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# NEVADA

THE MAGAZINE OF THE REAL WEST

JUNE 1983/\$1.75

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The Mystery Behind the Great Winnemucca Bank Robbery



**SECRET HARBORS OF MEAD**  
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Volume 43, Number 3  
May/June 1983

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**Cover Photo:** Denver Public Library.  
Tinting: John Bardwell.

## NEVADA MAGAZINE

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# Nevada Magazine's 6th Annual Great Nevada Picture Hunt

**Entry Deadline: June 28, 1983**

**O**kay, here's your chance to be a big shot in the photo contest that happens just once a year—*Nevada Magazine's* Great Nevada Picture Hunt.

Any photographer, professional or amateur, can enter. The photos must be of Nevada, but the choice of subject is yours. Besides reaping valuable prizes, the contest winners will have their work seen in public—by thousands of readers in an upcoming special feature.

## Contest Rules

The contest is open to all photographers. All rules must be followed exactly, or entries will be disqualified.

**Entry Blank:** Completed entry blank must be signed and included with photos.

**Photos:** All photos submitted must be previously unpublished and must have been taken in Nevada.

**How Many:** You may enter up to 5 black-and-white and up to 5 color photos (10 maximum per person).

**Labeling:** Your name and address must be on the back of each photo, plus title, location, or brief description.

**Color Photos:** Transparencies must be 35mm or larger. (If possible, present in see-through plastic sleeve. Do not send metal or glass slide holders.) Color prints must be 8x8" to 11x14", glossy or matte (not silk finish), and unmounted.

**Black and White:** Prints must be 8x8" to 11x14", glossy or matte (not silk finish), and unmounted.

**For Return:** You must enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope (no checks or loose stamps) and proper packing materials such as cardboard to assure the photos' safe return. No pickups at the office will be allowed.

**Packaging:** Send your entries in a package no larger than 12x16"

## Judges

**Cliff Segerblom** of Boulder City is an artist, photographer, and municipal judge. His photos have appeared in *Time*, *Life*, *Sunset*, *Arizona Highways*, *U.S. Camera*, and *Nevada*.

**Howard Hickson** of Elko is a professional artist and photographer and the director of the Northeastern Nevada Museum. He is the originator of the museum's traveling photo show, Nevada 83.

**Caroline J. Hadley** of Gardnerville is editor and publisher of *Nevada Magazine*. Her photos have appeared in *Car and Driver*, *Cycle*, *Persimmon Hill*, *TWA Ambassador*, and *Nevada*.

## Tips For Contestants

- Be sure to follow all the rules.
- The judges will welcome photos of any Nevada subject. Possible topics are people, places, sports and recreation, landscapes, ghost towns, wildlife, plant life, events and celebrations, urban Nevada, and rural Nevada.
- If you're cropping a print, consider what composition is most appealing. Don't center everything.
- Make sure each photo's focus is perfect, and that light quality is the best possible.
- The little things help—like concise labeling, legible handwriting, and clear plastic sleeves for slides.
- Send in your photos with plenty of time to spare. Entries postmarked later than June 28th will not be accepted.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

"All photos submitted have not been published before and were taken in the state of Nevada. If my photograph is included with the winners, *Nevada Magazine* is hereby granted permission to use it in a future issue, and in future promotions and advertising."

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Letters

## From Goldfield to Kyoto-shi

Due to the recession I had considered I could do without your superb publication for a while. So I ignored the renewal notice I received at my home in Goldfield, Nevada. But I have now been again called to work in Japan and cannot bear to be without some touch from home.

David C. Oaks  
Kyoto-shi, Japan

## Matchless Hospitality

You have a great magazine. I have, too, your '83 Historic Calendar. I enjoy the pictures, the articles, and the Historical Society, of which I have become a member.

I especially enjoyed the souvenir issue (50 Years of Gaming, March/April 1981) which we bought at Caesars Palace along with the *Nevada*. I asked to buy a carton of matches there, but the sales lady was so kind—she said that if you love Nevada this much, here's a free carton of matches. How can you beat that for Nevada hospitality?

Dwight A. Roberts  
Detroit, MI.

## Hidden Cave Discovered

I have long thought of *Nevada Magazine* as a good way of informing people about interesting attractions in Nevada. I did not realize how effective it is, however, until recently seeing the response from the public to your coverage of the Hidden Cave archaeological site tours, which the Bureau of Land Management and the Churchill County Museum conduct (Jan/Feb 1983).

Many who have called my office and taken the Hidden Cave tour have said they learned about it from the *Nevada Magazine* article and events calendar.

Thank you for the good coverage. We will keep you informed about the tour schedule.

Thomas J. Owen  
BLM District Manager

## Addressing Hot Deals

I liked your magazine very much especially the Jan/Feb 1983 issue about hotel package deals ("Hot Deals This Winter" by Ann Henderson). It was thoroughly explained, but I was greatly disappointed that you did not include addresses of these hotels in Las Vegas, Lake Tahoe and Reno/Sparks/Carson City except one. The reason is that I am a hearing handicapped person and a telephone would not do me any good. Whenever you put something down in your magazine about a hotel or nightclub or cabaret, always put an address and telephone number (of course) down. Thank you.

Morton B. Goldstein  
Pittsburgh, PA.

## Thanks to Clark and Smith

I want to thank you for the splendid piece on Walter Van Tilburg Clark (Jan/Feb 1983 by Roger Smith). My creative writing students at the University here thank you also.

Nancy Ashbaugh  
Las Vegas, NV

## Maiden's Grave Re-Visited

I have received your magazine for several years. I recently read with interest the article "Mystery of Maiden's Grave" by Harry Webb (Nov/Dec 1982). The thing that was most interesting was the letter to the editor by Lucinda Duncan's great-great-grandchildren. They stated that Lucinda Duncan was born in Ray County, Missouri, in 1792.

I live in Missouri and am President of the Ray County Historical Society. I am enclosing a part of the Ray County Census of 1850. It states that Lucinda Duncan in 1850 was 54 years old and place of birth was Virginia.

The following people and their ages and places of birth are listed as living in the same household: John Duncan, 29, Kentucky; William Duncan, 26, Kentucky; Joseph Duncan, Jr., 23, Kentucky; Lydia Duncan, 15, Missouri; William Flinikin, 6, Missouri; Joseph Duncan, 40, Kentucky; and Charlotte Duncan, 22, Kentucky.

There is no indication that her husband was with her in 1850. Maybe he had already gone West. Could Joseph (40) be her husband or brother-in-law? It is rather a puzzle to us, so would appreciate any information the family could supply.

David K. Hatfield  
Cowgill, MO.

Letters and cards to me during the holidays came in such numbers it was impossible for me to attempt answering any, so would it be possible to thank one and all through the letters column?

Thank you, editor, and also my many friends.

Harry Webb  
Tujunga, CA.

## Search for the Dam's Builders

The search is on for the workers who constructed the largest reclamation project of its era, Hoover Dam.

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first bucket of concrete being poured in the dam, a tribute will be paid to the original workers on June 6, 1983. Some of the activities planned are a Best Cableway Operator Contest using an operating model of the Hoover Dam cableway system, an old-time picnic in Frank T. Crowe Memorial

(Continued on page 53)

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TOMAS DEL AMO

The lake's cove dwellers find peace, privacy, and all the sand they want.

## LAKE MEAD'S SECRET HARBORS

With 550 miles of shoreline and hundreds of hidden coves, the great desert lake offers summer explorers the chance to find utopia. By Charles E. McManis

**T**he trouble with Lake Mead is that it is there. It sits in the middle of a harsh, rain-starved landscape and, like a shimmering siren, beckons the unwary mariner with offers of adventure and hidden promise. Especially in the summertime, her charms are irresistible.

The first time I saw Lake Mead was on a torrid afternoon in August, 1972. Surveying an undershaded, overpopulated beach, I wondered what the promise could possibly





**Water-skiers can make long-distance runs with ease on Lake Mead, whose 550 miles of rugged shoreline follow the old river channels of the Colorado, Virgin, and Muddy. When Hoover Dam was built in the '30s, it gave Southern California flood control . . .**

be. I began my first exploration as a skeptic. After a weekend in a secluded cove, I sailed home a believer. Today I certainly understand—and envy—the devoted Lake Mead boaters who consider many of the coves their private fiefdoms, where they can escape for a day, a week, or however long they wish.

The lake is capable of swallowing up literally hundreds of boats and their crews and hiding them from the rest of the world. With hundreds of miles of squiggly shoreline, Mead is a mapmaker's nightmare, but it has more than room enough for fishermen, water-skiers, sailors, swimmers, and scuba divers looking for fun either singly or in droves. There are also places for those of us who simply want to get away, to enjoy nearly perfect peace and quiet and night-time skies filled with more stars than you ever thought existed.

When Hoover Dam turned off the flow of the Colorado River in the 1930s, the river's muddy waters backed up to fill not only the river valley but also the tributaries and washes that flow into it. The result is a lake with approximately 550 miles of shoreline with an infinite number of indentations and coves. And when the water stopped flowing so swiftly, the silt dropped to the bottom, creating the clear blue water that belies the red, muddy torrent that gave the Colorado its name.

Contrary to popular belief, the primary

purpose of Hoover Dam is to prevent both flooding and drought by providing a regular flow of agricultural water downstream. The fact that a by-product turned out to be the Lake Mead National Recreation Area is just a lucky break for Nevada and Arizona.

These are boom times for water in the

**Another fish story from Lake Mead, where bass and trout are plentiful.**



TOMAS DEL AMO

Colorado River system. Good snowpacks in the Rockies combined with at least average rainfall have built up huge reserves of water. At Mead, this becomes most obvious when you notice the absence of the "high water" ring that always used to be visible along the shore. A visit to the dam confirms the high water level; the metal gates have been raised on the spillways to hold the water at the 1,200-plus-foot mark.

At its present high levels, some Lake Mead regulars claim that all the good coves and sandy beaches are gone. In reality, there are still plenty of good coves as well as a few new ones that haven't been discovered yet. Because of fluctuating water levels, the shoreline does change from week to week, month to month, and year to year. Downstream demand will always determine how much water remains for purely recreational purposes. In one sense, that is probably good for the recreational users as well. Because favorite coves and getaway spots do change, the lake itself encourages exploration.

When you first see Lake Mead as you pop over the hill from Boulder City or Henderson, its shoreline looks deceptively simple. From those vantage points the beaches and ridges blend together. Unless you knew better, you would never guess that another large basin lies beyond what appears to be a solid rose-colored rock wall as you look eastward. The impression is not





TOMAS DEL AMO



GENE HERTZOG

... and created the lake named for U.S. Reclamation chief Elwood Mead.

The lake's sailors need only a breeze to explore faraway shores. Fair winds can turn quickly into unruly gales, so weather watching is also a popular sport.

even changed much at water level. The best view of the lake's hidden coves and inlets is on a nautical chart, which will also give their names. The names themselves are intriguing. They honor natural features (Twin Springs, Hideaway), the lake's wildlife (Bighorn, Coyote, Sidewinder), people (Debbie's, Gordy's), and historic sites (Boathouse, Lost City).

The first time I discovered a hiding place, about 10 years ago, it was Labor Day Weekend. Naturally there was heavy boat traffic on the lake and particularly in the Boulder Basin. Although I had sailed through the Virgin Basin while racing from Lake Mead Marina to Echo Bay or Temple Bar on more than one occasion, I had never stopped to study the shoreline. My Lake Mead chart showed some anchorage possibilities near Middle Point, where the Virgin Basin meets the Overton Arm, and that is where we settled in. It was no trick at all once we were running close to the shoreline to find an inviting cove and duck inside.

It was our first solo family outing in our own sailboat. All of us were excited as we got the anchor down and the gangplank set up to the beach. With six people and a dog on a 23-foot sailboat, you really need an auxiliary shore base for comfortable camping, and the children were delighted to have their own private camp on the shore. Their biggest disappointment occurred when they discovered that their transistor radios

wouldn't receive anything but static. I was overjoyed and happy to note that they never brought their radios on the boat again.

As it turned out, there were many other things to do in camp. We fished from a small outcropping of rock; we climbed the rugged ridges that surrounded us and marveled at the view of the lake below. On hands and knees, we studied desert lizards and tried to see how many different kinds of the fascinating little bug-eaters we could identify. We kept cool by making frequent swimming forays into our cove, and at night we tried to count the shooting stars falling all around us. The night sky, crowded with stars that appeared so much brighter than normal to city eyes, was a sight as impressive as any of the manmade glitter in town.

And not a single other boat ever poked its nose into "our" cove during the entire three-day weekend.

On future trips we learned the advantage of towing along a small sailboat, dinghy, or inflatable boat to use for exploring. A windsurfer is an ideal addition to a cruise. Or, to use the wind on land, you can fly a kite. On one sailing club cruise I was taking top honors for the highest and longest flight in a kite-flying contest when a storm suddenly rolled over the hill. While everyone scrambled to batten down the hatches, I tried unsuccessfully to bring down the kite, which wanted to fly forever and probably

would have if the string hadn't finally parted as the squall line hit. Then the wind swept sand all over the picnic salads set on the beach and the burgers grilling on an open fire. Thirty minutes later the sun reappeared, and except for the gritty food, you would never have suspected what had happened. In spite of that double disaster, I am still devoted to club cruises and kite flying.



Anyone can make a similar getaway on Lake Mead. All it takes is a boat. Certainly part of the attraction is that most of Mead's real estate is accessible only by water. There are few roads leading to shore, a fact that is clear in the envious looks on dock-bound faces I have encountered while pulling away from the marina. If you don't have a boat of your own, there are several types available for rent at the six marinas scattered around the lake.

Preparations for a voyage require some planning. You must take everything you need—food and water, wood or charcoal for cooking, and your own shade in the summertime. A hat, of course, is a desert staple, and even though Lake Mead is wet, the sun is still a desert sun. For camping, the usual rules and equipment apply, with the main difference being that a campsite most likely will be yours alone if you choose. You can also take along all the comforts of home,



including air conditioning, via one of the larger rental houseboats.

For me, even 10 years after my initial outing, there is still a sense of excitement and expectation as weekend supplies are put aboard at the dock. Guiding a boat out of the marina into the open lake, I always have a twinge of what Drake and Magellan

must have felt when they set out to find new worlds. Looking for a new cove can be just as exciting.

I personally don't think that a good cove has to have a broad, sandy beach. It may be ruggedly beautiful and almost vertical with little or no beach at all. Most people hesitate to put their boat hard aground on rocks, and

with the inconvenience of the keel on a sailboat, it is even more impractical. For that reason, I always have a good anchor on board and drop it off the stern about 25 yards out as I coast to the shore. If it doesn't catch the first time, I back out and do it again until it does. If the beach is sandy, I  
*(Continued on page 19)*



LAS VEGAS NEWS BUREAU

One of the lake's annual fishing derbies draws a crowd of anglers at Boulder Beach.

## AND IF YOU LIKE CROWDS...

Here are some popular spots in Lake Mead country for sports, history, sightseeing, and just plain people watching.

### Lake Mead Advisory

The lake's Alan Bible Visitor Center will satisfy information junkies and visitors curious about fishing, history, and the plants and wildlife of this desert region. Besides exhibits you'll find slide shows, a movie, two botanical gardens, a half-mile nature trail, and a wealth of brochures and books. Named for the former Nevada U.S. Senator and operated by the National Park Service, the center is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It's located on U.S. 93 midway between Hoover Dam and Boulder City.

### Hoover Dam Tours

You can inspect 727-foot-high Hoover Dam from turrets to turbines on a 35-minute tour conducted by Bureau of Reclamation guides, who are well-versed in the dam's facts and lore. Tours are \$1 (free for children under 16) and leave the top of the dam every few minutes throughout the day, every day. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, tour hours are 7:30 a.m. to 7:15 p.m., and during the rest of the year, 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. An added attraction: the dam's interior temperature is about 55°F and much appreciated in the middle of summer.

### Voyage to the Dam

Every day Lake Mead Yacht Tours runs a 60-foot tour boat from Lake Mead Marina to Hoover Dam, the Paint Pots, Sentinel Island, and back. The hour-and-15-minute tours leave at 10:30 a.m., noon, 1:30 p.m., and 3 p.m. and cost \$5.50 for adults and \$3.50 for children 12 and under. Special group excursions can be arranged. Call 702-736-6180 for cruise information.

### Everything But Ghost Stories

On summer Saturday nights it's shades of Yellowstone and Yosemite at Boulder Beach—a genuine fact- and legend-filled national-park evening program, conducted by rangers to acquaint Mead visitors with the nature of the region. Rangers also lead weekend hikes during temperate months. Check at the visitor center for schedules.

### Best Town By a Dam Site

In the 1930s, when thousands of workers were hired to construct the dam, the federal government built the model town of Boulder City. With 10,000 residents, Boulder City has attractive, tree-lined parks and streets with downtown shops, galleries, and restaurants. There's also the historic Boulder Dam Hotel, a movie theater, and the privately-owned Hoover Dam Visitors Bureau. If you're wary of slot machines, relax—gambling is banned in Boulder City.

### Where People Meet People

After Hoover Dam the biggest crowd attractor on the lake is Boulder Beach, which has a long, open shore and campsites shaded and perfumed by oleanders. Nearby is a store with groceries, snack bar, and coin-operated showers.

### Finding the Lost City

A thousand years ago Pueblo Indians lived and farmed along the banks of the Muddy and Virgin Rivers. Some archeological sites were covered by the northern tip of Lake Mead's Overton Arm. In the town of Overton is the Lost City Museum, which houses excellent exhibits on the Pueblos and their artifacts and ancient culture. Admission is free, and the museum is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### A Hot Dip

If you like it hot even in the summertime, try Rogers Springs, a natural warm spring between Echo Bay and Overton Beach on the North Shore Road. With picnic tables and parking area, Rogers tends to be crowded on weekends, but you usually can avoid the rush by taking a plunge in early morning.

### The 'Other' Lake

Water flows downhill, and in Mead's case it flows into Lake Mohave, another big reservoir on the Colorado. Running 67 miles from Hoover Dam to Davis Dam, Lake Mohave takes up the southern portion of Lake Mead National Recreation Area. As at Mead, the main attraction at the long, narrow lake is water sports, and there are marinas at Willow Beach, Cottonwood Cove, and Katherine. Just south of Davis Dam is the casino town of Laughlin.

### Rafting the Colorado

One way to escape civilization is to take a raft trip down the Colorado River from the base of Hoover Dam to Willow Beach. The pick-up point is at the Gold Strike Inn, three miles west of the dam on U.S. 93, or you can be delivered directly from your hotel. The leisurely, 11-mile voyage takes about three hours and includes lunch and transportation back to the Gold Strike. Incidentally, the water on that stretch is about 53°F, even in summer, which is great for trout but much too cold for swimming. The raft trip offers rugged canyon scenery without rapids or danger; your camera will be safe. If you drive to the Gold Strike, the cost is \$39.95 for adults and \$34.95 for children under 12. Gray Line Tours offers a round-trip package deal from your hotel in the Las Vegas area for \$53.20 per person. For information contact Black Canyon Inc., 702-293-3776, or Gray Line Tours, 702-384-1234 or 800-634-6579. □



# CRUISE NOTES

Following are tips on how to cruise regally and fish legally on Lake Mead.

