



## Selections

### Inspiration, Innovation, and Ingenuity

by Deborah Stevenson  
Curator of Education

It starts with a vision. What do rattlesnakes, Datsolalee baskets, and *haute couture* have in common? Not much—precisely the kind of challenge that Exhibits Manager, Ray Geiser, and his team of talented exhibit preparators live for.

Innovative design techniques make exhibits not only accessible, but inspiring to a diverse audience. There is an underlying current, vitality, and energy behind the exhibit design process that draws visitors inside the museum and themselves. Many of us long to be explorers. We desire connection with the natural world and with each other. The museum's latest exhibit, *Selections from the Collections* provides opportunities for meaningful connections.

To create unity among the diverse Natural History, Anthropology, and History displays in *Selections*, Geiser designed a floor plan and display system that gives equal representation to all the collections from any one of the three entrances. He also introduced three new beautiful display cases manufactured by

Glasbau Hahn, but added specialized lighting. Geiser notes, "The basket cases are interesting because they are a prototype for future Anthropology displays in the North Building."



Above: Get up close and examine the horn of a Bighorn Sheep.



Left: Clear shelving allows a peek at the intricate designs on the bottoms of some of these "fancy" Washoe baskets.

*Selections* presented Geiser and his team with some unique challenges. Most exhibits utilize a single curator who selects the objects and writes most of the text. Multiple curators worked with the Exhibits Program to develop *Selections*. This collaborative effort produced many creative solutions, such as using touch specimens to enhance the educational experience. A cut-away view of a Bighorn Sheep

horn reveals its inner architecture. Tracks allow visitors to touch and closely examine the Sheep's stride, straddle, and gait. How the public responds to *Selections* will help museum staff make decisions for the future Natural History exhibits.

The textile portion of the History display called for tremendous innovation and flexibility. Dave Shipman built the quilt case

## Editor's Note

by Deborah Stevenson  
Curator of Education

In this time of rapid change, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Budget cuts, pressures, economic woes—the news we hear is often bad. Despair not. In this issue, we focus on the integrity of vision, the power of hope, and the joy of creativity. Museum Director, Jim Barmore, spells out a plan for a bright future. Fearless Captain Chaos (Scott Klette) juggles humor with awareness to keep us from taking ourselves too seriously. Our newest exhibit, *Selections from the Collections*, celebrates the creative talents of an innovative exhibits design team.

Inspirational programs include *Washo Stories* and a *Chinese Folk Dance Presentation*. The Anthropology Program shares the cost-saving secrets of custom archival box fabrication. Finally, learn more about Nevada State Museum's 2008 Membership Medallion in *News from the Mint*.

(Continued from page 1)

that Ray Geiser designed to fit the largest quilt in the textile collection—that way the quilts can be rotated over time. The box was so huge it was a challenge to get it through the door! To display clothing without the use of manikins, Geiser found a fabric called *Wonderflex* that is used in theater. Heating the material makes it malleable; it sticks to itself and hardens into the desired shape. Dorothy Nylén used *Wonderflex* in the T-shirt case and the corset mount. Jeanette McGregor described using formed Plexiglas and wire covered with tubing to mount challenging textiles like the showgirl outfit; the wire is flexible, yet holds its shape, while the tubing protects the objects. She adds, "The exhibit took longer than expected, but I really



Above: While our Garcia saddle is on loan to the Autry National Center, their Garcia saddle is on loan to us. Director of the Department of Cultural Affairs, Michael Fischer, admires the workmanship of this "loaner" saddle on display in the History Gallery until February 2009.

At left: Sequined showgirl bra from *Hello Hollywood Hello* displayed on special mount.

Facing page: This close-up of the back of the G.S. Garcia 1904 World's Fair saddle shows tooled leather and exquisite silverwork.

enjoyed the challenge and exchange of ideas."

In summary, Geiser told me, "I want visitors to have a good time and to enjoy the show. I believe there are some very interesting connections that can be made with this exhibit. In nature we see that form follows function—it works in exhibit design as well."

*Selections from the Collections* continues in the Middle Changing Gallery through 2008.

