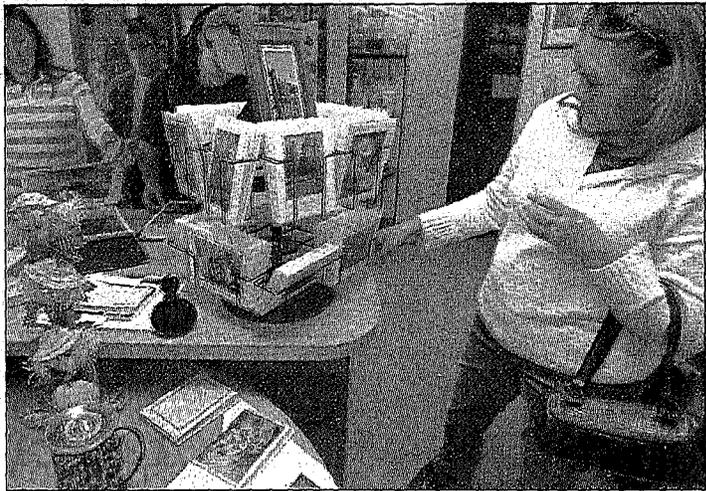
Customers treated to original art; artists enjoy busy day during tour

by Jonni Hill

Fall came to Alpine County and the town of Markleeville in a spectacular way last weekend with the Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios Tour. Crystal blue skies announced the event, just in time for nature to add her palette of color to her own canvas of birch and aspens and the Alpine artists opened the doors to their private studios to show the public how they work, too.

Several hundred visitors flocked to the tiny mountain county to enjoy nature's open air studio and then to make the tour of the artist's studios from as far away as the Mother Lode Gold Country of the California foothills.

"This tour gives (the artists) a chance to share what we do



SHANNON LITZ/R-C photos

Sara Cota of Gardnerville looks at Todd Branscombe's photography at Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios in Alpine County, Saturday. The event was a tour of more than a dozen artists' private studios, Saturday and Sunday.

and how we do it," potter Mark Vaughn, said. "It is a chance to interact with people on a different level than if we were able to do at different art shows."

Vaughn and his wife Car-



Gerri Praught of Truckee looks at Jennifer Vaughn's photography at the Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios event, Saturday.



Kim Browning of Gainesville, Fla. looks at Ellen Martin's purses and other fabric art at the Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studios, Saturday.

olyn produce hand-thrown high fire Raku pottery with metallic iridescent glazes on unique pots, vases, and fanciful wall decorations. The Vaughns' daughter, Jennifer, who also had her work on display, is an award-winning fine art photographer. A recipient of the Mamiya Award of Excellence, Jennifer is a graduate of Hallmark Institute of Photography.

"She has the eye for it," her father, Mark Vaughn said.

Another artisan on the tour was Kaye Jobst with her hand-beaded necklaces, ornaments and bottles, her gourds turn into artwork as well as the intricate work of her pine needle baskets.

"I collect pine needles from around here," Jobst said, "but, I don't just pick them off the ground, I wait until a good wind and pick up the freshly fallen ones or wait until I see the brown ones on the trees.

"Those are the ones I use. I don't want them to be wet on the ground and start to develop the black spots. They are starting to mold and they are unusable."

Jobst was showing her work in the home of her son, Todd Branscombe, a nature photographer. Branscombe was showing a new collection of photographs this year with his bear photography. Catching the bears in their natural habitat, his collection included a series of bears he had photographed, some right outside the back

See **Tour** on page 7

Tour: Markleeville artists display works

Continued from page 1
 door of his Markleeville studio.

Across the street from the Branscombe's Studio was a new addition to the tour. The Cookie Planet and food artist Debra Esteban displayed her work in a setting of a late 1950s soda parlor. Delectable creations, in the form of realistic ice cream cones of pure chocolate and the premier piece of art work, a hamburger. But not just any hamburger. The whole thing was made from chocolate. From the sesame seed bun to the tomatoes, pickles, lettuce, onions, cheese and of course the burger, it was a 100 percent sugar high. Served with a paper bagged, 1950's-style serving of French fries in the form of thin sugar cookie wafers in a red woven plastic basket with a real coke on the side, the setting was complete. Esteban has fun with food and her food is really too artistic to eat but also too good not to sample a bite or two.

At the studio of Peter Chope and Sandra Baenen, another artist, Kathy Caldwell was showing her hand-fabricated gold and silver jewelry. Each piece of her sparkling, one-of-a-kind designs, would be like wearing a piece of art.

In the studio of Jeff Brees, creator of topiary and garden sculpture using wire and hand-wrought metals, was his mother Jan Brees. An artist in her own right, Jan offered hand-crafted metal autumn leaves in natural free form shapes and whimsical rock sculpted birds.

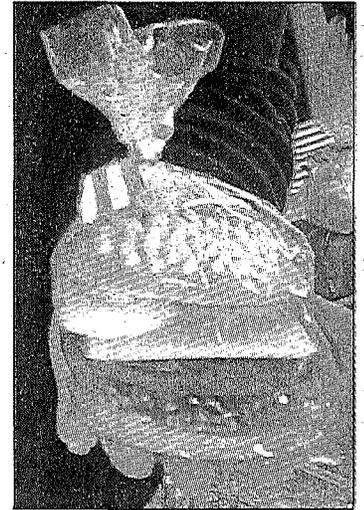


The leaves, crafted from nature's own patterns, each featured unique natural fall metallic colors.

"The rocks speak to me," Brees said. "I let them tell me what they want to be," she said

about her imaginative birds.

Along with artists, Sandra Baenen, Todd Branscombe, Jan Brees, Jeff Brees, Kathy Caldwell, Peter Chope, Susan Flakus, Gina Gigli, Kaye Jobst, Ellen Martin, Charles Muench,



Gina Gigli, left, explains the process of etching to visitors, Rita and Richard Valent at the Villa Gigli during the Markleeville Artists Autumn Open Studio Tour. Above, one of Debra Esteban's unique creations made from chocolate — a hamburger.

■ JONNI HILL/R-C photos

Debra Esteban, Carolyn, Jennifer and Mark Vaughn, the other sponsors of the Open Studio event, The Deli, The Markleeville General Store, The Mountain and the Garden, Villa Gigli Trattoria and The Wolf Creek offered specialty items for the enjoyment of the visitors who came to enjoy the offerings of an Alpine autumn.

■ Jonni Hill is a staff writer at The Record-Courier. She can be reached at jhill@recordcourier.com or 782-5121, ext. 213.

Alpine County writer publishes first novel

After impulsively throwing away his first two attempts to write books, Woodfords resident Adam Coyan now calmly discusses the recent – October 2005 – publication of his novel, “Plight of the Forgotten.” He claims that his sense of accomplishment is complete, and “no one can take that away from me.”

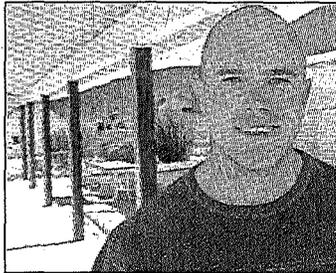
Stephen, Caleb, Daria and Kaitlin, the main characters in his novel, are brought to life to portray a satire of “where I see our society heading, with no emotions showing. As people pass each other on the street, their faces are expressionless. The Matamiss, the last of those left with true emotion, live in a perilous time where displaying any type of response could get you killed, and that the lack of emotion is a sure sign that the Demon Lord Grulag stirs in the hearts of men.”