## Charting a Course

For the boater, a precise nautical chart is an invaluable guide to basins, coves, and distances on the lake. The chief one is Nautical Chart 18687, which is drawn to a mean contour line of 1,160 feet in elevation. For the past year Mead's water level has hovered around 1,200 feet—and since the 1,200 elevation line is also shown, it's easy to see where coves are located. Another handy reference is the Lake Mead National Recreation Area Cove Map, which names the coves. You can purchase both the nautical chart (\$3.50) and cove map (50 cents) at the Alan Bible Visitor Center and at National Park Service headquarters in Boulder City. Or you can send a check (made out to S.P.M.A.) for \$4.23, which includes tax, to Lake Mead N.R.A., 601 Nevada Highway, Boulder City, NV 89005.

## Boats For Rent

If you need a boat for waterskiing, fishing, or exploring, Mead's six marinas have a good selection of rentals. Deposits are required. Visa and MasterCard are accepted at all marinas except Overton Beach. It is recommended that you call ahead to confirm rental and deposit rates.

**Fishing Boats:** Available at all six marinas, 16-foot fishing boats run \$30 to \$45 a day.

**Ski Boats:** Cruisers 16 to 19 feet in length can be rented for \$105 to \$155 a day. Skis, tow rope, vest, and flag also can be rented from \$9 to \$20.

**Patio Boats:** Good for relaxed social outings, patio boats are flat-bottomed, supported by pontoons, enclosed by railings, and furnished with chairs. The seven- and nine-passenger boats rent from \$65 to \$85 a day.

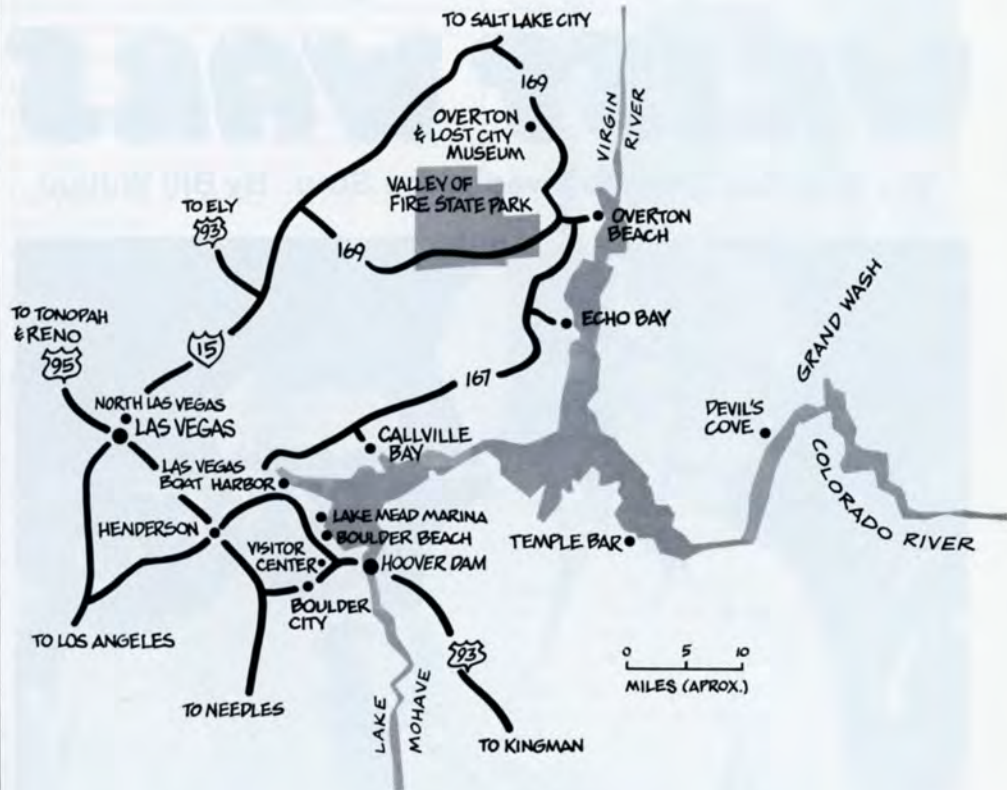
**Houseboats:** If you want to pamper yourself while exploring the lake, take a houseboat. Everything except food and drink is provided on board. Special features are air conditioning, gas barbecues, and cassette stereos. Safety features include fire extinguishers and life preservers. Callville Bay has 20 houseboats, Echo Bay 70.

Echo's 36-footer sleeps six, and during the regular season (March 25-October 31) costs \$510 for a three-day weekend, \$650 for four days midweek, and \$895 for a full week. The 50-footer, 10-sleeper goes for \$630, \$795, and \$1,095 respectively. A 50-footer with bathtub and wet bar runs \$730, \$930, and \$1,275. Off-season prices are about 70 percent of regular season rates.

Callville's 36-footer also sleeps six, and during the regular season (May 25-September 30) costs \$527 for three nights, \$700 for four nights, and \$926 for seven nights. The 50-footer sleeps 12 and runs \$708, \$944, and \$1,225. For the off-season, inquire about discounts off the summer rates.

## Angling for Fish

Lake Mead has fine fishing for striped and largemouth bass, trout, catfish, and



## LAKE MEAD LANDINGS

Name	Phone	Slips	Buoys	Facilities				Boat Rentals		Overnighters									
				ramps	hoists	dry storage	gas & oil	bait & tackle	groceries	restaurant	bar	ski boats	houseboats	fishing boats	patio boats	lodging	camping	trailer hookups	showers
Overton Beach Marina	702-394-4040		30-45	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	free	\$7	✓	✓
Echo Bay Resort	702-394-4000	320		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$4	\$9.50	✓	✓
Callville Bay Resort	702-565-8958	724		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$4	\$9	✓	✓
Las Vegas Boat Harbor	702-565 9111	685		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$4			
Lake Mead Marina	702-293-3484	400		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$4			
Temple Bar Marina	602-767-3400	68	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	\$4	\$9.50	✓	✓

Launching is free at each marina. Trailer and RV hookups are available for long-term stays. Showers and laundries are generally for the use of hookup users, but campers and day visitors can shower for a fee at Overton Beach or at the Boulder Beach Store, which has coin-operated showers.

crappie. Anglers need a Nevada license to fish from shore on the Nevada side, but by getting a special \$3 stamp, you also can fish from a boat or on the Arizona shore. For residents, a general license is \$14, although fishermen 65 and older need pay only \$2. A Nevada junior license for ages 12-15 is \$3, but under a special rule, anglers 13 and under don't need a license to fish Mead, Mohave, or the Colorado River. Likewise, there's a good deal for nonresidents—a license to fish those three waters in Nevada is only \$14.50, with the \$3 stamp needed for boat and Arizona shore privileges. A general nonresident license is \$30, and for ages 12-15 it's \$6.50. Also, nonresident anglers can purchase a 10-day permit for

\$10 or a three-day for \$7.50. If you have questions, call the Nevada Department of Wildlife in Las Vegas at 702-385-0285. The paperwork is available at local marinas, sporting goods stores, and bait shops.

## Bring Your Own Shade

During the summer, a hat is the most important item you can have on Lake Mead. The headgear will help you keep cool on hot summer days when the temperatures at the lake rise above 100°F. The desert's low humidity usually keeps the heat from being oppressive. On summer nights the average temperature is about 70°F. The weather in spring and fall is beautiful, while winter nights are cold. □



# WRIST WARS

The Ben-Gay Brigade invades the Strip. By Bill Willard



JOHN McDONOUGH

Tony Celeste became arm wrestling's champion because of Jean's strong-arm tactics.

At high noon the theme from "Star Wars" signaled the spectators milling in the Tropicana's Tiffany Theatre to take their seats. The announcer, Las Vegas radio man Lee Pete, made introductions. The referees were brought forward for brief bows. The national anthem roared over the loudspeakers, and the latest of the Strip wrist wars was underway.

Girth aside, the contestants in the Super Heavyweight Arm Wrestling Championship were taking part in one of January's biggest shows in Vegas. The showroom was packed, and prize money was \$5,400, a healthy purse for a sport once confined to friendly neighborhood taverns.

The tournament attracted 20 arm wrestlers from around the country, including four home-state entries. It was sponsored by Jen's, the frozen food firm, and the Tropicana. But the prime activator was Las Vegas Tony Celeste, insurance man and former bandleader who is one of the sport's most ardent promoters and fans.

The matchups were taking place the day before Super Bowl Sunday, when most press, radio, and television reporters would be queuing up in Pasadena. But Celeste wasn't in the least concerned about being overshadowed by football fever. He had landed a segment on NBC's "Real People" and a syndicated telecast on "Sports America." The coverage would allow millions of viewers to tune into arm wrestling, which for Celeste is as much a cause as a sport. He was drawn into the arm-wrestling

milieu in 1976 after his wife, Jean, won a women's contest at the Las Vegas Convention Center. At a time when little attention was paid to arm wrestling, Tony became its champion, touting it verbally and then promoting it under the aegis of Arm Wrestling International. In his tournaments the contestants get red-carpet treatment. This year he has four more AWI showdowns lined up, each featuring big names (and contestants) in professional sports.\*

"I love arm wrestling because it's a pure sport, one on one, no gimmicks," Celeste said with a missionary's zeal. "And if we can get the youth across this country interested in it, they won't have any time to steal hubcaps. This is a demanding sport."

For the combatants, the demands on this day included meeting Cleve Dean, a 450-pounder from Pavo, Georgia. The Brobdingnagian farmer made hay of his opponents, including all of the Nevada contingent, to win the \$2,500 first prize.

The last of the native quartet to be eliminated was Steve Roberson, a 36-year-old woodcutter from Sparks. Other Nevadans were Gary Arciero, age 34, a security guard at the Castaways down the street; Mike Harris, 39, partner in a Las Vegas janitorial service; and Joe Valenti, a 23-year-old trucker from Boulder City.

Valenti, the biggest Silver State com-

\*The tournaments at the Tropicana will bring to town players in four pro sports: football June 6-12, hockey July 25-31, basketball August 22-28, and baseball December 5-11.

petitor at 400 pounds, was out of the running after Arciero's brother, Virgil, last year's champ, forced his arm down and flickered the red light. Valenti returned to the reserved section complaining of torn ligaments.

A young nurse there was busy rubbing the sore arms of the contenders, who are also known as the Ben-Gay Brigade.

Steve Roberson, the woodsman from Sparks, chops for a living near Susanville, California. If Gary Cooper were alive, he would play the soft-spoken Roberson to perfection. Roberson has been arm wrestling seriously for the past seven years. "About seven years too long," he said. "Yeah, I enjoy it. I don't get any other kind of excitement, I guess. To me, it's more exciting than any other sport I've been in."

At the time Roberson was first testing his arm, Mike Harris and his wife, Cindy, were living in Buffalo. Mike saw an ad for an arm-wrestling competition and entered for the fun of it. "It's a great bunch of guys that are in the sport," he enthused. "When I moved out here I got back into it."

On hand at the Trop to cheer him were Cindy and their two squirmy boys, Matt and Greg. The kids weren't sure about arm wrestling, but they definitely enjoyed the Jen's pizza rolls being handed out by the plateful to the audience.

"This is an outlet for me," Harris said. "It makes me go to the gym and work out a little bit. Some people play golf. I arm wrestle." Then he lumbered up on stage for his third shot. He lost, but he would be back at a table the next night, refereeing a contest at the Troubadour nightclub.

The other local boy, Gary Arciero, and his brother, Virgil, are both well built but not with the huge arms and legs and general girth of other big men. The siblings are bald, and they have memorable, rather ascetic faces. They could play the roles of monks.

Gary, a 245-pounder, is extremely articulate and speaks softly with musical cadence. He would be an imposing figure at his Castaways security post. His amusement is entering three or four arm wrestling tournaments a year, but the most important ambition in his life is to be recognized as a bona fide poet.

"I write poetry," he admitted. "I want to get published someday."

A loner in his writings, Arciero does not move in the Las Vegas poetry circle. "It has been taking all my time just to work and train right now," he explained while massaging his right forearm and biceps. "I'm kind of focusing in on this arm wrestling and bringing in the poetry later."

Asked whether he was more interested in lyric writing or poetry, Arciero replied, "I'm actually more of a poet than a lyricist, but I can go either way. I believe in the great coordination of existence."

Then he heaved himself out of the booth and headed onstage for some harrowing physical exertion under the hot lights and the intense scrutiny of a full house, referees, and television cameras.

Poetry in motion. □

Bill Willard is a sculptor, actor, and writer who has lived in Las Vegas for more than 30 years.



# Showguide

Following is a muster of the stars, revues, and extravaganzas you can see in Nevada showrooms in May and June. Schedules can change, so it's wise to call ahead for times, dates, and reservations. For out-of-state callers, Nevada's area code is 702.

## Las Vegas

**Aladdin**, 736-0111 Entertainment TBA

**Barbary Coast**, 737-7111 Royal Dixie Jazz Band, noon-6pm (except Mon.); Irish Showband, 9:30pm, midnight & 2am (except Tues.); no cover, no minimum

**Caesars Palace**, 731-7333: "42nd Street," Broadway musical, 5/6-12/10, 9pm & 12:30am

**Circus Circus**, 734-0410: Circus acts, 11am-midnight, free

**Desert Inn**, 733-4566: Duke Ellington's "Sophisticated Ladies," Broadway musical, indf., cocktail shows 7pm \$20, 11pm \$18 on Fri. & Sat., 7pm \$18, 11pm \$15 on Sun. & Tues.-Thurs., dark Mon.

**Dunes**, 737-4110: *Casino Theatre*: Dream Street, thru 9/9, 8pm dinner show from \$16.50, 11:30pm cocktail show \$14.50, includes 2 drinks, dark Mon., *Top of the Dunes*: Anita O'Day, thru 5/28; Keely Smith, 5/30-7/9, 11pm & 1am cocktail shows \$7 includes 2 drinks; dark Sun.

**El Rancho**, 796-2222: Lounge entertainment nightly, 1 drink minimum

**Flamingo Hilton**, 733-3333: *Flamingo Showroom*: City Lites, revue, indf., 8pm dinner show from \$14.50, midnight cocktail show \$10.95, includes 2 drinks; Casino

**Four Queens**, 385-4011 Bourbon Street Parade, indf., 5-10pm; Jazz Night on Mon., 10pm-2am; no cover, no minimum

**Frontier**, 734-0240: Siegfried and Roy in *Beyond Belief*, indf., 7pm & 11pm on Tues.-Thurs. & Sat.-Sun., 6pm, 9:15pm & 12:15am on Fri., dark Mon., \$25.50, includes 2 drinks

**Hacienda**, 798-0571 *Fire & Ice*, ice spectacular, indf., 8pm dinner show from \$13.95 (optional), 8pm and 11pm cocktail show \$10.95, includes 2 drinks; Redd Foxx, indf., 10pm and 1:30am cocktail show \$10.95, includes 2 drinks; dark Mon.

**Liberace plays June 16-July 6 at MGM Las Vegas.**



**Holiday**, 732-2411: *Wild World of Burlesque*, indf., 10pm & 12:30am Mon.-Fri., 8pm, 10pm & 12am Sat., dark Sun., \$6.95, includes 2 drinks

**Imperial Palace**, 733-0234: *Mickey Finn Show*, indf., 2pm & 4pm; \$7.95, includes 2 drinks

**Landmark**, 733-1110: Nightly entertainment

**Las Vegas Hilton**, 732-5111 *Bal du Moulin Rouge II*, indf., 8pm dinner show from \$16.50, midnight cocktail show \$12.50

**Las Vegas Inn & Casino**, 731-3222: Entertainment Tues.-Sun.

**MGM Grand Hotel**, 739-4111 *Ziegfeld Theatre*: *Jubilee!* indf., 8:15pm & 11:45pm, \$23.50; *Celebrity Room*: Rich Little, thru 5/11 Dean Martin, 5/12-18; Melissa Manchester, 5/26-6/1 Mac Davis, 6/2-15; *Liberace*, 6/16-7/6

**Marina**, 739-2500: *Jan & Dean*, 5/4-30; Pete Barbutti, 6/1-8; *The Platters*, 6/9-7/19; 8pm & 10pm on Sun.-Mon. & Wed.-Thurs., 8pm, 10pm,



**Rich Little appears at MGM Las Vegas to May 11 and at Sahara Tahoe May 13-15.**

## Casino Notes

- The Imperial Palace in Las Vegas offers a new keno game for players looking for a sure thing. The "no show" keno allows a player to bet *against* his numbers turning up. That means for \$2.10 a ticket, a player can mark seven spots, and if none of the numbers come up, he wins \$10 and free play. The odds on winning are about the same, but for those of us who have won only 40 cents ever at keno, somehow it feels right.

- Siegfried and Roy, stars of the Frontier Hotel's "Beyond Belief," were named Entertainment Personalities of the Year by the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. The stars' menagerie includes elephants, tigers, lions, and serpents, which they occasionally show off to local school students at their Las Vegas estate.

- The Peppermill in Reno opens its cabaret June 6 with the Jerry Sun Show.

- Pat Collins, the hip hypnotist, returns to the MGM Reno through May 24. Her language is blue raunchy, but the show is hysterical. It's amazing what folks will do when the inhibition control mechanism is in neutral.—Ann Henderson



**Bill Cosby spins hysterical yarns at Harrah's Reno May 12-25.**

and midnight on Fri. & Sat., dark Tues., no cover, 2 drink minimum

**Maxim**, 731-4300: *Shameless!* starring Bobby Duck and his *Shameless Hussies*, indf.; 8pm & 10:30pm Mon.-Thurs., 8pm, 10pm, & midnight Fri. & Sat., \$8.95, includes 2 drinks

**Mint**, 385-7440: *Sidro's Armada*, indf., 11pm, 1am & 3am; *Edwards & Wilde*, indf., 9pm, 10pm, midnight & 2am; dark Mon.

