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First Snow in Central Nevada,  
by Harry Upson

# Ask Nevada

Readers present their questions on any Nevada subject and get the answers from David W. Toll, with a little help from his friends.

*Grahame Ross of Silver City writes to ask if his community was settled before Virginia City. This question has a rhetorical quality to it, since Ross is proprietor of Silver City's only remaining saloon and something of a local historian himself.*

However the answer is yes, Silver City was settled before Virginia City. In fact the community had been established in the middle 1850s by prospectors moving up canyon from Johnstown, well before Virginia City was established in the summer of 1859. Silver City is locally famous as the locale of the discovery of silver by the Grosch brothers, who died before they could capitalize on their find.

It is not so well known, however

that Silver City is also the site of the first shaft-mine on the Comstock. One member of a large prospecting party from California remembers spending 18 or 20 days in the summer of 1850 prospecting the western Utah Territory between the Walker River and Devil's Gate (on the north end of present-day Silver City):

"On the 8th of August, 1850, we commenced sinking a shaft at Devil's Gate," he recalled more than 30 years afterward. "Some gold was found in our prospecting trip, but in small quantities. That which was found at Devil's Gate was much lighter in comparison with its bulk, than what we had mined in California, and we did not think it of much value."

After the deaths of the Grosch brothers this shaft was rediscovered by later miners, and was thought to be the source of the brothers' rich silver samples. "About the first discovery made by the locators when they began cleaning out the shaft," Dan De Quille wrote in *The Big Bonanza*, "was the body—a sort of a mummy—of a Piute squaw who had been murdered some years before by members of her tribe, who had tumbled her remains into the old shaft." After that the shaft was considered bad luck, and certainly no silver ever came out of it.

In addition to the first mine shaft, Silver City also had the first cyanide mill in the state. It is easily recognized on the east side of the road at the lower end of town by its large iron-strapped redwood tanks. The mill was built in 1895 and operated more or less continuously until 1959 by three generations of the Donovan family

*The report on Nevada's big league baseball players has brought us a letter from John Pintar, a native of McGill, Nevada, now of Sacramento. "I believe I was the first Nevada-born athlete to sign a professional baseball contract," he writes. "I graduated from White Pine County High School in 1932, and the irony is that there was no baseball at high school.*

*"I signed my first professional baseball contract with the San Francisco Missions in 1936 out of the University of San Francisco. Brooklyn bought my contract from the Dallas Rebels in the Texas League in 1940 and in turn I was involved in a trade with the St. Louis Cardinals. I spent a couple of years in spring training with the Cardinals and*

*(Continued on page 62)*

David W Toll, author of "The Compleat Nevada Traveler," is former editor-publisher of the Gold Hill News. Send your inquiries to Ask Nevada, Nevada Magazine, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV 89710. Remember, no question is too large or too small.

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# Letters

## STATE CAPITAL MOVES TOWARD UTAH



The morning paper (August '79) brings the good news that no forests are afire in Nevada. I was surprised, however, to see that according to the AP Carson City has been relocated in the eastern part of the state, somewhere in the vicinity of Pioche. Does this mean my bureau is no longer needed? Is this why I never hear from you anymore?

Richard Menzies  
Salt Lake City UT

*No Menzies, don't panic, of course you're needed. Didn't you notice your name has been raised on the masthead?—Ed.*

## GOLD HILL NEWS FANS SPEAK

I could have done without your sample copy of *Nevada*. The magazine is no replacement for the *Gold Hill News*. The magazine is a slick hype job showing the ugly plastic Nevada. The Nevada I've cared about was more accurately and tastefully presented in the newspaper. The rest of Nevada, the deserts, the sagebrush, the hot springs, the miles of exquisite desolation can't be put on any kind of paper. So just take me out of your computer and I'll trek out to the east side of Pyramid Lake and up to the Black Rock desert when the spirit moves me and you go on selling the rest of the state to others.

Joann Lee  
Berkeley CA.

I was puzzled by the appearance of your magazine on my doorstep, as I have no memory of ever having ordered it. However, I find it so delightful that I will double what I assume to have been my initial order and so subscribe for two years.

S. Burgin  
Hutchinson, KS.

## REMEMBERS LAST YEAR

I think I can comment without prejudice about last year's Great Nevada Picture Hunt as I didn't enter any prints in the contest.

Not having a copy of that edition in which you showed the winners, I am depending on memory, but can recall my immediate impressions:

Referring to the editorial copy on page 56, stating the pix must have been made in Nevada and "capture the essence of Nevada," my recol-

lection of the winners is that few if any accomplished that goal, and only a verbal statement that the pix were indeed made in Nevada had to suffice as compliance with the rules. Pix of people, animals, flowers, et al. are not of necessity endemic to Nevada. The missing ingredient in most of the pix was "identity." I don't mean that every entry must include the Reno Arch to prove the point. The winners were all basically good, but I cannot recall even one which clearly had been shot in Nevada.

John McCreary  
Reno, NV.

## WE ALL WANT SOMETHING

Towards the end of July I finally got a copy of *Nevada Magazine* at a Safeway Store on Tonopah Street in Las Vegas. Everyplace I'd gone, I looked, but none! Plenty of *Arizona Highways*, but no *Nevada*.

Lucile Spire Bruner  
Las Vegas, NV.  
*Anyone who encounters this problem should call their local magazine distributor. It will encourage them to get Nevada on the newsstands more quickly.—Ed.*

The answer to the question raised by Dick Kemp (Letters, Fall) asking why a dock won't be built at Nelson's Landing is simple. The National Park Service will not promote it because of the flood that killed 13 people there in 1974. It's an extremely dangerous place.

Chris Schaller  
Carson City NV

I taught school in Nevada from 1927 to 1933, and just wonder if my struggle to start a new school in Deerlodge, Nevada, in 1927 might be of interest to your readers. Now that I am old, it seems a great adventure to me, so I am going to write it for my own pleasure anyway.

Veronica M. Elliott  
Georgetown, CO.

*Please send your story; we can't promise to print it but we are interested.—Ed.*

## IT'S LOADED

Compliments and an arm full of red roses for you and your entire staff are due for the Fall 79 issue of *Nevada*. It is loaded at both ends and in the middle with enjoyable reading and things to do.

Tex Walter  
Taft, CA.

When I heard some of Harry Webb's stories will appear in *Nevada Magazine* I decided to subscribe!

Amzie Stephens  
Nashville, TN.

I have just subscribed to your magazine because I've learned that David Toll is a member of your staff. How fortunate for you because David Toll is Nevada.

Vincent P. Troccoli  
Eatonville, WA.

*Harry Webb and David Toll are both regular contributors to Nevada Magazine. Toll also offers a bimonthly column called, "Ask Nevada." They are both very special observers of the Nevada scene.—Ed.*

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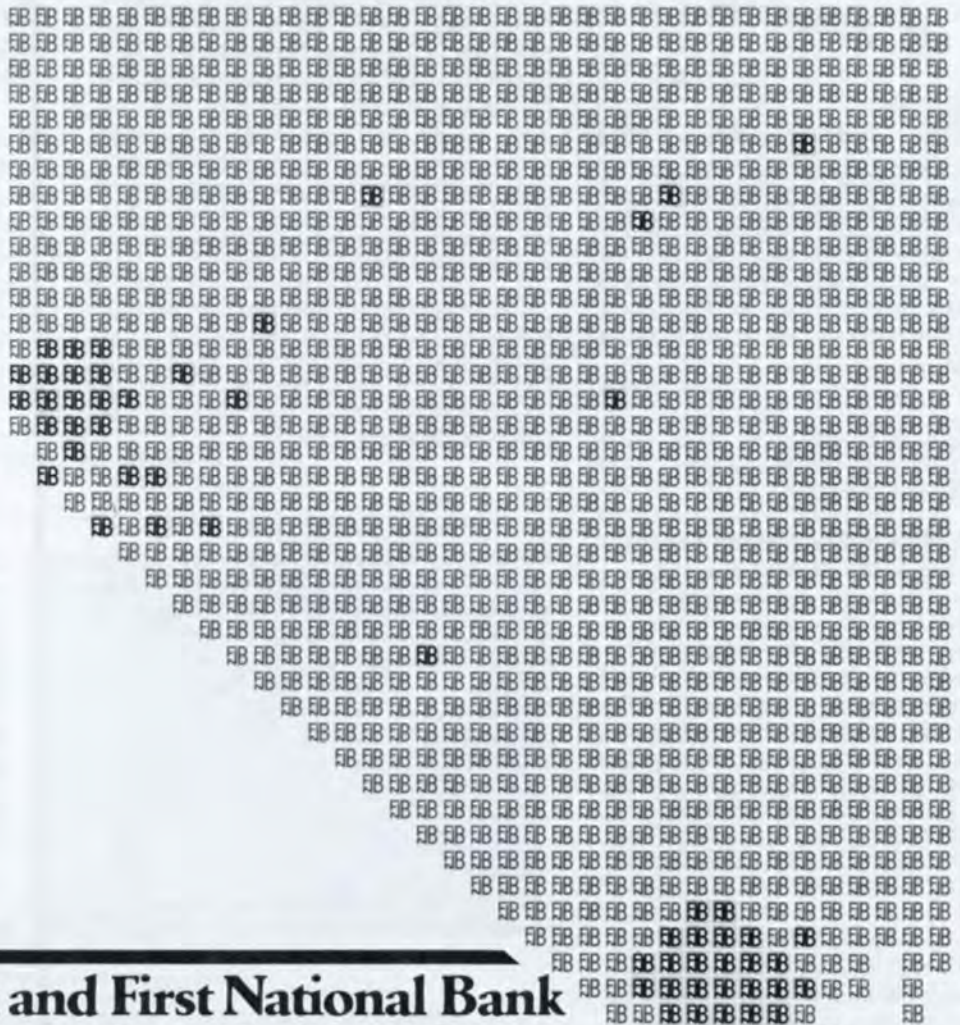
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Tahoe midweek may be the best skiing  
in the world. By Buddy Frank  
and Don Thompson

# thank god it's wednesday



Take any national magazine, shell out a few thousand for the full-page rate, and right across a sea of white space print the following:

"The best place in the world to ski is at Lake Tahoe." *(Continued)*



CURTIS/SKI INCLINE



VANCE FOX PHOTO

Flying looks good but it's for experts only (above). Among the benefits of Tahoe skiing are the beautiful views from the slopes (left).

Slowly the avalanche begins. Your box jams with irate mail from Taos to Mt. Mansfield. French patriots from Chamonix are protesting; the Sun Valley Rat Pack is in revolt and at Alta there's pure outrage. And more letters. The statistics arrive to expose the heresy: vertical drops, chair capacity discos-per-skier wind chill charts and more. Summarized, "The Sierras are okay as long as they remember their place."

Gather up your money and try it again, but this time with a condition. Not a very big condition, but just a little modification that stings the heart of the opposition. Start with all caps:

"MIDWEEK, the best place in the world to ski is at Lake Tahoe." Suddenly there's a silence that slides down Ruthies Run and spreads clear across Snowmass. No one's saying a word. Nary a grumble from Grenoble. Even the diehards at Mammoth Mountain



CURTIS/SKI INCLINE

Kids learn fast because they aren't embarrassed by mistakes.

act like someone cut the wires at Bridgeport. You've struck a nerve, and they know it. Summarized, "Don't say anything and maybe no one will notice."

That's exactly the point. No one has noticed Tahoe midweek since the Olympics left in 1960. Things haven't been a total loss. On the weekends, the Lake can hold a candle to anyone in terms of lift lines and mind-boggling moguls. But for years, the chairs have run up and down, Monday through Friday with only a handful of skiers aboard. Skiers with a well-kept secret and a smile on their face.

That secret begins with gaming. It's not that crap tables have anything magical to do with the slopes. It's that here, skiing, quite simply is not the top tourist draw. Maybe ahead of bingo, but it's certainly behind the showgirls and blackjack. Ask any casino executive in Reno, and he'll swear skiing was invented by the chamber of commerce to stop the slots from getting rusty in the winter. The harder it snows, the slower the dice



Championship race in the 1979 World Cup at Heavenly Valley.

roll. And the better the odds for the Tahoe ski visitor.

Any successful ski operation elsewhere in the country is spelled "Destination Resort." You sell the customer a package plan and keep him at your

place for five to seven days. That's how they do it at Aspen and Vail and Sun Valley. It's good business, but it can have some drawbacks for the skier. First, there are no slow days. The crowd remains nearly constant week-

## LAKE TAHOE SKI RESORTS

Area	Location	Phone	Vertical Feet	Rating Beg-Inter-Adv (Percent)	Rentals Adult/Child Full Day	Lift Price Adult/Child Full Day	Lifts	Night
Alpine Meadows	Hwy 89	916-583-6914	1667	25-35-40	\$11/8	\$15/8	13	no
Boreal Ridge	I-80	916-426-3666	600	20-65-15	\$8.50/5.50	\$10/5	8	yes
Granlibakken	Tahoe City	916-583-4242	250	0-50-50	mbr/guest	mbr/guest	2	no
Heavenly Valley	S. Lake Tahoe CA/NV	916-541-1330	4017	25-50-25	\$10/7	\$16/10	25	no
Homewood	Hwy 89	916-525-7256	1650	30-50-20	\$8/7	\$12/9 we \$10/7mw	9	no
Kirkwood	Hwy 88	209-258-6000	2000	20-40-40	\$10/7	*\$15/5	10	no
NorthStar	Hwy 267	916-562-1111	2200	33-50-17	\$11/7	\$15/9	8	no
Papoose (Children's World)	Squaw Valley		250	100-0-0 up to age 12	n/a	n/a	2	no
Powder Bowl	Hwy 89	916-583-4373	850	40-50-10	**\$8/4.75	**\$5.75/4.75	3	no
Sierra Ski Ranch	Hwy 50	916-659-7475	1600	42-45-13	\$9/9	\$11/7	6	no
Ski Echo Tahoe	Hwy 50	916-659-7177	1450	35-50-15	\$8/5	\$8.50/5.50	3	no
Ski Incline	Hwy 28	702-831-1821	900	30-50-20	\$10.50/6.50	\$14/8	7	no
Ski Reno	Hwy 27	702-849-0704	1440	40-30-30	\$10/6	\$12/5	7	yes
Ski Sundown	Hwy 88	209-258-8543	1200	20-60-20	*\$9/6	*\$10/7	5	no
Squaw Valley	Hwy 89	916-583-0121	2500	23-50-27	**\$9/6	\$16/under 12 free w/adult	24	no
Sugar Bowl	I-80	916-426-3651	1500	20-30-50	\$10/7	\$15/10 we	9	yes
Tahoe Donner Ski Bowl	I-80	916-587-6046	600	50-50-0	\$9.50/6	\$9/6 we \$6/4 mw	3	no
Tahoe Ski Bowl	Hwy 89	916-525-5224	1750	33-50-12	**\$7/6	**\$8/5.50 we \$5.50/4 mw	4	no
Tannenbaum	Hwy 27	702-849-9925	400	50-50-0	\$7/7	*\$6/3.50	3	yes
<b>. . . AND MT. CHARLESTON</b>								
Lee Canyon	Hwy 52	702-870-4778	1000	15-80-5	*\$8	\$9/6	3	no

\*—tentative; \*\*—1978; we—weekend; mw—midweek.

day or weekend. You may not face a long Saturday lift line, but by contrast there will never be a day when you're alone on a run either. There's also the problem of what to do in a purely ski town when you're not skiing. For example, if a storm closes the mountain, or you simply want a rest day off the hill, you're stuck. Prices during the winter are at a premium, entertainment is geared around the lift schedules, and the hardest run of the day is trying to fight the crowd at the bar.

Things work differently at Tahoe. About mid-October the motels at Crystal Bay, South Shore and Reno are abandoned, left to die in the cold and snow by the summer tourists. Their survival until May depends on adaptability and gimmicks like Winter Rates, Free Nickles, Bonus Coupons and the like. Here's a place where the skier can pick and choose luxury accommodations at a discount, see a lounge show using complimentary drink tokens and stuff himself with 89¢ Breakfast Specials. A Sierra blizzard becomes an opportunity to sample Nevada's 24-hour entertainment, not a day stuck in the lodge.

This advantage dips only slightly on the weekends when the day-trippers from Sacramento and San Francisco fill the basin. The people of this area are used to crowds; they're geared for peak summer periods and they hardly blink an eye at mobs that would cripple Aspen.

It's an asset unique to Nevada that gives ski resorts on both sides of the state line one-up in any comparison. To cement the claim as the "World's Best" is now as easy as proving the slopes are merely equal. Even detractors will usually concede that point, while others think Tahoe could win the title on its great skiing alone.

All the resorts share common assets: mild weather and good snowfall. When Alex Cushing sold the International Olympic Committee on the idea of holding the 1960 Games in little-known Squaw Valley his convincer was a documented 450 inches of snow a year. It's snow almost perfect for skiing. As the storms roll in from the Pacific, they lose a bit of their moisture and temperature before they slam into the Sierra. This generally results in flakes lighter than those in

the Pacific Northwest, but firmer than the head-deep powder at Utah and Idaho. The snow compresses well, but remains light. "Packed powder" is the standard report from November to April. The boiler-plate ice of the East Coast just doesn't exist here. Combined with an average temperature in the 40s and 50s, it's easy to get spoiled.

The one difficulty in selling Tahoe as a single resort destination is that each individual area has a distinct personality. There's a smorgasboard of large and small resorts and a single tank of gas can carry you from overwhelming to quaint and back again. It's a variety found nowhere else in the world.

**Squaw Valley:** When it's right, there's none finer. Nineteen double chairs, two triples, a gondola, a huge aerial tram service, and terrain that ranges from the terrifyingly steep KT-22 to the beautifully designed Gold Coast bunny area. Squaw however is not for the timid. The weekend crowds can be burly and despite recent efforts to change, the personnel tend to be a bit brusque. Still, it's worth the annoyance to find an area that you can't explore fully in a day or even a week.

# Ski Alpine Meadows

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It's a place where you can visualize the Olympic champions of the past streaking down the Siberia downhill course or see the possible medal winners of tomorrow running gates on Red Dog.

**Heavenly Valley:** The closest thing to the European concept of ski traveling. Here you can park your car in California and spend the day skiing in Nevada. Heavenly is big. Area-wise it has no match in the U.S. Although it's terribly cliché, photographers find it impossible to resist taking a shot or two of skiers floating 4,000 feet above Tahoe's water. With the tram and base lifts virtually rising out of the Stateline casinos, Heavenly is apres-ski headquarters. And there's also an excellent mix of terrain. The lower slopes on the California side suffer from a lack of altitude, but with good snow Gunbarrel is the home of the World Cup and a flock of hot doggers. On the Nevada side of the mountain, it's the utmost in intermediate trail skiing.