When Coyan describes the theme of his story, dimples appear, and his green eyes crinkle with mirth, making it evident that his own personality is the complete opposite of the expressionless imaginary characters populating his book.

“I love living in Alpine

Alpine Portfolio

by Gina Gigli



SHANNON LITZ/The R-C

Author Adam Coyan.

County, because the area is small and everyone knows everyone,” said the member of the fourth generation of Coyans settled in Markleeville.

“Of course, I also hate living here because the county is small and everyone knows everyone,” he jokingly added.

Adam, born in 1973, is one of four boys in the family parented by Markleeville residents Wanda and Gary Coyan. He is second to the oldest son Rob (George), followed by Josh and Gary. Brother Gary designed the cover for “Plight

of the Forgotten.” Two cliffs frame the image of an Indian face embedded in the earth, and an eagle soars above. All of the Coyan sons grew up hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, swimming, but Adam recently has pursued the art of sailing his boat on Pyramid Lake.

A serious student, Adam majored in physics at Northern University of Arizona at Flagstaff, but as he describes it, “I followed a different path.”

This path has included an enlistment in the Navy, where “I felt like some kind of hero,” life guarding at Grover Hot Springs, truck driving, operating the Markleeville Water Treatment Plant, and writing his books. When asked about the theme of the book he’s working on currently, Coyan dodges the question by saying, “Well, the title is ‘Spirit Chronicles: Volume I.’”

“Plight of the Forgotten”, by Adam Coyan was published in October 2005 by Author House and may be purchased at Amazon.Com.

■ Gina Gigli may be reached by e-mail at ginagigli@gbis.com

R-C
11-16-05



SHANNON LITZ/ R-C photos



Above, Barton Hospital lab assistant Jennifer Crawford takes blood from Nick Agnason at the Alpine County Health Fair on Saturday. He was having a cholesterol and glucose check. At left, Doug Rublaitis of the Alpine County Probation Department helps Marcus Rice, 4, make a visor at the health fair.

10/05

Alpine County writer publishes first novel

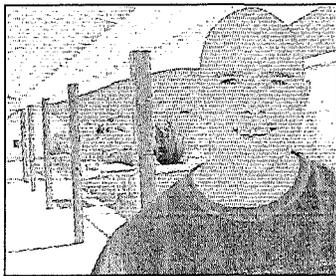
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HEALTH FAIR



Snow removal rules explained

Staff Reports

California’s budget crunch may affect whether Alpine County residents will have their roads cleared of snow this winter.

According to the Alpine County Road Department, snow removal is paid for from state gas tax revenues and doesn’t receive any money from county taxpayers.

Because of the deficits, Alpine County won’t be able

to maintain prior levels of plowing, sanding and overtime by the road crew, according to the policy.

According to the policy, anytime the road department has to close a road, they will notify the Sheriff’s Office, the fire departments, school and try and notify anyone living along the road.

In case of emergency on a closed road, the road department is asking residents to call 911, so the Sheriff’s Office can

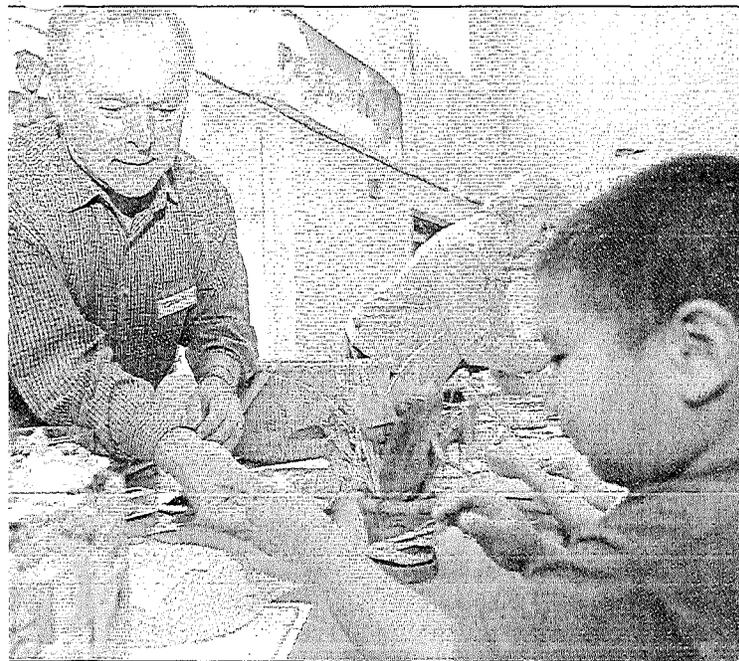
contact the department. Sanding will be limited to steep hills and sharp curves after storms. Chain and snow tire restrictions will be more frequent and berms blocking driveways will only be plowed after a storm has passed and during normal working hours. Snow removal will begin when the snow reaches 3 inches in any area.

For information on road closures and to report safety issues, call (530) 694-2140.

FAIR



SHANNON LITZ/ R-C photos



Above, Barton Hospital lab assistant Jennifer Crawford takes blood from Nick Agnason at the Alpine County Health Fair on Saturday. He was having a cholesterol and glucose check. At left, Doug Rublaitus of the Alpine County Probation Department helps Marcus Rice, 4, make a visor at the health fair.

Young glaucoma sufferer advocating research

When Melissa Baker was 15, she was a typical nearsighted teenager with thick glasses and a love of skiing and snowboarding. She'd been diagnosed with myopia when she was 7 years old and had been wearing increasingly thicker glasses since then to treat her vision deterioration. There was one problem, however: Melissa's problem was glaucoma, not myopia. The glasses were doing nothing to treat the pressure problem in her lazy left eye, and unfortunately for Melissa, it was too late.

It was a skiing accident at the age of 15 that led Melissa to an

ophthalmologist. Her family's optometrist had for years neglected to give her a standard glaucoma test. Upon visiting the specialist, Melissa learned that she had a serious case of glaucoma that had been causing her vision problems for all those years. Because Melissa had been suffering from extremely high intraocular pressure for so long, the damage to her optic nerve was irreversible. After four attempts at corrective surgery in her late teenage years, Melissa eventually lost sight completely in her left eye. At age 22, Melissa's left eye was replaced with a glass eye.

Melissa has since dedicated her time to educating others on the importance of regular glaucoma screenings, and she was recently appointed to be an honorary co-chair for the Glaucoma Research Foundation.

"It's important for me to share my story with others to prevent similar tragedies," said Melissa, who is now a 24-year-old student in Northern California. "Consumers need to look out for themselves when it comes to ensuring that they're getting the best quality of care. People must take an active role in their vision care and understand the differences among eye

care professionals. Unfortunately, I had to lose vision in one eye to realize this."