**Riviera**, 737-1755: *Joan Rivers/Smothers Brothers/Jim Stafford*, 5/12-25 & 6/16-22; *Larry Gatlin & the Gatlin Brothers Band*, 6/9-15; 8pm dinner show, midnight cocktail show

**Royal Casino**, 733-4000: *Grin & Bare It*, indf., 8pm 10pm & midnight; \$3.95 for show only, \$9.95 dinner & show

**Sahara**, 737-2111 Headliner entertainment

**Sam's Town**, 456-7777 24-hour entertainment

**Sands**, 733-5000: *Bottom's Up*, thru 7/15; 8pm & midnight; \$10.95, includes 2 drinks

**Showboat**, 385-9123: Entertainment and dancing nightly

**Silver Slipper**, 734-1212: *Boy-Lesque*, revue, indf.; 8pm, 10pm & midnight; dark Thurs., *Branded*, revue, indf.; 9pm & 11pm Mon.-Thurs., 7pm, 9pm & 11pm Fri. & Sat., dark Sun., \$5.95

**Stardust**, 732-6325: *Lido de Paris*, indf., 7pm & 11pm Sun.-Fri., 6:15pm, 9:15pm & 12am Sat., \$17.50, includes 2 drinks

**Sundance**, 382-6111 Entertainment nightly

**Tropicana**, 739-2411 *Tiffany Theatre*: *Folies Bergere*, indf., 8pm dinner show from \$16.95, 11:30pm cocktail show \$13.95

**Union Plaza**, 386-2444: "Chicago," Broadway musical, indf.; 8pm dinner show from \$11.95, 11:45pm cocktail show \$7.50

## Lake Tahoe

**Caesars Tahoe**, 588-3515 (800-648-7469): Entertainment TBA

**Cloud's Cal-Neva**, 832-4000 (800-648-7200): *De Mars Sisters*, 5/3-29; 9pm, 10:30pm & midnight; no cover

**Harrah's Lake Tahoe**, 588-6611 *South Shore Room*: Mac Davis, thru 5/12; Neil Sedaka/Billy Crystal, 5/13-19; Engelbert Humperdinck, 5/20-



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The Liberace Museum is under the auspices of The Liberace Foundation for the Performing and Creative Arts, a non-profit organization which aids deserving, exceptionally talented individuals

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Melissa Manchester sings at MGM Las Vegas  
May 26-June 1

26; Tony Orlando, 5/27-6/9; *Stateline Cabaret*: The Platters, thru 5/8 (except Mon.); B. B. King, 5/10-22 (except Mon.); Gary Puckett, 6/28-7/3

**Harvey's**, 588-2411 *Top Of The Wheel*: Fortune, 5/2-29; Jan Tanner, 5/30-6/26; Ron Rose Sound, indf.; *Casino Theatre Lounge*: Freddy Powers, 5/1-8; Ginny Fitzgerald, 5/9-22; Ernie Menehune, 5/9-29; Otice Yawn, 5/16-29; Chris David, 5/24-6/5; Cheap Cologne, 5/30-6/5; Joe Tater & Nancy Kaye, 5/30-6/19; Sun Spots, 6/6-26; Bach, 6/6-19; Marzigliano Sisters, 6/20-7/3; H. Dalton Legacy, 6/21-7/10; Cathy O'Shea, 6/27-7/17; Edell Anglin, indf.

**Hyatt Lake Tahoe**, 831-1111 *Motifs*, thru 5/8; *Breakaway*, 5/10-15; Bach, 5/17-6/5; Ernie Menehune, 6/7-19; Lelands, 6/21-7/3

**Nevada Lodge**, 831-0660: Nightly entertainment

**Sahara Tahoe**, 588-6211 (800-648-3322 toll free CA, AZ, OR, UT): *High Sierra Theatre*: Robert Goulet/Phyllis Diller, 5/6-8; Rich Little, 5/13-15; Roberta Flack/Lou Rawls, 5/20-22; Dottie West/Doc Severinsen, 5/27-30; Merle Haggard, 6/3-5; *America/Doug Kershaw*, 6/10-12; Waylon Jennings, 6/21-27; Johnny Cash, 6/28-7/4; *Pine Cone Lounge*: Bud Noble, thru 5/8; Taylor & Cole, thru 5/18; The Mugglestons, 5/9-29; Sam Butera, 5/16-6/12; The Treniers, 5/30-6/19; Sonny Turner, 5/13-6/10; Danny Marona, 6/20-7/10; 8pm dinner show from \$12.50, 11:30pm cocktail show from \$10

## Reno, Sparks & Carson City

**Carson City Nugget**, 882-1626: Winchester Cathedral, 5/3-15; Jeanne Nelson Show, 5/17-29; Otice Yawn, 5/31-6/26; *Motifis*, 6/28-7/21

**Circus Circus**, 329-0711 Circus acts, 11am-midnight, free

**Fitzgerald's**, 786-3663: *Cabaret*: Calamity Jane, thru 5/8; Sun Spots, 5/10-29; Winchester Cathedral, 5/31-6/12; Karen Cavanaugh & Starflight, 6/14-7/3; *Emerald Room*: Westport Junction, thru 5/8; Four Tunes Plus One, 5/10-29; Glenna Allen, 5/31-6/19; Chico LaMarr, 6/21-7/10

**Harrah's Reno**, 329-4422: *Headliner Room*: Joan Rivers/Jim Stafford, thru 5/11; Bill Cosby, 5/12-25; Don Rickles/Clint Holmes, 5/26-6/1; Smothers Brothers, 6/2-8; *Casino Cabaret*: Mamas and the

(Continued on page 58)



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# Jim Christison

**Golconda's cowboy painter is at home on the range.**



**'Red Dirt Country'**

**G**olconda artist Jim Christison describes his western paintings as "realistic impressionism—a style that leaves a little bit to the viewer's imagination, that isn't finished to the nth degree." And his style is in demand.

Howard Hickson, director of Elko's Northeastern Nevada Museum, recently showed Christison's oils. "He uses light in an exceptional manner," Hickson says. "His work must be shown in a large room. It overpowers a small room. He has an amazing sense of composition, with good use of negative space. And that oftentimes can't be learned—it's a feeling."

Feelings and emotions are what the 28-year-old Christison injects into every piece. "I paint from the gut. I really don't have any formal training, and I have to trust my instincts," he says. "As an artist you paint what you know, your feelings, interests, and what excites you, and hopefully that comes through the work."

Western images are part of his life. Born in Winnemucca, he grew up on his parents' Golconda cattle ranch, where he still lives. His typical workday is to rise with the sun, slip on his jeans and boots, and get on with his ranch duties. "I feed the cattle, chip ice—whatever needs to be done." In the early afternoon he trades his reins for a paintbrush and begins his real work. "The concentration necessary to paint and achieve a freshness to every piece is incredible," he says. "I'm exhausted when I'm finished. It's a workout."

Christison took up painting when he was 22 years old to try to capture his visions of ranch life. He didn't doodle or sketch as a youngster. He never took an art class at Winnemucca's Lowry High School, or at the University of Nevada, Reno, where he studied animal science for two years.

But he fell in love with brush, oil, and canvas, and spent his 25th summer working as an apprentice to Arizona artist James Reynolds. "That summer changed my life," Christison says. "He gave me and my work a whole new seriousness. I learned three times more from working with him than I would have by going to any art school.

"You do need to learn the basics, but beyond that, it's your interpretations that count. It's only good if it's got your emotions up there, your guts hanging on the wall." □





**'Isabella'**



**'Gettin' Wet'**



**'Early Arrival'**





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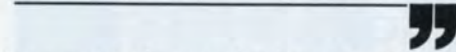
**LAKE MEAD** (Continued from page 10)

can put the bow on it, and if there are rocks, I can hold off a foot or two and never scrape bottom even if there are small waves. My bow line is usually tied to a well-rooted bush, a rock, or another anchor buried in the dirt.

The technique can be the same for any type of boat, although the rental houseboats are not anchor-equipped. Most often they use metal stakes driven into the beach with lines running from the stern. Actually, successful mooring depends more on find-



**At Lake Mead, a cove with high ground will be calm in even the worst storms.**



ing a spot in the cove that is protected from the weather. Remember that the prevailing winds are usually from either the southwest or northwest, and a hiding place surrounded by high ground will be calm in even the worst blows. Fortunately, almost all of Mead's coves are well-protected.

Although I like to get away from the electronic media completely, it's possible to receive both radio and television signals on the lake. Reception depends on where you are and what kind of antenna you have. This does not mean you are totally isolated in case of an emergency. Many boats have

CBs, and with a VHF marine radio on board, there are few if any places that you cannot call for help on emergency channel 16 or through the marine operator.

As for myself, I know where I would most like to be. Just as a good pirate would want it, the ideal hideaway would have a secret entrance. There is such a place on Lake Mead. You may be able to reach it by horseback or four-wheel drive, although even that may not be possible. In fact, you could cruise by its entrance a hundred times and never realize that James Bay is there. Even from fairly close, the canyon walls blend together and hardly give a clue to this secret passageway. The first time I poked the nose of my boat into the entrance, I wasn't sure I could find a place to turn

around and get out. The idea of backing out worried me, but in we went anyway.

Half a mile from the entrance, at the end of what seems like a long, winding canal, is a tiny beach. A steep valley leads up from the beach to the desert above. Friends tell me that deer come down through the valley to drink from the lake.

It is a small anchorage with just enough room for a single boat. I would never crowd in if someone were already on the beach. I simply would come about, sail up the shore, and find another cove. I'd still have the lake all to myself. □

*Charles E. McManis, Nevada nautical contributor, lives in Las Vegas and writes for Sea, Sail, Yachting, and other publications.*

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According to legend, this famous photograph of the Wild Bunch was sent to the Winnemucca bank with a thank-you note. The sharply-dressed dudes are, from left, Harry Longabaugh (the Sundance Kid), Bill Carver, Ben Kilpatrick (the Tall Texan), Harvey Logan (Kid Curry) and Robert LeRoy Parker (Butch Cassidy).

# Butch Cassidy & The Great Winnemucca Bank Robbery

On that day in 1900 the famous outlaw rode out of town in a hail of bullets. Or did he?

By David W. Toll

**W**innemucca is a tranquil town on the Humboldt River, a trading post transformed by the railroad into a lively shipping center, a bumptious cow town and county seat. Its history resembles that of dozens of other western railroad towns, except for one transcendent event:

On September 19, 1900, as the story goes, Butch Cassidy rode into Winnemucca and robbed the local bank.

Butch and the boys got clean away, galloping out of town in a hail of bullets, with \$32,000 in gold. Later on, the story tells us, he added insult to injury by sending the bank a photograph of himself and the boys

in fancy new suits, stiff collars, and derbies. With it was a mocking thank-you note expressing appreciation for the Winnemucca money they were using to pay for their fun.

It is a delicious story, and it has been told and retold countless times. I have told it myself. It is such a wonderful story that the community now celebrates Butch Cassidy Days every September in honor of the great event.

But unfortunately it is not a true story. In fact, Butch Cassidy never sent that picture, and the evidence is pretty clear that he was never in Winnemucca in his life.

The great robbery did take place, all

right. It may be that Butch Cassidy knew the robbery was going to happen. He might even have had a hand in making the arrangements, although that was never proved. It is also possible that some of his larcenous friends in the Wild Bunch were involved. But no matter who robbed the Winnemucca bank, no one who was there that day would ever forget it.

## The Boys

Winnemucca, 1900. Like a new mother gazing down at her sleeping babe, the September sun lavished light and warmth on the dusty burg at the big bend of the Humboldt. The town was busy with stockmen buying and selling cattle and horses when sharply at noon the schoolhouse doors burst open, and the pent-up kids came streaming out and down the steps and home for lunch.

Some of the boys liked to walk down Bridge Street to the river and chunk rocks into the shallow water until it was time to go back to class. So it was that nine-year-old Lee Case and a couple of his pals were on their way back from the river one day when they trooped past the empty livery stable and saw some cowboys sitting by the open doorway. In their friendly way the cowboys struck up a conversation with the boys. The next day they saw the men there again, and talked with them some more. They were just drifting cowboys passing through, making small talk about the town, asking how many deputies there were, and one thing and another.

East of town about 10 miles, another boy got to know the three cowboys. Ten-year-old Vic Button rode to Golconda to school every day, passing their camp in a hayfield down near the river where there was a well for drinking water. There was nothing out of the ordinary about that. The roundups were about over, and plenty of cowboys were moving through the country. Vic would have ridden right on by the men's camp except for the handsome white horse that caught his eye.

Vic rode over and asked the cowboy if he'd like to trade his white horse. The cowboy laughed and said no, he'd keep him a while. But Vic had fallen in love with that big white horse. The next day at his father's ranch, the CS, he picked out a fine strong saddle horse and rode it to the camp in hopes of a trade, but it was no dice. The cowboys were friendly, and jawed with the kid, and wondered out loud what the best way might be to get to southern Idaho in a hurry from there, and they nodded their heads when Vic pointed out Soldier Pass.

Vic rode a different horse past the camp to school each day, hoping one of them would take the cowboy's eye the way the white had taken his. But the cowboy wouldn't trade.

## The Holdup

September 19 was another golden day, and at noon the schoolboys hurried home for lunch as usual. Carl Smith took his customary walk down to the corner of Fourth Street and then turned and walked along the sidewalk next to the First National Bank. As usual, he looked in the window as he went by.



But most unusually he saw Mr. McBride, Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Hill standing by their desks behind the counter with their hands up in the air. Two men were pointing long-barreled pistols at their frightened faces. Over by the big safe a man with a scraggy yellow beard had ahold of Mr. Nixon with one hand and held a great, gleaming knife at his throat with the other.

Carl walked directly home as usual, ate his lunch in silence, and went back to school by the long way, so completely flummoxed by what he had seen that he didn't say a word about it to anyone until it was all over.

Lee Case and Slat Rutherford, meanwhile, were walking past the courthouse when they heard a burst of loud popping and stopped in wonder at the sound.

What they heard was banker George Nixon shooting his six-gun in the air in the street outside the bank. Nixon had opened the safe with that knife at his throat and watched helplessly as the bearded man had reached inside and thrust three bags full of gold coins into an ore sack he had brought along. Then he had emptied the money drawer in Nixon's private office of the 10- and 20-dollar gold coins kept there.

Then everyone had been herded into the bank's small backyard—Nixon, his three employees, and W.S. Johnson, a horse buyer who had been in Nixon's office when the robbers arrived. While the bearded man held them at gunpoint, the other two robbers had jumped the back fence and run down the alley to their tethered horses. When the man with the blond beard had gone over the fence after them, Nixon led the rush back into the bank. Grabbing up his hidden revolver, Nixon ran into the street to give the alarm. Johnson, the horsebuyer, meanwhile snatched a "pumping gun" off the wall, ran back into the yard and over the fence, and drew down on the robbers as they sped away on horseback.

But—click—the gun was empty.

Deputy Sheriff George Rose then ran out of the courthouse with a rifle in his hand. He raced past Lee and Slat and climbed a windmill that gave him a view over the slaughterhouse roof. Another spatter of popping broke out, and the boys followed him up the tower in time to see that the robbers were having a little trouble getting out of town.

Galloping down Second Street, one of them had seen Sheriff Charles McDeid standing outside the Reception Saloon and sent him ducking back inside with a pistol shot. They had taken the corner at Cross's Creek full tilt, and in the process the money bag had slipped loose and fallen to the street, scattering coins. The robbers hauled up their horses, wheeled, and plunged back to where the sack lay in the street. One of the men dismounted and handed the bag back up to a second man, while the third was attending to the pursuit with his six-gun.

Back at the bank, Johnson threw down his pumping gun in the alley in disgust, and after George Nixon emptied his gun in the air, Calhoun, the stenographer, followed the robbers on foot. As Golconda's newspaper, the *Silver State*, explained the next day, he

"accidentally turned the corner where the men had dropped the sack and one of the robbers goodnaturedly took three shots at Mr. Calhoun, who promptly fell behind a fence."

As Calhoun tumbled out of sight and the robber leapt back into the saddle, the door of the cottage behind the bandits opened. Chris Lane poked his head out and angrily began lecturing the horsemen about shooting off their guns inside the town limits. A bullet splintered the door frame over Lane's head, and he jumped back inside. The three



George Nixon, the bank's chief, was a U.S. Senator from 1905 to 1912.

men spurred their horses and dashed away, leaving gold coins glittering in the dirt where the bag had fallen.

#### The Chase

While their pursuers scratched in the street for coins, the bandits raced out of town on the Golconda Road. Seeing them go, Deputy Rose climbed down the windmill, hurried to a nearby railroad spur, and commandeered a switch engine and its crew to chase the rapidly departing badmen. When Lee and Slat climbed on, Deputy Rose ordered the kids off, and they had to jump down. But as soon as the deputy turned his back, Slat scrambled back on board.

The robbers had a good lead on the engine, and at the Sloan Ranch, about eight miles out of town, they changed over to fresh horses. In the process they took three fine saddle horses belonging to George Nixon, including his personal favorite. They galloped on, with the little switch engine slowly gaining. Deputy Rose was poised at its nose, waiting to get within rifle range, and Slat Rutherford had his head down and his heart in his throat, hanging on at the back of the engine.

About 11 miles out of town Deputy Rose began lobbing shots at the fleeing robbers, and the *Silver State* the next day gave him

credit for wounding one of Nixon's horses. Nevertheless, the barbed-wire fence that had kept the horsemen penned beside the tracks had been cut, and they sprinted north out of rifle range to another change of horses near their little camp by the river. There they transferred the gold to a packhorse and rode away.

Poses were formed, trackers put on the trail, and telegrams sent to law officers in the surrounding districts. The chase was on. If the men dispatched from Golconda had taken a slightly different route they'd have cut the trail ahead of the robbers; as it was they caught up to them where they were changing horses at Clover Valley, on the way to Soldier Pass. The posse couldn't keep up with the fresh horses, but it did get close enough that one of the bandits stood up in the saddle and yelled back at them: "Give the white horse to the kid on the CS Ranch!"

They did, and for years afterward Vic Button rode his white horse, Patsy, all around that country.

The progress of the chase from Wednesday, September 19, to Thursday, September 27, is told in the headlines of the *Silver State*:

#### FIRST NATIONAL BANK ROBBED

*Three Desperadoes Loot It and Secure Thousands of Dollars. Cashier and Assistants Forced to Hand Over the Money to the Robbers, Who Afterward Escape with Their Booty.*

#### ROBBERS ARE HARD PRESSED

*Last Reports Say Posse Was Not Far Behind. Desperadoes Are Heading for the Junipers Country—News of a Fight Is Expected Hourly.*

#### CHASE OF THE ROBBERS

*Were Near Tuscaraora Last Night.*

#### STRONG POSSE IS PURSUING THEM

*Last News Received Indicates the Capture of Desperadoes.*

#### ROBBERS STILL AT LARGE

*Poses Still After Them But There is No News of the Chase.*

#### THE ROBBER HUNT

*Posse Still Following Them Through Wilds of Northern Idaho.*

#### NO FURTHER NEWS OF ROBBERS

#### DUVIVIER RETURNS

*At Last Accounts Posse Was Far Behind Robbers.*

#### LOST TRAIL OF ROBBERS

*Only Chance of Capture Now is by Posse from Idaho.*

After that, nothing. The robbers had disappeared.

#### The Evidence

There was no lack of suspects. Even before the dust of the chase settled, the *Silver State* printed a long roster of candidates. In describing the tail end of the chase a week after the robbery, the *Silver State* mentioned that "two hard characters from Wyoming who had been around White Rock for some time are also believed to be connected with the robbery."