**Alpine Meadows:** Just upstream on the Truckee River from Squaw Valley is one of the friendliest places to ski. Alpine has long suffered in Squaw's shadow but in its own way it shines bright as a true family resort. You might also call it a true local resort. Most of the crowd comes from nearby Tahoe City. Alpine seems to have won the converts who've tried everything else. True, it's not a good beginners area, but it's excellent for the beginner-intermediate and offers five lifts for the experts. One other delight for the advanced skier is that the powder always seems better at Alpine.

**Kirkwood:** When it snows a foot in the Tahoe basin, it snows two feet at Kirkwood. No one is quite sure why but it always does. If the snow cover is marginal, head for Kirkwood. Tucked away on U.S. 89, it becomes an adventure, even for the Reno skier. There's a different feel here, perhaps because most of the crowd comes from Stockton instead of the Bay Area. The resort is built around the beginner-intermediate, and this offers a plus for the experts: no crowds on the steeper slopes. This year it'll be even better as Kirkwood is adding four new advanced trails. Because of its isolation, the people there seem to try harder particularly in the promotion department. It's a rare week when there isn't a Boogie-in-the-Bumps event, an Enduro race or a T-shirt contest.

**Northstar:** This is the ultimate ego area. If you're an intermediate, you'll

feel like an expert. Northstar is one of the new concept areas designed around a condominium project. It's well planned and a new triple chair this season just makes it better. They do limit ticket sales in an attempt to keep the skiing uncrowded. This is deceiving, though, since it's crowded before the limit is reached on good weekends. On that subject there is some good news. The parking lot has been expanded this year and should solve earlier problems.

There are more than a dozen other distinctive areas surrounding the Lake, a few of them bordering on major status:

**Ski Incline:** The snow-making process has been refined here, and it paid off handsomely during the 1976-77 drought. During normal years, there's always a great dusting of new stuff on the beginner and intermediate terrain. Incline is relaxed, family-oriented and very good for beginners.

**Ski Reno:** The newest name for the on-again off-again marriage of Slide Mountain and Mt. Rose resorts. This is demanding intermediate-advanced terrain, but if you do well your efforts will be noticed. The crowd is mostly

from Reno and they know their skiing. This is also a great place to follow the sun in the spring—Slide in the morning, Rose in the afternoon.

**Sugar Bowl:** Just off Interstate 80, this is the first stop for the San Francisco elite. It's a bit dated, but the Magic Carpet ride from the parking lot to the base lodge is still charming. Sugar Bowl is refined skiing with style.

**Boreal Ridge:** Boreal won a national award for design and management. Although it's small, everything is handy and done just right. It's strictly beginner-intermediate, but often draws the hotshots for night skiing.

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On the night before Christmas the legendary Nick the Greek had a special surprise for 100 Las Vegas families who were down on their luck.  
By Tricia Hurst

# Saint Nick of the Strip

The other day I had to borrow 20 cents to make a phone call. As I stood in the booth listening to the interminable ring on the other end, I was reminded of another such call years ago and my first and last introduction to Nick the Greek.

I was doing publicity in one of the gambling casinos on the Las Vegas Strip, and famous names and faces were as familiar to me as the housewife's butcher is to her. After the thrill of rubbing elbows with the stars had worn off, I began to look around at the rest of Vegas and found there was just as much poverty and pain a few minutes from the Strip as there is in any other town.

It was nearing Christmas, and I had the bright idea of soliciting funds from well-heeled hotel owners to make up Christmas baskets for needy families. In a week's time there was enough money for 100 baskets—a great deal of it coming from bartenders, cocktail waitresses, showgirls and guys who worked in the casinos.

On Christmas Eve friends helped load the baskets, filled with the traditional turkey and trimmings and toys, into the casino station wagon. Just as I was leaving, the manager handed me a "pickup" slip and asked if I'd meet the guest who was arriving shortly at the airport.

Meeting and greeting VIPs was part of my job, so there was nothing I could do but grin, shift into first and head for the airport with the baskets bouncing all around the car. The VIP was one Mr. Nicholas Dandolo, and he turned out to be a heavysset, graying man with not a trace of the arrogance and impatience I had encountered so many times with my pickup slips. He gave a shy smile and extended his hand and opened and closed the door for me when we got into the wagon.

I apologized for the crowded conditions and explained I was delivering Christmas baskets. As one of them



threatened to topple over Mr. D placed it in his lap, thoughtfully examining the contents and rearranging them.

As we neared the casinos, he spoke for the first time since we had gotten in the car

"I wonder if you would stop here and do me a favor" he said. I pulled into the driveway of a rival casino.

"I'd like you to make a call for me," he said. "It's very important you let the phone ring 15 times or they won't answer"

He jotted down a number with a short message on a slip of paper and I strode into the casino muttering under my breath. Polite or not, Mr D seemed to be as eccentric and lazy as the rest. A couple of minutes more and he would have been at my place where he could make all the calls he wanted. On top of that, I had to use my own dime. It never seemed to occur to a big spender that a dime was still a dime.

After dialing and waiting, then redialing to be sure, I returned to the car and informed my passenger that his party had not answered. He thanked me, and three blocks later I delivered him into the hands of the casino's doorman and bellhops. As far as I was concerned, they could make his phone calls for him.

It was almost midnight when I finished delivering my baskets of Christmas cheer and fell into bed with a sense of all's right with the world and I had contributed.

It was apparent the following morning that I'd never guessed how much.

The calls started coming in during the night, and by nine in the morning the switchboard was jammed. All the callers said the same thing. Laughing, crying, some were incoherent, and none could express what the baskets had meant to them: Christmas was not Christmas without a turkey and toys for the children. And the hundred dollar bill tucked into each basket was truly the star on top of the tree.

I was stunned, but not too stunned to realize I had been gloriously duped. Phone call indeed! I rummaged through my handbag and dialed the number on the slip of paper. No one

answered, but the day after Christmas I tried it again, and sure enough, it was a Las Vegas bank—a number that not only wouldn't answer on a holiday but would be closed in the evening as well.

Let it ring 15 times, and I had redialed to be sure. Time enough for someone to fill a hundred baskets; that is, if he were the kind of someone who walked around carrying \$10,000 in hundred dollar bills.

It didn't take long to ferret out the fact that Mr D was *the* Nick the Greek—a legend in the gambling world and a name I had heard daily in my six months in Vegas.

Nicholas Andrea Dandolos, alias "Nick the Greek," was born in 1886, son of a wealthy Greek merchant, educated at the best schools, steeped in the creeds of Aristotle and Plato. He was an acquaintance but never a friend of the Al Capones and Legs Diamonds of the world—a man who skirted the adoration of movie stars with his polite but aloof manner and who by his own calculations won and lost more than a half a billion dollars in his lifetime.

According to Life magazine, as his friends figured it, he had distributed \$2 million in day-to-day touches during his lifetime, given at least \$500,000 to charities, sent 28 children of friends to college, started 300 men in business without profit to himself and paid hospital bills for 600 people. He had been quoted as saying, "Money has been made a substitute for everything. Even character. It shouldn't be an ambition. I'm sorry we have to use it. It's just a stake."

He was obviously also a man whose one ambition in life, at least for the moment, was to avoid me as if I were carrying the bubonic plague. After my many attempts to contact him by phone were unsuccessful, even though our bungalows were only yards apart, it finally dawned on me that Mr Dandolos did not want his exercise in Christianity known. I had been in Vegas long enough to learn you don't go around mentioning money and especially anyone's source. It wasn't that it was considered vulgar as it might be in Boston or Philadelphia; it

was just, well, you might say unhealthy

Not that Nick the Greek was anything but a gambler and a gentleman. If he was going to take \$10,000 off his income tax as a charitable contribution, I figured he could break it to the government in his own way

But I still wanted to thank him personally for a gesture that surpassed my craziest dreams.

I got the chance a week later when I received another pickup and delivery slip. Mr D was departing. After I called for him it didn't take him long to make himself understood. He acted as if he had never set eyes on me in his life, but I couldn't resist one final nudge.

"By the way Mr D did you ever get through on that call you asked me to make? I mean to the bank that's closed at night?"

With not a change of expression, my passenger looked me straight in the eye and replied, "Now why would an old man like myself ask a pretty young lady and a very thorough one, I might add, like yourself, to run my errands? You don't think I can dial my own phone?"

As we stood at the airport waiting for the call to board the plane, Nick put out his hand and, hesitating only slightly raised it to my head and patted me. Then, without a word, he strode off.

Heading for the parking lot, I heard my name called and turned to see the plane's steward running after me, waving his arm.

"The gentleman who just boarded the flight asked me to give you this," he said, catching his breath. "He must be some kind of a nut or something. He tipped me a ten spot to catch you."

The steward turned and hurried back to the plane, and I looked down at the palm of my hand. In it was a dime—the correct amount for a phone call in those days.

Nick the Greek was a giant of his kind, and on Christmas Day in 1966 he died broke. VIPs or not, smart gamblers are a funny breed. They always pay their debts. Merry Christmas, Mr D, and sleep well. □

# Horse sense & nonsense

by Harry Webb

## Mary's taste for whiskey kept her fit, fighting mean and a memorable figure in Elko folklore.

When Mary Larson died at age 87 we simply couldn't believe it. Although Mary barely waggled the scales at the hundred mark and was as wrinkled as a prune, she was rated a well preserved woman. Folks said, "Why wouldn't she be *well preserved*? She's stayed pickled all her life!"

Mary was a kindly soul, but cross her and you had a fight on your hands. As an old ex-sailor said, "Rile Mary and it's a case of batten down the hatches and abandon ship! That woman would fight a buzzsaw and give it a five minute start!" Mary had a miraculous capacity for whiskey and her chief claim to glory was "When Bing Crosby was Elko's Honorary Mayor I drank him under the table four times!" Many citizens discounted this by 50 percent.

However Mary's yen for liquor never seemed to curtail her ability to acquire property. Aside from her ranch down the river she had lots scattered all over town, although until recent years lots in Elko were on a par with a row of post holes in Siberia.

The last time I saw Mary Larson she had just had a veritable axe-fight with a rancher by the name of Manuel Machado. Something over a cow. Mary was working Manuel over with an axe handle and Manuel, taking umbrage at this, had dropped her with a saucer-size rock. She was on the highway walking toward Elko, to have him arrested, when I came along.

"I'd of shotgunned that Portuguese son-of-a-bitch," she panted, "if I'd had ary a shell on the ranch!"

By the time we reached town she had had a change of heart. "Reckon I shouldn't o' fit with him, though, 'cause it was my fault." Instead of getting a warrant she got drunk.

One of the classic stories folks like to tell about Mary was an occurrence years before. Seems she had bought an old house on the south skirts of town

and after fixing it up in apple-pie order she decided she didn't like the location and, owning a lot about a couple blocks away decided to have the house moved on it.

A freighter friend, by the name of Reed, happened by with his six mule team and Mary wanted him to hitch on her house and haul it to the new location. Now when Mary wanted something done she wanted it done immediately if not sooner. But Reed had another hauling job that day and said "I'll move it first thing tomorrow. Mary " Mary had been hitting the jug and being in no mood for delay she gave him "a piece of her mind" that equalled a bogged-down mule-skinner's cussing.

Reed knew Mary so well he just laughed and went on about his business. However he finished his job sooner than expected that afternoon and decided while he had his six mules harnessed he may as well drag Mary's house down to that lot.

When he got to her house he found she'd gone on a binge and had passed out on a horsehair couch. When he couldn't wake her up, no matter how he tried, he jacked the house on his skids and hitched on. Thinking all the racket would have fetched her alive he went in for a final try but no luck. Mary was still dead to the world. Not wanting the stove pipes on the kitchen and heater stoves to fall down while moving and ruin everything with soot, he took them down. After carrying them out and shaking the soot out of them he laid them on the little porch by his house jacks.

At the new location he had the house jacked up, the skids pulled away and was letting the house down on its wooden templates when the door flew open and Mary came tumbling out yelling at the top of her lusty lungs, "Fire! Fire! Where the hell am I! Fire-e-e!"

There was a fire, alright. Smoke was

pouring out of every place there was a crack. To add to the bedlam the six-mule team stampeded through town for home with the skids wrecking everything in their path. Elko's Volunteer Fire Department consisted of businessmen and a hose cart, but the clang of the fire bell gathered them on the run, but by the time they reached the scene flames were belching through the roof. In seconds the hose was making the cart-reel hum as men ran looking for a hydrant. Then it was discovered the nearest fire-plug was a full block away and there was but a hundred feet of hose.

Mary was cussing everybody as she staggered around asking "Who the hell set my house afire?" But other questions were in order and, as the house burned, between her and Mr. Reed the firemen eventually deduced what had happened. Mary had woke up and, thinking it was morning, decided to cook breakfast. As unstable as she was she hadn't noticed the missing stove pipe but had managed to get wood from the box by the kitchen stove. After stuffing the fire box full she had emptied a gallon of coal oil on the wood for a quick fire and lit it. There being no stove pipe the enormous flame had shot up through the hole where the pipe had been, setting the ceiling and attic ablaze.

The aftermath of the situation came the next day when Mary was sober and friends were advising her to sue Reed for the loss. "No," Mary said, "I can't do that. It wasn't his fault. It was the fault of that damn whiskey I must have drank a wee too much of."

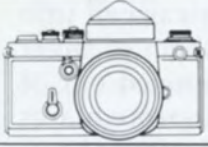
"Well, Mary" the Minister warned, "let that be a lesson to you. Never let a drop of that Devil's brew pass your lips again."

"Yes, Reverend, you're right," Mary admitted. "But a little nip now and then is the only thing that keeps me healthy" □

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Harry Webb is one of America's best known and most widely read Western storytellers. He is the sole surviving member of the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show and a former actor, cowboy trapper and horsetrader. He began writing during his ranching days in northeastern Nevada, and scores of his stories have been published in many Western magazines.

Today Harry Webb is 91 and lives in Southern California. "Horse Sense and Nonsense" is part of a series of Harry's favorite Nevada tales.



# T H E L E N S

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“And just as there is a certain sameness to the upland desert landscapes of central Nevada, there is a sameness, too, to the histories of settlements established there.” David W. Toll, from “The Complete Nevada Traveler,” published by University of Nevada Press.



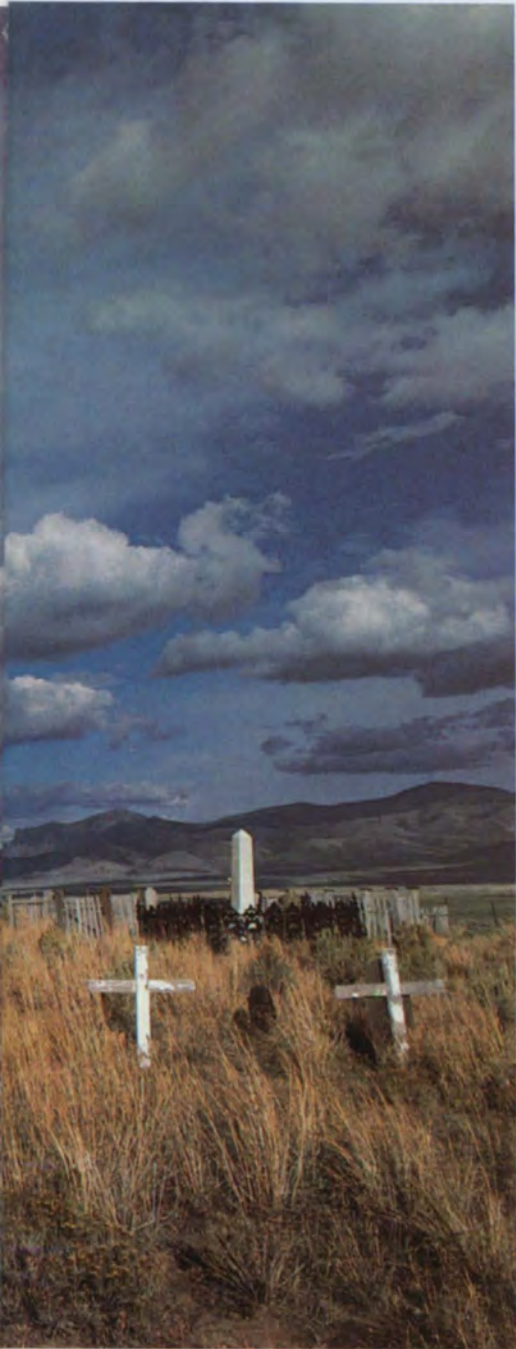
Gold was first discovered at Jarbidge near the Idaho border in 1909. Seventy years later few traces of man remain as the deer reclaim the rugged mountain wilderness.  
Photo by Richard Menzies

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"A century ago it was different. Gangs of miners, working in round-the-clock shifts, swarmed into those mountains to tunnel deep into the hips and ribs and rumps of them and plunder them of silver and gold. Those were the glory years, when bustling wagon roads were switchbacks gouged out of mountainsides to connect thriving, rawboned cities near the summits with dusty thoroughfares scratched across the windy flats below. Today only the husks of these cities remain—the few ghosts and almost-ghosts that have not vanished utterly "



A small placer mining camp in 1869, Tuscarora became popular only after silver lodes were discovered in 1871. At one time Tuscarora had a population of nearly 4,000. Today there are more graves than people.  
Photo by C. J. Hadley



In the 1800s, the burro was often the prospector's only friend. Today prospectors are hard to find while descendants of their trusty burros roam wild and free throughout the state of Nevada.

Photo by Linda Dufurrena



During the gold rush at the turn of the century inhabitants at Jarbidge numbered 1,500. Today there are a handful of permanent residents left in this north Elko County town, plus a store, gas pump, bar and post office.

Photo by C. J. Hadley



## THE OLD MORMON FORT

Now a museum, the old fort has mirrored events that have shaped Las Vegas since the Saints settled at the meadows in 1855 By Ardis Coffman

In the summer of 1855 Mormon missionaries built a fort in the Las Vegas Valley. Other white men had passed through this oasis they named "the meadows," but the missionaries from Deseret were the first to call it home.

The site they chose for their fort was a slight hill overlooking a sparkling stream. For the next century and a quarter each major change that shaped Las Vegas was mirrored in this small plot of ground. Its history is, in microcosm, the history of the city.

The 30 missionaries under the leadership of William Bringham had a dual mission. They were to establish a safe way station between the Mormon communities of Salt Lake City and San Bernardino. Their other assignment was to convert the Paiute Indians to the church and to teach them agriculture.

*Las Vegas Creek flowed by the main ranch house near the old Mormon fort at the turn of the century (left). The fort is now open for tours (right).*

The building of the 150 square foot fort, located on today's North Las Vegas Boulevard, proved the easier part of the job. The nomadic Paiutes were willing to eat the food produced, but farming did not suit their lifestyle. Nor were they inclined to join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A few were baptized; membership brought with it food and gifts. But most of the independent Paiutes preferred to live as their ancestors lived. They made nightly raids on the missionaries' fields; food growing in the valley had, after all, always been theirs for the taking.