Melissa recently reviewed new materials at www.nclnet.org on a new education campaign about the importance of understanding the various members of the eye care team. National Consumers League released the results of a survey, which found that many consumers, including those who wear glasses or contact lenses, are uncertain about the differences among various eye care providers, the services they perform, and the training and education they must complete.

The survey showed that one-third of respondents (30 percent) incorrectly thought optometrists have earned medical degrees. Despite the confusion about which eye care professionals have medical degrees, consumers have strong opinions on the need for the degree: when it comes to performing surgeries (including laser), injecting/prescribing medications, and emergency care, most respondents indicated that they would prefer their eye-care provider to have a medical degree.

"When it comes to eye care, it is vital for consumers to

understand who can provide what kind of services," said NCL President Linda Golodner. "There are a number of different types of professionals on the eye care team, and unfortunately, many consumers, as seen in our survey, don't differentiate among them."

Melissa is still an active snowboarder and skier and enjoys life as any other 24-year-old woman. She has a new part-time job, and she still has 20/15 vision in her right eye.

To learn more about NCL's new education effort, visit www.nclnet.org/health/eyes.

Betty James Cruz

1937-2005

Betty James Cruz, 67, died Nov. 22, 2005 at Carson Tahoe Hospital.

Mrs. Cruz was born Nov. 27, 1937 in Carson City to Roy and Maize Dick James and she was a resident of Woodfords, Calif. for 57 years. She was married to Kenneth Leo Cruz, Sr. and lived in San Francisco. She was a truck driver and a homemaker.

She was preceded in death by her parents, brothers Delbert, Marvin, Russell and her sister Eleanor James.

She is survived by her sons, Terrance Cruz I, Gregory Cruz, Darrel Cruz, Steven Cruz, David Cruz, Kenneth Cruz, Jr., her daughter Vanessa Cruz, sisters Flora and Leona James, her brother Edward James, 22 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Arrangements are in the care of FitzHenry's Carson Valley Funeral Home. A memorial service took place 11 a.m. Nov. 26 at FitzHenry's Carson Valley Funeral Home in Gardnerville followed by a Celebration of Life at the Woodfords Education Center.

LAKE TAHOE

Red ink locks up Alpine jail expansion

By Jo Rafferty
Tribune News Service

Until California's budget picture starts to look brighter, plans to expand Alpine County's inmate capacity beyond a single holding cell will stay on hold.

Funding department officials had hoped for new construction is not available. Until it is, the cell located in the basement of the Alpine County Courthouse, which was built in 1928, will have to suffice.

"With what occurred in California with the state and county budget, it was not feasible to move forward on a new facility at this time," said Sheriff John Crawford.

Property behind the general store, adjacent to the Alpine County Administration Build-

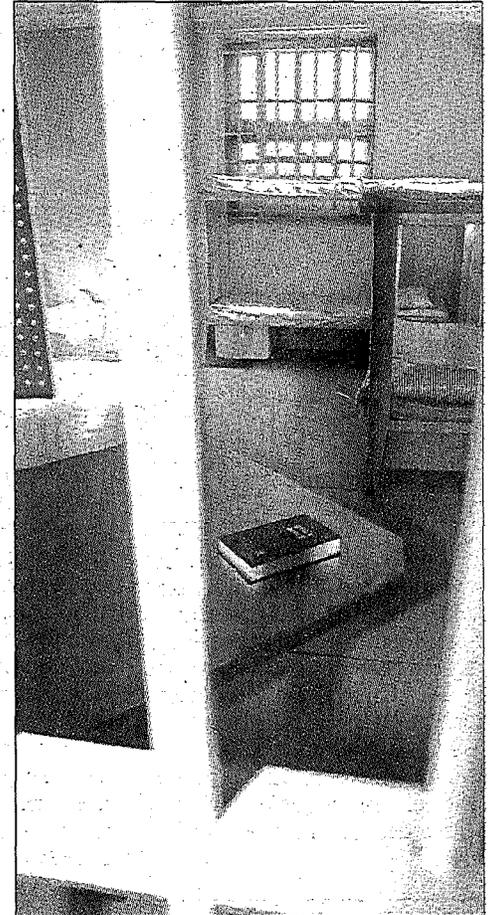
ing, was purchased a few years ago for the future Alpine County Sheriff's Office, but right now no funding is available to build on it, according to Leonard Turnbeaugh, director of Public Works and county surveyor.

Coring of the soil and drafting of floor plans have been done so far, but the sheriff's office is still in the preliminary planning stages, he said.

"We're looking for funding sources," said Turnbeaugh.

Currently there is one holding cell, used only for prisoners waiting to go to court. Two cells were available until several years ago, but one is now being used as a storage room.

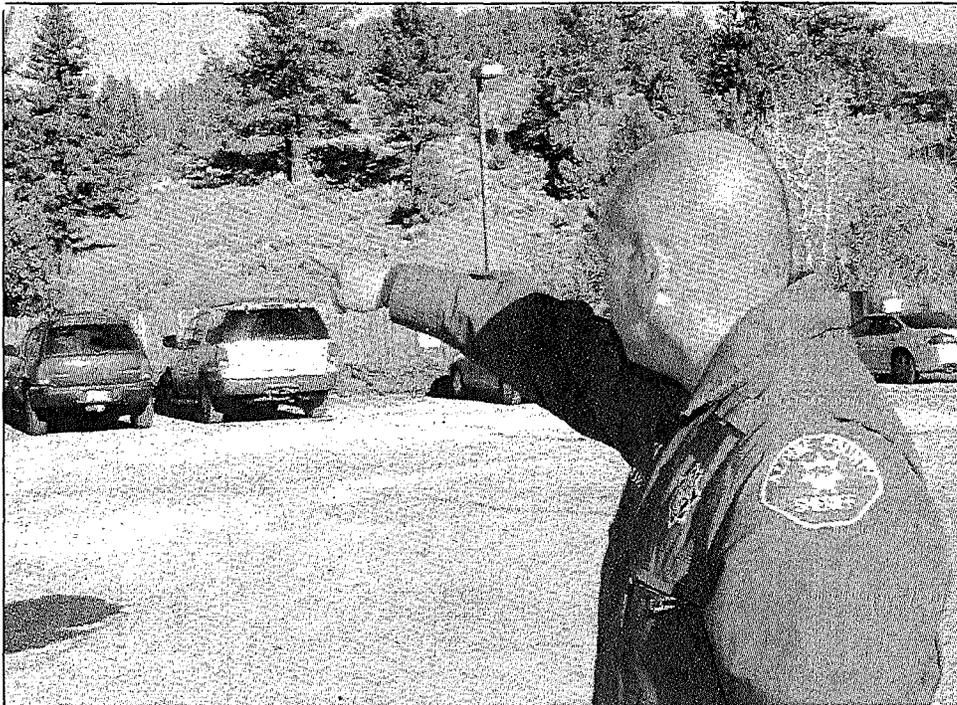
Inmates are taken to El Dorado County Jail in South Lake Tahoe until their court date.



Jessica Combos / Tribune News Service

The holding cell, above, under the courthouse in Markleeville since 1928, is still used for the court's purposes.

Alpine County Sheriff John Crawford, left, points out the possible location for the new sheriff's office in Markleeville.