## Annual Appeal Update

As of January 9, seventy-six donors have contributed to the museum's Annual Appeal fund drive. Since then, the following individuals have made donations:

Kerstine Johnson  
Rose (Terry) McGee  
Patricia Seiling  
Andrea Weed

The response was exceptional and we've exceeded our fundraising goal. On behalf of the museum and Board of Museums and History, thank you for your support. Funds directly support museum collections and education.



## See the Big Picture...

On the cover of this *Mint Edition*, we have chosen to feature one of the delightful Audubon reproductions on display in our changing exhibit, *Selections from the Collections*.

The Black-headed Grosbeak (called here the Spotted Grosbeak) is common in mid-elevation habitats across Nevada, while the Evening Grosbeak occurs primarily on higher mountain slopes in the western part of our state.

Dr. George Baumgardner, Curator of Natural History, gives monthly Behind-the-Scenes Tours. Schedule yours today!

## Garcia to Autry

by Sue Ann Monteleone, Museum Registrar

One of the five most important antique western saddles, the Nevada State Museum's famous G.S. Garcia 1904 World's Fair saddle, travels to the Autry National Center in Los Angeles and the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, Texas over the next year. The Autry's *Cowboys and Presidents* exhibition explores the relationship between the heroic cowboy image and presidential politics from Theodore Roosevelt to George W. Bush. G. S. Garcia built this saddle at his Elko, Nevada shop with Teddy Roosevelt in mind, decorating it with silver and gold medallions of Roosevelt and governors Nye and Sparks, silver eagles, and beautiful leather tooling. The saddle won gold medals at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair and at the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland, Oregon in 1905. It has been used by dignitaries in parades across the nation and President Roosevelt rode in the saddle in 1910. The saddle will return to our museum in February 2009.



If you're visiting those areas this year –  
Autry National Center  
4700 Western Heritage Way  
Los Angeles, CA 90027-1462  
323/667-2000

Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum  
1800 N. Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701  
512/936-8746

For more information on Garcia's Elko saddles see *Legacy of Silver and Saddles: G.S. Garcia to J.M. Capriola Co. 1864 – 2004* on sale now at the museum store.

## Message from the Museum Director

by Jim Barmore

What is the purpose of our museum? The question is timely. We're currently updating our strategic plan. Every year we take a break from our frenzied pace to think about what we intend to achieve over the next five years – what we can do to make a great museum even better. Simply stated, our purpose is education. We actively engage diverse audiences in understanding Nevada's natural and cultural heritage by preserving and presenting authentic objects and information. This is our essence. But, planning requires a closer look. We need to fully understand our purpose to prepare effective strategies. The following defines our function in more detail. Reviewing our purpose reminds us of our museum's varied and vital role.

The museum provides a **source of identity** for individuals, families, and communities by defining who we are, where we've come from, and where we live. School kids learn about their home. New residents connect with their adopted home.

The museum **conveys our state identity** – what defines Nevada and makes it unique from other states. The museum dispels misconceptions about our state.

The museum is a **place to share identity**. We're a place for shared experience and social interaction. Parents share with their kids. Families share when company comes. People volunteer at the museum to interact with those of similar interests.

The museum **celebrates and showcases identity** through attractive facilities, inspiring exhibits, and entertaining special events. We show off our state to tourists. We're a source of pride.

The museum **contributes to the economy of the state and Carson City**. We are an attraction, drawing local, national, and international visitors. The museum serves as a centerpiece in Carson City's downtown economy.

The museum **fosters a sense of belonging** where people come to connect with a larger community. People receive comfort and reconnect with roots. People gain a sense of continuity and stability in a time of rapid change.

The museum serves as an **inclusive center for all audiences** where all people feel welcome, disabled audiences fully participate in learning, and the heritage of all communities is represented and validated.

The museum **brings communities together for greater understanding** – to learn about other groups and dispel stereotypes about unfamiliar communities.

The museum serves as a **nice place to spend leisure time**. We're friendly, enjoyable, affordable, comfortable, convenient, and safe.

The museum serves as a **trusted source of knowledge**. We maintain high standards of scholarship. We are an authority on Nevada's heritage.

The museum is a **trusted keeper of the keepsakes**. We document heritage and optimize the care of collections for the benefit of generations hundreds of years in the future.

The museum is an **effective presenter of heritage**. Our exhibits and programs are engaging and relevant. Our methods reach and inspire diverse audiences.