It was soon obvious to church leaders that the mission at Bringhurst, as they called the outpost, was a failure. Not only did the Indians refuse to convert, but there were internal troubles as well. The Mormons began lead mining at nearby Potosi Mountain and there were arguments and jealousy over which operation had priority. As a result of the dispute, Bringhurst was "disfellowshipped" from the church and forced to leave in disgrace.

In 1858, only three years after its construction, the fort was abandoned. Men from the lead mines kept the farm going, and a small store and blacksmith shop were maintained for a number of years to serve those traveling the Mormon Road.

Then along came a miner with a yen to be a farmer. His name was Octavius Decatur Gass, and from his ledgers and household accounts, it is obvious he was a genial fellow fond of his homemade wine. In 1865 Gass and two partners bought out the few homesteaders who had settled in the valley during the Civil War years.

Gass repaired the abandoned fort, turning sections of it into a blacksmith shop and storage sheds. He built a ranch house and moved his wife, Virginia Simpson Gass, and children into it. Farm buildings were also constructed.

Wagon trains on the way west stopped often at the Gass Ranch, where the travelers washed in the spring, rested and bought supplies. They recorded in their diaries that Mr. and Mrs. Gass were hospitable folks who sold them the supplies they needed at a fair price.

Rather than attempting to convert

the Indians to his ways, Gass accommodated himself to theirs. He and Virginia learned the Paiute language and their relations with the native Americans appear to have been cordial and cooperative. About 60 Indians helped with the planting, harvesting and other ranch chores. They were paid in food and clothing.

After about 15 years of farming what Gass called Los Vegas Rancho,

bad crop years forced him to mortgage the 800 acre ranch. When he was unable to pay back the loan, the property was taken over by Archibald Stewart in 1882. The price was \$6,478.

But Stewart, unlike Gass, was not popular with his neighbors. About two years after moving to the ranch, he became embroiled in a feud with an employee at the next ranch, which was owned by Conrad Kiel. The cause of



CLIFF STANLEY

## LAS VEGAS CULTURAL & HISTORIC TOURS

Cultural Focus offers a glimpse of the side of Las Vegas that is often overlooked by providing guided tours of the area's art museums, theaters, university campus and restored historical sites.

Four such cultural and historic tours are offered at the present time to convention and local groups of 30 or more. The choices are:

A tour of the Old Mormon Fort, Kyle Ranch, the Strip, and Glitter Gulch. Then groups visit the Westside Art Community and the Las Vegas Museum. Cost is \$11 per person, which includes museum fees and refreshments.

Subject to production schedules, an evening tour takes in performances at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, the Meadows Playhouse, Reed Whipple Center or the Charleston Heights Arts Center. Cost is \$28.60 per person including dinner and theater tickets.

A visit to Lake Mead's visitor center an art walk through Boulder City and a stop at the Desert Research Institute for demonstrations on solar energy. After lunch at historic Casino Pass, the group tours the Southern Nevada Museum. Cost is \$19.80 including lunch and entrance fees.

A trip though colorful Red Rock Canyon to Spring Mountain Ranch State Park for a tour of the pioneer ranch whose former owners include Lum of "Lum and Abner" Vera Krupp and Howard Hughes. Cost is \$16.50; a box lunch is served.

On request tours can also be arranged to educational facilities, news media, art galleries and other sites of interest to specific groups. For information contact Jeanne Clark at Cultural Focus, 749 Veterans Memorial Drive, Las Vegas, 89101, 702-382-7198.

the feud and the details of the shooting are lost in time, but the most likely version is that Stewart went to the Kiel Ranch one day with the intention of settling a score with a man named Henry. There was a shoot out and Stewart was the loser. Kiel was away from home at the time of the gunfight. When he returned he sent Helen Stewart a note: "Your husband is here dead. Come take him away."

The widow drove her buckboard across the desert to get the body. She found her husband lying where he fell with a blanket thrown over him. Throughout her life, she insisted his injuries indicated that more than one man was involved in the killing.

No trial was held since it was ruled that Henry had acted in self-defense. The impression comes down the years that there was little sorrow over Stewart's demise.

Helen Stewart stayed on at the ranch, and with the help of a foreman to take care of the heavy work, she turned the place into a kind of early West spa. Trees planted by Gass grew to towering heights. There was a stream for bathing and relief from the summer heat, and Mrs. Stewart was

said to lay a fine table.

The era of the covered wagon drew to a close as the Pacific Coast was connected with the rest of the country by railroad lines. One was the next owner of the ranch—the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad, later the Union Pacific.

Las Vegas was born on May 15, 1905, when areas of the ranch were sold as Clark's Townsite. Another part of the property was a division point and a resort for travelers. The creek was dammed to create a swimming pool for the town. "The Plunge" was a life saver in those summer days before air conditioning when the desert temperatures hit 115 degrees.

Then, one day came the news that a great dam was to be built on the Colorado River some 30 miles away. Engineers arrived looking for a place to use as a laboratory for testing concrete. They needed a building that could be kept cool since they were working with combustibles. The remaining piece of the old Mormon fort, a crumbling but well insulated adobe structure, seemed ideal. In 1929, the engineers moved in, renovated the building, installed government issue windows and doors,

and, of course, a flagpole.

The mobs of workers on the dam gave rise to a new industry—gambling. The city grew. The old fort was tucked away under the hill hidden by the huge Elm trees; the future was bright, the past forgotten. Few visitors to the palaces of glitter gulch suspected Las Vegas had a history.

If not for the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, the old fort would have been torn down many times over. The ranch buildings had long ago given way to an Elk's Club.

But in recent years, Las Vegas began to grow up as well as out. Other citizens joined the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers in efforts to preserve and develop the historic site at Washington Avenue and Las Vegas Boulevard. The City of Las Vegas bought the land from the Elks in 1971. In 1976, thanks to a Bicentennial grant, the building was stabilized and opened to the public.

Today the museum in the old fort is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. A guide is available to interpret history for visitors and show a variety of antiques housed there.

The fort is also a stop on the Allied Arts Council's Cultural Tours. □

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## **Beltran: Basque Sheepman of the American West**

by Beltran Paris, as told to William Douglass  
Available December, 1979 \$10.00

As a youth raised on a tiny farm in the Pyrenees Mountains of France, Beltran Paris lived a life of almost unceasing work and few expectations. As he was to recall in later years, "Somehow, I thought I could do better."

It was this motivation that prompted him to join the many hundreds of young Basques in similar straits who made the momentous decision to emigrate to the American West where they began a pattern of experiences which typified the Basque shepherd early in this century.

But Beltran was not satisfied to remain a shepherd or a camp tender, and eventually he built a successful livestock operation which today extends over three Nevada counties.

**University of Nevada Press**  
Reno, NV 89557 • (702) 784-6573

When he hitchhiked into Silver City in 1946, he vowed, "Staab, you're going to ride out of this town in a Cadillac!" By Jim Crandall

## PAT STAAB, Comstock saloonkeeper

Six grizzled bikers roar down Spooner Summit, race through Carson City and head east on Hiway 50. A cloud of exhaust fumes billows out behind them. A wave of menace sends rabbits scurrying in their wake. Springs groan and tires scream as the swarm leans left hard, turning onto Hiway 17 and heading for Virginia City

They swoop up the hill into the sleepy little town of Silver City and descend like vultures on the Golden Gate Bar. Dismounting, they clamber noisily into the dark narrow bar. The odor of sweat, grease and gasoline sickens the air. The local patrons slip quietly out the back door.

The gang scrutinizes the wrinkled, grey haired man behind the bar. They order drinks and make themselves at home. Ashtrays shatter as they hit the floor. Mock fights send pictures flying from the walls. Fallen barstools splinter under pounding black leather boots.

The mirror behind the bar explodes from a thrown beer bottle. Shards of broken glass rain down on the quiet bartender. The bikers laugh and order more drinks.

But instead of drinks, the little man whips a 12-gauge double-barreled shotgun out from under the bar. He runs past the bikers and out the door to their gleaming Harley-Davidson motorcycles. Blam! Blam! Two of the bikes sink down in the ass-end, tires shattered.

The stocky little man slips two more cartridges in the chamber spreads his feet apart, and waits.

The six bikers slink out of the bar ease onto their motorcycles, start them up and limp out of town.

Pat Staab is a man to be reckoned with. He was in the Marines in World War I and the Army in World War II. And between the wars he spent 15 years keeping cutthroats and murderers honest as a prison guard at San Quentin. So when the bikers pulled up to his bar that spring day in 1956, Staab was ready

You never knew what to expect when you entered Staab's bar. He wore a perpetual scowl, accentuated by bristling upturned eyebrows overshadowing fiery bright blue eyes. You'd get the cold shoulder at first. Then, after a sideways scrutiny you



Pat Staab in 1947 outside Golden Gate Saloon where he entertained tourists with dummies and "baby rattlers."

might get a drink. If you were lucky you'd get to quench your thirst in peace, but this happened rarely

He'd start out on you about the sissy drink you ordered. Your hair is too long. Your great-great-grandfather came on the wrong boat. You're ready to jump over the bar and throttle this guy but then he turns his head to one side, winks, and cracks a joke. Suddenly you're laughing, and Staab has done it again.

Staab's reign at the Golden Gate started on a whim in 1946. He'd seen an ad in the *San Francisco Chronicle* saying that half-interest in a Nevada bar was for sale. "I figured it was a pretty good bet because I'd heard the price of gold and silver was going up," says Staab. "I took the Southern Pacific to Reno, the bus to Carson and I hitchhiked up to Silver City"

Staab found himself in a ghost town. Although a few of the scattered hillside houses were well kept, most were teetering on the edge of collapse, their paint long gone with the winds. Rusted mining equipment lay in random heaps, silent testimony to the bustling gold rush days long gone. "I said to myself, 'Now Staab, you're gonna ride out of this town in a Cadillac!'"

In the midst of the town's silent thoroughfare sat the Golden Gate Bar. Staab gave the sagging building the once over and decided to buy in. Half-owner Betty Crux was also a newcomer to the town. Staab bought Betty's disillusioned partner out and three months later he and Betty were married. With Staab at the helm the two of them made a go of running a bar in a ghost town.

And the going was tough through the late 40's and 50's. By the time the "Bonanza" series became a prime time TV hit, the handful of remaining mining operations were nailing up "Closed" signs. One by one the Con Chollar Donovan's Mill, and Dayton Consolidated had shut down.

The three other bars in Silver were feeling the pinch too, and one at a time they closed their doors. But not Staab. He pooled all his resources, squared his shoulders and started to work. He cut down the trees in front of the bar and set his traps for the tourists on their way up to Virginia City to see Hoss and Little Joe.

A big black box appeared next to his front door which proclaimed in bold red letters, "BABY RATTLERS." Many a car would come to a screeching halt. Whole families would walk up shyly

with the father holding back his troop while he peered down through the wire mesh boxtop. But instead of writhing diamondback rattlers with fangs dripping venom, he'd see pink, yellow blue and red baby rattles, the age old pacifier of tiny tots.

"I also had a homemade horse in the bar and a burro outside," says Staab. "And a stuffed man sitting on a rocking chair on the porch. Must have been a million pictures taken of that old dummy." Staab had another little gimmick. He wired a loudspeaker to the front of his bar so he could ball out the tourists whenever he felt like it.

Staab and Betty would work like crazy through the summer months. "Twenty-seven hours a day nine days a week," as Staab would say. But in the winter months when things slowed down Staab kept boredom at bay with a few town projects.

Prowling around Silver one day he peeked through the ancient doors of the old Silver City Fire House. A couple of broken down hose carts were all that remained, so Staab decided to revive the fire department.

"About the only thing the people in town would do if there was a fire was pull out the old carts and watch whatever was on fire burn to the ground," says Staab. "I bought an old 1929 Chevrolet fire truck from the junkyard in Virginia City stole some fire hose from the Carson Fire Department, and put a new floor down in the old fire house." Staab became chief and crew of the Silver City Fire Department.

"About the only time I went to a fire was when the Cat Family's house burnt down," says Staab. "I called them the 'Cat Family' because they had 128 cats, and I know they was eatin' them cats. All the food they ever bought was cat food.

"And one of the guys was a little Canadian, had a hell of a pension. He was what you call a 're-check man. A re-check man is out of England or Canada and they're the black sheep of a rich family. The family sends them away and sends them a big check every month to keep them away.

"Anyway when their house caught on fire I knew it was a torch job. They had moved all their furniture out the day before. So I got the old fire truck out and drove on up there. I asked the lady if all the people were out and she said they were. Well, I seen what the score was, so I backed the truck up and fixed it so nobody could start it.

"And the joint burnt down. So we

GRAHAM ROSS COLLECTION



*Staab and a friendly guest at the bar in 1966.*

got rid of them Cat People."

By the 1960's when Staab had settled into a routine in Silver the hippies started showing up. They bought or rented some of the teetering old buildings, braced them up and moved in. Before long Staab was in the midst of a town filled with youthful enthusiasm. Painters, writers, metal sculptors, actors, theologians and geologists flocked to the bar.

"I didn't like the long hairs at first," says Staab. "But then I got smart. Now these tourists, you lay out a red carpet to get their buck, see. But those kids, that was another story. They'd come into the bar with their long hair and bare feet, but they'd reach way down in their old torn up blue jeans and pull out hundred dollar bills!

"I said to myself 'Hey Staab, you're on the wrong side here.' So I got rid of the red carpet and kept the kids. I used to wash their money and set it on the back bar to dry just for a joke. But I never made a dime till the kids started showing up."

Besides making money off the "kids," Staab and Betty made a lot of close friends. Staab, born in 1900, was getting older. He and Betty treated the newcomers like adopted children. On Christmas and Thanksgiving the new locals would walk into the bar to find a complete turkey dinner with all the trimmings sitting in front of them with no charge, rare for Staab. In fact, his gruff veneer seemed to be weakening.

He would even loan money out, "But only this once, and you'd better have it back by Friday" was his lame excuse.

Staab grew comfortable in his role as town father and he would have stayed in that position for the rest of his life, but in 1971 his world came crashing down around him. Betty died.

"Hard times didn't affect me much, I'm pretty broad shouldered," says Staab. "But when Betty died I went kind of haywire." Staab went through a deep depression for months. He started drinking heavily. He wrecked his car. He put the Golden Gate up for sale.

"The kids took pretty good care of me through all that," says Staab. "I was in pretty bad shape." Staab made it through the calamity although staying in Silver was still too much for him to bear. He sold the bar to Graham Ross in 1973.

Staab decided to make a new life for himself. He re-married his first wife, Maybelle Parce, but says the marriage was a mistake. "I put her in the ground a year ago," says Staab.

Staab finally settled down in Gravois Mills, Missouri. He met his current wife Gracie at a bowling alley there, but brought her out to Carson to get married and up to the Golden Gate for the reception. Nowadays Staab spends most of his time fishing, or taking care of his boat, or polishing his pride and joy the big black Cadillac that he drove out of Silver City. □

# Comfort by the Cord

As we approach the 1980s—what might be called the decade of diminishing expectations—the American family is spending more and more for home heating. Renewable resources such as solar wind, hydroelectric and nuclear energy will be developed to ease our addiction to oil.

The Franklin stove, in fact, was the answer to the country's first energy crisis. In Ben Franklin's Philadelphia, people were used to going out and gathering wood for their fireplaces. But as the city became more crowded, they had to rely more on wood dealers—and on conserving their wood supplies. Ben Franklin's stove offered a compact heating compartment that could be placed in the center of a room, getting more heat for less wood (and less money).

Heating with wood, one renewable fuel resource not part of any federal program, is being revived in a rapidly increasing number of American homes. In the past five years, the manufacture of wood burning stoves in the U.S. has increased sixteen fold.

Everything from the small, one room parlor stove to wood-fired furnaces capable of heating large, multi-leveled houses, are being installed at such a rate that stove makers cannot keep up with the demand. More than a million homes in the U.S. are now either partially or totally wood heated.

There are a wide variety of ways to burn wood. The standard home fireplace may be aesthetically pleasing, but 90 percent of the heat from those dancing flames never enters the room. And, if the central heat is on while the



hearth is blazing, that expensive forced air will be carried past your browning marshmallows, into the flames, and right up the chimney

The fireplace can be made more efficient by installing steel box inserts or C-shaped tubular grates which draw cool air from the bottom, direct it by convection around the fire, and force the heated air back into the room. But to effectively heat a home with wood, a variety of the "airtight" wood stove or heater is what you want.

The airtight or controlled draft type wood burning stove is available in an array of models, from a multitude of manufacturers. Depending upon its size and design, an airtight can heat between 4,000 and 25,000 cubic feet of space—one room or several. The guiding principles of these stoves are the control and direction of the air flow for a slow efficient burn, and maintaining a high firebox temperature for the most complete possible combustion. Stove makers will add their own unique features, often patented, such as flow baffles, secondary chambers,

pre-heating airways, bi-metallic coil thermostats, firebrick lining, intruding flues and more, all for the cause of making their wood stoves "the world's most efficient."

## Choosing a Stove

When sallying forth into the ever-burgeoning and highly competitive stove marketplace, the buyer is wise to think out most of his needs beforehand. Will wood be your primary heat source or merely a back-up? Are you heating one room or an entire house? Is the design pleasing, i.e.

can you live with a hot metallic box in your front room?

What is the stove made of? Good steel will heat quickly and withstand high temperatures, but cast iron holds a fire longer. If you choose iron, a new stove should first be "seasoned" with small fires to prevent cracking. Domestically built stoves are superior to foreign imports; stoves cast in Taiwan have been known to crack with even the slightest bump or jolt. Finally is the retailer really knowledgeable about wood heating, or could he as easily be selling vacuum cleaners?

Fisher, Nordic, Ashley Schrader Buffalo, Jotul, Riteway All Nighter Orley's, and Earth Stove, to name but a few all manufacture sturdy efficient models. Be wary of salesmen who denigrate competing models and claim exact efficiency percentages or heating capabilities for their stoves. The efficiency of any good stove depends upon the characteristics of the space being heated, climatic conditions, type of fuel, and the operator's skill.

Good used stoves can still be found at flea markets, garage sales, and in the classified ads. If you should find one, check for burned-out linings, cracked iron, crumbling welds, ill-fitting doors, vents and ash pans, and instability from warping, mishandling or poor manufacture. A flashlight is an indispensable tool for ascertaining the worth of a used stove.

### Installation

If you are not handy with carpenter's tools, installation of a wood stove is best left to a professional. State and federal building codes are strict about the installation of chimneys and stovepipes. Thousands of stove-related house fires are reported each year in the U.S. A radiating stove, one which transmits energy directly from its metal surfaces, should stand several feet from the nearest wall. A circulating stove has an outer steel jacket and heats by convection: cool air is drawn in at the bottom, heated between the firebox and the jacket, then released to the room through vents in the stove's top and sides. A circulating stove's outer surface never gets "red hot," and may be installed closer to a wall. It is also a safer stove if you have small children (or large drunks) in your home.