George Nixon pressed a vigorous investigation. He hired Tom Horn, the notorious



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enforcer of the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association, and paid numerous informants. In correspondence with the Pinkerton Detective Agency, Nixon guaranteed payment of \$1,000 for each of the robbers, dead or alive, and said he would also commit one-fourth of the recovered loot, and even more if there were significant risk or expense involved.

About six weeks after the robbery someone got around to searching the campsite near the river and found the torn-up scraps of three letters, which Nixon himself taped back together to send to the Pinkertons.

One of the letters, postmarked September 1, 1900, at Riverside, Wyoming, was addressed to C.E. Rowe, Golconda, Nevada. "Dear Friend," it said. "Yours at hand this evening. We are glad to know you are getting along well. In regards to sale enclosed letter will explain everything. I am so glad that everything is favorable. We have left Baggs, so write us at Encampment, Wyoming. Hoping to hear from you soon I am as ever, your friend Mike."

Another letter was written on blue paper with the letterhead of attorney D.A. Preston of Rock Springs, Wyoming. It was dated August 24, 1900, and read, "My Dear Sir, Several influential parties are becoming interested and the chances of a sale are becoming favorable. Yours, Truly, D.A. Preston."

The third letter was written in the same handwriting as the second, and on the same blue paper, but with no letterhead and no salutation. "Send me a map of the country," it said, "and describe as near as you can the place where you found the black stuff so I can go to it. Tell me how you want it handled. You don't know its value. If I can get hold of it first, I can fix a good many things favorable. Say nothing to anyone about it." It was signed simply, "P"

Douglas A. Preston was Butch Cassidy's lawyer and had represented other members of the Wild Bunch in their scrapes with the law.

There were other hints of a Wyoming connection. One of the getaway horses wore a Wyoming brand and was discovered to have been rustled. There were those "two hard characters from Wyoming," who reportedly met the robbers in the wilderness of southeastern Idaho and disappeared with them.

### The Photograph

A few years ago, two bound volumes of letters were found in the basement of the old bank building. They turned out to be copies of George Nixon's business correspondence from February 24, 1900, to October 9, 1905. The letters were later given to Lee Berk, a long-time Winnemucca resident and ardent student of its history. In turn, Mr. Berk passed them on to the Nevada Historical Society. The letters shed light on a number of important events of the time, and 28 of them are devoted to various aspects of the robbery.

One interesting aspect of the letters is that nowhere is there any suggestion that the famous photograph, or any note or other communication, had been received from the bandits. Mr. Berk has read every issue of the *Silver State* for years after the



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**The scene of the crime: the First National Bank in Winnemucca.**

robbery, and nowhere has he found a reference to the famous photograph or the mocking note.

In fact, it was the Pinkertons who sent George Nixon the photograph—more than five months after the robbery took place.

The photograph was discovered by a Wells Fargo detective working undercover as a gambler in Fort Worth, Texas, to track down the survivors of the Black Jack Ketchum gang. The detective was strolling down Main Street one day when he happened to pass the Swartz photography studio and noticed a picture on display of five dapper dudes in their new threads. He was startled and pleased to recognize the handsome young man standing on the left as Bill Carver, one of the men he was searching for. The others were quickly identified as Harvey Logan (Kid Curry); Harry Longbaugh (alias Harry Alonzo, alias the Sundance Kid); Ben Kilpatrick (alias the Tall Texan), another one of the

Ketchum bunch; and Butch Cassidy.

Wells Fargo sent a copy of the photograph to the Pinkertons, who were investigating the Winnemucca robbery on behalf of the American Bankers Association. They sent it, along with some mug shots, to George Nixon in Winnemucca for his identification.

"While I am satisfied that Cassidy was interested in the robbery," Nixon wrote in reply on January 8, 1901, "he was not one of the men who entered the bank."

A month and a half later, however, Nixon conceded, "So far as Cassidy is concerned, we will be willing to take chances in paying the reward for him upon the evidence now in hand." But he emphasized that Cassidy had not been one of the robbers. "I am trying to get a description of Cassidy from a person who formerly knew him, as the photograph you sent me is the likeness of a man with a great deal squarer cut face and massive jaws, in fact somewhat of a bulldog

appearance, while the man 'Whiskers' struck me as a face that, in case it was shaven, would have more of a coyote appearance."

A quick look at the famous photograph shows four strong chins. Only Harvey Logan looks like a coyote, and Nixon tentatively identified him as one of the other men. "After studying the photo of Harvey Logan, which you sent me, both Mr. McBride and myself are of the opinion that he is #2," he wrote. As for robber #3, Nixon added with obvious hesitation, "I am also about confident now that he was Harry Alonzo."

It seems scarcely a firm identification, but on May 15, 1901, the Pinkerton Detective Agency offered a \$6,000 reward for the arrest of the Winnemucca robbers. The flyer contained descriptions of the three men who had entered the bank, and stated:

"After a thorough investigation, and from information received, George Parker (right name) alias George Cassidy, alias 'Butch' Cassidy, alias Ingerfield; and Harry Longbaugh (sic), alias 'Kid' Longbaugh, alias Harry Alonzo, are suspected of being two of the men engaged in this robbery."

**The Verdict**

While the flyer was being distributed to law officers around the country, Butch, Sundance, and Etta Place were in New York, enjoying a farewell round of parties and pleasures before sailing to Buenos Aires and a new series of adventures in South America.



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A Pinkerton detective eventually tracked them to Argentina, but he didn't pursue them into the interior, where they were ranching at Cholila in Chubut province. When Butch and Sundance were reported killed by soldiers of the Bolivian Army a few years later, the Pinkertons closed their files on them. No one was ever arrested for robbing the Winnemucca bank, and the reward was never paid.

This much we know: Butch Cassidy wasn't there, and he didn't send that photograph either.

The rest is theory, but there is plenty of that. Lee Berk has come to believe that some local person—C.E. Rowe, perhaps, or one of the suspects listed in the paper, or someone whose name never came to light—recognized the bank as a plum ripe for the picking and got word to the Wild Bunch in Wyoming. Then some of the boys rode in to look the situation over and later did the job. At 91, Lee Case can plainly remember his shock and surprise at seeing his cowboy friends from the livery stable stampeding out of town in a blaze of gunfire, but he can't recall that they ever mentioned their names.

Another persistent theory says that the robbery was an inside job, and that George Nixon had conspired to rob his own bank. One variant of this theory has the horse buyer Johnson actually being Butch Cassidy himself. But Johnson was a real person, well known and well documented. An impersonation is out of the question.

Another version of the inside job theory has George Wingfield as mastermind. Wingfield, later a mining millionaire and political boss of Nevada, had appeared in Tonopah not long after the robbery with a grubstake provided by Nixon. He and Nixon were partners in numerous enterprises, including great bonanza mines at Goldfield and a chain of banks. It is perhaps tempting to picture them scheming to fake the robbery.

But Wingfield was already a well-known character in the region, having run a saloon in Golconda and raised horses on a ranch nearby. His comings and goings were noted in the newspaper. He could never have taken an active part in the robbery without being recognized.

And George Nixon didn't need to fake any holdup. He was doing very well on the square, as he did all his life, becoming very rich from his Goldfield speculations, building a chain of banks and a mansion on the Truckee Bluffs in Reno, and in 1905 ascending to the U.S. Senate. He was the very model of success, a paragon of rectitude, the hardworking hero of a Horatio Alger life.

So just this once I'm going to miss Butch Cassidy Days. Instead, I'm going to camp on the doorstep of the fancy Nixon mausoleum at Mountain View Cemetery in Reno. I want to listen to the rattle of the good banker's bones as he rolls over in his coffin while the home folks honor the thieves, whoever they were, who held a knife at his throat and stole all that Winnemucca money. □

*David W. Toll is the author of The Compleat Nevada Traveler and a longtime Nevada contributor.*

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# The Nevada Calendar for May & June

Your complete day-by-day guide to events and celebrations in the Silver State.  
By Melissa Cronin



JIM CHAMBERLAIN

From big-city arenas to small-town fairgrounds, Nevada rodeo is always a high-kicking affair. This photo was taken in Hawthorne in 1952.

## Rodeo Bucks & Broncs: Same Time, Same State

Two of America's biggest and richest rodeos—Las Vegas' Helldorado Days and the Reno Rodeo—take place in Nevada this June. Both are rated by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) as among the top five annual rodeos in total prize money, along with those in Houston, Denver, and Cheyenne.

Prize money is the measure for contestants, too. At the end of the year, the 15 top money winners in each rodeo event qualify for the National Finals Rodeo in Oklahoma City in December. Therefore, the chance of a win in Reno or Las Vegas, which offer close to \$300,000 each, will draw the sport's best-known stars.

Since the two rodeos are scheduled for the same time in June, some buckaroos and cowgirls

will enter both. Using private planes and commercial air charters, riding-event cowboys could spend eight seconds atop a snarling Brahma bull in Reno and a few hours later slip down onto the back of another in Las Vegas. Helldorado performances are at 8 p.m. on June 18-26. In Reno they take place at 7:30 p.m. on June 21-24, at 1:30 and 7:30 p.m. on June 25, and at 1:30 p.m. for the Sunday finals on June 26.

Both Reno and Las Vegas will feature pro rodeo's seven main events. In three of them—saddle bronc, bareback, and bull riding—the cowboy must show good, high-kicking style while hanging on for the eight-second buzzer. The other four events—calf roping, team roping, steer wrestling, and cowgirls' barrel racing—demand split-

second timing from horse and rider.

The action will be top-notch in both arenas, although the settings are decidedly different. The Helldorado events take place within the ultra-modern confines of the Las Vegas Convention Center, a cow chip's throw from the jangle and chrome of the Strip. The Reno Rodeo is held outdoors at the Nevada State Fairgrounds on the northern edge of town, where the aroma of sagebrush and stock still perfumes the air.

Both celebrations last 10 days, featuring downtown parades, carnivals, beard contests, buckaroo breakfasts, queen competitions, and western hoopla galore. See the Nevada Calendar listings for daily schedules. Remember, it's same time, same state.—*Jim Crandall*



# Las Vegas/South

## MAY

**Las Vegas Civic Ballet Company in Concert**, 1 \$4, 2pm, Charleston Heights Arts Center, Las Vegas, 386-6384

**Tropicana Gin Rummy Tournament**, 1-5, Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas, 739-2222

**Colors in Concert**, 1-27 multi-media exhibit by Rodolfo Fernandez, Main Gallery, Flamingo Library, Las Vegas, 733-7810

**In Praise of Woman**, 1-6/3, septatone body landscapes and fine-art photography by Robert Ball, Upstairs Gallery, Flamingo Library, Las Vegas, 733-7810

**Vegas Wings' Desert Tour**, 1-3/31/84, motorcycle tour, requires visiting 15 out of 35 checkpoints in Nevada, \$6, Las Vegas, 736-3145

**"The Seventh Seal,"** 2, Ingmar Bergman film, free, 7pm, Charleston Heights Arts Center, Las Vegas, 386-6384

**Las Vegas Stars v. Edmonton Trappers**, 2-4, triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm Mon.-Tues., 6:30pm doubleheader Wed., Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**Las Vegas Stars v. Vancouver Canadians**, 5-8, triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**"Bleacher Bums,"** 6-7 play, 8pm Fri.-Sat., also 2pm on Sat., Clark County Community College Theatre, Las Vegas, 643-6060

**"The Music Man,"** 6-7 12-14, 8pm, also 2pm only on Sun. the 15th, Alta Ham Theatre, UNLV, 739-3801

**"Madame Butterfly,"** 8, opera, soprano Nancy Shade, tenor John Duykers, and Las Vegas Symphony, 2pm, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV, 739-3420

**Trio Serenata**, 8, chamber music, 2pm, Flamingo Library Aud., Las Vegas, 733-7810

**"Peter Pan,"** 10, child's film captioned for the deaf, 7pm, Flamingo Library Aud., Las Vegas, 733-7810

**Duquesne Univ. Tamburitzans Institute of Folk Arts in Concert**, 12, Eastern European folk music, song and dance, \$10 general, \$5 seniors (65 and older) and students, 8pm, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV, 739-3535

**Las Vegas Stars v. Albuquerque Dukes**, 13-15, triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm Fri. and Sun., 6:30pm doubleheader Sat., Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**Greek Food Festival**, 15, dancing, food, arts and crafts, \$3, Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas, 386-0600

**"Walkabout,"** 16, Australian film, free, 7pm, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 385-6384

**San Diego Padres**, 16, exhibition baseball game, 7:30pm, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**Military Appreciation Day**, 21, golf tournament at Nellis AFB, with BBQ, for info. call North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, 642-1944

**Arts and Crafts Festival**, 21-22, juried show, Jaycee Park, Las Vegas, 386-6511

**Bike Race for Life and Breath**, 22, Meadows Mall, Las Vegas, 454-2500

**International Festival**, 22, food, drink, music, arts, crafts, and costumes, 20 local ethnic organizations, Las Vegas Convention Center, 733-2323

**Las Vegas Stars v. Tucson Toros**, 25-28, triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**Lincoln County Homecoming**, 27-29; on Fri. softball tournament, horseshoes, bingo party; on Sat. swap meet, races, horseshoes, softball, art show, Kids' Day, rodeo, street dance, and King and Queen Contest; on Sun. swap meet, horseshoes, BBQ, Paiute Indian dancing and singing, softball championship, Caliente, 726-3637



## Bourbon Street Meets the Old West

Virginia City's boardwalk will be ringing with Dixieland when a dozen jazz bands and clarinetist Pete Fountain bring the sounds of Bourbon Street to the old mining town on June 24-26. Following Friday night jam sessions, musicians and a convoy of antique cars will parade through town at noon Saturday. Then such bands as the Abalone Stompers, The Dixiecats, and the Natural Gas Jazz Band play through the afternoon and evening at 10 clubs on C Street. The music will continue throughout Sunday. For \$10 each day you can buy a "jazz badge" for admittance to all jazz rooms. Also, afternoon and evening concerts will be performed by Pete Fountain and Merle Koch's All Star Silver Stope Jazz Band on Saturday and Sunday at Piper's Opera House. Tickets are \$35 per person for each show. For tickets, write Merle Koch, Box 423, Virginia City, NV. 89440 or call 847-0313.

**Three Portfolios**, 29-6/24, retrospective of Kenneth Ostheimer's photography, Main Gallery, Flamingo Library, Las Vegas, 733-7810

## JUNE

**Las Vegas Stars v. Portland Beavers**, 2-5, triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**Tropicana Baccarat Tournament**, 3-5, Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas, 739-2222

**"The Beauty and the Beast,"** 3-12, Rainbow Company production, 7pm Fri., 2pm and 7pm Sat., 2pm Sun., Charleston Heights Arts Center, Las Vegas, 386-6553

**Woody Owl Day**, 4, music and theater for children, followed by games and a demonstration by the Metro K-9 Corps, free, Spring Mountain Ranch State Park, 875-4141

**Union Plaza Gin Tournament**, 5-8, Union Plaza Hotel, Las Vegas, 386-2110

**Tribute to Builders of Hoover Dam**, 6, 10am-4pm, Crowe Park, Boulder City, 293-4035

**Arm Wrestling Championships**, 6-12, Jenos Pro Football "Super Classic VI," free, Tiffany Theatre, Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas, 739-2222

**Tropicana U.S. National Table Tennis Championships**, 7-13, Sports Complex, Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas, 739-2222

**Union Plaza 8-Ball Tournament**, 8-11 Union Plaza Hotel, Las Vegas, 386-2110

**Tropicana Craps Tournament**, 9-12, Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas, 739-2222

**"Hello Dolly,"** 9-26, 8pm Thurs.-Sat., 2pm Sun.,

Las Vegas Community Theatre, Reed Whipple Cultural Center, Las Vegas, 382-7225

**Ron Stephenson Tire Town/SNORE 100**, 11 100-mile off-road desert race, Southern Nevada Off Road Enthusiasts Club, \$100 entry and \$35 insurance fees, Las Vegas, 876-0371

**Las Vegas Spring Jazz Festival**, 11-12, outdoor festival featuring Carmen McRae, the Buddy Rich Orchestra, Spyro Gyra, and Maiden Voyage, plus product and service booths, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 457-2600

**"Old Yeller,"** 14, child's film captioned for the deaf, 7pm, Flamingo Library Aud., Las Vegas, 733-7810

**Las Vegas Stars v. Phoenix Giants**, 14-17 triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**Elks Helldorado**, 17-26; 49th annual celebration opens Fri. the 10th with street dance, 7pm, on Fremont St.; 17-26, the Helldorado exhibit hall, carnival, and Village Bar (continuous entertainment); 18, parade on the Strip, 9am; 19-22, Wrangler Bull Fighting; 21 Whiskerino Contest. Rodeo runs 18-26 with performances at 8pm, Las Vegas Convention Center, 385-1221 or 385-3191

**Union Plaza Pan Tournament**, 19-21 Union Plaza Hotel, Las Vegas, 386-2110

**Las Vegas Stars v. Tacoma Tigers**, 22-25, triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

**"Raisin,"** 23-7/23, musical adaptation of "Raisin in the Sun," 8:30pm Thurs.-Sat., 3pm Sun. 6/26 and 7/17 Las Vegas Little Theatre, 735-0167

**Mountain Visions Musical Program**, 24-25,





CAROLINE J. HADLEY

## Me and Jim

When Jim Butler picked up a rock one day in 1900 to scold a wandering mule, as the story goes, he found the stone heavy and flecked with glinting silver ore. Hence, the boomtown of Tonopah and the Jim Butler Days celebration this Memorial Day Weekend. The festivities mix mining, games, and parties on May 26-30. If your time is tight, be there Friday night when Main Street is blocked off for an open-air dance. Saturday is the big day for kids' and adults' games and contests, with state championship mucking and double-jack drilling, furious mining tests that date back to Tonopah's early days. A main feature on Sunday is the Summit Race, one of the state's toughest running events. Starting and ending at the Mizpah Hotel, the 6.2 mile (10km) racecourse winds along old mining roads and Oddie and "T" mountains. Monday is set aside for well-deserved R&R.

shown on a 35-foot screen, Spring Mountain Ranch State Park, 875-4141

**Tropicana Backgammon Tournament**, 26-30, Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas, 739-2222

**"Lost Horizon,"** 28, film captioned for the deaf, 7pm, Flamingo Library Aud., Las Vegas, 733-7810

**Las Vegas Stars v. Phoenix Giants**, 30-7/3, triple-A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Cashman Field, Las Vegas, 733-0600

## Central

### MAY

**Men's State Bowling Tournament**, 4/30-5/8, weekends at Sunset Lanes, Ely, 289-8811

**Fine Arts Festival**, 9-13, White Pine High School, Ely, 289-4811

**Ely Amateur Golf Tournament**, 21-22, White Pine Golf Course, Ely, 289-4095

**Jim Butler Days**, 26-30, teen dance on Thurs., on Fri. art show and craft fair, street dance, kangaroo court; on Sat. skits, black powder shoot, parade, horseshoe contest, junior mucking, women's mucking, double jack drilling, skydivers, Bob Perchetti Memorial Dunk Tank, Gay '90s Ball, liar's contest, beard contest, and square dancing dem-

onstrations; on Sun. 6.2-mile summit run, Tonopah, 482-3859

### JUNE

**Eastern Nevada Umpires Tournament**, 3-5, women's fastpitch softball, Marich Field, Ely, 289-8877

**American Bashkir Curly Horse Convention**, 17-19, horse show and performance, Bristlecone Convention Center, Ely, 289-4228