The museum is a **trusted manager of public resources**. We maximize efficient and effective use of resources and maintain full accountability. Our facilities and property exemplify high standards of maintenance and security.

The museum is a **successful partner**, effectively collaborating with agencies, organizations, businesses, and communities to expand resources and public benefits.

The museum is a **great place to work**. Staff and volunteers work collaboratively as a team, based on trust, respect, and courtesy. We value open communication and participation in decision-making. We constantly pursue a vision of improvement, always seeking higher standards of public service.

# Power and Grace: Sonia Carlson Presents Chinese Dance and Culture

Xian Na (Sonia) Carlson is a tiny but powerful woman whose presence and vitality can fill a room. Traditional dance was an important part of Sonia's childhood in China. Through imitation and instruction, she learned folk dancing from her aunt. Ms. Carlson came to the U.S. in 1987 as a foreign student. Twenty-one years later, she still performs and teaches traditional Chinese dance for audiences of all ages. Sonia

demonstrates a refined eloquence and perfection that could be described as poetry in motion. She now resides in Gardnerville.

The Nevada State Museum presents an afternoon of entertainment by Sonia Carlson and her Chinese dance students from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 5, 2008. Seating is limited so early arrival is recommended. This program is provided in



Sonia Carlson and her students perform traditional Chinese dance at the museum on Saturday, April 5 in celebration of the Year of the Rat.

partnership with the Folklife Program of the Nevada Arts Council and funded through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Sonia's presentation complements the museum's newest exhibit, *Selections from the Collections*, in which the Chinese Lotus Foot or Lily Foot (shoes) are displayed. Regular admission fees apply. For more information, contact Deborah Stevenson at 775-687-4810, ext. 237. Sonia mentors many students and has served as a Master Artist in the Nevada Arts Council's Folklife Apprenticeship program. Ms. Carlson will perform the Chinese "long sleeve" dance (chang xiu wu) – an ancient tradition dating back to the Han Dynasty. Her students will perform ethnic dances from the minority groups, Zhuang, Mongolian, and Gaoshan, and from the Han majority group. Sonia will also teach basic calligraphy.

## Numismatic Fact:

### World's First Million Dollar Coin

On May 4th, 2007, the Royal Canadian Mint unveiled the world's first 100-kilogram (220.5-pound) pure gold bullion coin



Thursday, worth one million Canadian dollars (\$850,000 US) - breaking a record for value. But this coin will not go into

circulation. The over-sized coin is a new denomination for Canada and required an amendment to the Canadian Currency Act. Three of the coins were produced only after interested buyers came forward. It is 21 inches (53 centimeters) in diameter and 1.2 inches (three centimeters) thick.

## Going LOCO - MOTIVES for Enhanced Membership

The first issue of the Members Only Collector's Medallion was retired at the end of 2007. The new release is available at all Enhanced Membership levels. Enhanced Memberships include all basic benefits plus these additional benefits:

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Sustaining<br>\$100   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Members Only <b>Brass</b> Collector's "CC" Medallion minted on Coin Press No. 1</li> <li>◆ Guest Pass for free admission for up to five adults</li> </ul>   |
| Contributing<br>\$250 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Members Only <b>Silver</b> Collector's "CC" Medallion minted on Coin Press No. 1</li> <li>◆ Guest Pass for free admission for up to five adults</li> </ul>  |
| Patron<br>\$500       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Members Only 24-karat <b>Gold-Plated</b> Collector's "CC" Medallion minted on Coin Press No. 1</li> <li>◆ Exclusive Curator's Tour</li> <li>◆ Two Guest Passes for free admission for up to ten adults</li> </ul>   |
| Benefactor<br>\$1,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Members Only 24-karat <b>Gold-Plated</b> Collector's "CC" Medallion minted on Coin Press No. 1</li> <li>◆ Acknowledgement on the Members Recognition Wall at the museum's entrance</li> <li>◆ Exclusive Curator's Tour</li> <li>◆ Two Guest Passes for free admission for up to ten adults</li> </ul> |