An existing chimney can be adapted easily to accommodate a wood stove. Or, if stovepipe is used, it must be run through the wall—not the ceiling or roof—and triple-wall pipe should be

run through a thimble or steel spacer box in the wall. Eight-inch firebrick around the pipe at the wall exit is an acceptable alternative to a thimble. Probably the safest way to vent smoke is with a steel stove chimney but it's very expensive too. Again, be sure to consult, or hire, a professional when it comes to installing your stove.

### How a Cord Stacks Up

Once your wood stove is safely installed, and you're prepared to do your part in bringing OPEC to its knees, the trickiest part of the operation begins—getting wood. You can either buy cordwood from a dealer or head out into the woods and cut it yourself.

Most dealers sell wood by the cord, a quantity consisting of 128 cubic feet of fuel. When it is well stowed and stacked so that "a rat can run through but the cat can't follow" a cord measures 4 by 4 by 8 feet. If your wood is delivered in a standard pick-up truck, you won't be getting a full cord in one load alone. If your dealer piles the wood in a crisscross or self-bracing fashion, the resulting 4 by 4 by 8 foot stack could be as much as thirty per-



JOHN PACKER PHOTOS

Wood stoves have their own looks and personalities, but efficiency usually depends on the care of the owner.



Woodsmen split another pile of Sierra pine, a strenuous but low-cost way to stay warm when winter zephyrs blow.

cent short of a cord. Most dealers don't stack their deliveries, so it's important to stack it yourself as soon as possible. Then, if it doesn't "cord-out" as promised, have a little talk with your supplier. Take a friend or two with you. But the best way to avoid being cheated, and it is an all too frequent occurrence, is to buy from an established local wood dealer.

The price of cordwood is based upon three factors: type of wood, availability and the time of year. Because they burn the slowest and provide the most available heat, hardwoods such as oak, locust, maple and ash are the most expensive, costing between \$95 and \$130 per cord. The price also indicates the sad fact that stands of hardwoods are scarce in the state of Nevada. A friend who lives on Martha's Vineyard, where hardwoods abound, pays \$45 for a cord of oak. Delivered and stacked.

Conifers and all other evergreen trees are softwoods. Split cords of softwood can be purchased for \$60 to \$80. Fir or pine will always be much cheaper than oak or locust, but keep in mind that one cord of Live Oak will produce as much heat as two cords of

# FIREPLACE OWNERS

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**670 Dunn Circle**  
**Sparks, Nevada 89431**  
**702-359-5661**

Jeffrey Pine. Wood prices are at their lowest from spring to early summer. When the buds of May are blooming and people begin working on their first tan, wood sales drop off dramatically and cord prices will often be reduced as much as 25 percent.

Installing a wood stove to conserve energy and then spending more money on wood than you would for heating oil or gas seems rather silly. But an efficient stove, properly operated, will reduce heating costs over the long run, in spite of rising cordwood prices.

## Cutting Your Own

Cutting your own will maximize the money saving aspects of a wood heated household. Surprisingly the Sagebrush State has a wide variety of trees suitable for fuelwood. Singleleaf Pinyon and Desert Juniper thrive throughout the state. Aspen, Cottonwood, and Locust grow in the canyons and ranchlands, and numerous species of evergreens abound on the eastern Sierra slopes.

Most of the land where these forests grow are managed by agencies of the federal government. The U.S. Forest Service allows the cutting, in designated areas, of up to five cords per person of dead or down wood. Free permits may be obtained at any Forest Service office, or call the U.S. Department of Agriculture for information on free wood sites in your area.

The Bureau of Land Management charges \$3 per cord, with a 10 cord limit, for permits to cut wood on lands controlled by them. BLM cutting areas are usually more accessible than those controlled by the Forest Service and can be reached in a standard pick-up. But some of the roads are so rutted and rocky that even a four-wheel drive truck will take a severe beating. Both agencies have strict regulations concerning the use of chain saws, and a fire extinguisher and long handled shovel must be kept within reach at the cutting site.

Landowners often allow cutting on their property in order to clear the land. Power companies cut thousands of trees each year and the remaining wood can be obtained by individuals with permission. Landfills and dumps are good sources of scrap wood and stumps. As winter approaches and "wood fever" sets in, you'll be surprised how much burnable material has escaped notice.

Cutting your own wood is hard,

dirty work. But when the winter storms howl about your home, it can be very satisfying to know that your family is warm and cozy because you worked hard for a few days in the fall.

Heating with wood will not stop the flow of windowed envelopes into the mailbox. But with the advent of more efficient wood stoves, it is surely an idea whose time has returned. □

## NEVADA STOVE STORES

*Note: Nevada's area code is 702.*

### RENO

**C & M Enterprises**—1002 S Wells Ave., 786-7222. 9-5 Tues.-Sat. Fisher stoves. Metalbestos, stovepipe, prefab hearths and fireplace inserts. Owners Mary Anne and Jack Healy.

**Commercial Hardware Co.**—500 E 4th, 329-0231. 8-5:30 Mon.-Fri., 9-5 Sat. Schrader, Ashley Franklin, comfort heaters, parlor stoves and box heaters. Pipe, single wall and insulated, fireplace sets, asbestos materials, installation kits.

**Fireplace Distributors of Nevada**—125 Woodland Ave., 747-1346. 8-5 Mon.-Fri. 9-1 Sat. Earth Stove, All-Nighter, American Home Heater, Majestic, Crest, Triumph and Franklin. Stovepipe, both single wall and insulated. Installs and delivers in Reno area. Owner Larry Lundgren.

**Kelley's Kountry Antiques**—11450 S Virginia St. 825-3223. 10-5 daily. Antique pot belly stoves: Round Oak, Home Radiant, Rival Oxford, Montgomery Wards, completely restored, ready for hookup. Owner Johnny Kelley.

**Orley's Custom Wood Stoves**—1207 California Ave. 322-8604. 9-6 Mon.-Fri., 9-5 Sat. Orley's custom stoves. Furnishes all pipe, hearths and backs. Owners Orley and Marsha Milligan.

**Overland Construction Co.**—4330 San Gabriel Drive, 825-4871. 9-6 Mon.-Sat. Full line of wood burning stoves, stovepipe and accessories. Installs stoves and fireplaces. Owners Denny Waite and Earl Barbey.

**The Cinder Box**—1041 S Virginia, 323-0700. 9:30-6 Mon.-Fri. 9:30-4 Sat. Acme, Earth, Fisher, Regional, Timberline, Heat King, Woodsman, Quaker Fire View, Contemporary and Stanley. Stovepipe, baking ovens, bellows and grates. Installation. Owners Jerry and Sher Hardin.

**Zee's Supply**—403 Dermody Way next to Harrah's Auto Collection, 359-9575. 9-5 Mon.-Sat. Hurricane, Heat & Glow and Preway. Complete installation; supplies oak, pine and fir wood, also cultured stone and veneer. Owner Don Zolezzi.

### SPARKS

**Fire & Floor Shop**—55 Freeport Blvd., 358-3410. 8-7 Mon.-Fri., noon-6 Sat. Sun. by appointment. Schrader, Contemporary. Manager Jessica Reed.

**Glass Mountain Block**—355 Greg St. 358-1200. 8-5 Mon.-Sat. Nordic, Fisher Yodell and others. Stovepipe, accessories, installation and masonry services.

**Tolotti Mfg., Inc.**—670 Dunn Circle, 359-5661.

7:30-5 Mon.-Fri. Tolotti Stoves, converts fireplaces into wood burning stoves. Coal grates, ash dumps. Owner Greg Tolotti.

### CARSON CITY

**Carson Tahoe Fireplace Distributors**—328 Fairview Dr., 883-7043. 9-5 Mon.-Sat., 9-7 Thurs. Earth Stove, Fisher, Frontier, Fire-View Malm, Preway Heatilator, Superior, Majestic and Chinoak. Fireplace tools, screens, and glassfyre inserts. Complete installation. Owners Ted Finkler and Art Maffei.

**Chas-C-Meek-Lbr-Co.**—2869 N Carson, 882-5555. 8-5 Mon.-Fri., 8-noon Sat. Heat King, Earth Stove, Acme, fireplace inserts. Stovepipe, caps, flashings, support systems. Representative Marvin Coulson.

**Glass Mountain Block**—Long's Shopping Center, Hwy 50. Nordic, Fisher, Yodell and many others. Stovepipe, accessories, installation.

**M C Manufacturing**—5551 Highway 50 East, 883-6773. 8-5 Mon.-Sat. Elco Fireplace, steel unit custom made to fit existing fireplace. Complete installation. Owner Merrit Olmstead.

**Meyers Hardware**—202 N Carson, 882-1317. 8-5:30 Mon.-Sat., 9-3 Sun. Earth Stove, Franklin and Ashley. Owner Ladd Furlong.

**Schrader Stoves of Nevada**—4750 Highway 50 East, 882-8685. 9-5 Mon.-Fri., 10-4 Sat. Schrader stoves, 10 models and sizes. Stovepipe, chimney systems, woodholders, fireplace tools and flue brushes. Owner Marion Van Horne.

### LAS VEGAS

**Major Distributors Inc.**—3744 W Mead Ave., 876-1294. 8-5 Mon.-Fri. Majestic, Narco,



*Eureka in the winter of '81. Many mining towns literally stripped surrounding hills of anything that would burn.*

Temco, Heat & Glow, Metal-Fab. Installation available. Manager Joe Durcan.

**Mr. Phillips Hearth & Home Accessories**—1155 E Sahara, 732-3134. 9-6 Mon.-Sat. Fisher and Earth Stoves. Grates, coal buckets, flue cleaners, installation kits. Owner Phillip Van Deventer.

**The Fireplace Shop**—3620 W Sahara, 876-9773. 10-6 Mon.-Sat. Timberline, Franklin, parlor stoves, fireplaces. Stovepipe and accessories. Installation available. Owners Steve Tuggle and Dick Pruitt.

### BATTLE MOUNTAIN

**Royal Hardware**—Highway 40 East, 635-2422. 7-6 Mon.-Fri. 7-5 Sat. Fisher stoves. Stovepipe, hearth, grates, brushes, coal shovels, coal hod, complete kits. Free delivery. Owner Steve Sel-din.

### CALIENTE

**Gottfredson's Dept. Store**—179 Clover St., 726-3162. 9-6 Mon.-Sat. Huntsman, Fisher and Atlanta stoves. Chimney kits, stovepipe, triple wall, grates, screens, stove boards, installation kits. Free delivery. Owners Kevin Phillips and Wes Holt.

### ELKO

**Builder's Mart**—331 11th St., 738-8454. 8-5:30 Mon.-Sat. Nordic and Fisher. Triple wall pipe, grates, glass fronts and screens. Free in-town delivery. Manager Frank Aguirre.

**Elko County Farm Supply**—147 Commercial St., 738-4055. 8-5:30 Mon.-Fri. 8-4 Sat. Earth Stove and Ashley can order others. Free delivery. Owner Bob Secrest.



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**H & J House of Fireplaces**—1042 Commercial St., 738-5935. 1-5 Tues.-Sat. Centennial, Heat King, Fisher, All Nighter, Malm and Parlor stoves. Rock stovepipe, bellows, brooms, grates. Installation. Deliver within 100 miles. Manager Mark Newman.

**ELY**

**Bath Lumber Co.**—189 W. Aultman St. 289-3083. 8-5 Mon.-Sat. Earth Stove, Malm, Majestic and Miller. Insulated stovepipe, glass doors, screens, hearth, brick, grates, fireplace tools. Owners Tom and Jim Bath.

**Buck's Supply Co.**—2143 Aultman St. 289-2110. 8-5 Mon.-Fri., 8-12 Sat. Fire View and Woodsman. Insulated stovepipe, chimney kits, fireplace tools, glass doors and blower kits. Delivers in Ely. Owner Ron Baker.

**The Stove Shop**—914 Avenue L, 289-4500. On call, business operated out of home. Fisher and Bicentennial, everything for installation. Free delivery. Owners Ed and Linda Wright.

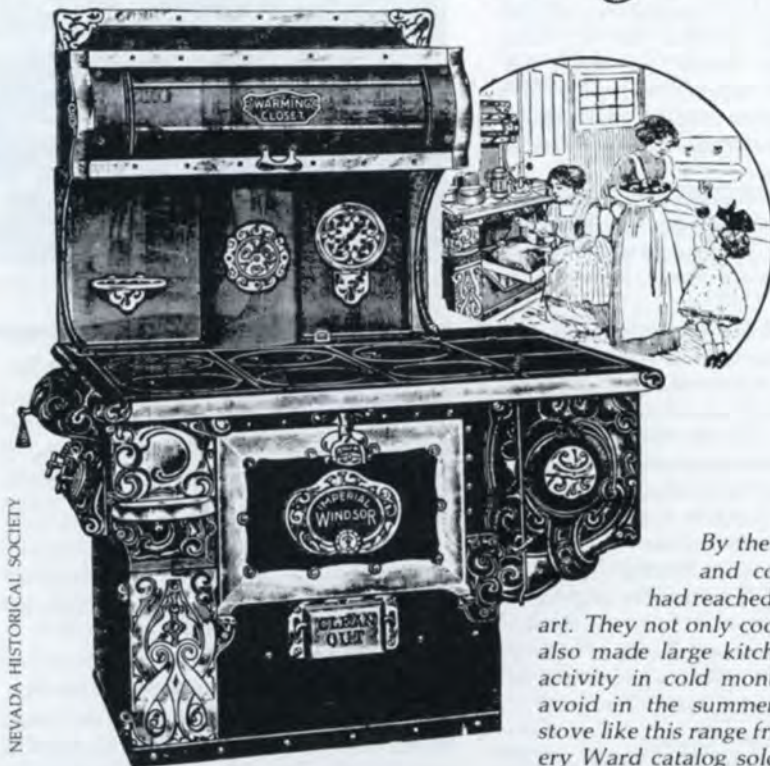
**FALLON**

**Nevada Home Improvement**—2040 Reno Hwy., 423-3456. 8-5:30 Mon.-Sat., 9-3 Sun. Schrader Suburban, Timberline fireplace inserts and Heat-ilorator. Metalbestos, stovepipe and dampers. Owner Bob Ansotegui.

**GARDNERVILLE**

**The Fire Place Etc.**—1421 Industrial Way 782-7151. 9-5 Mon.-Fri., 9-12 Sat. Heat King, Fisher, Chinook, Woodsman, Superior, Nordic and many others. Everything for installation. Owners Len and Nicki Campbell.

**Wellsville Polished Steel Range**



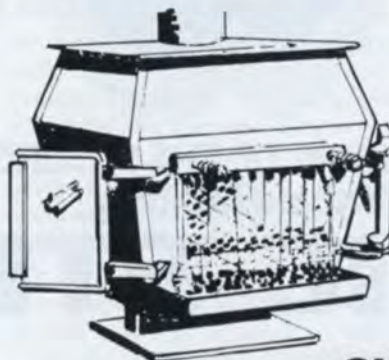
*By the late 1800s, wood and coal burning stoves had reached a high state of the art. They not only cooked the meals but also made large kitchens the center of activity in cold months and places to avoid in the summer. A first quality stove like this range from the Montgomery Ward catalog sold for \$25.*

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D & G Enterprises—Chevron station on Main Street days, 485-6387 eve. Orley's custom made stoves. Owners Donald Shrider and Milton Griffin.

## LOVELOCK

Pitt Mill & Elevator Co.—1210 Cornell St., 273-2687. 8-5 Mon.-Sat. Nordic stoves, Stovepipe, roof flashing, spark arrestor and hearth stones. Installation available. Manager Bud Hockemier.

## MINDEN

All Energy Design—1547 Railroad Ave., 782-5442 or 882-8229. 8:30-5:30 Mon.-Fri., 10-5 Sat. Schrader and Glow Master. Stovepipe, double wall pipe, black pipe, baker ovens. Installation available. Owner Kelly Kjelstrom.

## PIOCHE

Pioche Mercantile—68 Main St., 962-5849. 8-6 Mon.-Sat. Fisher stoves, Stovepipe, dampers. Delivery within 30 mile radius. Owners Tom Brown and Jerome Sears.

## STATELINE

The Fire Place Etc.—298 Kingsbury Grade, 588-4581. 9-5 Mon.-Fri., 9-12 Sat. Heat King, Blaze King, Fisher, Temco, Earth Stove, Acme, Chinook, Nordic and many others. Black stovepipe, glassfyr doors. Everything for installation. Owners Len and Nicki Campbell.

Schrader Wood Stoves—290 Kingsbury Grade, 588-4159. 9-5 Mon.-Sat. Schrader stoves, 20 models including free standing, fireplace adapters, inserts and mobile home approved models. Owner Jim Fosdick.

## WINNEMUCCA

Reliable Ace Hardware—931 W. Winnemucca Blvd. 623-2670. 8-7 Mon.-Sat. 9-5 Sun. Fisher stoves, Stovepipe, chimneys and fireplace tools. Complete kits.

## YERINGTON

Copeland Lumber—302 S. Main St. 8-5 Mon.-Sat. Schrader stoves, Stovepipe, dampers, log holders, fireplace tools, complete chimney package. Free delivery. Manager Jerry Homestead.  
Valley Building Materials—702 S. Main St., 463-3777. 7-6 Mon.-Sat. Earth Stove, Fisher and Nordic. Metalbestos chimneys, stovepipe, asbestos wall lining. Complete kits. Free delivery. Owner Romeo Rosaschi.

## NEVADA STOVE MAKERS

Nordic Stove Mfg. Inc.—Rt. 1 Box 94, Lovelock, NV 89419. Two models, Norseman and Valmun. Total wood burning, features a blower, outside air source. Basic design steel hexagon shape.

Schrader Stoves of Nevada—5551 Hwy. 50 East, Carson City, NV 89701. Three stove styles in 10 sizes, plus a kitchen wood range and two types of fireplace inserts. Airtight. Basic designs are rectangular, tapered side and a two-level top.

Tolotti Mfg. Co.—670 Dunn Circle, Sparks, NV 89431. Makes fireplace insert that can be altered to accommodate most fireplace sizes. Preserves esthetics of fireplace, with control burn and little ash buildup. Rectangular shape with glass door. Sales on premises, 7:30-5 Mon.-Fri., 359-5661.