**Ninth Annual Bank Club Tournament**, 17-19, men's fastpitch softball, Marich Field, Ely, 289-8877

**White Pine County NCA Rodeo**, 25-26, fairgrounds, Ely, 289-8877

## North

### MAY

**Elko Chamber of Commerce Home Show**, 1 Convention Center, Elko, 738-4840

**Horse-A-Thon**, 1 20-mile trail ride to benefit American Cancer Society, BBQ follows at Lamoille, 738-5816

**Longhorn Cattle Show**, 6-8, convention on Fri., purebred cow sale on Sat., roping steer sale on Sun., Elko, 738-5816

**Cactus Pete's Air Race**, 7 Lander, WY to Jackpot, 755-2259

**Jr. High School Band Concert**, 11 Convention Center, Elko, 738-4840

**Five State Horseshoe Tournament**, 13-14, players from Nevada, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Montana; public invited, Jackpot, 755-2321

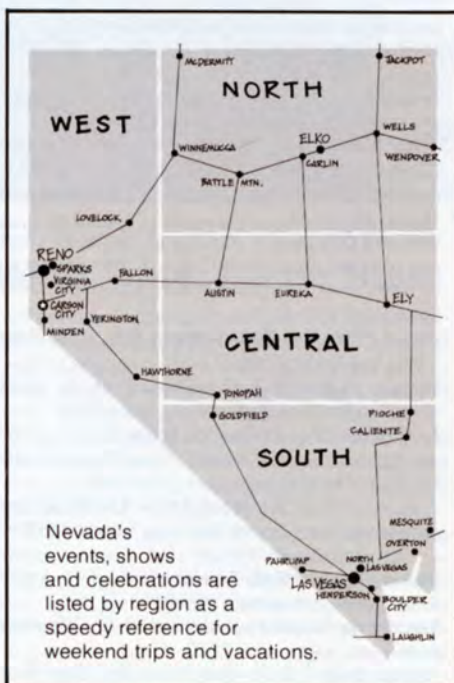
**Early Bird Special**, 14, stock car races with time trials 10am-4pm and races at 8pm, Winnemucca Speedway, fairgrounds, Winnemucca, 623-3519

**Jackpot Pro-Am**, 16-17 golf tournament, Jackpot, 755-2264

**High School Band Concert**, 18, Convention Center, Elko, 738-4840

**Cactus Pete's Air Race**, 21 from Seattle, WA, to Jackpot, 755-2259

**Spring Choral Concert**, 25, Convention Center, Elko, 738-4840



### JUNE

**Snake River Artisans Art Show**, 3-5, Cactus Pete's Convention Center, Jackpot, 755-2259

**Joisting Tournament**, 4, modern knights on horseback recreate ancient competition, Jackpot, 755-2259

**Wells High School Rodeo**, 4-5, BBQ, dance and rodeo, Rodeo Grounds, Wells, 752-3616

**Gem, Mineral and Art Show**, 10-12, Cactus Pete's Convention Center, Jackpot, 755-2259

**Winnemucca Basque Festival**, 11-12; on Sat. 11:30am parade down Winnemucca Blvd. followed by woodchopping, weightlifting, tug-o-wars, dance contests, exhibitions, and Sat. night dance, fairgrounds; on Sun. 11am Mass followed by 1pm barbecue steak or lamb stew dinner (\$8), dance contests, sheepherder's bread bake-off, American and Basque music, City Park, info. 623-2225

**Elko Amateur Golf Tournament**, 11-12, Ruby View Golf Course, Elko, 738-6212

**State High School Rodeo Finals**, 16-19, fairgrounds, Elko, 738-4091

**Western Festival**, 17-19, square dancing, fiddlers' contest, races, BBQ, shootouts, hot-air balloons, kangaroo court, townwide celebration in Elko, 738-7135

**Cactus Pete's Air Race**, 18, Cloudbusters Flying Club from Spokane, WA, to Jackpot, 755-2259

**Oly Golf Tournament**, 23, Jackpot, 752-3326

**Mt. Trails Appaloosa Horse Show**, 24-26, appaloosa horse judging, fairgrounds, Elko, 753-6676

## Lighting the Fuse

Every Fourth of July citizens throughout the Silver State celebrate with patriotic fervor, touching off fireworks, parades, and parties at more than 20 towns and cities. In the July/August issue you'll find a complete schedule of Independence Day activities. If you have questions in the meantime, call Melissa Cronin at *Nevada Magazine's* Fourth of July Hot Line, 702-885-5416.

**Krazy Daze**, 25, parade at 10am, games of all kinds for children, picnic supper in City Park, Wells, 752-3919

**Lamoille Country Fair**, 26, begins at 10am, arts and crafts, food, and children's games, Lamoille Women's Clubhouse, Lamoille, 744-4322

## Reno/West

### MAY

**Nevada 83**, thru 11 photo show, Pershing County Library, Lovelock, 273-2216

**"The Taming of the Shrew,"** 1 Shakespeare, \$4.50, 2pm, Nevada Repertory Company, Church Fine Arts Theatre, UNR, 784-6659

**Gin Rummy Tournament**, 1-5, \$100,000 partners tournament, \$1,000 entry fee per team, MGM, Reno, 789-2000

**Student Exhibition**, 1-16, 8am-5pm weekdays, Sheppard Gallery, Church Fine Arts Theatre, UNR, 784-6658

**Reno Philharmonic Concert**, 3, performing William Walton's "Crown Imperial" and Gustav Holst's "The Planets," 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, Reno, 329-1324

**Reno Padres v. San Jose Bees**, 3-5, class A pro baseball, 7pm, Moana Stadium, Reno, 825-0678

**Reno Padres v. Rohnert Park Redwood Pioneers**, 6-8, class A pro baseball, 7pm Fri., 1:30pm



## Going to the Hop

On June 3-11 the Southern Nevada towns of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson and Boulder City unite to roll back the clock for a Fabulous Fifties Festival that will feature sock hops, rock 'n' roll bands, guest celebrities, and TV heroes from the '50s. Visitors and locals will find '50s dress and automobiles *de rigueur* and will be able to enter such events as a Marilyn Monroe look-alike contest and hoola hoop competition. So dust off your penny-loafers, butch-wax your jelly roll, and make the scene. For more information call the Greater Las Vegas Foundation at 369-0345.

Sat., 1pm doubleheader Sun., Moana Stadium, Reno, 825-0678

**Silver State Square Dance Festival**, 6-8, Convention Center, Reno, 972-1349

**Historical Buildings Tour and Vintage Car Show**, 7 self-guided tour of four historic west-side homes, Jack's Bar, and the Capitol. Yard sale at the Roberts House, quilt show in the Capitol, and vintage car show at Brewery Arts Center. Refreshments at the Governor's Mansion starting at 11 am. Adults \$5 and children under 12, students, and senior citizens \$4, 10am-4pm, 1207 N. Carson St., Carson City, 883-1542

**Nevada Artists Assn. Art Show**, 7-8, contest and sale, 10am-5pm, National Guard Armory, Yerington, 463-3091

**Virginia City Grand Prix**, 7-8, championship dirt-bike races each day through the hills around Virginia City, purse up to \$15,000, 826-1122

**Reno Fleet Hobie Cat Race**, 8, skipper's meeting at 10:30am followed by race, south end of Washoe Lake, 322-4853

**UNR Chorale Concert**, 8, with the Reno Chamber Orchestra, free, 3pm, Pioneer Theatre, Reno, 784-6145

**UNR Band Spring Concert**, 10-11 free, 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, Reno, 784-6145

**Crystal Hill Antique Show**, 13-14, Convention

Center, Reno, 785-4800

**"The Rainmaker,"** 13-14, 20-21 27-28, 8pm, Brewery Arts Center, Carson City, 883-1976

**Gettin' There, Barbershop Style**, 14, Silver Dollar Chorus, 8pm, Pioneer, Reno, 825-0278

**Genoa Volunteer Fire Dept. Benefit**, 14, music, steak dinner, and auction, \$12.50, firehouse, Genoa, 782-5200

**Maverick Lions Club First Invitational Golf Tournament**, 15, prizes, \$55 per person, 9:30am, Eagle Valley Golf Course, Carson City, 887-2380

**Reno Padres v. Salinas Spurs**, 17-19, class A pro baseball, 7pm, Moana Stad., Reno, 825-0678

**Nevada 83**, 18-6/22, photo show, Washoe County Library, Reno, 785-4010

**Sierra Nevada Chorale Spring Concert**, 20, 8pm, Pioneer Theatre, Reno, 786-5105

**Reno Padres v. Stockton Ports**, 20-22, class A pro baseball, 7pm Fri., 1:30pm Sat., 1pm doubleheader Sun., Moana Stadium, Reno, 825-0678

**Two Cities**, 20-6/17 exchange exhibition with Univ. of Pacific at Sheppard Gallery, Church Fine Arts, UNR, 784-6658

**Armed Forces Day**, 21 parade on Sierra Way at noon followed by ammunition plant tour and BBQ, Hawthorne, 945-5896

**Soaring Society of America Region XI Championships**, 21-22, 28-30, glider competitions, rides, Douglas County Airport, Minden, 782-7627 or 916-961-0362

**Kerak Shrine Circus**, 21-22, three-rings, \$5 general, \$6 reserved, 10am, 2pm and 8pm Sat., 2 pm and 7pm Sun., Convention Center, Reno, 322-3330

**Model Train Railroad Show**, 21-22, model train layouts, modulators, handmade units, free, noon-5pm, Hazen Bar, Hazen, 867-3066

**Jazz at the Pioneer VI**, 22, presented by the Love of Jazz Club, starring the Heath Brothers plus Richie Cole and Alto Madness, 1:30pm, Pioneer Theatre, Reno, 786-5105

**Tennis Marathon**, 22-26, attempt by two players to break the Guinness World Book of Records of 111 hours of continuous tennis, begins 8am Sun., Plumas Tennis Center, Reno, 785-2262

**PTA Carnival & Parade**, 27 parade at 10am

## Pom-Poms Away

The citizens of Hawthorne roll out the artillery on Saturday, May 21, to celebrate Armed Forces Day with a parade down the main street. Tours and a barbecue will be held afterwards at the Army Ammunition Plant, which has been a Hawthorne landmark since the 1930s.

followed by carnival at Oats Park, Fallon, 423-3463

**Big John Strong Circus**, 27 6pm and 8pm shows, U.S. 395, Gardnerville, 782-2172

**Reno Invitational Coin & Stamp Expo**, 27-29, dealers throughout the U.S. attending, \$1.50 adults, children under 12 free, 10am-7pm Fri.-Sat., 10-5 Sun., Convention Center, Reno, 785-4800

**Oasis Running Club Fun Run**, 28, one-mile and 10-km runs, runners get T-shirts and passes to Wild Bunch Stampede (5/28-30), \$10 entry fee, fairgrounds, Fallon, 423-5742

**Silver State Hobie Regatta**, 28-29, major points regatta open to all Hobie Cats, pavilion at Washoe Lake, 322-4853 or 851-0706

**Wild Bunch Stampede & Bucking Horse Auction**, 28-30, contests for best bucking horse, bronc riding, wild horse race, wild cow milking, dally calf roping, and saddle cow scramble at 1pm followed by dancing at the Dry Gulch Saloon in the evening on Sat. and Sun., auction at 1pm Mon., fairgrounds, Fallon, 423-2544

**Virginia & Truckee Railroad Museum Celebration**, 29-30, two newly restored V&T engines will be fired up for museum opening. Summer hours are 8:30am-4:30pm Fri., Sat., Sun., and holidays, U.S. 395 South, Carson City, 885-5168

**Reno Padres v. Rohnert Park Redwood Pioneers**, 30-6/1 class A pro baseball, 6pm doubleheader Mon., 7pm Tues.-Wed., Moana Stadium, Reno, 825-0678

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LINDA DUFURRENA

## Basqueing in Tradition

Each summer Nevada Basques celebrate their New and Old World traditions in festivals at Winnemucca, Elko, Ely, and Reno. The seasonal merriment begins June 11-12 with Winnemucca's colorful weekend celebration. At the fairgrounds on Saturday, contestants will prove their skills at woodchopping, weightlifting, and other contests that honor the Basque qualities of strength and endurance. On Sunday, Mass at City Park is followed by an enormous feast, music, and native dancing. An unusual quantity of wine will be consumed throughout.









# Muench's Gallery

Predawn light accents the beauty of the Ruby Marshes, a wildlife refuge skirting the eastern edge of the Humboldt National Forest 60 miles southeast of Elko. The spring-fed marshes are a favorite with fishermen in search of bass and with city folk looking for escape. Campgrounds are available, but include gasoline on your list of supplies; there's only one commercial pump in the valley, and it dispenses regular-grade fuel only. The signs of high technology have not yet touched one of Nevada's most beautiful areas.—AH

*David Muench enjoys showing what he calls "a spirit of place" in his work. Muench, one of the West's great landscape photographers, presents selections from his Nevada portfolio in each issue.*



# Tallman in the Saddle

**Winnemucca's Bob Tallman  
is an enduring star in a  
rough and tumble sport.  
By John C. Acree**

**H**is strong voice invites your attention, forcing even the slickest of city dwellers to listen to his euphemisms of cowhand life and his tall-but-true tales of the professional rodeo circuit. It is a trusting, agreeable voice, blending with the aroma of beer suds and the wispy scent of top-grade rodeo stock, bringing fans' senses from the \$2 bleacher seats to the trampled mud of the center arena.

The voice is that of Bob Tallman, at age 35 a 12-year veteran of professional rodeo announcing. Tallman is heard by fans at major rodeos across the country from Madison Square Garden to the Cow Palace, and by radio listeners in both hemispheres. He is an enduring, and endearing, showman in a sport in which stars can rise or fall with the buck of a horse.

Tallman came to the sport naturally: he was born and raised in the Northern Nevada ranching community of Winnemucca. "I can remember when I was four or five years old," he says, "the rodeo was the biggest thing around Winnemucca. All the





## 'You Need a Little Dust in Your Hotdog, Wind in Your Beer'

*Bob Tallman, who will announce this June's Reno Rodeo, shares some of the rules of rodeo watching that he has learned during his years in the arena and broadcast booth:*

I think the main things people come to see in a rodeo come in two or three phases. First, a little blood and guts. They're searching for an identity to the Old West, the romance and the individualism of the cowboy, and the athletic competition for dollars, against time, against beast. As long as people incorporate those three things, and they don't go there looking for something that will change their life, they will profit from the experience.

On the other hand, people who go once in a while who are not die-hard rodeo fans should learn to appreciate the individualism and the acceptance of the cowboy today in this world, because it's now changed. It's not the everyday working cowboys' competition and weekend get-together in town. It is a traveling breed of independent athletes now competing for as much as \$150,000 a year per man.

What are the benefits of indoor rodeo? Number 1, atmospheric conditions can be controlled in a coliseum. Mother Nature can't beat you. Number 2, theatrical conditions can be controlled and governed because of the availability of spotlights, controlled sound, and the emphasis upon acts and theatrics are 300 percent greater indoors.

However, outdoor rodeo is about as Americana as you can get, because you need a little dust in your hotdog, a little wind in your beer. Rodeo started outdoors and was meant to be an everyday working cowboys' contest. Another advantage outdoors is that regardless of the size of the arena, you can always add more seats. And you just can't duplicate Nevada's fresh air, you know, that zest and outdoor good-time feeling.

At a rodeo, if you go with somebody who's an expert, you may have a tendency to be constantly questioning what's happening and not paying attention. I think that a person going to a rodeo for the first time should go and watch and then go back and ask questions. Don't form an opinion the first time around. It's like when you go to a movie with someone who has already seen it; that can ruin it for you. Also, you may go with someone who really doesn't give a damn and it could be boring because you're worried about why they do or don't like it.

There probably isn't a bad seat in the house at either the Reno or Las Vegas rodeos because of the size of the arenas and the conditions. People who are neophytes should always try to sit directly across from the bucking chutes

and on a right angle to the timed event chutes. That way the timed event cowboys pass before them left to right or right to left, and the bucking chute action comes directly toward them. Never try to sit at the end of an arena anywhere you go.

The best way to get close to the action? Buy a front-row ticket. If you want to be close to tight levis and high-heeled boots, buy the cheap seats in the bleachers behind the chutes. They fill up the most because there's so many people who just want to be close to the cowboys, but they're the worst seats in the house. At night in Reno they're not covered and you can freeze to death. In Las Vegas all you're doing is looking at their butts all the time, and you don't ever get to look at their faces.

The difference between riders and ropers? Basically, your timed event cowboys are considered better horsemen. They're a little less hyper, and I say that because they spend more time with their animals, training rope horses and bull-dogging horses, and they're considered athletes against time. Whereas a riding event cowboy (who rides broncs or bulls) may be a little flashier, a little more Good Time Charlie, and he's today what would be considered a commuter cowboy because three or four of them will stay in a small plane or nice van or motorhome. Timed event cowboys will have a tendency to be a little more family

oriented, more down to earth. Riding event cowboys are a little wilder, and tend to have a little more showmanship.

In dress, fringe has never taken. They might be Buckskin Buffalo Bill or Wake Forest Graduate, totally preppy. The die-hard North American cowboy, as a competitor today, is full-blast Hollywood or he is the old plaid shirt.

A lot of cowboys ride with their pants tucked in their boots because they tie their boots on with tie downs, and that way the straps aren't underneath their pant legs. Tucking the pants in the boots is an old tradition. It comes from the Southwestern cowboy, South Texas, West Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, because they wore leggings over their pants. If you were riding through the brush, a snake could crawl out of the brush and crawl up your pant leg. But if your pant leg was in your boot, he couldn't get in.

Cowboys pretty much stick together, and I think it's not for the safety in numbers as much as that cowboys like to be around cowboys. If you're around people who are not cowboys, then it's somewhat of an intimidation factor because of the dress code. Today every urban cowboy wears the same sort of clothing, but still, you can line 'em up, a hundred of 'em, and I'll pick the 10 cowboys out of the bunch, because of the way the hat is set, worn, or shaped, by the fit of the clothes. You remember now, though, I live it, 24 hours a day. □



BRENDA ALLEN



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pizazz, the parade, and the show. I just got hooked." Tallman, who lives in Reno, returns to his hometown frequently to visit family and friends, and each year he announces the event that hooked him as a youngster, the Winnemucca Labor Day Rodeo.

"I don't consider myself a local boy done good," Tallman says, relaxing on the back porch of his parents' home in Winnemucca after last year's rodeo. "It's more of a local boy gets lucky situation. I came into the profession at the perfect time. They needed young blood, someone who would go, go, go. It was basically being at the right place at the right time."