New book was a community effort

"When Alpine County Librarian Bessie Platten stood up at the meeting of the Alpine County Historical Society last year and presented her idea for a new Alpine County history book, the members listened attentively," said Mike Makley, out-going president. "Publication of our previous history book, 'Alpine Heritage' took place more than 40 years ago, in 1964. Long-time Alpine residents Ileen Price Long, Mabel C. Love, and Angie T. Merrill (now all deceased) had prepared 'Alpine Heritage' for publication in honor of Alpine County's Centennial Celebration. Our new book, 'Images of America: Alpine County,' published in October of 2005, is intended to serve as an historical and photographic complement to the former classic portrayal of pioneer life."

Alpine County Museum Director Dick Edwards said the update was helped by expansion of the county's photo collection.

"The photo collection had been expanded over the years, thanks to donations from historical society members and history buffs," Edwards said. "The book committee selected 203 photos from a total of 500 to be included in our new book. Though these photos had been scanned into our museum's archival system, Arcadia Publishing required each of the 203 photos to be scanned at 20 centimeters wide and 300 dots per inch."

Mike Makley said the new book traces Alpine County's development to three periods of time: geological forces at work, 10,000 years of existence by the Washo Indians, and the Euro-American occupation led by Jedediah Smith in 1827.

Alpine Portfolio

by Gina Gigli

Platten, who originally conceived the project, coordinated progress with Arcadia Publishing, and assisted with the organization of chapters and layout.

"It was a labor of love by the committee for the community," she said.

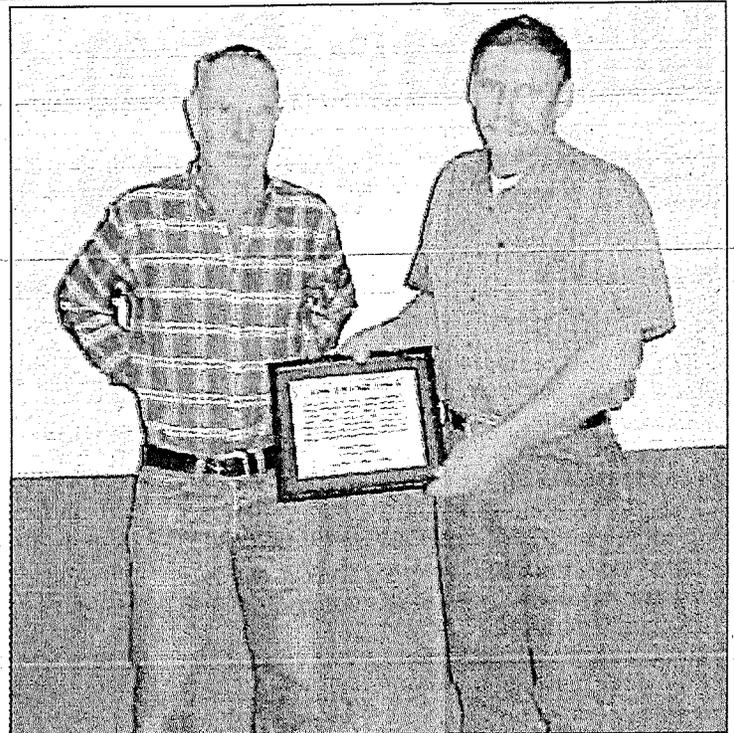
Karen Dustman researched and wrote the text for Chapter Two – 'Mining Towns and Camps.'

"I enjoyed the research, because I learned a lot, and I appreciated my husband Rick's assistance," Dustman said. "I think the community should be proud of the finished book."

Patti Brisbin, who lives in Carson City and is a social economic analyst for the Nevada Department of Transportation, was responsible for writing Chapter Four – 'The Middle Years: Where Did Everybody Go?'

"Pulling in and tracking the back-and-forth activities of Alpine County and Carson Valley families was fascinating for me," Brisbin said.

Nancy Thornburg also wrote some text for chapters, and other members of the Historical Society who helped with gathering photos, research, verification and editing were Irving Krause, Ellen Martin, Lois Kaiser, Fritz Thornburg, Gary



Fritz Thornburg and Alpine County Supervisor Don Jardine with some mining certificates.

Coyan, and Gina Gigli.

A well-kept secret is the fact that "whatever else was left," was laboriously and efficiently taken care of by the historical society president, Mike Makley, and the museum director, Dick Edwards, who fortunately for the sake of the book, enjoyed collaborating.

Ever wonder how Markleeville was named?

"The first killing in the area occurred when Jacob Marklee was shot to death by H. W. Tuttle," according to the caption under the photo of Jacob Marklee in the book. "On June 23, 1862, Marklee recorded a land claim of 160 acres that became the town site. Marklee established a toll station, collecting fees from travelers when their cargo and livestock crossed the Middle Fork of the Carson River (Markleeville Creek). Although toll station

operators were always unpopular, and at least one other collector was shot in that era, Marklee was not shot by an irate traveler. Marklee had 'benefited and befriended' Tuttle, who later killed him in an argument over property rights. A year later, Tuttle was acquitted of murder in Amador County District Court, when he was found to have acted in self defense. Marklee's home site was located where the Markleeville courthouse now stands."

"Images of America: Alpine County" may be purchased for \$25.29 by sending a check or money order to: The Historical Society of Alpine County, P.O. Box 517, Markleeville, CA 96120. The price includes tax and shipping.

■ Gina Gigli is a resident of Markleeville.

Kirkwood opens for operation as snow falls

Staff Reports

It was snowing on Thursday when Kirkwood Mountain Resort opened for daily operations for the 2005/06 winter season with Chair 5 in operation, offering intermediate terrain.

According to www.kirkwood.com, 3-8 inches of snow fell on the mountain in the previous 24 hours, leaving a base depth of 13-28 inches for opening day.

The site's live Web cam showed the lift was operating and people skiing on Thursday morning.

A winter storm watch was in effect for the Sierra through Friday morning.

If conditions permit, the resort will open more lifts for the weekend, offering beginner and advanced terrain as well as intermediate.

Early season ticket prices are in effect until further notice; ticket price will depend on amount of terrain available.

All services will be available from the Village Plaza, including tickets, season passes, rentals, repairs and private lessons for adults and children.

ON THE WEB

www.kirkwood.com

or call: (209) 258-7254

Kirkwood Sports will open, as well as several dining options including the Wall Bar & Grill, Monte Wolfe's, Bub's Sports Bar and the Kirkwood Inn.

The Cross-Country Ski & Snowshoe Center will begin winter operations on Saturday, with 10 kilometers of groomed trails with skating lanes in the meadow and 25 kilometers of snowshoe trails in the Sierra Crest trail system.

Season passes are on sale, starting at \$199 for an adult midweek pass.

All paid lift tickets can be turned in for full credit on a season pass; pass must be purchased the same day.

Visit www.kirkwood.com or call (209) 258-7254 for more information.

Rates are available on early season lodging packages; those interested can call Kirkwood Vacations at (800) 967-7500 for more information or to make a reservation.



Don Jardine

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CORRECTION

The Historical Society presented a plaque of appreciation to Fritz Thornburg and Don Jardine, Sr. (received here by his son, Don Jr.) for the efforts to bring the old stamp mill to the museum in Markleeville and to restore it to working condition.