## News from the Mint

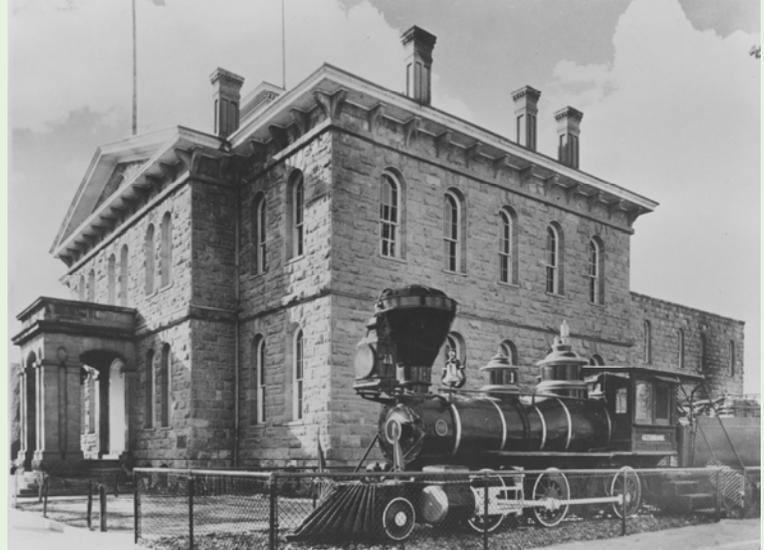
# Return of the *Glenbrook*

by Robert Nysten, Curator of History

The Carson & Tahoe Lumber and Fluming Company's Lake Tahoe Narrow Gauge Railroad Locomotive No. 2 (the *Glenbrook*) was on public display outside the Nevada State Museum (NSM) for almost 40 years. The *Glenbrook* was one of two identical narrow gauge mogul locomotives ordered from the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1874 and placed in service by June 1875 during the height of the Big Bonanza. They cost around \$8,000 each. The *Glenbrook* made six trips a day from lake level to Spooner Summit carrying a total of twenty-five thousand feet of lumber in six cars.

After the narrow gauge line closed, the *Glenbrook* was sold to the Lake Tahoe Railway & Transportation Company on January 31, 1899.

Forty-four years later, the Bliss family donated the engine to the Nevada State Museum and, since 1981, it has been undergoing restoration at the Nevada State Railroad Museum. Internationally recognized artist, designer, author, and instructor, Stephen Lesnick of Las Vegas, designed a medallion for the Nevada State



The *Glenbrook* on the North side of the Nevada State Museum.

Museum in 1980, featuring a classic view of the museum with the popular and memorable *Glenbrook* engine. The image of the *Glenbrook* on the north side of NSM from the late 1940s to 1980 identified the museum as place of historical significance to tourists and locals alike. Visitors to the NSM fondly remember being photographed in front of the *Glenbrook* and still inquire as to its whereabouts. The *Glenbrook* Medallion was one of many that Lesnick designed for the museum between 1977 and 1990,

including the Pony Express, State Capitol, and 50th Anniversary of Gaming medallions.

Using the same obverse die as in 1980, NSM will reissue the *Glenbrook* Medallion this year as its exclusive **2008 Membership Medallion**. The reverse features Coin Press No. 1 with the famous mint mark "CC." The medallion is not available for purchase, but comes with an enhanced membership opportunity (see LOCO-MOTIVES article at left).



Coin Press No. 1  
e



## Ken Hopple Wins Award

The mint's Chief Coiner, Ken Hopple, received the Outstanding Numismatist of the Year Award from the Reno Coin Club in January 2008. The award was given to Ken for his outstanding contribution to the promotion of numismatics and the operation of historic Coin Press No. 1. Ken was also honored for his continued work in restoring coin dies for the museum's Anthropology Program.

Ken shares his passion & enthusiasm with a group of young visitors to the historic Carson City Mint. Curator of History, Robert Nysten lends a hand.



www.nevadaculture.org

The Nevada State Museum in Carson City is an agency of the Division of Museums and History within the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs. The museum engages diverse audiences in understanding and celebrating Nevada's natural and cultural heritage.

State of Nevada  
Jim Gibbons  
Governor

Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs  
Michael E. Fischer  
Department Director

Division of Museums and History  
Peter Barton  
Acting Division Administrator

Nevada State Museum  
Jim Barmore  
Museum Director

The Friends of the Nevada State Museum, a 501(c)(3) private nonprofit organization, supports the museum through volunteer assistance, fundraising, and advocacy. For information contact Michelle LaFontaine, Chair at 775/267-6674.