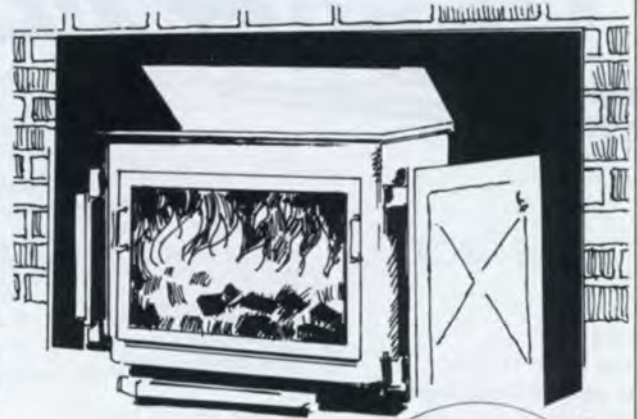
—Compiled by Betty Govorchin

# The new Fisher Fireplace Insert: Now you can have your fireplace and heat with it too.

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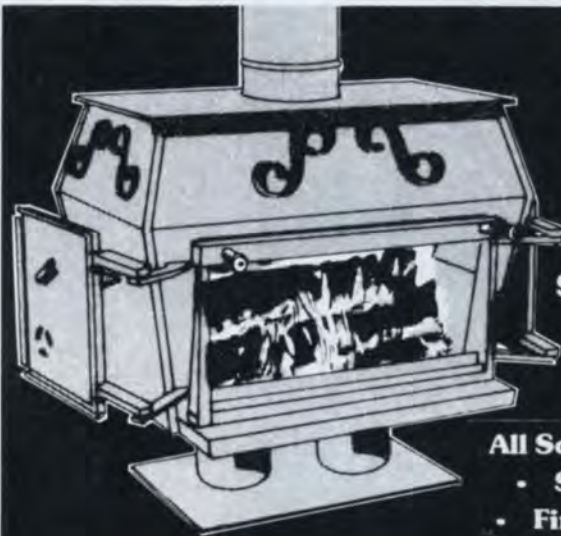
America's best-known wood stove company has developed a new stove that fits inside your fireplace. The **Fisher Fireplace Insert** gives you all the pleasures of a fireplace with remarkably improved efficiency. The attractive **Insert** makes for more living in your living room and adds a touch of beauty to your home. Best of all, it can save you money on your heating bills.

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# Show Guide

## LAS VEGAS

**ALADDIN**  
736-0111  
Loretta Lynn, 11/6-19  
Anne Murray-Frank Gorshin,  
11/20-12/3  
Gladys Knight & The Pips, 12/4-16  
Lola Falana-David Steinberg,  
12/27-1/2

**CAESARS PALACE**  
731-7431  
Ann-Margret, thru 11/7  
Frank Sinatra, 11/8-14  
Cher, 11/15-28  
Tom Jones, 11/29-12/5  
Andy Williams-Henry Mancini,  
12/6-19

**CIRCUS CIRCUS**  
734-0410  
Round the World Circus Acts

**DESERT INN**  
733-4444  
Glen Campbell-Lonnie Shorr,  
thru 11/5  
Tony Bennett-Joan Rivers, 11/6-19  
Steve & Eydie, 11/20-12/3

**DUNES**  
737-4110  
Casino de Paris '79

**FLAMINGO HILTON**  
733-3111  
Razzle Dazzle

**FOUR QUEENS**  
385-4011  
Garfin Gathering, thru 11/24  
Gary & The Jones Girl, 11/26-12/22

**FRONTIER**  
734-0110  
Lola Falana-Foster Brooks, 11/1-7  
Roy Clark, 11/8-21  
Mel Tillis, 11/22-12/19  
Tony Bennett-Joan Rivers, 12/26-31

**HACIENDA**  
739-8911  
Ice Fantasy

**HOLIDAY CASINO**  
732-2411  
Wild World of Burlesque

**LANDMARK**  
733-1110  
Redd Foxx, indf.

**LAS VEGAS HILTON**  
732-5111  
Liberace-Andre McArdle, thru 11/19  
Paul Anka, 11/20-12/3  
Bill Cosby, 12/4-18  
Paul Anka, 12/27-1/7

**MARINA**  
731-1500  
Bare Touch of Vegas



Mel Tillis, Frontier, Nov.22-Dec.19.

**MAXIM**  
731-4300  
Olde Tyme Burlesque

**MGM GRAND HOTEL, LAS VEGAS**  
739-4567  
Ziegfeld Theater:  
Halleluja Hollywood  
Celebrity Room:  
Rich Little-Susan Anton, thru 11/7

Donna Summer, 11/8-14  
Dean Martin, 11/15-21  
Engelbert, 11/22-28  
Mac Davis, 11/29-12/15

**RIVIERA**  
734-5110  
Ben Vereen, 11/9-21  
Tony Orlando-Rita Moreno,  
11/22-12/5  
Bobby Vinton-Milton Berle,  
12/26-1/9

**SAHARA**  
735-4242  
Charo-David Brenner, thru 11/1  
Johnny Carson, 11/2-3  
Jerry Lewis-Diahann Carroll, dinner,  
11/4-14  
Buddy Hackett-Peter Marshall,  
midnight, 11/4-14  
Don Rickles-Glenn Smith, 11/15-28  
Dom DeLuise, 11/29-12/5  
Flip Wilson, 12/6-12  
Tennessee Ernie Ford, 12/13-19  
Buddy Hackett, 12/27-31

**SANDS**  
735-2916  
Wayne Newton, thru 12/15  
Wayne Newton, 12/27-31  
Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, 12/31

**SILVER BIRD**  
735-4111  
Linda Bailey-Spectacle, thru 11/18  
Paul Christopher-Spectacle, 11/19-25  
Paul Christopher-Aureus, 11/26-12/16

**SILVER SLIPPER**  
734-1212  
Boylesque & Morris as Elvis

**STARDUST**  
732-6325  
Lido de Paris '79

**TROPICANA**  
739-2411  
Folies Bergere '79

**UNION PLAZA**  
386-2444  
"Too Many for the Bed,"  
Virginia Mayo, comedy  
Mickey Finn Show



Melissa Manchester, Harrah's Tahoe Dec.14-17.

## LAKE TAHOE

**CAL-NEVA LODGE**  
831-1511  
Tony Austin Trio, thru 11/30

**HARRAH'S LAKE TAHOE**  
329-4422  
Bill Cosby-Jack Jones, thru 11/8  
Sammy Davis, Jr., 11/22-12/2  
Steve Martin, 12/3-5  
Sammy Davis, Jr., 12/6-13  
Melissa Manchester, 12/14-17  
Tony Orlando, 12/26-1/1

**HARVEY'S**  
588-2411  
Frankie Fanelli, Sun Spots, Kenny  
Laursen, 11/1-11  
Esquires, 11/1-21  
Zella Lehr, 11/12-12/2  
Jerry Sun Show, 11/13-12/3  
The Links, 11/19-12/2  
Big Tiny Little, 11/26-12/16  
Motifs, 12/11-23  
Miles Sherman, 12/18-1/2  
Jose Luis, 12/24-1/6

**PARK TAHOE**

588-3515  
Johnny Tillotson, thru 11/25  
Bittersweet, 11/6-18

**SAHARA TAHOE**

588-6211  
(800-648-4322 toll free from CA.,  
AZ. OR. ID., UT.)  
Helen Reddy 11/22-25  
Engelbert, 11/30-12/2

**RENO, SPARKS,  
CARSON CITY**

**CARSON CITY NUGGET**

882-1626  
Four Tunes, thru 11/18  
The Davis Family 11/20-12/2  
Cathy O'Shea, 12/4-1/2

**CIRCUS CIRCUS**

329-0711  
Variety Entertainment  
Circus Acts

**ELDORADO**

786-5700  
Good Times '79, thru 11/24, 12/25-31

**FITZGERALD'S**

786-3663  
Dan Miller Band, thru 11/4  
Esquires, 11/6-18  
Bet E. Martin, 11/20-12/9  
Clyde Amsler, 12/11-23  
Ink Spots, 12/25-1/20

**HAROLDS CLUB**

329-0881  
Bordello Revue, indf.

**HARRAH'S RENO**

329-4422  
Ben Vereen-Johnny Yune, thru 11/8  
Lou Rawls, 11/18-28  
Burt Bacharach, 11/29-12/5  
Merle Haggard, 12/13-19

**MAPES**

323-1611  
Tony Castor thru 11/13  
Lotus Young, indf.  
Donnie Brooks in "Hello Reno," indf.

**MAPES MONEY TREE**

323-2023  
Fun Days of Burlesque, thru 11/30  
Judy Crawford Affair, Musical,  
thru 11/22  
Close Encounters Disco



*Anne Murray, Aladdin,  
Nov.20-Dec.3.*

**MGM GRAND HOTEL, RENO**

789-2000  
Ziegfeld Theater:  
Hello Hollywood Hello  
Lion's Den:  
Liz Damon's Orient Express & Aureus,  
thru 11/20  
Shazam, Kathryn Chase, 11/21-12/18  
The Muglestons, 12/19-1/15

**JOHN ASCUAGA'S NUGGET,  
SPARKS**

358-2233  
Hank Thompson, thru 11/11  
Rusty Draper, 11/13-25  
Foster Brooks-Barbara Eden, 12/27-31

**ON SLOW**

786-7310  
The Good Life, thru 11/10  
Ron Rose, 11/12-12/31

**ORMSBY HOUSE, CARSON CITY**

882-1890  
The Motifs, thru 11/4  
David Proud, 11/5-12/2  
The Esquires, 12/13-31  
The Good Life, 12/17-31

**RIVERSIDE**

896-4400  
Dancing to the Fabulous 40's,  
11/1-12/25  
Toni Ingraham Show, 12/26-1/6

**SAHARA RENO**

322-1111  
Rip Taylor, thru 11/4  
Gary Mule Deer, 12/3-16  
Wayland Flowers, 12/17-23

**SHY CLOWN**

358-6632  
Country Western Music

PHOTOS COURTESY HARRAH'S  
& JOHN ASCUAGA'S NUGGET



*Tony Orlando, Riviera,  
Nov.22-Dec.5, and Harrah's Tahoe,  
Dec.26-Jan.1.*

**RURAL NEVADA**

**Commercial Hotel, Elko**  
738-3181

**Stockmen's Hotel, Elko**  
738-5141

**Hotel Nevada, Ely**  
289-4414

**Sharkey's, Gardnerville**  
782-3133

**Cactus Pete's, Jackpot**  
755-2321

**Horseshu Casino, Jackpot**  
755-2331

**Stateline Casino, Wendover**  
668-2221

**Winners Inn, Winnemucca**  
623-2511

Dates and performers  
subject to change.

—Compiled by Betty Govorchin



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Desert moonlight in a sea of sand. Photos by Tracy Knauer

## Shades of Fire

The Valley of Fire is one of those places where everyday rules of color space and time seem slightly bent and outdated. Distances are difficult to judge in the canyons and mountains that rumble off into the horizon. Colors and shadows play in the light as the sun sweeps the valley painting reds, grays and yellows across its rugged canvas.

The colors and moods we see are owed largely to a long-ago desert age. Winds piled a sea of sand in Southern Nevada 140 million years ago. Later the dunes re-emerged in great blocks of sandstone to be carved once again by water and wind.

The dazzling shades of red, purple and pink in the valley are the result of groundwater leaching oxidized iron in the sandstone. It's the same effect that one sees in Red Rock Canyon west of Las Vegas and at Zion in Southern Utah. At the Valley of Fire brilliant red is the dominant hue in canyons like the one near Mouse's Tank (above), and mixes with white in vistas like that of Fire Canyon (right).

Each daybreak the sun goes to work. Primroses close their petals and birds zing along the washes in morning song. And some figure etched in a nearby ridge blinks and raises a brow as the rocks awaken.



Robert "Bobo" Sheehan of Reno is a guy with a funny name and a serious reputation as a college and U.S. Olympic ski coach.  
By Buddy Frank

## Bobo the starmaker



GARY JAMESON

boots first; that way I can talk to him, find out his abilities, where he skis and something about his personality." He believes that a ski shop can live or die on its "chair-side" manner while buckling up boots. "It's really important to find out the details. I'll sell a beginner 'expert equipment' if I know he's a gifted athlete. But if you did that with an average customer he'd never learn to ski. And more important, he'd never come back."

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**"In those days if you were a ski racer, everyone thought it was because you couldn't get a job."**

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He has little trouble selling the philosophy to the staff at his Reno Ski Shop. Most of them are part of the family "We're a close knit group, and it all goes pretty smoothly" Sheehan says with an obvious hint of deep pride. His two eldest sons, Butch and Jack, were both Junior National ski champions. The third, Steve, pioneered hang gliding in the Reno area. And his daughter Patty gave up a promising ski racing career concentrated on golf, and finished second in this year's U.S. Amateur Open. When Patty takes a break from selling sweaters in the shop to swing her clubs, Bobo becomes a one-man press corps. He calls the TV stations and newspapers on a regular basis with her latest scores. "Doesn't hurt the ol' ski shop to have a Sheehan in the headlines."

His wife Leslie also practices her own brand of public relations. From her post behind the store cash register she often overhears a customer or two sizing up her husband as an old guy who probably doesn't know anything about skiing. She's quick to interrupt. "I'll have you know he was the ski coach at Middlebury College for 22 years and was the head coach of the U.S. Olympic ski team."

The ski shop on Wells Avenue in Reno had only been open a few hours this August following its annual four-month closure. A customer wandered in, told the clerk he wanted to buy some equipment and asked to see "Bobo." It was music to Robert Sheehan's ears. Music that grew to a symphony when he added the clicking of the cash register ringing off a \$600 sale.

"It gets better every year" he admits. "I didn't even know that fellow but he knew me. It's my silly nickname. You gotta have a gimmick to sell skis, and I can tell you there just aren't that many guys named Bobo."

He says it with a chuckle and a smile that seems to leap off his perpetually tanned face. That sly look of delight,

together with his silver-white hair and diminutive stature, make it easy to imagine Sheehan spending his summers on some remote mountain top with a band of elves making skis and boots. He does little to dispell the image. For the last five years, his radio advertisements have featured a 2000-year-old man who swears Bobo taught him to ski on the Pyramids. The name and the ads have combined to make him one of the best known ski figures in Northern Nevada. "Not bad for a kid from Vermont," he laughs.

Sheehan is quick to let the jokes die when it comes to business. He says that a ski salesman today has to be part skier part technician and part counselor "I usually have a customer try on

That usually comes as a surprise to Nevadans, but it's common knowledge on the East Coast where Sheehan spent 40 years building a reputation. "I started skiing in 1928. There wasn't anything else to do during Vermont winters." At that time there were only a handful of lifts in the country and he concedes that "we weren't very good skiers, but we were great climbers."

Despite his protestations, Sheehan developed into a good competitive skier and excelled at baseball and football. However his peak athletic years were interrupted by World War II and a stint as a dive bomber pilot in the Pacific. Afterwards he used the GI Bill to complete his education at Middlebury and landed a coaching job with his alma mater upon graduation. It was during Bobo's reign that Middlebury along with Dartmouth and Denver began to dominate collegiate skiing. The sport was king in Europe, but it had yet to make its mark in the States.

When Toni Sailer won three Olympic gold medals in Cortina, Italy in 1956, he became an international hero. Sheehan reminisces that it was different over here. "They thought we were bums," he says. "In those days if you

were a ski racer everyone thought it was because you couldn't get a job."

He began to believe it himself after being named U.S. Alpine coach for the '56 Games. In Italy that year, the European competitors had the best gear team uniforms, coaching contingents and every skier was a local celebrity. By contrast, Sheehan and his team arrived on the slopes wearing Levis with a \$5-a-week allowance. "I was the whole coaching staff, in charge of getting train tickets, hotel rooms, laundry and everything. After seeing those Europeans, it didn't take us long to figure out that, as far as skiing goes, America just wasn't with it."

Today we've seemingly caught up, but the former coach admits that there's been a price to pay "It's a full time job for these kids, and I'm not sure if they really have any fun at it," he says. "We used to be able to forget it in the summer and just relax, but now they train year-round. It's tough." He says that coaching, too, has changed drastically and doubts that he could run a team now "We used to tell the kids things that weren't necessarily true. Things based on our own personal experience. But today there's sci-

entific tests. There's a book on each athlete and how to train him. I just don't think I'd be good at that sort of thing."

Sheehan's success came from his ability to relate to his skiers. At a race, where other coaches maintained a fierce competitive rivalry Bobo would cheer on everyone, friend or foe. He once took off his own ski and gave it to a Dartmouth man to finish a race. And, it was his popularity with the members of the '56 Olympic squad that landed him the job in Cortina. "Coaching," he says, "is a matter of individual attention, taking the time to get to know the skier."

It's a Sheehan trademark that he brought to Nevada when he opened his first ski shop here in 1969. "You've got to take time with each customer. I don't care if it takes two hours and the guy doesn't buy a thing. At least you've spent the time and that fellow will be back—and maybe bring his friends."

He says it's the only way he can stay in business, and stay in Reno. "Best place I ever found where I can have great skiing and still play golf all year long." □



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# Saga of the Hangtown Turkeys

Henry Hooker's friends thought he was crazy to drive a herd of turkeys over the Sierra just so Nevadans could have a proper holiday dinner.  
By Bonnie Newton

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In the isolated settlements of the early West, it took a minor miracle to put turkey on the table at Thanksgiving and Christmastime. Long before the days of truck lines and refrigerated boxcars, transporting the birds was an arduous business. When fall came, country drovers herded turkeys by the thousands to markets and railheads sometimes hundreds of miles away.

No gobblers ever made a more epic journey than the Hangtown turkeys that trudged across the snow-covered Sierra Nevada one year so the people of Carson City could have a proper holiday dinner. And no turkey trail boss ever faced a more dramatic stampede than Henry Clay Hooker.

It happened in the 1860s when Hangtown, now known as Placerville, was a prosperous mountain town in the Mother Lode. Hooker was an enterprising young man making his fortune in the hardware business, but he dreamed of becoming a rancher. Even though his mercantile business was thriving, he traded in livestock and at times drove cattle from California to Nevada.

Then a disastrous fire in Hangtown's business district in 1866 wiped out



Hooker's hardware store, his home and his entire stock of merchandise. He carried no insurance. The bank couldn't afford to give him a loan, so he was left with less than a thousand dollars in cash.

It seemed that Hooker's dreams were literally in ashes, but he was not the sort to give up easily. Hooker, born in 1828 in Hinsdale, New Hampshire, was of sturdy Yankee stock. The only one in his family not to go to college, he left Hinsdale to make his own way. In the Eldorado County pioneer community, his reputation was that of a man of sterling quality, kindly and humorous, yet also proud and ambitious.

While Hooker was wondering how to obtain enough capital to support his family and go into business again, he noticed the large flocks of turkeys being raised by Hangtown farmers. And he got an idea. In Carson City, on the other side of the Sierra, there were no turkeys. He knew there were many men working the rich Comstock Lode nearby who were hungry for a change from bacon and sourdough and who would pay almost any price for the uncommon pleasure of a turkey dinner.

Hooker decided to risk everything on the project. He purchased a flock of 500 birds for \$1.50 each. He ignored the jeers of miners and fellow merchants, who said the fire had caused the respectable businessman to become "touched in the head," and prepared for a winter drive of almost 100 miles across the Sierra. Preparations included prodding the turkeys through warm tar, then through sand to give them protective "shoes" for the long



walk over snow-covered rocks.