If Tallman's present situation is due to luck, his natural talents have certainly contributed to his good fortune.

"Bob never was the athletic type of boy," says John Tallman, Bob's father, from behind the counter of Tallman Lumber, the business he has owned in Winnemucca the last 28 years. "He always liked livestock, liked being around the cattle and horses."

For Bob, being around livestock was part of growing up at the Willow Creek Ranch north of Winnemucca. When he moved to town as a teenager, he was way ahead when it came to rodeo.

"He was about 5-foot-9 and weighed maybe 90 pounds," Tallman's old high school rodeo partner, Ron Chesser, says laughing. "But he could sure ride the horses. He was very outgoing, not afraid of anything. If anybody was to be a rodeo announcer, it was Bobby."

After competing in rodeo and 4-H horsemanship, Tallman entered college in 1965 at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. There he studied animal husbandry, joined the rodeo team, and began announcing college rodeos. He also announced amateur rodeos in Nevada. After trying his hand at professional roping, Tallman realized he could grab a crowd better with his voice than calves with a rope. His broadcasting career began.

Today, Tallman is the main man in 40 rodeos on the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association's yearlong tour, including events in such far-flung places as San Francisco, Denver, Fort Worth, Phoenix, New York, West Palm Beach, Seattle, and Calgary. He is heard by more than three million listeners every week when 136 radio stations in the U.S. and Canada broadcast his Great American Cowboy Show, which is also heard on the Armed Forces Radio Network in 22 foreign countries.

He also works with Cotton Rosser, of Flying U, who provides the animals for many PRCA rodeos. "He owns all the cattle and I do the set-up and put the rodeo on," Tallman says. "You could say he holds the liability and I hold the bull."

With today's electronic equipment, Tallman frequently broadcasts his "Good evening ladies and gentlemen" from horseback in the arena. It's one of his trademarks, making him part of the action rather than just a voice from a loudspeaker. He often demonstrates riding and spurring techniques, joins clown acts, and meets the winners of countless rodeo drawings and raffles. Sometimes spending more than 12 hours in the saddle during a three-day

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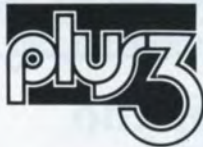
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BRENDA ALLEN

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show, Tallman has made it his business to know the riders, telling endless stories of cowboy and animal, success and defeat, pain and glory.

Tallman, his wife, Kristen, and their eight-year-old daughter, Nicole, live in Reno. To make his schedule of 40 rodeos, 300 performances a year, he's on the road much of the time because, for all his flair and smooth manner, Tallman is a worker.

"I enjoy my freelance kind of life-style," he explains. "I don't think I could work Monday through Friday on a fixed sort of income. Security frightens me."

Tallman admits he had a little help with his "go get 'em" attitude, attributing most of the Tallman salesmanship to his parents, especially his father, John. Both John and Irene Tallman were raised on Northern Nevada ranches, and their hard-work principles rubbed off on the younger Tallman.

"I think the most successful thing I've done is the work we did for ABC's Wide World of Sports," says Tallman. "That and the radio show have created a booming identity, turning me into a commercial entity."

The career of Tallman is a story of success: a beautiful home and family, a Dodge pickup presented to him by Dodge representatives, flying first class across the country, and meeting people from all walks of life. But what of the inner Tallman, the man who must realize the glitter and glamour of his business will not last forever?

"You never can tell what you will do next," Tallman says. "Peace and quiet, good food, pretty flowers, green trees. All those things are pretty important to me. I might like to come back to Humboldt County and wear my Wrangler jeans, my cotton shirt, and become one of the good ole boys working the system. The big cars, airplanes; I have had all those, and it boils down to the basics. Maybe I will come back and be a rancher some day. Or maybe next year I could be in the lumber business in Winnemucca. You never know." □

*John C. Acree, a freelance writer, lives in Winnemucca.*

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# Sagebrush Gourmet

## A diner's guide to the Silver State.

Following is a selective guide to reader-approved Nevada restaurants whose advertisements appear in this section. Besides descriptions of menu and atmosphere, the listings include prices, hours and other details for your convenience. If you have any comments on the establishments listed, drop us a line at Nevada Magazine, Sagebrush Gourmet, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV. 89710.

### BAGEL DELI

1091 S. Virginia at Bagel Alley  
Reno. 322-9458

"Home of the Stuffed Bagel" and Reno's only Bagel Factory and Kosher Style Delicatessen. As the winner of *Nevada State Journal's* award, "Best Oddball Food Treat," this restaurant features 16 different varieties of bagels (sesame, onion, onion-garlic, cinnamon apple, cheese, etc.) baked fresh daily. Bagel Deli offers 14 different varieties of homemade cream cheeses, including avocado, date-walnut, strawberry and jalapeno pepper.

Kosher style meats include hot pastrami, corned beef and turkey. The combinations for sandwiches are endless and all of the above may be combined to form an omelette of your dreams! Best home-made spicy chili in the West. Cafeteria style or counter service. Eat a little . . . or eat a lot for a little. Don't miss this treat. Open Tues.-Fri., 8-4:30; Sat., 8:30-4:30. DELIVERY PROVIDED.

### CATTLEMEN'S

Hwy. 395, Washoe Valley  
Between Reno and Carson City. 849-1500

A ranch-style restaurant, the cozy Cattlemen's offers excellent meals at a moderate price. The special sirloin steak dinner is a popular and good buy. Currently \$6.45, this dinner includes a baked potato, salad, bread, ranch-style beans, sirloin steak and a glass of wine. Other entrees range from a simple hamburger steak to a filet mignon and lobster. The Alaska king crab is delicious! Open seven days a week for dinner from 5 p.m. No reservations. AE, MC, VISA.



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**LIBERTY BELLE SALOON & RESTAURANT**

4250 South Virginia Street  
Reno. 825-1776

Fun dining in an atmosphere of old Nevada memorabilia embellished with an ornate back bar, Victorian chandeliers and a profusion of antique slots. Purveyors of delectable prime rib, teriyaki steak, crab legs, lobster tail, spinach salad, etc. Open every day 11am-11pm, Hofbrau lunch, 11-5, from \$2.50; Dinner, 5-11 from \$5.75. Ample parking. Reservations suggested for larger parties. MC, VISA.

**LOUIS' BASQUE CORNER**

301 E. 4th Street  
Reno. 323-7203

Louis' restaurant offers a warm, unhurried atmosphere that hints of yesterday. Master chefs prepare genuine Basque cuisine such as Tripes Callos, Poulet a la Basquaise, Paella, Boeuf Bourguignon, and entrees including Coq au Vin (chicken in red wine sauce), Lapin Chasseur (hunter's rabbit), and Ris de Veau (sweetbreads) as well as many other delicious French and Spanish Basque dishes all served family style with complimentary wine. You can enjoy a famous picon punch, cafe royal or perhaps an Izarra or choose from Louis' extensive wine list. Basque culture is reflected in the pottery, artifacts and pictures from the Pyrenees which grace the walls of the two traditional dining rooms. Louis and Lorraine Erreguible host many special dinners and parties in this authentic Basque restaurant. Ample free parking. Lunch: Mon.-Fri., 11:30-1:30; Dinner nightly at 6 p.m. All major credit cards accepted.

(Sagebrush Gourmet continued next page)



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**MINER'S CAFE AND SPECIALTY HOUSE**

Comstock Hotel and Casino  
Second and West Street  
Reno. 329-1880

The decor of this 24-hour cafe is a colorful and faithful reproduction of the Virginia City of the 1800s when silver was pouring out of her mines. Photos of the Comstock diggings cover the souvenir-type menu, and the bill of fare is literally a page from the past with tasty entrees honoring bygone mining pioneers. Located on the mezzanine is the Specialty House Restaurant featuring Chicken Cordon Bleu, Idaho Rainbow Trout and the Comstock's famous 1-lb. New York Steak dinner with all the trimmings for \$5.99. The Miner's Cafe and Specialty House is open 24 hours daily. AE, MC, VISA.

**JOHN ASCUAGA'S NUGGET**

I-80 at Nugget Avenue  
Sparks. 358-2233.

Eight unique restaurants—the most under one roof in Northern Nevada—offer award-winning cuisine at moderate prices. Each has a distinct decor and specialty menu, from the Polynesian treats of Trader Dick's to the tender cuts at the Steak House. The General Store and Farm House Coffee Shop are famous for their fresh baked desserts and breakfast specialties as well as daily specials for lunch and dinner. John's Oyster Bar features freshly steamed shellfish and a variety of seafood specialties. The Golden Rooster Room offers sumptuous buffets, while the Dutch Pantry is perfect for a quick but delicious meal. And for the ultimate treat, the Celebrity Room features superstar entertainment and a menu to match. Reservations not necessary. AE, Diners, MC, VISA.

**RAPSCALLION SEAFOOD HOUSE & BAR**

1555 S. Wells Avenue  
Reno. 323-1211

This Rapscallion is unique and different and possibly will remind you of the tradition of excellence that existed long ago in the restaurants of the San Francisco waterfront. The bar is lively, mostly because it is one of the favorite watering holes for locals. The antique gas lamp, the colorful stained glass, and the whiskey boxes create an atmosphere that draws you in for a cocktail. The Rapscallion, which has earned a reputation for being Reno's official seafood house, offers 20 to 30 choices of fresh food dishes. Old-fashioned attention to detail by the service people is something not found much today and will be appreciated. Lunch: Tues.-Fri., 11:30-2:30; Dinner: Nightly at 5:30 p.m. MC, VISA. Reservations suggested.

**STAR HOTEL**

245 Silver (at Third)  
Elko. 738-9925

The Star Hotel was built in 1909 as a boarding-house for Basque sheepherders and ranchers. Today the Star Hotel still houses sheepherders, but it is also an extraordinary family-style restaurant specializing in hearty meals, European style. Hosts Joe and Anita Sarasua suggest you start your dinner with a picon punch (which does pack a punch). Then enter the dining room to order your entree of either steak, seafood, chicken or specialty dishes like Oxtails and roasted bits of lamb prepared with onion and red pimientos. Or on Fridays try the chef's special of lobster, bacalao or rice and clams (when in season). Your dinner will include an ample supply of soup, salad (with a special dressing), entree, vegetables, beans, spaghetti, french fries with ice cream or sherbet for dessert. The Star Hotel offers fine and plentiful fare. Dinners only: 5-9:30 p.m. Closed Sundays. No reservations. No credit cards. □

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# Stage Fright

When Olga Johnson gave a lecture on pronunciation to her hostile stagecoach companions, she got an eye-ful of trouble. By Harry E. Webb

**W**ith the single exception of not being able to adjust to native Nevadans' style of speech, Mrs. Olga Johnson was otherwise like a real native daughter. She enjoyed delving into Nevada history and especially its mining towns, which one day found her preparing to board the stagecoach from Rogerston, Idaho, to Jarbidge, Nevada.

As she and two Elko County ex-miners stood waiting for the stage to swing around the block, she made her first mistake by getting irked by the men calling Jarbidge "Jarbridge."

"You gentlemen having lived around here should know that Jarbidge is spelled with only one r," she corrected them.

"Wanta bet on it?" one of the men asked. "I'm not a betting person," she apprised them, "but I do like and practice spelling and pronouncing people's names—and also a town's name—properly." One grizzled character had an answer for her: "Well, lemme tell you somethin', sister. If you expect to get along in this man's land, you better learn to talk his language!"

Olga had heard enough to convince her she wanted to ride as far removed from those men as possible. "What kind of person," she asked a bystander, "is the stage driver?"

"Best in the West, lady," came his answer. "Ain't that right, Frank?"

"Sure is," the grizzled passenger assured one and all. "Yessir, Johnnie's the salt o' the earth! That is until he gets peeved over somethin'."

That was good news to the lady passenger. "I'll arrange to ride up with him," she said.

Sitting beside the four-horse driver, she found Johnnie Walker to be an affable seat companion, and after exchanging names she looked forward to a pleasant journey—which it was up to a certain point. She told him a little fib, saying she had asked to sit with him because both men inside the coach were pipe smokers and she couldn't stand pipe smoke at such close range. But a voice from below called up and bellowed, "Taint so, Johnnie. She got her danged hackles up because she insisted Jarbidge should be pronounced with only one r!"

"Johnnie turned to me," she said later in describing the incident, "and was a changed character. That so?" he all but shouted, and

no matter how I tried to smooth over my mistake, he had clammed up unless it was to shout some question down to those who were in tune with his own stubborn idea of pronunciation. I was left to my own thoughts until we were on the frightening, narrow ridge of the Crippen Grade, where the road is so close to the brink that any sane driver better study every inch of it.

"Pointing with his whip he said to me—at least I suppose he meant it for me—'If you're in a rush to get down to Jarbidge you can get off this seat and step off the edge there. Jarbidge is 2,000 feet straight down and you'll be there in seconds!'"

"I had intended never to speak to him again but his sarcasm prompted me to chatter, 'Just keep your eyes on this road or you will kill us all right here! And,' I added for good measure, 'Jarbidge has but one r!'"

At that Johnnie flew into a rage. He shoved the bunch of lines in her hands and shouted, "That does it, woman! By God I'm up to my neck with you and here's something to help you see the road better!"

Before she could gather her wits, he flung something in her direction. Looking down, Olga Johnson saw an eye staring at her from her lap, and she proceeded to faint.

Johnnie Walker was still shouting abuse when he found himself in a peck of trouble. The lines were fast slipping past his feet while he fumbled in the fainted woman's lap for his costly glass eye. Meanwhile the team was taking them down the steep grade at a hair-raising speed.

Amid the alarmed shouts from inside the coach, Johnnie gathered up the lines and by heroic effort retrieved his glass eye from Mrs. Johnson's lap just as it was about to roll off and be lost forever at the bottom of the canyon.

She was returning to her senses as her frantic companion in the driver's seat finally got the horses under control and slowed them to a gallop. Later she wasn't sure if she'd made her point, but during their trip into town Johnnie didn't mention one word about how to pronounce Jarbidge. □

*Harry E. Webb, who once rode with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, has been a cowboy, trapper, actor, and author. His Nevada stories are presented in each issue.*

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### CALENDAR (Continued from page 31)

youth fair, arm wrestling, hose cart races, tug-of-war, fire dept. waterfights at Minden Park, 20-30 Club Dance at fairgrounds; on Sun. Lions Club Breakfast at Minden Park, softball championship at Lampe Park, Minden and Gardnerville, 782-2172

**Hazen Day**, 12, parade at 10am, BBQ at noon, street dance at 2pm, Hazen Bar, 867-3066

**Reno Padres v. Fresno Giants**, 14-15, class A pro baseball, 7pm, Moana Stadium, Reno, 825-0678

**1983 Valeta Rudnick Memorial Desert Enduro Benefit**, 15, Virginia City Motorcycle Marathoners start at dawn in Tonopah and arrive in Virginia City about 5pm in annual ride for pledges. \$4 dinner with 100 home-cooked dishes and auction follows at the Bucket of Blood Saloon, info. 847-0756

**Wagon Train Days**, 15-26, wagon train and horse riders' expedition from Carson City to Placerville. Wagons and riders assemble in Carson City on 15th and leave on 16th, arrive at Spooner Summit on 17th, Round Hill on 18th, Amacker Ranch in Meyers, CA. on 19th, Strawberry Lodge on 20th, Kyburz on 22nd, Pollock Pines on 23rd, and reach Placerville on 24th where Pioneer Days are held on 25th and parade on 26th. To join the caravan contact the Highway 50 Assn., 916-622-2748

**Capitol Concerts**, every Wed., 15-8/10, folk, jazz, rock, or classical, 11:30am-1pm, Legislative Mall, Carson City, 329-1324

**Reno Padres v. Stockton Ports**, 16-19, class A pro baseball, 7pm Thurs.-Fri., 1:30pm Sat., 1pm doubleheader Sun., Moana Stad., Reno, 825-0678

**Reno Rodeo**, 17-26; on Fri. the 17th carnival and exhibit hall opens, fireworks, team pinning competition; on Sat. buckaroo breakfast, parade, drill team competition; on Sun. team pinning finals, drill team competition; on Mon. businessmen's steer decorating calcutta. Rodeo takes place on 21-26 with performances at 7:30pm Tues.-Fri., 1:30 and 7:30pm Sat., and 1:30pm Sun. finals. Rodeo "slack" events take place 8am Tues.-Fri., Nevada State Fairgrounds, Reno, 329-3877

**Father's Day Fun Run**, 18, 10km and half-marathon runs start at 5:30pm at Shopper's Square and finish at Peppermill, followed by fashion show and dance, Reno, 826-2121

**"Androcles and the Lion,"** 23-25, children's musical, \$1.50, 10:30am and 1:30pm, Nevada Repertory Company, Church Fine Arts Theatre, UNR, 784-6659

**Eldorado West Coast Wine Tasting**, 24, 6pm, Eldorado Hotel, Reno, 786-5700

**Carnival of Jazz**, 24-26, celebration of Dixieland bands at 10 clubs on C Street in Virginia City. Jam sessions on Fri. evening; on Sat. parade at noon and bands begin playing at the saloons at 1pm, Jazz Badge \$10; on Sat. and Sun. Piper's Opera House Concerts feature New Orleans jazz clarinetist Pete Fountain and Merle Koch's All Star Silver Stope Jazz Band at 1:30pm and 7:30pm, concert tickets \$35, 847-0313

**Ramblin Wheels Hoot Owl Run**, 25, evening motorcycle poker run, \$5, 6pm, also sign ups for Nevada Grand Tour of historical and scenic sites, Greenbrae Bowl, Sparks, 358-6335

**Reno Padres v. Lodi Dogers**, 27-29, class A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Moana Stad., Reno, 825-0678

**Nevada 83**, 29-8/3, photo show, Nevada State Museum, Carson City, 885-4810

**Reno Padres v. Rohnert Park Redwood Pioneers**, 30-7/1 class A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Moana Stadium, Reno, 825-0678

**A Reminder:** To confirm dates and times, use the phone numbers listed with each event. For out-of-state callers, the area code is 702 throughout Nevada.



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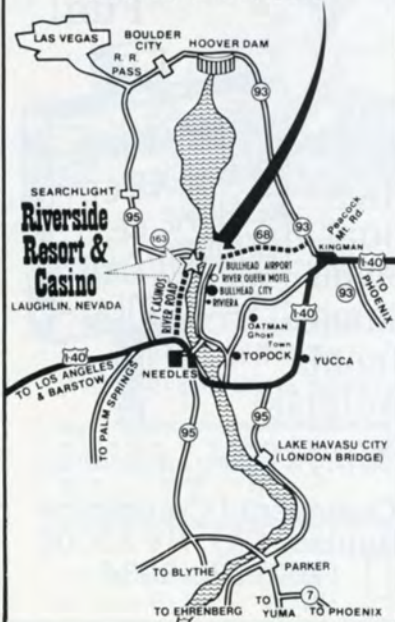
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# Snakes Alive!