The Nevada State Museum publishes the *Mint Edition* newsletter in collaboration with the Friends of the Nevada State Museum for the purpose of highlighting museum exhibits, education programs, special events, and collection activities. The publication is available on a quarterly basis in January, April, July, and October in print or online at the website above. Museum members receive the *Mint Edition* as a benefit of membership.

Newsletter staff: Deborah Stevenson, Editor; Jeanette McGregor, Design; and Holly Austin, Production.

Please address all newsletter communications to:

Deborah Stevenson  
Nevada State Museum  
600 North Carson Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4004  
775/687-4810 ext. 237  
Fax 775/687-4168  
dasteven@clan.lib.nv.us

## Traditional Washo\* Stories & Songs Teach, Inspire, and Transform

by Deborah Stevenson  
Curator of Education

In this 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we face environmental degradation, increased violence, widespread disease, and the fragmentation of our daily lives. We long for connection and meaning. Throughout human history, stories have celebrated what it means to be human. Stories about love, despair, and human resourcefulness communicate across ethnic and generational lines. Stories connect us to what is real in ourselves and others. Stories make us laugh. Stories make us cry. Stories provide hope. Stories can heal.

The Nevada State Museum presents an afternoon of stories and songs by Washo elders, Melba Rakow and Steven James, on Saturday, April 26, 2008. Enjoy creation stories, family histories, and songs in both Washo and English. Due to the popularity of the traditional Native American stories, two sessions are offered: 1:00 – 2:00 and 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Seating is limited so arrive early. This program is provided in partnership with the Folklife Program of the Nevada Arts Council and funded through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Regular

admission fees apply. For more information, contact Deborah Stevenson at 775-687-4810, ext. 237.

The stories complement the exquisite Washo basketry on display in the museum's newest exhibit, *Selections from the Collections*. Melba Rakow will share her family tradition through heirlooms such as baskets, beaded moccasins, a cradleboard, and a soap brush made by her relatives. "The challenge," Melba says, "is to help young people become rooted in their traditional culture, express pride in their heritage, and still succeed in the modern world." Steven James expressed sadness in the loss of the Washo language: "Most people are too busy to learn. Soon the elders will be all gone." That is why the museum works hard to preserve and protect language, stories, and traditions as well as artifacts and specimens.

\* Note: We are using the early, traditional spelling *Washo* instead of *Washoe*, out of respect for Washo elders who requested the traditional spelling. Both versions are acceptable today.

## ...How much does an email weigh, exactly?



"Captain Chaos" here—The Nevada State Museum doesn't own a scale large enough to weigh the piles of paperwork generated by the construction

of the central concourse; admittedly, I haven't checked with the railroad museum to see if they've got a scale for weighing locomotives...luckily for the environment, we recycle the vast majority of our paperwork.

But—how much does an *email* weigh, anyway? If you calculate the number of emails on this project—and multiply that by the number of people sent to, and received by, times the number of pages, and then multiply *that* number by the number of back and forth responses...well, it'd be enough to make the "Rain Man" reach for an abacus...

What makes things even worse; I'm not really sure if we can recycle emails...where do they go

after dumping the deleted file???

At any rate, January was wet and cold...February wasn't much better... This hampered dirt work construction, and slowed progress...adding about 36 days to the overall completion date...but with current temperatures holding in the somewhat "normal" (30-year average) range, progress mounts once again. The structural steel fabrication has been underway for some time, with the majority of the large structural components being "pre-built" off site...it is the intent to transport these pre-built sections to the museum's construction site, and assemble them as they come off the truck. Mid-April should show spectacular progress, as the structural steel framework is expected to be better than 80% complete within *four days!*

In the next issue of *Mint Edition*, we'll be examining the rate at which my hair is turning grey—but until then, just remember: You're unique—just like everyone else...