For assistance, he brought along one other man and two dogs. Taking a similar route as another Sierra pioneer, the courageous Snowshoe Thompson, Hooker drove his turkeys east toward the Lake Tahoe summit.

The journey was slow and exasperating because the cranky birds could neither be hurried nor controlled. Any excitement sent them off in a flurry of beating wings, and then it took hours to lure them back into line with a trail of corn. But slowly, slowly, Hooker and his winged herd did progress.

As Hooker headed his noisy procession across the mountain tops, they lost the trail. Suddenly, the entire flock arrived at a precarious ledge. With footing scarce and a drop of several hundred feet before them, the turkeys milled and gobbled in confusion. The hounds, trying to turn the gobbling birds so they would skirt the ledge, began nipping at the turkeys' tails and barking orders. But the dogs pressed too hard. The prize herd moved all right—right off into the wild blue yonder. Before Hooker could halt the stampede, his precious flock had flown away.

One of his fortunes had gone up in smoke. Now another had taken wing. Hooker wrote later of that despairing moment: "I thought, 'Goodbye turkeys!' My finances were at a low ebb. Now my only earthly possession was lost."

There was nothing the dazed, heart-sick turkey herder could do but slowly make his way down the summit. Near the bottom, however, Hooker heard a welcome sound: a gobble, then another and another. Most of the turkeys were sitting peacefully on the ground, waiting patiently for their leader! The remaining members of the maverick aerial squadron were scattered in nearby brush. They were easily rounded up with a little corn and encouragement.

Triumphantly, Henry Hooker led his flock on to its fate in Carson City. Free-spending citizens of Nevada's capital eagerly paid \$5 a head for the turkeys. He had recouped his fortunes.

From the sale of his turkey flock, Hooker became owner of Sierra Bonita Ranch, today the oldest continuously operated ranch in Arizona. And scores of turkey fanciers in Nevada's dusty towns and camps enjoyed the exotic taste of Sierra gobbler on Christmas Day 1866. □

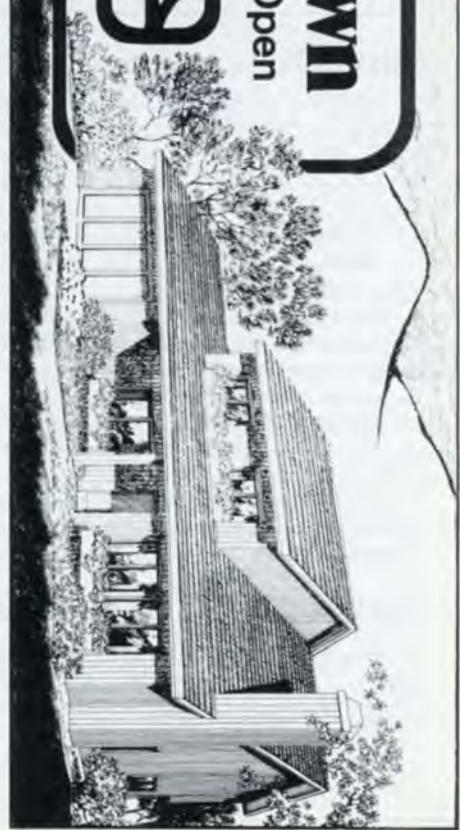
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# Calendar **100 HOLIDAY SEASON EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS**

## JUDY BAYLEY SUPER SEASON

When the Judy Bayley Theatre opened on the UNLV campus in 1972, the event was hailed as the beginning of a new cultural era in Las Vegas. The French farce "A Flea in Her Ear" was the premier; seven years and some 40 productions later the theater has established a national reputation with its stage setting and award winning troupes.

The Bayley began as a dream project of several university administrators and professors. One was long-time theater arts professor Dr. Jerry Crawford.

"When I came to the university in 1962," Crawford recalls, "the fine arts complex was a low priority item. In 1965 the idea reached a turning point when President David Moyer, Paul Harris, dean of fine arts, and I teamed up to push the fine arts complex to the top of the list."

That year Las Vegas businessman Wing Fong began to raise money for the theater. Donations came in from community leaders and others who hungered for a cultural outlet in the city.

But the most generous donation came from Judy Bayley the theater's namesake. As owner and operator of the Hacienda Hotel on the Strip, Bayley was known as the "First Lady of Gambling in Las Vegas." By cultural and charitable groups in Southern Nevada, she was also known as a great philanthropist. It was her contribution of \$65,000 that helped begin construction. Bayley was on hand for the ground breaking October 19, 1970, but, sadly didn't live to see the theater open two years later.

The 600-seat Bayley Theatre is known for its benefits to both players and audiences. The house was designed so the playgoer can hear and see well from any seat in the house; the acoustics are outstanding. The stage can do several trick moves, creating an elevated platform or an orchestra pit in a single flourish.



Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" comes to Judy Bayley Theatre Dec. 6-16.

In 1975 UNLV's production of "The House of Bernarda Alba" was selected one of the 10 best college productions in the United States at the American College Theater Festival. Directed by Crawford, the play was performed at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

That kind of excitement and quality has been recognized at home, too. During the 1978-1979 season, more than 2,000 persons purchased subscriptions to the JBT season. Department Chairman Fred Olson hopes to top that number this year. Says Olson, "We have billed this as our 'Super Season.' We feel the season offers a balance between plays that entertain and those that may provoke our patrons to think."

The theater presents four productions this winter and spring. Following are the season's dates and performances:

- Dec. 6-16—Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," comedy
- Feb. 14-24—Eugene O'Neill's "Anna Christie," drama
- Mar. 20-30—"Loot," contemporary black comedy
- May 1-11—"Pippin," Broadway musical —Betty Ellis

## BIG DEAL AT SAHARA

When the smoke clears December 12 in Las Vegas, winners will forget any tired eyes or backsides when they pocket \$200,000 in total cash and prizes in the Sahara World Championship of Blackjack.

Amateur or professional "21" players with a \$750 grubstake (\$250 entry fee and \$500 buy-in), can enter the annual affair December 9-12 at all three Saharas—Reno, Tahoe and Las Vegas. Successful players in Reno and Tahoe travel to Las Vegas for the last round of play on the twelfth.

There's no charge to watch. Each player tries to rake in the most money at his table in the two hour limit. Winners advance to another round, some losers get a second chance, while others are left to watch and plan next year's strategy.

Contact Sahara hotels for information on rules and entry, or call toll-free 1-800-552-1500 in California and 1-800-854-2003 in Nevada and all other states.

Other December card tournaments include two at the Union Plaza in Las Vegas: the World's Richest First Prize Gin Rummy Tournament December 9-13, followed by a Pan Tournament December 16-19.

## NIGHT AT THE OPERA

Bizet's "Carmen," the famous opera about a fickle gypsy and her lovers, opens the twelfth season of the Nevada Opera Association on November 30 and December 1. It also represents an ambitious project for the Reno-based company.

Founder Ted Puffer and his wife Deena have translated the opera so it can be presented in its original version. Today most audiences see a

"Carmen" in which all dialogue is sung, but the Puffers' translation allows the audience to enjoy the traditional music as well as spoken dialogue in English.

Early reservations are recommended. Call 702-786-4046, or write Nevada Opera Association, Box 3256, Reno, NV 89505.

The new season also features the premiere performance of the Nevada Opera Ballet in Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Ballet, December 15 and 16; Donizetti's "Lucia Di Lammermoor," to be presented in Italian February 8 and 9; and Floyd's operatic adaptation of the Steinbeck classic "Of Mice and Men," April 25 and 26.

## NEVADA AUTO MYSTERY TOUR

Sports car racers take to the boonies November 17 and 18 for the second annual Nevada Rally—a Sports Car Club of America sanctioned pro rally covering 600 miles of every possible terrain Southern Nevada has to offer.

Rally teams, each consisting of a driver and navigator, race against the clock to see which modified but street legal car can cross the desert on dirt roads, make it down the Vegas Strip, climb over mountain passes, dash across dry lake beds and inch along old mining trails in the fastest possible time.

Racers won't know the route until one hour before the race begins Saturday on Koval Lane at the Mini-Price Motor Inn in Las Vegas, the rally's sponsor. Motel personnel should have information on good places to watch the excitement, and on other planned events.



NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Possibly Nevada's first bluegrass concert was enjoyed by a crowd of several at Lake Tahoe on August 7 1897. You can do some bluegrass knee-slappin' and hollerin' at Charleston Heights Art Center in Las Vegas on Nov. 9.

## CAPRIOLA ROPING DAYS

Five days of team roping are planned for the fourth annual Capriola Days October 31-November 4 at the Spring Creek Horse Palace, 17 miles south of Elko on the Lamoille Highway. Contestants choose partners based on age, sex and skill. Spectators can bid in a Calcutta, an auction where prize money goes to the highest bidder picking the winning team. For details contact the J.M. Capriola Co. 500 Commercial Street, Elko, NV 89801. 702-738-5816.

## SOUTH

### ONGOING

- Original LAS VEGAS Mormon Fort tours, Tues.-Sun.
- Cultural Focus Tours, LAS VEGAS, 702-382-7198
- Historic artifacts on display, Southern Nevada Museum, HENDERSON, and UNLV Museum of Natural History, LAS VEGAS

### NOVEMBER

- 1-9—Ruth Thorne-Thomsen, pho-

tography show, 12-4pm, UNLV Art Gallery, LAS VEGAS

- 1-17—Watercolors by Jeff Crave, Tues.-Sat., 11-5pm, Burk Gal'ry BOULDER CITY
- 1-24—"The Owl and the Pussycat," Tues.-Sat., Meadows Playhouse, LAS VEGAS
- 2-4—Moapa Valley Fair, rodeo, exhibits, carnival, all day Paul Lewis Ranch, GLENDALE
- 4—Liberace in Concert, 8pm, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV LAS VEGAS
- 6—Wind Ensemble, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV LAS VEGAS
- 6—Hold'em Poker Tournament, Union Plaza Hotel, LAS VEGAS
- 7—"Get Out Your Handkerchief," French film, 7:30pm, Red Rock Theater, LAS VEGAS
- 8-12/9—"Don't Drink the Water," comedy Thurs.-Sun., LAS VEGAS Little Theater
- 9-30—Acrylics by Peter Golden, 11-4pm, Tues.-Sat., Burk Gal'ry BOULDER CITY
- 9—Bluegrass Concert, Charleston Heights Arts Ctr., LAS VEGAS
- 9-11—HENDERSON Expo '79, Civic Center, 10-10
- 10—4th Annual LAS VEGAS Judo

- Championships, 9am, Vo-Tech High School
- 10-11—European Style Flea Market, 9am-6pm, Convention Ctr. LAS VEGAS
- 11—UNLV Chamber Singers, 2pm, Ham Concert Hall, LAS VEGAS
- 11-25—Works by Rita Abbey, 1-4pm, UNLV Art Gallery, LAS VEGAS
- 13—Woodwind and Brass Ensemble, 8pm, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV LAS VEGAS
- 14-15—Latin Encounter, discussions by experts on Latin culture and current immigration issues, 7-9:30pm, Charleston Heights Arts Ctr., LAS VEGAS
- 16-18—City of LAS VEGAS Flower Show, 11:30am-6pm, Convention Ctr.
- 17-18—Towne & Country Flea Market, 9am-6pm, Convention Ctr., LAS VEGAS
- 18—UNLV Jazz Ensemble, 2pm, Ham Concert Hall, LAS VEGAS
- 20—Franco Guilli & Enrico Cavallo, Community Concert, 8:15, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV LAS VEGAS
- 24—Three Women Art Show, Green Apple Gallery, LAS VEGAS
- 25—Nevada String Quartet, 2pm, Flamingo Library LAS VEGAS
- 25-12/21—Nevada Watercolor Society Show, Flamingo Library LAS VEGAS
- 26-12/17—Art Show, UNLV Art Gallery LAS VEGAS
- 28—LAS VEGAS Chamber Players, 8pm, Charleston Heights Arts Ctr.
- 30-12/8—"Promises, Promises," musical, Thurs.-Sun., Clark Co. Comm. College, NORTH LAS VEGAS

### DECEMBER

- 1—Christmas Parade, 11am, NORTH LAS VEGAS
- 1—Boy Scouts of America Fun Fair, 9am-3pm, Convention Ctr., LAS VEGAS
- 1-2—European Style Flea Market, 9am-6pm, Convention Ctr., LAS VEGAS
- 4—Patricia McBride-Jean Pierre Bonnefous, Master Series Concert, 8pm, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV LAS VEGAS
- 5—"Grand Bourgeoisie," Italian film, 7:30pm, Red Rock Theater, LAS VEGAS
- 6-8—National Olympic Marathon Golf Tournament, Hacienda Hotel, LAS VEGAS
- 6-9—"Twelfth Night," Shakespearean comedy 8pm, Judy Bayley Theatre, UNLV

- 6-22—"Critic's Choice," comedy Thurs.-Sun., Reed Whipple Ctr. LAS VEGAS
- 6-1/5—"You're A Good Man Charlie Brown," Thurs.-Sun., LAS VEGAS Little Theater
- 8—HENDERSON Children's Christmas Parade, 11am, Market St.
- 9-12—World Championship of Blackjack, Sahara Hotel, LAS VEGAS
- 9-13—The World's Richest First Prize Gin Rummy Tournament, Union Plaza, LAS VEGAS
- 11-14—International Entertainment Exposition, Convention Ctr., LAS VEGAS
- 12-16—"Twelfth Night," Shakespearean comedy 8pm, 16th 2pm, Judy Bayley Theatre, UNLV LAS VEGAS
- 12-22—"The Glass Menagerie," drama, Tues.-Sat., Meadows Playhouse, LAS VEGAS
- 14-16—Nevada State Championship Chili Cookoff, all day, Circus Circus Hotel, LAS VEGAS
- 16—Kalman Banyak, LAS VEGAS Chamber Players, 2pm, Charleston Heights Arts Ctr.
- 16-19—Pan Tournament, card game, Union Plaza Hotel, LAS VEGAS
- 22-23—World Wide Flea Market, 9am-6pm, Convention Ctr., LAS VEGAS

## WEST

### ONGOING

Nevada Artists Assoc. Gallery features work of Nevada artists, 10-4 Mon.-Sat. 12-4 Sun., 449 W. King St. CARSON CITY Art exhibition, 2-6 Wed.-Mon., 699 D St., St. Phillip's Center Gallery HAWTHORNE

### NOVEMBER

- 1-15—"Top to Toe," exhibit of women's clothing and accessories of 1865-1920, Nevada State Museum, CARSON CITY
- 1-25—Fibre art exhibition by Keith Kays, 10-4 Tues.-Sat., Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, RENO, info. 329-3333
- 2-4—Sekulich Antique Show & Sale, 1-10pm, V&T Room, Coliseum, RENO
- 3—Christmas fair, 10-6, St. John's Catholic Hall, LOVELOCK
- 4—Reno Chamber Music Concert, directed by Vahe Khochayan, 3pm, place TBA, RENO, info. 786-1181
- 8-12/2—Art In Computer Age Exhibition by Harold Cohn,



Nevada's events, shows and celebrations are listed by region as a speedy reference for weekend trips and vacations.

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computer generated drawings, 10-4 Tues.-Sat., Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, RENO, info. 329-3333

9-10—"You Can't Take It With You," comedy Proscenium Players, 8pm, City Administrative Bldg., 813 N. Carson, CARSON CITY

9-11—"The Thirteenth Chair," mystery, 8:30pm, 11th 7:30pm, RENO Little Theatre

10—Centro de Informacion Latino Americano Dance, 9pm-2am, Fairgrounds, RENO

13—Dick Barrymore Ski Film, sponsored by Mt. Rose Kiwanis, 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO

14—Carnival of Choruses, musical instruments, 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO

15-16—"You Can't Take It With You," comedy, Proscenium Players, 8pm, City Administrative Bldg., 813 N. Carson, CARSON CITY

15-17—"The Thirteenth Chair," mystery, 8:30pm, RENO Little Theatre

16-18—Christmas Showcase of Homes & Outdoor Living, 1-10pm, V&T Room, Coliseum, RENO

17—History of Toys, Christmas Exhibit, Nevada State Museum, CARSON CITY

17—"The Apostle," gospel musical, 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO

17—Homemakers Bazaar, 10am-3pm, Fairgrounds, RENO

17-18—Christmas Fair, 10am-9pm, Community Center, CARSON CITY

18—Reno-Sparks Interfaith Gospel Concert, 3pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO

29—Establishment Day, 1859-1979, Walker River Indian Reservation, SCHURZ

30-12/1—Bizet's "Carmen," opera, 8:15pm, Nevada Opera Assn., Pioneer Theatre, RENO

### DECEMBER

1-1/2—Antique Doll Exhibition, from Nevada collections, 10-4 Tues.-Sat., noon-4 Sun., Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, RENO

2—The Nevada Symphonic Orchestra, conductor David Buck, classical music, 3pm, Pioneer Auditorium, RENO

2—World Wide Flea Market, 9am-6pm, V&T Room, Coliseum, RENO

4—Winter Holiday Concert, 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO

5-9—Holiday On Ice, 7:30pm, 8th noon, 4pm and 8pm, Coliseum Arena, RENO

- 8-1/6—Birds of Prey, watercolors by Louis Fuyertes, 10-4 Tues.-Sat., Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, RENO
- 8-9—Community Christmas Carnival, 10am-9pm, 9th 11am-5pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO
- 8-9—Pacific AAU Novice Boxing Tournament, Community Center, CARSON CITY
- 9-12—World Championship of Blackjack, Sahara TAHOE and Sahara RENO
- 15-16—"Nutcracker," ballet, 2:15 pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO
- 19-21—Ballet Theatre of Nevada, "Illusions of Christmas," 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO
- 22—New Penny Singers Christmas Concert, 8:15pm, Pioneer Theatre, RENO
- 31—Sociedad Honorifica Mexicana Dance, 9pm-2am, Fairgrounds, RENO

## CENTRAL NOVEMBER

- 10-11—ELY Table Tennis Tournament, first 40 entrants, Convention Ctr., info. 702-289-2568
- 13—Nevada Assoc. of Conservation Dist., Bristlecone Convention Ctr., ELY

## DECEMBER

- 1—Christmas Holiday Celebration, parade, children's activities, noon, downtown ELY
- 1—Charity Ball, 8pm, Convention Ctr., TONOPAH
- 8—Community Children's Christmas Sale, 10am, Convention Ctr., TONOPAH

## NORTH NOVEMBER

- T—Christmas Bazaars, various churches, WINNEMUCCA
- 10/31-4—Capriola Days, team roping, cow cutter, 1-6pm, Spring Creek Horse Palace, ELKO
- 18—Fun Shoot & Turkey Shoot, Spring Creek Trap & Skeet Range, ELKO

## DECEMBER

- T—Crafts & Arts Sale, Nixon Hall, WINNEMUCCA
- 15—Fun Shoot & Turkey Shoot, Spring Creek Trap & Skeet Range, ELKO
- 20-3/31—Cross Country Skiing, Wildhorse Ranch & Resort, ELKO
- 24—Children's Christmas Party, Cactus Pete's, Horseshu and Barton's 93, JACKPOT
- T—Dates to be announced

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# Nevada Reading

Reviewed by Olivia Mandel

## TALES OF A SECRET WILDERNESS LAKE IN THE SIERRA

**Sierra Summer**  
by Mel Marshall  
University of Nevada Press  
Reno, Nevada 225pp. \$10.95

The Sierra Nevada extends approximately 400 miles from a gap south of Lassen Peak on the north to the Tehachapi on the south, and varies in width from 40 to 80 miles. Somewhere in its northerly portion lies a small lake; no highway will take you there. Mel Marshall, however makes an irresistible invitation to join him from the first snow melt of summer until the passes close with the onset of winter at his campsite, which he called home for 25 past summers in the Sierra.