Record-Courier 12-9-2005

Alpine items

Food drive begins for Alpine Family Support

Kirkwood Mountain Resort and the Kirkwood Community Association are partnering with Alpine County Family Support Council in their annual Holiday Toy and Food Drive.

Donations should be made out to the Alpine County Family Support Council to the Kirkwood Community Association, PO Box 158, Kirkwood, CA 95646 pr stop by the KCA office outside of the General Store and make a donation.

Bruce Gianola and Amy Broadhurst will take the donated funds and do the shopping in time to deliver the gifts in time for the holiday.

Grover Hot Springs holiday hours

New hours for Grover Hot Springs started Dec. 5.

The hours are noon to 8 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekends, closed Wednesdays.

For more information, call (530) 694-2249.

Sno Park permits available

Sno Park permits are available at the Alpine County Visitor Center, Woodfords Station and Sorensen's Resort.

The permits cost \$5 per day or \$25 per season. For more information, call (530) 694-2475.

Alpine County Visitor Center update

The Alpine County Visitor Center will be open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. seven days a week until Dec. 22.

Starting Dec. 27 winter hours will begin — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The visitor center will be closed Dec. 23, Dec. 26, Dec. 30 and Jan. 2.

Christmas tree cutting permits

Christmas tree cutting permits will be available at the Alpine County Visitor Center through Dec. 22 at \$10 per tree with a two tree limit per household. For more information, call (530) 694-2475.

Time to cut a Christmas tree

It seems silly, when we live in the land of Christmas trees, to buy a tree. It's more fun to walk to the Visitors' Center on Main Street in Markleeville, where the Alpine County Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Forest Service share space, and purchase a tree-cutting permit for \$10, from Lee Miller, information receptionist for the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

Then the fun really begins. Ann Robinson Molinari and husband Dino recently cut their Christmas tree in the Leviathan Tree Cutting Area by driving up Monitor Pass and following paved Haypress Flat Road a short distance.

Though Molinari lives in the Bay area, she grew up in Markleeville and returns every year to "find my perfect tree." While the couple sawed down a 6-foot fir, their children, Forrest, Ann and Foxx, enjoyed sipping hot chocolate in the Markleeville home of their grandparents, Forrest and

Alpine Portfolio

by Gina Gigli

Karen Robinson.

The rules are simple. To cut a Christmas tree in designated National Forest System Lands, purchase a permit from the Carson Ranger District office in Markleeville or Carson City and take along your tag, regulations, and map of signed, permitted areas.

Don't even think of going off road in a motorized vehicle, though you might think about skiing or snowshoeing and pulling a sled. Your "perfect tree" must be within ten feet of another green tree, and the resulting stump may not be any higher than six inches above the bare soil. Immediately after cutting your tree, attach the green tag in a visible location, because you wouldn't want

your tree confiscated, and especially you wouldn't want to be imprisoned for six months or fined \$5,000.

Recent icy rains, snow, and heavy winds have contributed to the annual loss of dried leaves from aspen trees, with their once-spectacular colorations fading from our memories. However, recollections of a dinner conversation about aspen trees in the Long's Markleeville home a few years ago, have not faded.

Included in the guest list of cook Jim Long, was Don Miller, who has a cabin directly across the road. Between bites and sips of the food and wine, Long and Miller started talking about their deceased fathers, the former owners of their vacation houses.

"My dad (Bill Long) was always jealous of all of the aspen trees your dad (Al Miller) grew on his property," Long said. "Over and over, Bill tried to plant aspens, to no avail. He

always attempted to learn about the method used by your dad to transplant young aspens, but he never did. Now, after all of this time, will you reveal Al's secret?"

"Easy," Miller replied chuckling. "Al had a dump truck, and he would go up on Monitor Pass, when the crew was widening the road, and load his truck with dirt to fill in the steep depression on his lot next to Markleeville Creek. That dirt was chock-full of aspen seedlings and runners. It was a win-win situation.

"According to my dad, the one aspen tree that Bill succeeded in nursing along through autumn, winter, and spring didn't survive.

One morning, Bill looked out his window and was astounded to see a bear rubbing himself on the lone aspen tree, and that old bear kept on until no more leaves remained."

■ Gina Gigli is a Markleeville resident.

Kirkwood residents hold Thanksgiving

Staff Reports

Judging by the attendance numbers for this holiday weekend for a variety of community events, it's hard to believe Kirkwood residents knew the resort was not yet open.

"Who would have ever guessed we'd have a record number of children for our Saturday movie night?" said Kirkwood Community Association Events Manager Amy Broadhurst. "We were two short of 50, by far our largest crowd since we introduced Movie night three years ago."

And so it went all weekend long, as clearly many Kirkwood families are making this their annual Thanksgiving retreat, snow or no snow, as the resort missed being open on the November holiday for the first time in several years. "Sure we would have loved to be skiing, but Amy did a wonderful job with all the events and we had a great time just

the same," said Matt Petri, new KCA Board Member who spent the holiday enjoying the festivities with his wife Nell and their kids Chase and Molly.

Kirkwood's Mountain Team was able to make a fair amount of snow on the bottom of the mountain, which made for great sledding conditions.

"It was great to see so many neighbors even without our main winter event," said Bruce Gianola, new KCA President and Lost Cabin resident.

Over 30 Kirkwood kids and adults participated in turkey bowling on the ice rink, more than 80 residents and guests enjoyed the resort's annual Thanksgiving dinner in the Wall Bar.

Gingerbread house decorating drew nearly 70 adults and children, followed by the annual Christmas tree trimming in the lobby of The Lodge.

While kids ate pizza and

watched "The Polar Express" in Monte Wolfe's, parents took advantage of the first black pass sales event of the season in Kirkwood Sports, earning discounts on skis, boards and the great new lines of outerwear. Kevin "Coop" Cooper, his wife Carolyn and staff enjoyed meeting many new homeowners and getting them set up for a great winter.

"Ever since I started focusing my attention on community events this past summer, we've had great attendance from KCA members," said Amy. "It's very satisfying to see Kirkwood grow into the type of place where families go out of their way to both participate and meet new friends. I think that's very unique among most other Tahoe resorts."



Special to The R-C

Diamond Valley School Book Fair participants with some of their creations. Below, the winning entry is Tessa Williams' castle "Goose Town." The book fair raised \$1,832.62.

Alpine Book Fair nets \$1,832.62

by **Katy Branscombe**
Diamond Valley eighth-grader

The Diamond Valley School Book Fair was a great success this year.

The fair was held Nov. 30 to Dec. 5.

Purchases were made before school, during recess, and after school. Thursday was the family event night from 4 to 7 p.m. Along with the book fair, there was a contest to build a reading castle.

Many students participated in this year's contest. In all, there were 24 entries; and eight



prizes awarded.

The best overall castle was awarded to sixth grader Tessa

Williams for her castle entitled "Goose Town."

She won a Hover Disc and Diamond Dollars to use in the school prize shop.

All entries won prizes. The fair itself was also very popular, and raised a total of \$1,832.62.