# Anthropology Volunteer's Milestone

By Eugene M. Hattori, Curator of Anthropology

Long-time volunteer, David Critchfield, recently accomplished a very important goal in anthropology collections' care: making cardboard boxes! Using a very simple, handmade box that I fortuitously used to transport radiocarbon samples from the Utah Museum of Natural History as his initial pattern, David began fabricating custom archival boxes for our larger and our most fragile artifacts. Boxed artifacts include prehistoric feathered caps from Charlie Brown Cave, Dr. S. L. Lee's Egyptian falcon mummy, and a three-foot long miniature

birch bark canoe. Most of the boxes contain oversized prehistoric basketry fragments. Many of his boxes feature supports and trays that provide further artifact protection and facilitate access to the object. David constructs boxes and internal supports from acid-free corrugated board (cardboard), ethafoam (polyethylene foam) and poly vinyl acetate adhesive (PVA glue).

Some 100+ boxes later, David achieved our goal of boxing all of our large, loose objects. We probably realized a savings of several thousand dollars versus commercial archival boxes, if even available in the sizes we needed. More importantly, however, is the space saved with custom-sized boxes. We lost approximately 20% of our collections storage area in our move to the North Building, so any space saved is precious.

Visitors from other museums marvel at David's creations, oftentimes even ignoring the interesting artifacts they contain. David provided a partially completed box to the University of New Mexico's Maxwell Museum of Anthropology so that they could begin custom box construction. David most recently taught box making to volunteer Jeri Dejonge. She is fabricating boxes for Elephant Mountain Cave artifacts currently being studied by Dr. Pat Barker, retired BLM archaeologist.



Volunteer David Critchfield and some of his archival boxes.

## Contact the Museum

775/687-4810  
Fax 775/687-4168  
[www.nevadaculture.org](http://www.nevadaculture.org)

Jim Barmore,  
Museum Director, ext. 226  
[jbarmore@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:jbarmore@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Holly Austin,  
Membership Coordinator, ext. 222  
[hjastin@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:hjastin@clan.lib.nv.us)  
George Baumgardner,  
Curator of Natural History, ext. 236  
[gdbaumga@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:gdbaumga@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Carol Edling,  
Accountant, ext. 224  
[ceedling@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:ceedling@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Ray Geiser,  
Exhibits Manager, ext. 252  
[rmgeiser@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:rmgeiser@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Eugene M. Hattori,  
Curator of Anthropology, ext. 230  
[emhattori@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:emhattori@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Scott Klette,  
Facilities Supervisor, ext. 232  
[swklette@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:swklette@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Jan Loverin,  
Curator of Clothing and Textiles,  
687-6173 [jloverin@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:jloverin@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Sue Ann Monteleone,  
Registrar, ext. 240  
[samontel@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:samontel@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Robert Nysten,  
Curator of History, ext. 239  
[ranysten@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:ranysten@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Charmain Phillips,  
Museum Store Manager, ext. 244  
[lcphilli@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:lcphilli@clan.lib.nv.us)  
Deborah Stevenson,  
Curator of Education, ext. 237  
[dasteven@clan.lib.nv.us](mailto:dasteven@clan.lib.nv.us)

Indian Hills Curatorial Center  
775/687-5393  
Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile  
Research Center  
775/687-6173  
Anthropology Resource Center  
775/687-4810, ext. 229  
Bretzlaff History Resource Center  
775/687-4810, ext. 239 or 240  
Natural History Resource Center  
775/687-4810, ext. 236

## Morgan of the Museum

The Touring Adventures of Morgan S. Dollar, Docent of the Nevada State Museum by J.D. McGregor 2008



# Nevada State Museum

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Permit No. 32  
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Nevada State Museum  
600 North Carson Street  
Carson City, Nevada  
89701-4004

Phone: 775/687-4810  
Fax: 775/687-4168

[www.nevadaculture.org](http://www.nevadaculture.org)

## Visit the Museum

Open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Daily  
Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas,  
and New Years

Adults	\$5.00
Seniors (65+)	\$3.00
Children (under 18)	Free
Members	Free

SPREAD YOUR WINGS AND FLY ON OVER  
TO VIEW WHAT'S NEW  
AT THE NEVADA STATE MUSEUM...  
STORE, THAT IS!



Nevada's wildflowers bloom in many varieties: Book markers, note cards, and hand-crafted jewelry.

Wild mammals, birds, and amphibians appear in plush form, books, and kids' projects.



New titles fall from the tree of knowledge:  
*Dempsey in Nevada*,  
*Radicalism in the Mountain West*, and  
*Legacy of Silver & Saddles*.