There is adventure here at 7,500 feet, a gentle unfolding as the lake and meadow come alive. We read of the unexplained (though Marshall will volunteer *his* theory) orgy of the trout in the third week of June. There is history as he recounts the complete disappearance of a town of 4,000 inhabitants more than a century ago. There is a love of, and a respect for the natural order of things, and Marshall, a keen observer of his surroundings, knows the neighborhood intimately.

A strong case is put forward for ecological preservation. A hunter himself, the author understands the need for control of the herds, and it is as a naturalist he philosophizes:

"It would be unfortunate if the excesses of the abusers should ever result in the over-regulation of those who respect the integrity of the Sierra. At this writing the chief abusers are those whose machines, by misuse and carelessness, can potentially damage the fragile crust of earth that lies thinly over the granite bedrock. If it should be necessary to choose between machines and mountains, we would take the side of the mountains."

And it is as a naturalist he shows the wonder of the life and the inevitable death at the lake. He has a gentle descriptive style which draws the reader to sit with him while he keeps a night watch on the beaver colony or

tracks a squirrel along the damp earth. The effects of time and weather and man are made abundantly clear and to anyone even remotely interested in the primitive mountains this will be an impressive book. Marshall's black and white photographs do not do justice to the words, but that is not surprising, for he has written 250 articles and short stories and 40 books, and his words are beautiful. And thanks, Mr. Marshall, for the invitation. Wouldn't have missed it for the world.

## FRED KABOTIE: PORTRAIT OF A HOPI ARTIST

**Fred Kabotie: Hopi Indian Artist**  
An autobiography  
told with Bill Belknap  
Museum of Northern Arizona  
with Northland Press/Flagstaff  
33 color plates by the artist  
15 black and white photos \$35.00

Fred Kabotie is a man of many worlds. His home is on the crest of Second Mesa overlooking the Hopi Indian village of Shungopavi in Northern Arizona where he was born in 1900. He works his own fields and takes an active part in the life of the village. He is also an internationally known artist.

All Hopi are brought up to express themselves in artistic ways, just as they are taught to hunt and to farm. Since

there is no written Hopi language, they are great storytellers and their expressions in design and color are a record of their past and an insight into the soul and spirit. As Kabotie was growing up, the split between the progressives and the traditionalists in his village threatened their historic culture. Each new world Kabotie entered was a path toward helping to preserve that heritage.

*Fred Kabotie: Hopi Indian Artist* is a charming narrative of the man's rise from reluctant schoolboy to teacher from primitive kachina painter to world famous muralist. His numerous accomplishments are related with obvious pride, but always the importance rests with how the Hopis would benefit. Written with his long time friend Bill Belknap of Boulder City Nevada, Fred Kabotie's life is dedicated to the preservation of the Hopi culture, and what better way than through the dissemination of his beautiful pictures. Unfortunately at \$35.00 it is an Art book, not within the budget of the general reader. His remarkable story should be available to more of us.

## PRESIDENT HAYES SLEPT HERE

**Elegance on C Street, Virginia City's  
International Hotel**  
by Richard C. Datin  
Designed and published by the author  
\$3.25

Opened in 1877 the International would be Nevada's most splendid and luxurious hotel for years to come. Despite financial problems (the real boom in VC had been during the Sixties and early Seventies), it had cost \$220,000 and boasted the first hydraulic elevator in Nevada and furnishings that rivaled those of the famed Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

Richard C. Datin has compiled an interesting history of the construction, growth, boom, decline, and final destruction (in 1914), again by fire, of this elegant hotel and the two which preceded it. The book is illustrated by old clippings, photos and drawings. The parallel rise and fall of Virginia City is dramatically clear. Peopled by the famous and infamous, it is an interesting look into the past.



Hopi artist Fred Kabotie

# "BIRTHRIGHT:" A NEW NOVEL OF VIRGINIA CITY

## Birthright

By Phillip Finch

Seaview Books

New York, NY \$9.95

Western novelist Phillip Finch (*Haulin' Stormfront*) lived in and loved Northern Nevada, fished and hunted here, worked search and rescue in Alpine County hung out in the Union Brewery Saloon and the Gold Hill Hotel. Because of this immediacy and his own considerable talent, Finch's new book, *Birthright*, an adventure set in Virginia City in the 1860s, is strong, richly flavored and vividly textured.

*Birthright* traces three people through their early lives until they ultimately join forces in Virginia City to perpetrate an ingenious sting. Though the main characters—Joshua Belden, a disinherited Bostonian, Liz Burgess, a prostitute, and Captain Jim, a Washo Indian—are fictitious, their paths cross the famous and the infamous, in historically accurate settings and words.

In the following passage, Joshua has been working as a mucker in the Ophir mine in order to learn all he can about the business. There is an explosion, and Joshua, shaken, is asked his impressions of the catastrophe by a reporter.

—Olivia Mandel

\* \* \*

His name was Dan DeQuille. That was his literary name, at least, and as they sat at the bar at Almack's, he apologized for the transparency of it. But one has to have a *nom de plume* in this line, he told Joshua. His born name was William Wright, but Joshua would oblige him mightily if he would forget that and stick to Dan.

Each drank three whiskeys in an hour. Then DeQuille said that he had a story to write. He would be pleased to have Joshua come along, he said. Joshua could check his piece for factual errors, and might interject a note of color now and again where the narrative dragged.

The *Enterprise* would soon occupy



Virginia City in the 1870s

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

an expensive brick two-story on C Street, but at the moment the office and the presses were in a one-story frame building with an adjacent lean-to that ran the length of one side. The lean-to housed bunks for the reporters, a kitchen, and an eating table. DeQuille sat with pen poised over a pad of paper that sat on a scarred and pitted oak desk. The top of the desk was covered with loose papers and old back numbers of the *Enterprise* and the *Union* and the *Gold Hill News*. In this early afternoon the paper was between editions, so the old Washington press was still. But the wet smell of printer's ink hung over the place, and when Joshua sat in front of the desk, in a chair that DeQuille had pulled from across the room, he touched a finger to an exposed triangle of oak within the scatter of papers and brought back a fingertip smeared black.

DeQuille hunched over the pad and began to scribble. He wrote for a couple of minutes, pausing only to dip the pen into an inkwell, until he stopped and asked the spelling of Joshua's name without looking up. The pen scratched a few seconds more, and then DeQuille lifted his eyes from the paper.

"Was there pandemonium?" he asked. "Squeals and panic and such?"

None that he could recall, Joshua said.

DeQuille twisted his mouth, pursed his lips, shook his head.

"But it would only be natural to call it a horrifying and chilling experience. That would be a fair description, would it not?"

Some would have found it so, Joshua said. It had been frightening, at least.

"Good," DeQuille said. "Because it wouldn't do to intimate that this was any Sunday picnic under the pines. The public figures that such a catastrophe would scare them witless if they were involved. They'd be let down by any other point of view."

It was certainly frightening, Joshua said. Most stimulating.

"Stimulating. You sure you can't come up with a stronger word? It ain't stupendous enough, if you grasp my meaning. Wouldn't you say terrifying, at the very least? An awesome and terrifying shock? Cause if you don't favor such strong words, I'm sure I can go back down there in the Ophir and find some that would."

*Awesome* and *terrifying* would suit fine, Joshua said. Dan could even throw in *nerve-shattering* if he cared to. DeQuille was off again at that, his head nodding slightly as the pen jumped across the paper. Joshua sat in his chair and watched a compositor walk to a rack of type, pick out a few

(Continued on page 50)



CLIFF SEGERBLOM

Lake Mohave as seen from Eldorado Canyon midway between Willow Beach and Cottonwood Cove.

# ELDORADO CANYON

The mines may be closed, but Prospector Fred knows there's still plenty coming out in the wash.  
By Judee Quillin

A visit to Eldorado Canyon, 54 miles southeast of Las Vegas off U.S. 95 and Nevada Route 60, provides the explorer with ample raw material for months of fantasizing.

The ruined mining structures are not apparent to the casual eye. A half-mile hike is required beyond road's end to reach the ghostly underground shaft floorings and cabin foundations that recall Eldorado's glory days. The foundation of the assay office still stands on a rugged hilltop near disarranged

pieces of the old mill. Wooden supports are visible in the murky tunnels that gave up an estimated \$10 million in silver and gold between 1857 and 1941.

Eldorado was named by Captain Johnson of Fort Mohave who prospected there in 1857. Rich claims in the neighborhood include the famous Techatticup Mine and its Savage vein, which yielded \$3.5 million. The name Captain Johnson gave to the diggings was derived from the Spanish legend of

"the gilded one" that came to mean "city of gold." The canyon marked the northern boundary of Mohave Indian territory.

The trek beyond the signs that warn motorists to halt is easy if you have a guide like Fred, "The Old Prospector" who inhabits a weary trailer reclaimed from the Big Flood of 1974, the thunderburst that claimed nine lives and wiped out Nelson's Landing. He points out the patched places in the trailer's hull, the work of the earthmovers that came to clean up after the waters receded. "They pushed this stuff around like so much garbage," he tells. "I bought this trailer and fixed it up. It was a showplace once."

Prospector Fred is the town greeter. Choosing to shun publicity this crusty caretaker lives in simple reclusion on a salvage heap of his own making near the Colorado River. He won't be photographed. He collects all manner of desert debris, from abandoned ball mills and ore crushers large enough to contain a standing man, to idle motorcycles, boats and cars, and two piles of aluminum beer cans, each eight feet across.

A friendly swig of hooch or a can of "Colorado Kool-Aid" may prompt Prospector Fred to give you a guided tour of his grounds. He's from Omaha, he offers, and he's lived in Eldorado 10 years. Grinning under his wide-brimmed straw and patting the Saturday Night Special on his hip, he shows his collection: a '32 Ford grille, Prince Albert tobacco cans, pieces of weathered wooden dynamite boxes. From his trailer's bedroom closet, he produces a 6X reflector telescope as tall as Fred himself.

Atop a pile of souvenirs, he indicates a plaque certifying his competence as an automobile air conditioning and heating repairman, a trade he abandoned in preference for caretaking and working the Mockingbird Mill with his cronies Jim and P.J. Their equipment looks like the work of Rube Goldberg but it's freshly greased and turns freely.

P.J. pans for visitors at Fred's request. He lost his right forearm and part of his chin to a farmer's shotgun four or five decades ago, but P.J. deftly handles his cold handle skillet nonetheless. Standing at the shell of a now gutless Kenmore washing machine that serves as a stand for a porcelain basin filled with fine, silty ore and water, P.J. dips a skillet full of the mixture, and five minutes' patient laving reveals two or three good-sized crumbs of

gold. "It takes a teaspoon of those to make an ounce," he tells his staring audience.

Jim is tending hydroponic tomatoes in a makeshift greenhouse. "They're just as strong and pretty as their Daddy" he gleams.

Fewer than 50 residents remain in Eldorado Canyon today. Grim reminders abound of the frequent floods that drove many from the canyon: twisted tractor parts, weathered planks and pipe. A shack covered with peeling tarpaper stands nearby with a cistern made from a boat.

"That shack used to stand 30 yards to the south," Fred explains. "The water moved it—and moved the family that lived there out of here, too. Some people say it's junk, but you never know when you may need something."

"Here," he gestures, as he continues to display more spoils of his scavenging. "These are patent markers from the turn of the century." Claim descriptions are etched into hunks of rock. Prospector Fred has strong opinions about the federal government's efforts to control yet more Nevada land. "Used to be, you could register your



*Charlie Nelson's cabin, the first house in Eldorado Canyon.*

patent, make \$100 worth of improvements each year and pay your taxes, and that land was yours to work, lease, or to pass on to your heirs. Now they say they'll come in and evaluate your land and if you ain't done nothin' with it in five years, they'll kick you off. They want to put us all in little boxes!"

Perhaps Prospector Fred is right. A

'30 model Motorola radio keeps him in touch with current events, and he travels into Las Vegas for beer and groceries every two or three weeks. The rest of his time is spent fishing, mining and pacing off the history-laden hills of Eldorado Canyon. Prospector Fred seems blessed with an overage of peace of mind. □

# NEVADA 80

**A juried show open to serious photographers of Nevada subject matter. NEVADA 80 will be a professional quality exhibition showcasing some of the best photographers in the West.**

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Send for entry blanks and list of rules no later than November 25, 1979 to:  
**NORTHEASTERN NEVADA MUSEUM,  
Attention: NEVADA 80, Post Office Box 503,  
Elko, Nevada 89801, (702) 738-3418.**

Pioche, 1876: "Men are getting so timid that they hardly dare venture in the streets for a short walk for fear that they will be married men before they can return." By Craig MacDonald

## Single Men's Protective Society

There was no doubt about it. In the 1870s, Pioche was a man's town. So much so that it had earned the reputation of being the wickedest mining camp in Eastern Nevada.

"Some people do not hesitate to fire a pistol or gun at any time, day or night, in this city" one newspaper reported. "Murderers who shoot a man in the back get off scot free but the unfortunate devil who steals a bottle of whiskey or a couple boxes of cigars has to pay for his small crime."

Pioche is said to have had 75 deaths

of violence before anyone died a natural death. Not aiding to the sanity of the town of 6,000 were the 72 saloons, which kept the camp's inhabitants well lubricated.

However, as is the case in all diggings, times change, and by 1875 Pioche was losing its reputation as a "wicked, rip-roaring town." One of the reasons for the change was the influx of women into the male-dominated community

Many of the women married miners, and gradually the rugged diggings

became civilized—but not without a fight.

The July 8, 1876, *Pioche Daily Record* told its readers that "An association is being formed amongst the unprotected male sex, the object being to protect themselves from the encroachments of the female sex, which of late have become so dangerous, that the poor male is getting to be an object of pity

"Many have lately been caught up and married before they hardly knew it. Females are arriving from all direc-

*In the early 1870s, Pioche was nearly all male, forcing men to double up as dancing partners during Saturday night frolics.*



tions by stages and private conveyances.

"In consequence of this frightful state of affairs, men are getting so timid that they hardly dare venture in the streets for a short walk for fear they will be married men before they can return. This association proposes to ameliorate the condition of affairs."

That night the Single Men's Protective Association crowded into a private, smoke-filled room, for the purpose of devising ways and means whereby single men could be protected from the "rapidly increasing encroachments of the fair sex."

The following men were selected association leaders: C. H. Patchen, president; W. P. Goodman, secretary; Julius Hoffman, treasurer; and Joseph R. Hoag, sergeant-at-arms. Hoag's job was to keep all women from getting anywhere near the meeting room.

After \$5 dues were collected, a resolution was introduced calling for members to "pledge to withstand the wiles of all females who should propose throughout 1876." The resolution excited considerable discussion. Some wanted the association to guarantee that it would do everything within its power to keep each member single.

Suddenly as the resolution was nearing a vote, a large thud was heard outside the door followed by a tremendous crash.

The locked door was being battered down!

Moments later a bevy of women stampeded into the room. Chaos ensued as the intruders chanted their demands to be heard. Male occupants fell over chairs and tables in an effort to escape. Association members made headlong dives out the windows. None stayed behind to listen.

Nothing was heard about the association until July 15th when the *Daily Record* carried the following article: "The members of the association, having finally recovered from their panic and bruises of last Saturday evening, will hold another meeting tonight, at which time they will elect a new sergeant-at-arms, as the present incumbent declines to serve any longer

"He states, and with pretty good reason, that his experience of last Saturday evening, in being knocked down and trampled upon by a swarm of indignant feminines, is not exactly the kind of business that he enjoys and he thinks someone else should hold that post of honor for a few meetings.

"It is whispered around that the



Women were held in high esteem at many 19th century mining camps. But in Pioche, it took a bit longer for them to be accepted.

treasurer is a little short on his collection and trouble may be anticipated if accounts do not come out square."

What did occur at that evening's meeting is known only by the members that attended. The Single Men's Protective Association was never heard from again, but rumors have it that the group went underground and held gatherings under the oath of secrecy.

As to the success of the association, only time can be the judge. The marriage tally lengthened as more churches

were constructed.

To the happiness of many but to the sadness of some the Pioche newspaper later reported: "The people of this city have been on their good behavior for nearly two months now and there have been no homicides or altercations."

Pioche had become civilized. Its reputation as the wickedest mining camp in Eastern Nevada had bitten the dust, due in part no doubt, to the "dangerous" influence of women over a society of men. □



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# Beyond the Pale

Fences are the beginning and the end of the open range. By Pandion

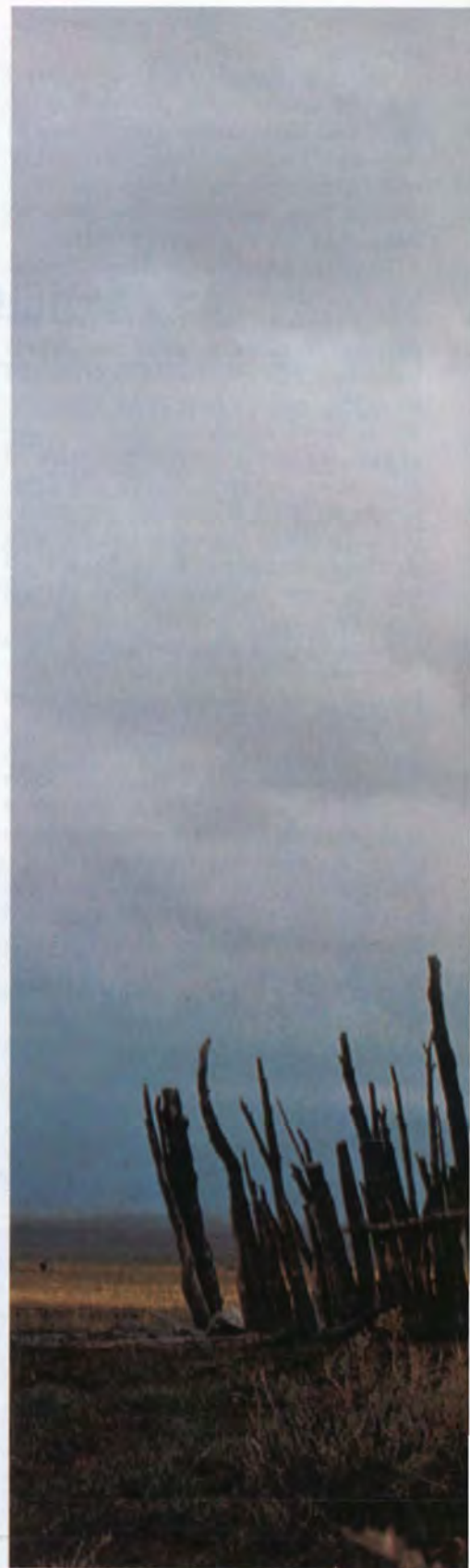
Faded outlines in the desert, barely discernible now the earliest fences in Nevada were built of sagebrush, stone, or juniper. Toward them Native Nevadans on the hunt spooked the antelope, half the hunting party hooting and hollering while the other half shot the animals from behind these makeshift corrals. Sometimes the fences led the antelope into ravines or over small cliffs where the entire herd was trapped and the largest taken for meat. Few native fences survive; weather animals, and man have tumbled even the stone fences to the ground.