Half of that, or \$916.31 will go towards buying new books for the library. Mrs. Lovell along with Diamond Valley School would like to thank the families and friends of the students for helping to support our school, and helping to expand our school library.

Santa's helpers arrive in Alpine County seat

Who were the mysterious perpetrators pulling off the Christmas Caper in "downtown" Markleeville?

Since Markleeville is not incorporated, holiday decorations cannot be installed simply by asking a nonexistent mayor or town council to requisition them.

It's true that Wolf Creek and Creekside Lodge once again are celebrating the season in inimitable style by displaying wreaths in windows and festoons of festive lights. Though several other businesses also decorated for the holidays, a unifying theme was lacking.

Santa's helpers quietly arrived in the "Nick" of time to hang a multitude of fir boughs tied with red bows on almost every fence and pole, and an elf strung white icicle lights under all of the undecorated eaves. Now, even Rudolph-the-Red-Nosed Reindeer would be proud of Markleeville's green and red swags and white icicles!

Modest and unsung, Santa's helpers were spotted gleefully hanging the boughs and wearing "red caps with fuzzy white balls." After serious investigation, they have been revealed to be town-enhancers Gary and Barbara Howard and part time residents Ron and Beth Andrews.

The icicle elf is otherwise known as Teresa Burkhauser, Director of the Alpine Chamber of Commerce.

Other helpers are arriving in Alpine County this week. Since the fear of wildland fires lurks in the hearts of almost all



Special to The R-C

The Alpine County Courthouse is decked out for Christmas.

Alpine Portfolio

by Gina Gigli

mountain dwellers, the Carson Field Office of BLM is playing Santa Claus by sending manpower and machinery to reduce "ladder fuels" near Markleeville. Tim Roide, BLM Prescribed Fire and Fuels Specialist, explained, "We will be thinning out brush in a mosaic pattern, and we'll cut some firs and piñons in the understory that are creating ladders for fire to climb.

"Our project involves the mechanical mastication of 260 acres of shrubs, trees, and down

logs for the purpose of hazard fuels reduction and forest health improvement. A large tractor with a cutting head will chew up the material and deposit it on the ground to achieve both nutrient recycling and erosion control. We are starting now, with operations ceasing as the weather dictates. Our goal is to complete the work before July 1, 2006, creating minimal impact to campers, hikers, fishermen, and residents."

Indian Creek Campground will be the first treated, followed by an area near Summit Lake; then Milberry Creek, south of Turtle Rock Park; and lastly, land near Poor Boy Road, south of Markleeville.

■ Gina Gigli is a Markleeville resident.

Boomer generation going

by Susan Wood
Tahoe Daily Tribune

downhill and loving it more

Ski areas and equipment makers have gone to great lengths to appeal to a generation that has added 78 million people to the planet.

Baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, represent a large market to ski areas trying to accommodate more than youngsters having fun on the slopes.

The National Ski Areas Association released results of a survey showing the percentage of skiers 45 or older has climbed from 21 percent to 31 percent in the last eight years. There are reasons for this. American boomers have made the case they're more fit — but they also don't want to wreck their knees or other joints.

Lake Tahoe-area resorts have responded with more groomed runs and upgraded snowmaking equipment. Every major resort includes a variety of ski runs — beginner, intermediate and expert, with some also offering extreme terrain that's particularly steep.

With its high-angle grooming, Kirkwood Mountain Resort looked high and low to cater to the aging demographic still in love with skiing and boarding. In the last few years, the Alpine County resort smooths out those nooks and crannies thought to be unheard of as groomed runs a decade ago.

This year, Kirkwood plans to expand the popular program — with grooming possibilities off Thunder Saddle and The Wall runs: The resort received a lot of requests to post or notify

homeowners or out-of-town guests of grooming the steeps. Many of these requests come from the older set.

"Being out there keeps them younger," Kirkwood spokeswoman Tracy Miller said.

Sierra-at-Tahoe picked up on the demand for expanded grooming three years ago and hasn't looked back. The ski area is known for split grooming, doing half the run and leaving the other part untouched.

"It's a great way to ease (boomers) into the powder conditions. Believe it or not, we'll have people say there's too much powder, so we try to satisfy both groups," Sierra spokeswoman Nicole Belt said.

It's critical to Sierra-at-Tahoe, which has used the grooming amenity to accommodate family members who may

not ski together on the same run because some may want a challenge while others want to cruise.

Terrain and snow conditions lead service and amenities as top priorities mentioned in Sierra's customer service surveys. The resort has found that 20 percent of its ski and boarding population over the last three seasons are older than 45. The majority of that population is between 45 and 54.

Some aging skiers have even made the case that having lower season-pass rates allows them to go out for a few hours

instead of feeling committed to be outside for eight. It's difficult to justify paying more than \$60 and not using it for the full day.

"I used to be first on, last off," Barrie Betschart, 57, said. "As long as they keep the \$299 pass, I'm fine."

Betschart, who started skiing at age 3, grew up in the world of skiing from Europe to New England to the West Coast. The longtime South Lake Tahoe resident remembered how excited her father was at her age about nearing the time when he qualified for senior citizen status.

The resorts used to offer free skiing.

She passed down the love to the next generation. Her two sons also love to ski. One of them, Wisi, was a member of the U.S. Ski Team for more than 10 years.

"I still do tree skiing. But I used to do Gunbarrel. I've noticed the shorter skis and snowboards have really chopped up the moguls. That helps," she said. "I'm not as crazy as I used to be when I followed my kids. I value my bones a little more than I used to."



SPECIAL TO THE R-C

Alpine Christian Community Church sits at the base of Carey's Peak in Woodfords.

Little white church stands firmly below massive cliffs

After moving from home to home and to different buildings, members of the Alpine Christian Community Church — the only church in Alpine County — now are ensconced in a small white building at the base of Carey's Peak in Woodfords.

Notched into the granite rocks high over the steeple, a feathery waterfall plummets to earth.

The most ornate cathedral in the world might not match up to this breathtaking natural architecture backdrop of mountain and canyon.

In the early '70s, a group of Alpine County women started a Bible study group and met in the Woodfords home of Dick and Jean Martin.

Then, six or seven couples began meeting in the Markleeville home of Paul and Virginia Smith, and they asked Eberhard Wiedenmeyer to lead Sunday morning services. Pastor Wiedenmeyer served as minister for the congregation from 1974 to 1986, followed by

Alpine Portfolio

by Gina Gigli

Everyone is welcome at our church," said Rhoads, who is known for his allegorical style of delivering the message of the day, as well as for his colorful ties and vests.

Ernestine Fogarty, a long-time church member from Markleeville, concurs.

"We are in complete harmony with one another, and I look forward to each Sunday. Since children attend the regular service at 10 a.m. Sundays, the pastor always tells a contemporary story first and then applies it to his sermon, so we all understand the message."

In lieu of holding Christmas

morning service, a special Christmas Eve candlelight service will take place at 7 p.m. Dec. 24.

Children, ranging from 6 years old to college age will stage a play titled, "Least of These," inspired by Matthew 25. Cami Chavez, Marianne Rhoads, and Jeri Bennett have been coaching the young performers, and after the play and service, electric lights will darken and candlelight will glow, as musician Darlene Bennett presses the keys on the old-time church organ, and the congregation sings "Silent Night."