Dave Doty of Sparks tries to keep snakes out of harm's way.

By David E. Moore

**D**ave Doty is not a reckless man. In fact, security is his business. As an expert with locks, alarms, and sensors, he is out early most mornings "checking the waterfront," as he refers to making the rounds of his clients. Sometimes he'll mix business with sport by trying to break in, to see whether his systems are in good order.

But for a careful man, he spends a lot of his time in the company of creatures most of us regard as slick, sly, and scary—snakes. Last winter, for instance, he fed and cared for three dozen rattlesnakes at his lab and snake shelter in Sparks. "They were picked up too late to put into dens, so they were fed through the winter and released in the spring," he says. Asked how many snakes he has in all, Doty laughs. "I couldn't begin to count them."

Doty is one of the best-known reptile experts, or herpetologists, in the country. He's lectured on the east coast and throughout the western states, and his snake research has taken him to five continents. Doty, 60, has lived in the Reno area for most of several decades, working as state safety director for the Bureau of Land Management and with the Air Force at Stead. To Nevadans, Doty is probably most familiar for his popular talks and demonstrations at state parks, to interested gatherings, and on local TV.

His message is twofold. First, don't let your worries about snakes ruin a good time when you're out hiking or hunting. And second, snakes are fascinating and useful creatures, and we shouldn't spoil their good times by lopping off their heads.

Usually people, not snakes, are the aggressors, he says. "It's the people here that are threatening. We have too many



ALVIN McLANE

**This gopher snake doesn't mind being handled, but others will bite.**

**The sidewinder curled on a rock at left gets his name from his method of locomotion, a sideways whip of his body that helps this rattler to move in sand. Other Nevada serpents, from left: The mountain kingsnake is sometimes mistaken for the poisonous coral snake; however, the kingsnake's red bands are bordered by black, while the coral's red bands are bordered by yellow. The Mohave rattler is not overly aggressive, but his venom is deadly. Like other pit vipers, the Mohave has long, hollow fangs and can regulate how much poison he injects. The garter snake is found throughout the state.**

people who call themselves outdoorsmen but aren't, and it doesn't matter if it's a sun spider, a gopher snake, or a bear. If it moves, they kill it."

Doty has been fascinated with snakes since childhood, when he was barely as tall as the snakes were long. "When I showed an interest, my mother, my father, and my uncles all made sure I did it right," he says. "I remember the first one. I caught him with a stick in my hand. He kept snapping at me. I realized I had to hold him some way, so I held him down with the stick, picked him up behind the head, and walked home with him." The family garage soon was popu-

lated with the snakes young Doty brought home. When the family lived in San Bernardino, however, his collection was nearly disbanded. "They passed an ordinance so you couldn't have them in the city limits. But an attorney, a friend of my father's, fought it, and under the grandfather clause they couldn't bother me."

He continued to study snakes and other reptiles because, well, he likes to be sure of things. "I mainly got into it because I couldn't believe all the crud that people told about them, and if you don't believe something, you have to either disprove or prove it." He discovered that western snakes rarely chase people, and in any case most snakes' top speed is only about 7 mph. He discovered that milk snakes don't steal milk, and that gopher snakes and rattlers could live peacefully together as long as they were well-fed. He also found that in a stressful situation, a snake is just as afraid as you are.

"Through the years I've tried to dispel old wives' tales and things like that, which is quite easy to do once you take a little time," Doty says. "Of course, there are no blacks and whites with reptiles. You have to deal with all the possibilities. Like when I first heard about the rattlesnake without rattles, I said, 'Hey, who chopped them off?'"

The initial case of the rattleless rattlers surfaced in Central Nevada. "The first time I ran across it was back in 1955 or '56 when an old government lion hunter called me up and said, 'Hey, you want to hear something funny? I got a rattlesnake out here without any rattles. What do I call it?' I said, 'It's a rattlesnake without rattles,'" Doty recalls, laughing.

"I thought he was joking with me at first. I do know of some rattlesnakes in other areas that don't have rattles, but this wasn't one of the areas I was cognizant of. So he brought the sucker in, and we identified it, and it was definitely a Great Basin. There was no question. And I told him it was just one of those things that occurs in nature.

"As time went on, they began to centralize," he says. "Bob Kettle from Fallon made me aware of several he'd seen. Other fellows like buckaroos told me they had seen them, so by putting all my information together, I'm getting a generalized location for them."

The reports by Doty's informants—part of a network he has around the state—indicate the rattleless rattlers have been found north of Tonopah, in the Reese River area below Austin, and near Battle Moun-





PHILIP METSCHER

**Two male Great Basin rattlers engage in a rarely-seen autumn war dance north of Tonopah. A similar ritual occurs in spring between mating males and females.**



DAVID MOORE

**Dave Doty of Sparks, here with a rattler, handles about 2,000 snakes a year.**

tain. "Now, each range or location we're not certain of because we just haven't had time to go in and locate them and all the dens of importance. They are Great Basins, but genetically there has been a change, and in that area the frequency of numbers is increasing. It's just a genetic change that has occurred in our lifetime."

However, wanderers in the Reese River area are not at a severe disadvantage since a rattler *with* rattles won't necessarily sound a warning anyway. "Oftentimes they won't rattle. Probably only about one-third of the snakes I pick up will rattle," Doty says. "Listening for the rattle is no indicator of survival."

Snakes are unpredictable, too, in how they will react when it's cold outside. During the winter, when most rattlers, especially the females, are holed up in their dens, you would expect them to be placid. That's not always the case. Doty says last year a man inspecting a den in the Wasatch Mountains in Utah was bitten two days before Christmas, when it was deep winter there. Doty himself has had snakes get hot when they should have been cool. "I've put western diamondbacks in the refrigerator, between 36 and 40 degrees, and this cools them down to where I can put them in a plastic tube and perform small surgery without any great difficulties. I've had them in the refrigerator, say, for an hour and a half, then open the door and have the thing strike."

"On the other hand, you have what happened one time to Link Piazza. Early fall, cool morning, he was out hunting, and he stepped on one, and it made no motions

at all. *Link* made a lot of motions, but the snake didn't," Doty recalls the story told to him by Piazza, who with his brother, Chet, hosts a weekly Reno TV show, *Sportsman's Trails*. "That was a cool morning, and it probably wasn't as low as it was in the refrigerator."

There is a period to beware known as "dog days." When the snakes are shedding their outgrown skins — generally from mid-July to late August — they're semi-blind, and frightened. "They have to rely on their heat sensing, and are more apt to strike at anything that gives off body heat," he says.

### Good Field Reading

There are several good reptile guides that you can use to help identify snakes and lizards in the field:

*A Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians*, Robert C. Stebbins, 1975, one of the Peterson Field Guide Series published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, MA., \$8.95.

*Audubon Field Guide, North American Reptiles*, F. King, 1979, Random House, NY, \$12.50.

*Snakes, Lizards and Turtles of the Lake Mead Region*, Russell K. Grater, 1981, Southwestern Parks and Monuments Association, \$3.50. This well-written, full-color, 48-page booklet can be ordered (with \$1 extra for shipping) from the publisher at Box 1562, Globe, AZ. 85501.

Is there any truth to the saying, "See one snake and look for its mate?" Doty says it always pays to look for another, but after the rattlers leave their dens in the spring, they tend to separate, living as loners. "During the summer if you see two or three together, it is more coincidence than it is companionship. They're not really a family animal."

Another non-article of faith to follow is that snakes in Nevada will be found where you don't expect them—not only in your kitchen, or in your woodpile (where you should expect them), but many miles from their appointed territories. For instance, the Great Basin rattler dominates from Oregon south to Tonopah, while the Mohave generally extends from Tonopah to below Las Vegas. But, according to Doty, the Mohave has been moving north over the years, and specimens have been found on the road as far north as Mina and Luning.

He also has found that the Arizona coral snake, a beautiful snake with a lethal bite, which is not shown on range maps for Nevada, is another why-here case. They seem to be found most frequently in Lincoln County. Corals also have been found, and identified, near Lovelock and Unionville and in Brunswick Canyon east of Carson City, he says.

Snakes are known to turn up in another unlikely place: the water. At Pyramid Lake you sometimes can get an excellent view of rattlesnakes swimming between Anaho Island and shore, Doty says. "It's not unusual at all to see them swimming up or down a creek. If you get out to Indian Springs, in

*(Continued on next page)*



## How to Avoid Close Encounters

In Nevada the vast majority of snakes you're likely to see are harmless. Since rattlesnakes move around mostly at night, during the day the chances are perhaps 10 to 1 in favor of seeing a gopher snake instead of a rattler. And, like other snakes, the poisonous kind just want to be left alone.

"Remember that snakes are more afraid of you than you are of them," says Dave Doty. "They will always try to vacate ahead of your arrival."

Because snakes are so sensitive to ground vibrations, your normal footfall usually will give ample warning. Wear protective boots. Don't walk right next to rock walls or ledges where snakes might be hiding, and don't step over rocks or ledges without looking. Before putting your hand on a ledge, check it first.

When you're camping, don't sleep on the ground if you can help it and stay away from piles of brush or rocks. Snakes generally are more active at night, so avoid walking around in the dark.

Be sure to keep your distance, too, from protected areas that might be snake dens. The snakes congregate in and around the dens in fall before hibernation and in spring, when they are mating and preparing to go out on their own.

In the unlikely event you do encounter a rattler, it's something of a judgment call. Are you jumping over a creek or climbing a rock? Is your weight toward or away from the snake? "If you freeze," Doty says, "the snake in time will usually either vacate the area or relax to where you can move away a little bit." Lift your foot rather than drag it as you ease away, since the snake might feel threatened by the vibrations.

An encouraging note: the more time you spend outdoors, the more these precautions become second nature.

### And If You Get . . .

A snakebite may be unbelievably painful and worrisome, but thanks to modern treatments there is little reason for it to be fatal, especially in the case of a healthy adult. In Nevada, there hasn't been a death from snakebite in more than 40 years.

If you or a companion are bitten by a snake, Doty says the first things you do may be the most important.

- Be calm. Panic brings on shock, which can be as dangerous as any venom. Get victim to lie down and relax.
- Determine whether the bite is from a venomous snake. If so, there will be at least one fang mark, pain, and possibly swelling and discoloration in bite area. (Pain may not result from the bite of a coral snake, which is extremely rare in Nevada. But the neurotoxic poison is deadly. You must get to a hospital.)

- If those signs are absent, don't treat  
(Continued on page 62)



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White Pine County, you'll see, if you're fortunate, four or five varieties of snakes in the water at the same time." A rattler in the water can strike, but its striking distance is shortened because it can't coil. "Usually you can avoid them, but you have to remember they're pretty slick swimmers."

Such variables are seen and noted each day by Doty in his work with both poisonous and nonpoisonous snakes. Over the years he has suffered about 50 venomous bites, some minor, a few sending him to the hospital. "Some have been field mistakes, but most were from handling the snakes, medical procedures, examining the snakes. I probably pick up and put down well over 2,000 snakes a year. You consider that many handlings, getting bit once in a while isn't all that bad, and I've been doing it for over 50 years."

Besides caring for snakes in need of shelter, food, and medical help—parasites can be a plague, and often snakes will leave their dens too early in spring and catch pneumonia—Doty does research in venoms and the reptiles themselves. Just as snakes are greatly misunderstood, he says, they also bring great benefit.

"Snakes are extremely useful. In some areas they control rodents where nothing else can. So the rattlesnake has that importance.

"In Queensland, Australia, in the early sixties they killed off all their venomous snakes, and their problem became tremendous. The rodents were eating their grainery, furniture, libraries, and everything else. What they'll do is import a nonvenomous species, which they initially intended to do. Our own Pacific and Great Basin gopher snake is one of the leading candidates. But it's going to be quite some time to repair the damage they did. In South Africa they did the same thing in the late seventies—and have the same problem."

There are, of course, a healthy number of rattlers in Nevada. Frequently Doty is called upon to extricate nervous rattlers from the kitchens and patios of nervous homeowners. After catching the snake, he releases it out in the sticks where no one lives. Some catches are donated to the university or to fellow herpetologists.

Recently he rescued a big boa that had been living for several weeks in the walls of a Reno apartment house. "He was able to move between four apartments, so everybody was quite shook up." Doty lured the boa out by putting a large male rat—"they have a heavy musk odor"—in a cage in one of the openings.

Last year someone released a no-longer-wanted pet, a rock python, near Pyramid Lake. Doty says the monster is still out. "We believe it is well over 12 feet now and has reverted to the wild. It is spotted periodically. I would recommend that anybody who sees it stay away from it. It's nonvenomous, but it's a constrictor and dangerous as a wild animal.

"If anybody sees it, report it and don't mess with the snake," the expert says. He adds, less as a request than as a command, "But please don't kill it." □

David Moore is Nevada managing editor.

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**LETTERS** (Continued from page 5)

Park, the showing of an award-winning film made by the Bechtel Corporation, tours, exhibits, a prestigious banquet, and much more. Area hotels and motels, airlines and businesses have offered their assistance. All of the activities will be free to those contractor or government employees on the project during its construction (1931-1935).

The original workers are urged to send their names and mailing addresses to the Hoover Dam Tourist Bureau, P.O. Box 224, Boulder City, NV 89005.

Robert D. Ackerson, President  
Hoover Dam Tourist Bureau  
Boulder City, NV

**Truckee Annex Nixed**

Sorry, C.J., Truckee is a winner. Truckee would not be Truckee anywhere except in California (Jan/Feb 1983, Editorial).

Jerome F. Franklin  
Carson City, NV

**Two Sharkeys, Two Countries**

Just a word to let you know that Patrick Burke made a boo-boo. In the March/April 1983 edition on page 22 ("Sharkey and His Cow Town Palace"), Burke says that Jack Sharkey was a Slav. Years ago, when I talked to Jack Sharkey (not his real name) in South Boston, Massachusetts, he was a Lithuanian.

Frank Euronis  
(Another Lithuanian)  
Reno, NV

I love your magazine. Each story and/or article is great. I never miss a page of the magazine. I sent two subscriptions as Xmas gifts, now I'm sending myself one.

Pam Morse  
Yerington, NV

**The Fountain of Youth State**

I enjoy your magazine so much that I have sent a subscription to a young, active 97-year-old Reno friend. There are many wonderful places to live in Nevada but I prefer Carson City, where I was married in 1959, and Fallon.

May I just say that Nevada is a wonderful state where men are men and all women never grow old. Even 90-year-old women look ubiquitously Ponce de Leon young.

Willard E. Crawford  
Oroville, CA.

I just want to tell you how much I enjoy your magazine. I love the West very much and it keeps me up on all the news. The only time I get out there is a yearly trip to Las Vegas. I have been receiving the Nevada Magazine for about five years and I read it from cover to cover. Keep up the good work.

Ray Ainsworth  
Hilton, NY

**Endless Beauty**

Just a note to let you know how much I enjoy traveling your state and reading your magazine. I've spent my vacations in Nevada the last two years and intend on making 1983 the third in a row. Last

summer I crisscrossed your state from Vegas to Reno and Tahoe, then across to Wendover, and believe me, the Lake Tahoe area is the most beautiful spot in the state if not the entire world!

Then your wonderful magazine—it's a pleasure to behold! I just wish it came more often. As I read through every issue, there's such a real feeling that I'm right back out there in Nevada.

One last thing: yours is the only magazine that I even find the advertisements to be interesting—I read every word of every ad. The next time I'm in Boulder City, you can bet I'm gonna look up Herb's Tavern!

Thanks for such a fine publication.


Max C. Christensen  
Anita, IA.

I requested a copy of your November/December '82 issue to see if I liked it. I do like the magazine and am enclosing check for one year. I like the state. Have been there several times. Visited Las Vegas last August.

Nannie Bryant  
Louisville, KY.

What a better time was had while reading Nevada Magazine can't be imagined. I, being born and raised in this great state, feel especially close to the stories in Nevada Magazine. It's funny at how many things I didn't know. It makes me ashamed of myself and maybe I can rectify my shame by this subscription.

James Hyder  
Las Vegas, NV



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# Nevada Night Flight

The need to deliver the mail on time presses hard against the risk factor, but that's what a pilot gets paid for.

By Robert Downs

**E**ly, Friday, May 23—It is snowing as I drive to the airport. Snow in late May is something you accept in the high country of eastern Nevada.

Ely is a down-on-its-luck town, a town of 10-year-old Buicks, Oldsmobiles, and Chryslers that aren't driven much, potholed streets, and tacky houses. But I've never heard an unkind word here, and I'll take Ely over big-city tinsel any day.

The time is 5:15 p.m., not an unusual hour for an airmail pilot to start his rounds. The Ely mail leaves after the close of the business day for major collection centers in Reno, Las Vegas, and Salt Lake City.

Driving off the F Street overpass, I can see that both Steptoe Valley and Hercules Gap, the exit routes I use for visual flight departures, are hidden behind a curtain of snow. The weather briefing indicates snow, rain, and high winds over much of Nevada. You need a good airplane for that kind of stuff, and tonight I've got a reliable Cessna

402—twin engines and enough room in the stripped cabin for up to 1,500 pounds of mail.

The postal courier, Erling Linnell, is prompt as usual. We exchange our light-hearted gripes over who wastes the most time waiting for the other. Then the mail is quickly loaded aboard, and as the celebrants in Ely's many bars toast the end of the week's labors, the 402 gets its landing gear up and we go to work.

**Elko, 6:40 p.m.**—The flight up has been as expected: ice, some turbulence, and the usual fierce downdraft over the Ruby Mountains. I respect the Rubies the way you might respect a well-fed tiger, hoping to tiptoe gingerly by without disturbing him.

Not to be. Directly over Harrison Pass, the downdraft sucks at my airplane, and I shove the engine controls up to the max. The propellers snarl loudly.

I tense slightly as the airspeed continues to drop and sneak a quick look at the ice on

the wings. Then the turbo-charged Continental engines respond, tearing the airplane away from the mountains. The airspeed builds, but I relax only a little as we begin the approach into Elko.

There are high mountains and hills around every Nevada airport, and pilots must fly instrument approach with precision and care. This time, just as the altimeter shows 1,000 feet above the ground, the airport pops into view through a light rain shower.

A time check is made as the landing runway, perpendicular to my flight path, is crossed. Fifteen seconds later, a judiciously gauged 270-degree turn to the right brings the aircraft onto final approach into the wind. The landing is routine.

This has been a textbook approach. Nobody knows it except me. But I am the only one who counts.

**Reno, 8:40 p.m.**—Night has fallen en route to Reno, the clouds darkening as the



sun settles behind the Sierra. Night flying is routine in the '80s, and in the winter, I seldom see the sun.

That was not always so. Antoine de Saint Exupery, the legendary French pilot known as Saint Ex, wrote an aviation classic called "Night Flight" a half-century ago. Riviere, who managed the airmail operation on which the story was based, was vehement in his advocacy of night flying: "It's a matter of life and death for the lead we gain by day on ships and railways is lost each night."