The settlers used fences not to drive animals to death, but to nurture them—horses, cattle, and sheep—by confining them to areas where food and water were available. No longer communally shared, the open range was divided into private property by fences.

Ranchers in the 1880s hired Chinese labor to build their fences; these had holes augured in juniper posts for wire to pass through. Later manufacturers devised barbed wire to string between the posts. Straight post material was

scarce in the desert, so fences were built of whatever was handy even bristlecone pine, oldest of trees. Wagonloads of trees were brought down from the mountains to build corrals and loading chutes, and where the Iron Horse ventured, fences were often constructed of abandoned railroad ties. In the arid Nevada soil, many early ranch fences—bleached by the elements, tilted in the wind, square nails testifying to their 19th century origin—are still standing, and standing firmly throughout rural sections of the Silver State.

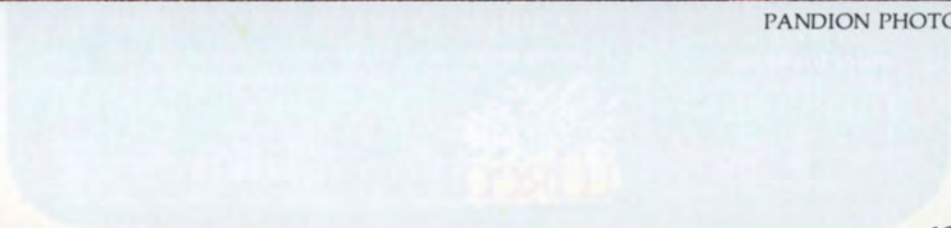
More recently the posthole digger has been replaced by the small pile-driver. Steel now marches across the desert, a loss of the picturesque to the functional. And with the growth of cities, homeowners mark their property lines and ensure privacy with fences, both decorative and utilitarian. Perhaps, some day even steel posts and chainlink fences will be nostalgic reminders of the past as invisible shields of laser beams or magnetic force fields keep the herds on the range and screen out pollution and unwanted noises for city dwellers. □





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## NEVADA READING

(Continued from page 43)

lead slugs, and drop them into a chase. DeQuille ran through six sheets of paper. Then he told Joshua that he had one negligible chore to do, to fill a column and a half of non-pareil type with local news. He attacked with the pen again, and after he had written a few more pages, he asked whether Joshua was aware of any excitement in the city. Excepting the catastrophe of which he had just been a part, of course.

No, he had seen nothing, Joshua said. Then: Wait. There was a scuffle below my window last night. A Chinaman and a Paiute, grappling for a few scraps of wood that had dropped off the Chinaman's pile that he carried lashed to his back.

"Now that is the stuff I need," DeQuille said. "Local color. If it is a Chinaman and an Injun, so much the better."

He went back to the pad of paper and it was late afternoon once he had corrected his copy and given it to a typesetter. Then Joshua and DeQuille walked together out of the office. He would be needed before the edition went to print, DeQuille said, but that left him a few hours anyway. The Almack had been convivial enough before.

They drank whiskey again. After his second glass, DeQuille began to brag about the power of the Fourth Estate in Virginia. They could make a mine's stock jump ten points in an hour on the exchange. They could close a play before the end of the first act. You could say what you wanted about Bill Stewart or the mine supers or the big capital that was beginning to flow into the mines. It was the Fourth Estate, particularly the *Enterprise*, particularly DeQuille of the *Enterprise*, with his salary of forty-five dollars per week, who really held the scepter in Virginia.

"Then maybe you will be able to get me a job," Joshua said.

"A job? You have a job in the Ophir unless they must lay you off for a few days on account of the cave-in. More likely they will want you there to clean up the mess tomorrow."

Joshua laid one hand on DeQuille's left coat sleeve. "Dan," he said. "I am not a thickheaded sort. I don't need a second intimation like the one today to convince me that my place is up here in the sunlight. My career as a hard-rock miner is finished. I have hefted a shovel in anger for the last time." □



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# The Relentless Gourmand



## Featuring food and drink in the Sagebrush State.

rather than a frozen patty; the chicken and fish are fine.

Among the greatest pleasures at Jay Manning's Restaurant is people-watching. The place attracts a universal cross section, from weary travelers hot from the road to local businessmen who know a good, cheap lunch. Truckers and ranchers and plainclothes cops bring a selection of museum-quality faces for review.

The staff is fun, too. Restaurant Manager Dick Longmire and his wife Mary Lou head the help, and both are gifted with entertaining personalities. With prompting, Dick may tell you of the days he fed hungry film crews making B-grade horror flicks. Mary Lou is a prototype of her ilk, with marvelous blond hair piled high on her busy head. The more ambitious waitresses can be seen to copy her type-casting.

When you find yourself driving the Interstate near Las Vegas, swing into Jay's under the big Union ball in the sky. Count on a good meal—and don't forget the bread pudding!

—Judee Quillin

**JAY MANNING'S LAS VEGAS 76  
AUTO/TRUCK PLAZA  
Interstate 15 at Blue Diamond Rd.  
(702) 361-1176**

When a highway restaurant is bypassed by a freeway it will go bottom up in short order unless it's especially good. The Verdi Inn, located 10 miles west of Reno on old U.S. 40, is testimony to the fact that it's worth driving a mile off an Interstate for

The old adage about following eight-wheeled to the best home-style cooking in any community is borne out in the award-winning restaurant at Jay Manning's Las Vegas 76 Auto/Truck Plaza on Interstate 15, five miles south of Las Vegas at Blue Diamond Road (Exit 33).

Union Oil Company operates more than 300 truckstops across America. Each year the top 10 Union Truckstop restaurants in the nation are honored with a trophy in recognition of outstanding quality, cleanliness and courtesy. The Las Vegas 76 Truckstop has won Union's Top Ten Award three years running, a feat virtually unparalleled in truckstop lore.

It's easy to agree with the judges. Any selection from the extensive (for a truckstop) menu is sure to please. Breakfast is available around the clock, and Mexican fare is a house speciality. Owner-operator Jay Manning, a cheery fellow with a shrewd business sense, boasts that his chef "has never seen a can," and his statement rings true on the palette. Everything from the tuna salad to the ambrosial bread pudding is put together on the premises.

Breakfasts feature homemade biscuits and cream gravy, great coffee and small pricetags. Ask for "Barlow ham" if you hunger for a thick slab of prime pork. Two daily luncheon specials are offered at \$2.95, besides the regular selections. Hot and cold sandwiches are generous and flavorful, and Manning's turns out a mean milkshake.

Sundays usually find locals standing in line for a seat in the large dining room, but the special Trucker's Section keeps spaces turning quickly for the pros. It's not uncommon for the restaurant to serve a thousand meals a day on weekends, many of them to "regulars."

The Mexican offerings are a tasty bargain. With names like the Gordito, the Rosarita and El Senor they'll satisfy a rampant appetite, day or night.

Dinners include soup or salad, a hefty-sized entree, vegetables and such. West Texans will love the chicken fried steak, a real piece of meat

quality food served in pleasant surroundings at a fair price.

Built in 1924, the Inn has been operated by the Engel family for 18 years. The owners, Ed and Gert Engel, grew their staff; son Jerry is the chef and son Curt pours fizzes and shots at the Inn's 1860 vintage bar.

The setting is much like a European country inn, with a friendly extravagance of family pictures and mementos. Tables offer good separation in several paneled dining rooms, all pleasantly lamp-lit. It's almost like eating at a friend's home—a friend who knows how to prepare quality food.

Service at the Inn is beyond reproach, but above all, the reason for the Verdi Inn's survival is the food. The menu offers steaks, roast beef, chicken, spaghetti, and many seafood dishes including Abalone Almondine and Scampi. Most prices range from \$6 to \$10. All meals come with a liberal hors d'oeuvres tray that offers greens, pickled onions, sauce, and seasonal delicacies.

Like the atmosphere, the recipes have a personal one-of-a-kind touch. Especially good is the Coquille St. Jacques, a combination of scallops, crab and shrimp with mushrooms in a lovely buttery white sauce. It is served on a metal shell that's twice the size of the usual restaurant serving of this traditional French dish. The hickory barbecued Prime Rib Bones are also exceptional—if you're not too bashful to pick yours up and gnaw the last delicious bits off the bone. Beef tasters can choose from 10 selections, and the Spencer Steak with Teriyaki sauce marinade is very tasty.

Most dishes come with ambrosia instead of green vegetables, a substitution that allows the chef, and you, to concentrate on the delectable entrees. Children are offered a kid's menu that's larger than normal and even includes boned trout.

The dessert menu is limited, but the rum babas and the cheesecake are worth sampling. If you can't handle dessert alone, the waitress will be happy to split a serving between two people. And if you're still able, you can

fill up later on the candy tower

The food philosophy at the Verdi Inn stresses lovingly prepared, fairly standard items with special touches. Dinner is served 5:30-11 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 4:30-10 p.m. Sunday. Reservations are recommended on weekends. On Friday and Saturday nights, patrons can dance to Ray Sawyer's piano and organ music. The Verdi Inn is a family restaurant in the best sense of the word and has a high percentage of regulars, which is always the sign of real value in the trade.

—Lou Bignami

**THE VERDI INN**  
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Nevada gourmards are invited to share experiences and judgments of their favorite eating or drinking establishments in the Sagebrush State. Reviews should be 500 words in length, noting atmosphere, quality and prices. If yours is accepted, you'll be paid at least enough for a night out. Send with a self-addressed stamped return envelope to The Relentless Gourmand, Nevada Magazine, Capitol Complex, Carson City NV 89710.

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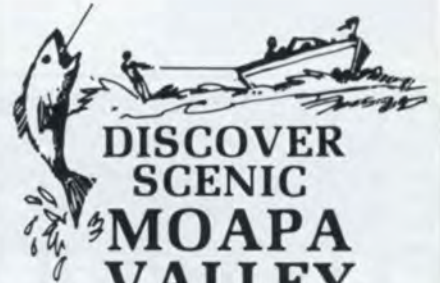
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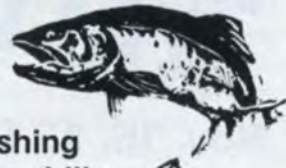
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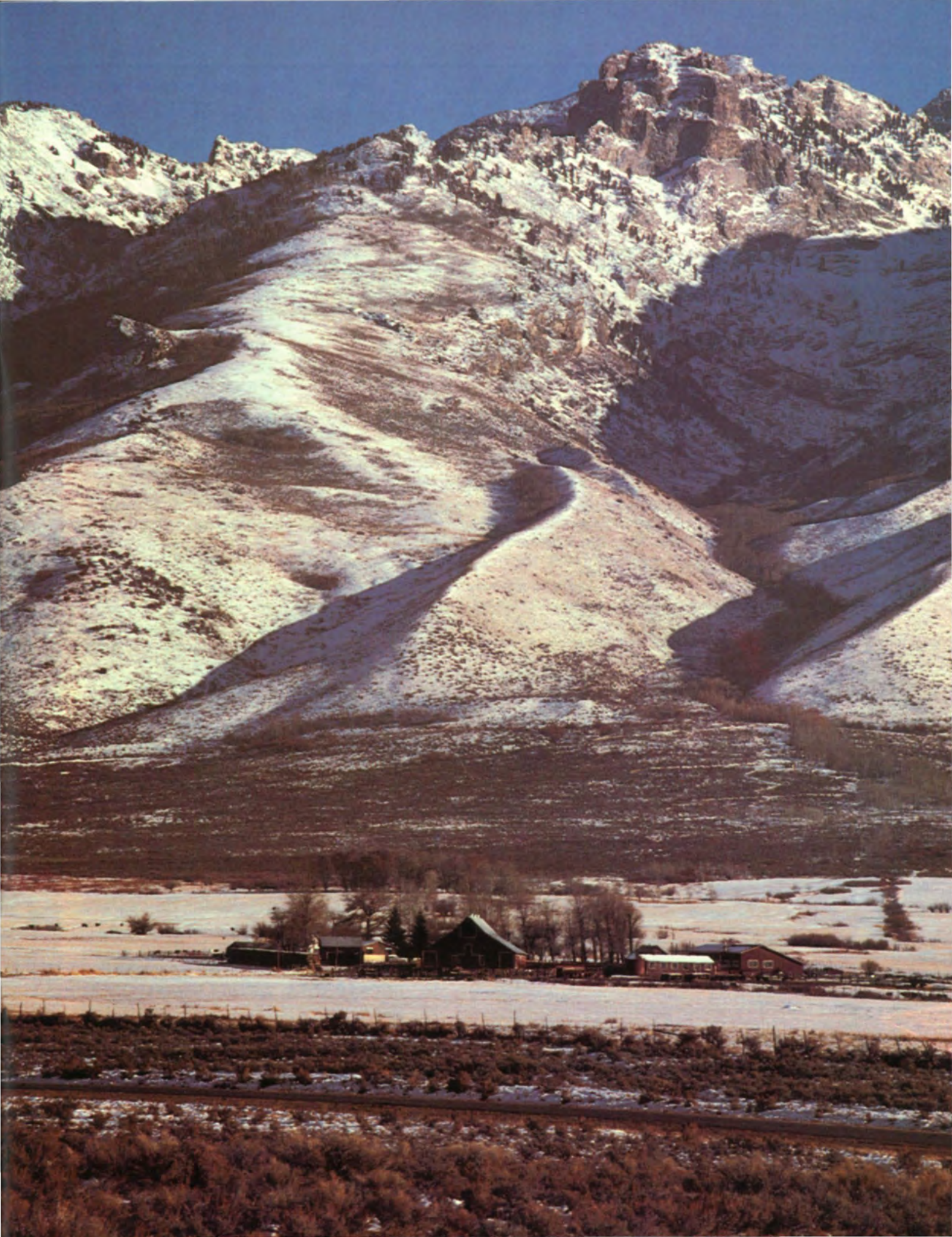
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Blue Lake country by Linda Dufurrena

Ruby Mountain homestead by Joe Royer



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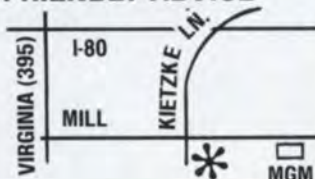
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# Nevada Notes

## McDERMITT, WITH OR WITHOUT?

As the site of the last active army fort in Nevada, it is fitting that McDermitt, located on the Nevada-Oregon border has an historic name.

During Civil War times, the locale was a meeting place for Nevada's Shoshones and the Bannocks from the north, and it was there that Sarah Winnemucca attained her reputation as an educator and Indian spokeswoman.

The commander of the fort guarding the once-busy route between Nevada and Idaho, Lt. Col. Charles McDermitt was killed in a skirmish with Indians in 1865 and the fort was named in his honor.

Somehow over the years a second "t" crept into the name, and Fort McDermitt became McDermitt in most official circles, much to the disgust of history buffs who for years attempted to right the wrong, generally in vain.

Finally when the U.S. Board of Geographic Names in Washington, D.C. was informed of the century-old spelling error in 1971, it was decreed that McDermitt—with one "t"—would be adopted for "federal use."

A look at a few maps, both federal and state, shows that local and state tradition has won out, however and nary a one "t" McDermitt is to be found.

—Harver Usher

## LET'S HEAR IT FOR BUREAUCRACY

Not content with just renaming the Bureau of Land Management, The Old Miner of Battle Mountain, Tom Norris, recently labeled bureaucracy in general.

Last winter in a contest judged by Citizens For Mining, Norris offered \$2,000 in prize money to get the best anti-bureaucracy bumper sticker.

"If you're a bureaucrat, you are part of the problem," was the winning line submitted by a Colorado man.

Norris says he promoted the contest to help "get rid of all that red tape in government," and hints that more tests of wit may be forthcoming. "We're searching for an idea," he says. "We'll probably do something when we get it together."

—Harvey Usher

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# Ask Nevada

(Continued from page 4)

then finished my career with the Sacramento Solons in the Pacific Coast League."

*An earlier column reported a shaky consensus on the Mormon Fort in Las Vegas being the oldest standing structure in the state. Since then word has been received of a construction left behind in the 1840s in the remotest region of central Nevada by John C. Fremont. If I can ever again afford a tank of gas and a telephone call I intend to look it over and report on its authenticity*

*George Moon of North Las Vegas went traveling recently and asks which is the longest straight stretch of Nevada highway and which the steepest?*

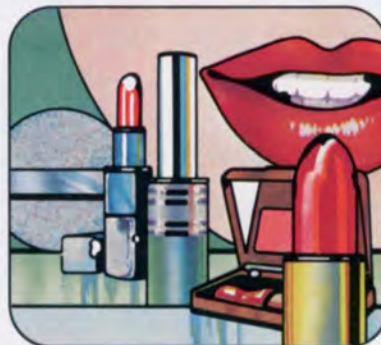
There are several stretches of U.S. 6, 50 and 93 that measure 14, 15 or 16 miles of straight pavement, and where Highway 50 crosses the Lander-Eureka county line—about half way between Austin and Eureka, the road is straight as a string for 22 1/3 miles. But the champion length of bee-line asphalt is on Highway 93 where it crosses the Clark-Lincoln county line. From about 14 1/2 miles south of the line to about 8.3 miles north of the line the road proceeds in undeviating monotony for more than 22 3/4 miles.

The steepest section of highway in Nevada remains unidentified despite numerous candidates: Nevada 80 through Gold Hill in Storey County; the Angel Lake road in Elko County; the Wheeler Peak Road in White Pine County; and the upper reaches of the Kingsbury Grade in Douglas County. All of these highways are maintained by state crews, but none were originally built by the Highway Department and the grades have never been computed. The steepest section of highway the state has actually built is at Sacramento Summit on Highway 50 about 20 miles from the Utah border with less than an 8 percent gradient.

With special thanks to Frank Smyth, Thompson & West, Dan De Quille and John Pintar

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