The little white church in the picture-perfect setting is located at 150 Old Pony Express Road, parallel to Highway 88, in Woodfords.

■ Gina Gigli is an Alpine County resident.

Then, six or seven couples began meeting in the Markleeville home of Paul and Virginia Smith, and they asked Eberhard Wiedenmeyer to lead Sunday morning services. Pastor Wiedenmeyer served as minister for the congregation from 1974 to 1986, followed by Dick Lyons from 1986 to 1991, Al Moak from 1991 to 1993, Gene Holman from 1993 to 1999, and Ron Rhoads from 1999 to the present time. Meanwhile, members met at the homes of the Craiks, Gansbergs, Chacons, Barretts, and Stephens, and also at the Fredericksburg Schoolhouse (destroyed by fire), Turtle Rock Park, Diamond Valley School, and Mt. Sierra Christian School.

"Sometimes it was hard to keep the church alive when it was moving around," said George Chavez, chairman of the Alpine Christian Community Church board.

He talks about the solution to the shifting from place to place.

"The building fund that had been accumulating over the years was not sufficient to build a church from scratch, but it did cover remodeling costs, so my family and my in-laws, Bob and Marge Stephens, decided to donate use of a former house on the property of Woodfords Auto."

In 1999, contractor Nick Hartzell was hired by the church to bring the house up to building code, and to take out some interior walls, refinish the hardwood floors, paint the interior and exterior, and build the steeple. One of his helpers, Benny Fillmore, volunteered to fashion the wooden cross for the steeple.

Ever since signing the 25-year lease with the Chavez and Stephens families, the congregation has had a permanent home to offer Sunday morning services, Bible studies, weddings, memorial services, pancake breakfasts, and other events for Alpiners.

Marianne Rhoads, who serves as Associate Pastor, assists husband Ron Rhoads, who is also an attorney and a member of the California State Bar Association.

"We have cast aside labels, and we are completely independent of any denomination.

tor always tells a contemporary story first and then applies it to his sermon, so we all understand the message."

In lieu of holding Christmas

parallel to highway 88, in Woodfords.

■ Gina Gigli is an Alpine County resident.

Arbitration loss will cost Alpine County

by Kurt Hildebrand
Editor

An arbitrator's ruling will cost Alpine County at least \$150,000 in longevity pay it failed to pay 20 employees.

The Alpine County Auditor's office is still computing how much the Nov. 29 ruling by California arbitrator Christopher Burdick will cost. Assistant to the Board of Supervisors Judy Molnar said it will take until mid-January before the costs are fully known.

At issue is the memorandum of understanding between the county and two unions, the Alpine County Employees Association Miscellaneous Bargaining Unit and the Alpine County Deputy Sheriffs Association Law Enforcement Unit.

The agreement, which became effective July 15, 2003, tried to reform the way Alpine County compensated its employees for longevity.

According to Burdick's ruling, no one was happy with the old way, in which employ-

ees who were regularly promoted would end up not receiving longevity pay, because their accumulated time was tied to their time at a particular pay range, not to their total time.

Negotiators tried to find a way to tie longevity pay to actual time in service, so that an employee who worked 10 years would receive a pay increase, no matter how many times they'd been promoted.

However, county negotiators told the unions the longevity rules could not be applied retroactively.

Molnar said the county's general fund budget is \$7 million.

County officials were concerned that making the longevity pay retroactive would substantially increase workers' pay and adversely affect the budget.

Burdick said county negotiators did not include their desire that the pay raises not be retroactive in the actual agreement.

After being ratified by both the Board of Supervisors and

the employees, the county auditor implemented the 2003 agreement.

When implemented, employees who reached their fifth anniversary with the county during the agreement were given a 5 percent pay raise. However, those who hit their 10th, 15th, 20th and 25th anniversaries were not. Shorter term employees were being rewarded and longer term employees, for whom longevity pay is intended to encourage continued service, were not, Burdick pointed out.

"To the detached, disinterested eye, the manner in which the county has implemented the new longevity plans seems irrational, inconsistent, inequitable and unfair," Burdick said.

Molnar said the county could appeal the decision to Alpine County Superior Court. That decision would be up to the Board of Supervisors.

The memorandum of understanding has expired and will be renegotiated, Molnar said. But it remains in effect until a new memorandum is ratified.

Alpine arbitration article incomplete

EDITOR:

As correctly stated in your article, at issue in this matter, was that employees with very short tenure (less than five years) were rewarded, while those of longer service got nothing.

The county's interpretation and subsequent implementation of this issue caused forfeitures for those employees in the 6-24 years of service. For example, two men are hired in the same position, same department, same pay grade. One is hired on Dec. 31, 1999, the other on Jan. 1, 2000.

The one hired on Jan. 1, 2000, is entitled to a 5-percent increase in 2005. The one hired in 1999 would not receive a 5-percent increase until 2008.

What I noticed missing from your article, was the history of this issue. In January of 2003, the employees tried informally to resolve this matter with the Assistant to the Board/ Personnel Director (same person).

We attempted to bring those employees, (including the deputies), affected by the disparity, current.

The estimated cost at that time, was approximately \$46,000. The county had \$7 million in the general fund. In lieu of providing those employees a 5-percent increase for each five years of work, the county elected to litigate. Consequently, as of December 2005, legal fees alone are approximately \$106,000.

Total projected cost to the taxpayers for this matter is \$155,000. Sadly, this is the second employee arbitration lost by the county in 2005. In October, another employee action cost the county approximately \$100,000 in legal fees, bringing total legal costs in these two matters to over \$200,000.

I am a 17-year employee of Alpine County. I am one of those employees affected by this ruling. I love the people I work with and I love my job; however, I was confused by the action taken by the administration in this matter. Denying

Total projected cost to the taxpayers for this matter is \$1,000,000. Sadly, this is the second employee arbitration lost by the county in 2005. In October, another employee action cost the county approximately \$100,000 in legal fees, bringing total legal costs in these two matters to over \$200,000.

I am a 17-year employee of Alpine County. I am one of those employees affected by this ruling. I love the people I work with and I love my job; however, I was confused by the action taken by the administration in this matter. Denying long term employees a 5-percent increase, while providing a 56 percent increase to the Assistant to the Board/Personnel Director for six years of service, complicated matters.

The following quote, "the county could appeal the decision to Alpine County Superior Court. That decision would be up to the Board of Supervisors," is incorrect. Page 4 of the ruling states that "The decision of the Arbitrator shall be final and binding on all parties." The Administration offices were hand delivered a copy of this 35-page ruling on or about Dec. 1, 2005. If anyone would like a copy of it, please contact me. Thanks.

1-4-06

Elizabeth McGeein
Alpine County Employee

Carson Valley Almanac 2005



A hiker enjoys a day on the Faye-Luther Trail.

Canyon Hikes Re-trace History

*Trails lead to the secret
hideaways where rustlers
concealed horses they stole
from hapless travelers*

STORY AND PHOTOS
by LINDA HILLER

If you were a traveler coming through the Carson Valley area in the mid-1800s, it wasn't exactly a Shangri-la.