Substitute "trucks" for "ships and railways" and there is the reason for night airmail flight. Time is precious. It is 330 road miles from Ely to Reno, and a packet on the evening mail flight gains a full day in the delivery process.

The weight of this responsibility is on the airmail pilot. When weather and mechanical problems arise, the desire to get into the air presses hard against my judgment of the risk factor. But that's what I get paid for.

Reno's weather is murky, but Reno has a radar approach control, a sophisticated Instrument Landing System (ILS) and sequenced flashing approach lights to the runway. The capability is vastly greater than Elko's approach aid; yet further down the scale is Ely's.

Soon the flashing strobes pierce the gloom, pointing like an arrow to the approach end of the runway. Touchdown is smooth because on wet runways the moisture eases the initial contact between tire and pavement. But wet runway landings don't count in pilots' informal contest for the smoothest landing. They're too easy.

**Southbound to Las Vegas, 10:15 p.m.**—I take a welcome break during the first part of this leg. At 13,000 feet, the Cessna cruises smoothly on top, clear of most clouds.

How casually I accept the modern navigational aids! One radio tells me that Coaldale is 67 miles ahead, the other says Reno is 60 miles behind. Both tell me the aircraft is on course. At the same time the big radar eye of the regional Air Traffic Control Center at Oakland is tracking my position.

In modern air navigation, using various electronic aids, it is not necessary to see out of the cockpit to know exactly where one is. It was not so in Saint Ex's time. In his tale a pilot, Fabien, became lost above a solid cloud layer at night. He was flying in the calm, clear air above an undercast that extended hundreds of miles in all directions, hopelessly lost. Only 30 minutes of fuel remained.

Fabien was doomed.

I never fly above the clouds without thinking of Fabien's dilemma. What would a pilot do in such a situation? I guess he'd fly where he sensed there would be level, open terrain, like Death Valley. He'd set up a descent at the lowest rate possible and then wait until the ground met the airplane.

I think to myself: what a great subject for thought tonight.

By 11:30 I am looking for the lights of four towns: Beatty, Lathrop Wells, Desert Rock, and Indian Springs. If they are all visible, I can discard the cumbersome instrument flight plan and safely negotiate

my way into Las Vegas by the Tonopah Highway, U.S. 95, which runs around the north and east sides of Mt. Charleston. The procedure saves about 10 gallons of gas per night, which makes both President Reagan and our accountant happy.

All cities wear a diadem of gems at night, but Las Vegas flaunts the crown jewels of the world. Even now, as I round the mountain just before Indian Springs, the gambling mecca explodes into view. Las Vegas is gorgeous at night.

**Las Vegas, Midnight**—The flight line at Las Vegas is like the rest of fairyland. The Cessna is parked between Kenny Roger's Jetstar and another one belonging to A.G. Spanos, the Stockton apartment builder. We'd never get away with parking here in the daytime; it would be like a neighborhood mutt at a pedigree show.

There are three regulars in the Hughes Executive Terminal after midnight: the pilot of the metro police helicopter, myself, and the pilot of the Chicken Ranch shuttle.

Chicken Ranch shuttle?

Yes, that bordello operates a Cessna 208 on regular schedules to and from the ranch, which is 50 miles west of Las Vegas. There is no charge for the flight.

**“All cities wear a diadem of gems at night, but Las Vegas flaunts the crown jewels of the world. Even now, as I round the mountain, the gambling mecca explodes into view. Las Vegas is gorgeous at night.”**

My Midwestern upbringing might keep me from taking such a job, but I respect the pilot. Anyone who motors around Nevada every night, as he does, has my respect.

**Northbound to Reno, 1:45 a.m.**—Flying alone is the only flying that really counts. You gain a feeling of being in control of your own destiny that cannot be duplicated when others are on board.

It may sound odd, but when I'm alone in a roaring, rattling airplane, my clearest sensation is one of silence. The mail sacks just lie there, uncomplaining: great passengers.

Reno, just ahead, is a city I like. It goes back 15 years, when en route to Vietnam I went through the survival school at Stead Air Force Base. After the completion of the rigorous 19-day course, Harolds Club gave all graduates a big "I Survived" badge, a free bar, and five dollars worth of chips. You can say what you will about the casino's motives, but I thought it was a nice gesture, and they still get my trade.

**Reno, 3 a.m.**—I fly alone but depend on a large network of people. There are, for

example, the nameless and faceless air traffic controllers without whom modern air traffic would creak to a halt. There are a minimum of 31 other people I deal with directly during the night.

There are the women, for example.

Four of them: Laura and Robyn in Las Vegas, Sheila and Liz in Reno. They work as dispatchers in the big aircraft service centers. The names and faces change over the months, but they are uniformly personable, competent, and the object of every pilot's affection—especially of airmail pilots, who see them every night of the week.

**Elko, 5:15 a.m.**—I'm 30 minutes behind schedule. When it was time to depart Reno, Elko reportedly had visibility of one mile and a 400-foot ceiling. That was too low for me to legally make an approach, but more importantly, it was much lower than earlier forecasts. It made sense to wait. The 4 a.m. report said the trend was "up" so I got on my way.

A number of people know my general schedule as I wing it through the night. Frankly, I like to have someone worry about me if I'm not on time. So it's comforting to have Orv Nelson, on the graveyard shift at the Elko Flight Service Station, ask, "Aren't you running a little late?"

Orv also tells me the ceiling and visibility have improved rapidly at Elko. The approach and landing are easy.

**Ely, 5:40 a.m.**—Airborne from Elko, the Cessna pokes its long snout through the cloud tops as we approach 10,000 feet. Off to my left, the rising sun glints off the towering snowcap of Ruby Dome. It's a stunning sight, this scene arranged for the solitary gaze of the airmail pilot.

But I cannot relax yet. There is still a light snow falling at Ely, and while it's great to be on top in the smooth air, I think of Fabien, the lost pilot, and recognize that, at some point, I have to come down through the clouds.

The problem is that the Ely navigational radio doesn't give distance information, unlike most, so it's a riskier approach. Further, that insidious and deadly enemy, fatigue, has set in. It's been a long night.

I work hard on this one, forcing myself to concentrate closely on the flight instruments, descending rapidly and periodically checking outside the cockpit to see if the ground is visible.

There! A familiar pattern of houses on five-acre plots appears through the snow.

This is home country to me. I take the airplane close to the ground, cross the field, then turn back to the runway. A final, very smooth touchdown on the snowy surface.

For the moment, I am content. □

*Robert Downs, former Ely resident, is currently flying on-call charters for companies in the Sacramento area, where he now lives, and is working on a novel. In the meantime, Downs' old nighttime airmail run around Nevada has gone the way of the Pony Express and Overland Stage. On March 28, 1981, the U.S. Postal Service canceled the Ely-Elko-Reno night flight because of rising costs. The runs are made in the daytime by a commercial carrier. Of the three late-hour flights whose pilots gathered in Reno every evening, only a single Reno-Las Vegas shuttle remains.*



# nevada 83

Prize views of the Silver State from the Northeastern Nevada Museum's touring photography show.

As the Nevada 83 photo show rolls through Lovelock on its yearlong, state-wide tour, the judges of the Northeastern Nevada Museum's exhibition-and-contest offer advice to future contestants.

The three judges who inspected the record 1,112 entries in Elko were museum director Howard Hickson, photographer Linda Dufurrena of Winnemucca, and Nevada editor-publisher Caroline J. Hadley.

Hickson's verdict: "Technically, a lot of good photos failed because they were out of focus, printed from poor negatives, miserable cropping, and with color density too light.

"But it bothers me because I see a lot of excellent work juried out," he said. "I just wish we had a bigger show."

Dufurrena blanched at the overwhelming number of landscapes: "What I missed most were portraits."

Hickson, the show's creator, was surprised that even a perennial favorite was missing: "This is the first time we didn't get a rattlesnake." □

*For some rattlesnake photos that missed Nevada 83, see "Snakes Alive!" on page 48.*



**"Big Thunder, Little Thunder"**  
Richard Menzies, Salt Lake City, UT  
First, Black & White



**"Too Cold for Comfort"**  
Tammy Mori, Tuscarora  
Third, Tie, Color Slides





**"Ferns on Thomas Peak"**  
 Michael H. Gallagher, Elko  
 Second, Tie, Color Slides



**"Petroglyphs"**  
 Alan Bittler, Reno  
 Second, Tie, Color Slides

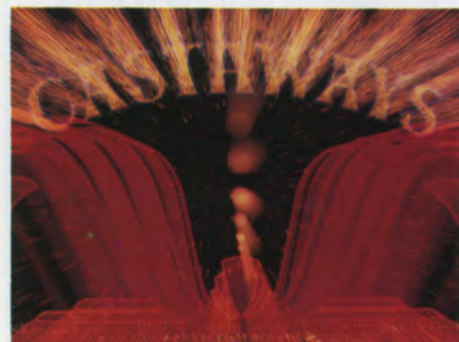
### Where to See the Show

Lovelock: April 27-May 11, County Library  
 Reno: May 18-June 22, County Library  
 Carson City: June 29-Aug. 3, State Museum  
 Genoa: Aug. 10-24, Courthouse Museum  
 Yerington: Aug. 31-Sept. 14, County Library  
 Hawthorne: Sept. 21-Oct. 3, Walker Wassuk  
 Tonopah: Oct. 12-26, Historical Society  
 Las Vegas: Nov. 6-Dec. 7, Las Vegas Art Museum  
 Overton: Dec. 14-28, Community Center  
 Las Vegas: Jan. 4-25, Las Vegas Library  
 Ely: Feb. 3-23, County Library

For Nevada 83 traveling photo show schedule in May and June, see Calendar listings.



**"Mountain Mahogany"**  
 Michael Surber, Reno  
 Second, Tie, Color Slides



**"Castaways"**  
 Norma J. Giudici, Santa Clara, CA.  
 Third, Tie, Color Slides

### Nevada 83 Winners

#### BLACK & WHITE

**Best of Show:** Tad Cheyenne Schutt, Las Vegas. **First:** Richard Menzies, Salt Lake City. **Second (Tie):** Richard Menzies, Salt Lake City, and Tad Cheyenne Schutt, Las Vegas. **Third:** Harry Upson, Reno.

#### COLOR PRINTS

**Best of Show:** Roy DeGiovanni, Sparks. **First (Tie):** Leon Drew, Egg Harbor, NJ, and Chad B. Smith, Logan, UT. **Second (Tie):** Ray Foster, Pahrump, and Kaz Yonekura, Hazen. **Third (Tie):** Tom Puckett, East Ely; Susan Moore, Winnemucca; and Tracy A. Mori, Tuscarora.

#### COLOR SLIDES

**Best of Show:** Tad Cheyenne Schutt, Las Vegas. **First:** Michael H. Gallagher, Elko. **Second (Tie):** Michael Surber, Reno, and Alan Bittler, Reno. **Third (Tie):** Tammy Mori, Tuscarora; Gary Yarbrough, Reno; and Norma J. Giudici, Santa Clara, CA.





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## SHOWGUIDE (Continued from page 14)

Papas, thru 5/8 (except Mon.); The Association, 6/17-19

**MGM Grand Hotel**, 789-2285 (800-648-3568 toll free CA, AZ, OR, ID, UT); **Ziegfeld Theatre:** Hello Hollywood Hello, indf.; 8pm dinner show from \$22, midnight cocktail show from \$18.50; **Lion's Den:** Pat Collins, the Hip Hypnotist, thru 5/24; Super Gold, 5/25-6/1; Liz Damon's Orient Express, 6/2-7/19; **Leo's Lair;** The Garfin Gathering, thru 5/10

**John Ascuaga's Nugget**, Sparks, 358-2233: **Celebrity Room:** Roy Clark, 5/20-6/4; TBA, 6/5-6/29; Glen Campbell, 6/30-7/13

**Onslow**, 786-7310: Nightly entertainment

**Ormsby House**, Carson City, 882-1890: **Mark Twain Bar:** Open, thru 5/8; Two of Clubs, 5/2-22; Westport Junction, 5/10-29; Garfin Gathering, 5/31-6/5; Matys Brothers, 6/6-19; **Supper Club:** Abbey Road, thru 6/5

**Peppermill**, 826-2121: Jerry Sun, 6/6-19

**Pioneer Inn**, 329-9781: Nightly entertainment Wed.-Sat., no cover

**Reno Hilton**, 785-7100: **Opera House Theatre:** Razzle Dazzle, indf.; 8pm & 11:30pm Tues.-Sat., 3:30pm & 8pm Sun., dark Mon.; **Rainbow Cabaret:** Dae Han Sisters, 5/1 & 6/28-7/25; Jonas, thru 5/16; Bach 5/3-16; The Reycards, 5/17-6/13; Zella Lehr, 6/7-20; Tommy Rivers & the Rapids, 6/14-27

**Riverside**, 786-4400: Dancing to records of the '40s, '50s & '60s, Tues.-Sun., no minimum

**Shy Clown**, 358-6632: Nightly entertainment

**Sierra Sid's**, Sparks, 359-0550: Nightly entertainment

**Sundowner**, 786-7050: Carlos Avalon Explosion, Tues.-Sun.

# Rural Nevada

**Elko:** Commercial Hotel, 738-3181, and Stockmen's Hotel, 738-5141; Red Lion Inn & Casino, 738-2111

**Ely:** Hotel Nevada, 289-4414

**Fallon:** Fallon Nugget, 423-3111

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

**Hawthorne:** El Capitan, 945-3322

**Jackpot:** Cactus Pete's, 755-2321, and Horse-shu Casino, 755-2331

**Laughlin:** Riverside Resort, 298-2535; Del Webb's Nevada Club, 298-2512; Regency Casino, 298-2439; Edgewater Hotel & Casino, 298-2453; The Colorado Belle, 298-2425

**Tonopah:** Mizpah Hotel, 482-6202; Station House, 482-9777

**Topaz Lake:** Li Brandi's, 266-3321 and Topaz Lodge, 266-3339

**Wendover:** Goldrush Casino, 664-2255; Nevada Crossing, 664-4000; Stateline Casino, 664-2221, Red Garter Casino, 664-2111

**Winnemucca:** Star Hotel & Casino and Winners Hotel-Casino, 623-2511

**Yerington:** Casino West, 463-2481, and Lucky Club, 463-2868

All dates, performers and prices are subject to change. At press time, some casinos had not completed May/June bookings, so we recommend calling ahead to confirm entertainment schedules. □



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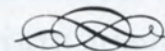
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## SNAKE TIPS (Continued from page 51)

as a venomous bite, but see a doctor anyway.

- If signs indicate a venomous bite, and it's on the arm or leg, keep the bite below the level of the heart.

- Apply a flat, constricting bandage two or three inches above the bite, between it and the heart. A second bandage can go below the bite. Don't let swelling reach the bandage, and don't make a tourniquet—cutting off circulation with a tight bandage will cause further damage. With a constricting bandage you should be able to insert a finger underneath without undue force.

- Sterilize the wounds with antiseptic or soap and water.

- Sterilize a sharp knife or scalpel in a flame. Make one straight incision to

connect the fang marks, extending one-quarter inch past each puncture. Don't cut into tendons or nerves. Never cut deeper than one-quarter inch, and don't make cross-incisions.

- Gently squeeze out the venom with your fingers for 20 or 30 minutes or until you reach a doctor. Don't try to suck out the venom—you'll add bacteria to the wound and possibly poison yourself.

- Get to a doctor right away.

- Beforehand, identify the snake if you can. The doctor will want to know what kind it was. □

*For more detailed instructions from Dave Doty on bite treatment and avoiding snakes, as well as desert survival, send \$1 (covers printing and postage for the flyer) to him at HISSSSCO, Box 1105, Sparks, NV. 89432.*

## Nevada Snakes

The snakes of Nevada are survivors, adapted by instinct and coloring to their desert and mountain surroundings. They feed on such prey as mice, lizards, birds, and other small creatures, and in some cases may live to be 25 years old or more if nature is kind to them. Here are some of the Silver

State's most notable snakes, beginning with the rattlers that live in Southern Nevada:

**Panamint:** As its name suggests (think of Death Valley's Panamint Range), this rattler usually is found on the southwestern side of the state from Las Vegas to Tonopah. Its bite, like that of its close relative, the Southwestern speckled, causes an unusual amount of damage to blood vessels.

**Southwestern Speckled:** Probably the most common rattler in the Lake Mead area, living in dry washes and rocky mountain areas. Its scales are "pepper-marked" and there are dark rings on tail. Slightly nervous, so don't molest.

**Western Diamondback:** Primarily found south of Las Vegas. You must give this rattler a wide berth, for it won't give up an inch of ground in an argument. Nature has provided an identifying sign—distinct black and white rings on the tail, because of which this ill-tempered snake is sometimes called the coontail or ringtail rattlesnake.

**Mohave:** Sometimes patterned like a western diamondback, but without distinct black and white tail rings, the Mohave isn't nearly as vicious but is many times more deadly. To give a lethal bite to a healthy 170-pound adult, the western diamondback must inject 110 milligrams; the Mohave needs only 10. Often has greenish tint, but coloring can range from gray to brick-red. It's found in Southern Nevada south of Tonopah.

**Sidewinder:** A relatively short rattler (18-30 inches long), the sidewinder gets its name from the way it travels—sideways. It whips its body as it moves across the sandy areas where it is found in Southern Nevada, leaving "S"-shaped tracks in the sand.

**Northern Pacific:** Found on the extreme western edge of the state north of Reno to the Oregon border. Like many snakes, it's highly adaptable in coloring.

**Great Basin:** Probably the most widely distributed rattler in Nevada, extending from the northern border to below Tonopah and across the state from east to west. Can range to over 10,000 feet in the mountains.

**Night Snake:** Found throughout Nevada, this rear-fanged venomous snake is sometimes mistaken for a gopher snake. Burrowing and nocturnal, it can deliver a bite but with difficulty. The night snake is not dangerous if you leave it alone.

**Arizona Coral Snake:** A handsome serpent with red bands bordered by white or yellow—and possessing a dangerous, neurotoxic bite. The coral snake is not on range maps for Nevada but has been found here in rare instances. A burrower, it's most active at night.

**Sonora Mountain Kingsnake:** This pretty, harmless snake is sometimes mistaken for a coral snake because of its brightly-colored bands, but on its bands the red is bordered by black. Found in Southern Nevada.

**Great Basin Gopher Snake:** Another harmless creature that extends throughout the state. Usually active in the daytime, it kills prey by constriction. When confronted, it may hiss and coil, so unfortunately it's sometimes mistaken for a rattler.

**Wandering Garter Snake:** Usually found in northern two-thirds of the state and in the Mount Charleston area, this snake has yellow stripes down its back.

**Red Racer:** Commonly seen throughout Nevada, the racer is the fastest snake in the desert with a top speed of about 7 mph. It has a bad temper, too, so don't handle. Nonvenomous, it is active in daytime. □

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