Amidst the lovely canyons and foothills along the Sierra lurked robbers and horse thieves — dastardly men who would steal your horses, run them up one canyon and down another only to sell them back to any traveler needing a good mount, including, quite possibly, you.

Two nearby hikes, Faye-Luther Canyon and Horse Thief Canyon, retrace the escape routes of those equine rustlers,



Horse owners nowadays can ride without fear of being set upon by rustlers.

and provide differing views of the Carson Range. There, you can listen for the echoes of horse hooves galloping by as the victims below must have bellowed in grief and anger.

Both of these canyons led to the aptly named Horse Thief Meadow, where rumor has it there was occasionally co-mingling of the pilfered

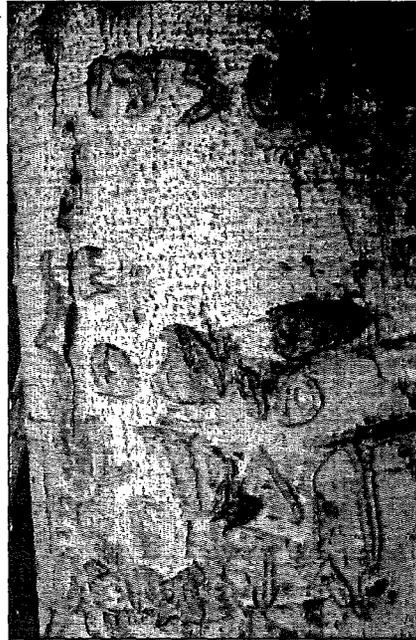
ponies.

Faye-Luther Canyon is located south of Jobs Peak off Foothill Road near the California border. Luther Canyon was named for Ira Luther, who operated a

people do respect this and the "scoop your poop" request, hikers hope the situation will improve to 100 percent with more responsible users.

In winter when there is snow on the Valley floor, this trail is wonderful for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Even beginners can manage the gradual ascent and descent, and the views take on a magical, white-washed feel.

Horse Thief Canyon is further south on Foothill Road and to the west, in between Woodfords and Hope Valley in California. Again, rustlers brought horses through here to Horse Thief Meadow, and legend says some of the horses were stolen and sold more than



Basque tree carvings date to the 1930s.

once.

The trailhead starts at 6,600 feet and ascends quickly. The rushing sounds of Horse Thief Creek provide a buffer to the vehicle noise as you begin up the trail, and soon you're in a place so peaceful it hardly seems possible there was mayhem here once. You may hear Clark's nutcrackers right away, and then the chorus of small-

er forest birds should take over: chickadees, nuthatches, juncos, pine siskins and goldfinches.

There is a seep with alders and tall grass about halfway up, and the geology here is fascinating, with steep cliffs and huge conglomerate rocks. You'll come to a gate about a mile in — be sure to close it after you pass through, since you're in

cattle country.

As you come to the area with large lodgepole pine trees, begin to look for Basque carvings on the quaking aspen trees, something the area is known for. Some say there are remnants of cowboy cabins and corrals up there, but these are rare.

The creek that meanders through the meadow is mesmerizing, and one can only imagine what went on in that placid meadow a century and a half ago. You can go on to other destinations from this point. Call the Carson Ranger District, 882-2766, for information.



A creek runs through the meadow.

Directions

Both of these hikes take you into the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, and both have good parking but no restrooms or water.

Faye-Luther Canyon:

From Genoa, go south on Foothill Road (State Route 206) past Kingsbury Grade (State Route 207), and then travel 4.6 miles to the trailhead parking lot on your right.

Horse Thief Canyon:

From Woodfords, Calif. (on Highway 88 south of Gardnerville), go west on Highway 88 about four miles. The trailhead parking lot is on the right, just past the

Snowshoe Springs campground entrance.

For more information, call the Carson Ranger District, 882-2766, or the Carson Valley Trails Association, 265-0901.

Where the wild things flourish

*Watching wildlife is a
Carson Valley pastime*

by SUSIE VASQUEZ

The fog may feel like cold death on a January morning, but it isn't fazing wildlife on the Byington Ranch in Carson Valley.

Birds sing in the cottonwoods while flocks of geese in a nearby field search for a morning meal.

"The bald eagles come in

February and March for calving. They eat the afterbirth and leave, but we have red-tailed hawks year-round," said rancher Barbara Byington. "When they're perched on a post, they'll watch you as you go by."

She leaned over a cup of steaming coffee at her kitchen table. ...

"There are thousands of geese in the Carson Valley," she said. "I think we have too many."

Byington moved to this Carson Valley ranch from Doyle, Calif., with her family in 1950. The ranch is spread over 1,100 acres in the Carson Valley, making their open space more important to wildlife

as the Valley's ranchlands are consumed by development, she said.

Most of the wildlife, like the owls and hawks, keep the rodents from tearing down the fields, but the coyotes can sometimes be a problem. They don't bother the cattle, but Byington said she sees a coyote almost every day.



SHANNON LITZ

Bald eagles gather in a field along Highway 395 near Genoa Lane providing photo opportunities for tourists.

"I hear them howling at night, but I can't always tell how close," she said. "We've lost a couple of family dogs to coyotes. They can be a threat."

Mountain lions stay near the foothills to the west and the Byingtons never see the deer, she said.

"They never go past Willow Bend," she said. "Evidently, they have enough to eat along the river."

Wildlife is one of the big attractions for people living here, and ranching is a precious commodity that will preserve wildlife as long as it is kept intact, said Dan Kaffer, coordinator for Western Nevada Resource Conservation and Development.

"Ranches provide free flood control, allow groundwater recharge," he said. "They enhance air quality, provide drainage and help preserve wildlife habitat. We should pay ranchers for the advantages they provide."

Before there was ranching in Carson Valley, early pioneers were taken aback by the lack of wildlife in Nevada. Historically the number of mule deer increase with man's intervention, said Chris Healy,



The Carson River provides a shady refuge and a cool drink for these deer on a hot summer afternoon.

SHANNON LITZ

spokesman for the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

"Early explorers left quickly because they couldn't live off the land successfully," he said. "But when people settled here and the junipers and piñon were cut for firewood, sage grew in its place, providing significant habitat for mule deer."

The mule deer population increased accordingly, but the sage ecosystem is now aging, lost to development and wildfire. In recent decades piñon and juniper forests have increased, further shrinking the deer habitat, Healy said.

"When you shrink the habitat, you shrink the herd," he said, adding that in the spring, old-timers recalled mule deer by the thousands migrating to the Pine Nut Mountains through Jacks Valley, but the migration was lost to development.

"Habitat is simply food, water, shelter and space," Healy said. "For the most part, humans can take more advantage and alter habitat for their benefit. Animals lose out."

Healy said the best thing to do for wildlife is leave the animals



This bear was captured, tagged and released in the Leviathan mine area.

alone.

"People here decry the loss of wildlife habitat, but they live in

areas that adversely affect that habitat," he said. "If residents deem it important enough, they need to

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Chris Healy

choose to preserve the remaining stands of wildlife habitat.

"If people consider a healthy mule deer population important to the quality of life, they have to make those choices known. We comment on the impact of potential developments, but we don't often win those battles."