

NEVADAMAGAZINE.COM | NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015
PAWN STARS' | KINGSTON ROADTRIP
THIRSTY NEVADA
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NEVADA

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015

M A G A Z I N E

Pawn Stars'

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2016 Calendar Schedule

**Immokalee, Florida
February 26, 27, 28**

Mark Rypien

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Bobby Humphrey

**Reno, Nevada
June 3, 4, 5**

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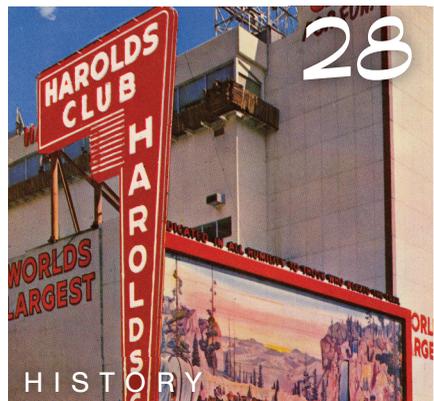
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Cover Photo: Neil Lockhart

Billowing locomotive steam is backlit by the sun during early-morning operation at the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City.

VISIT
JIM MARSH'S
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NEVADA

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 A STATE APART.

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Carrie (left) and Mary Dann during the 2003 livestock roundup by the Bureau of Land Management.

WEB EXTRAS

► Carrie Dann—a cattle rancher and an elder in the Western Shoshone Tribe in Nevada—kept more than 120 boxes of records documenting a five-decade legal battle for grazing rights in the Crescent Valley between the Danns, the Western Shoshone Nation, and the government. These documents—now on exhibit; see page 14 for more—chronicle the difficulty of interpreting the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley between the two sovereign nations. The story of the family’s struggle was very public, but read as we share their personal history, too. **By Kathie Taylor**

TOUR AROUND NEVADA 2016



It’s like Cher’s farewell tour; it never ends! Due to popular demand, we are going to continue our tour for 2016! What is your favorite Nevada town? Cast your vote and we’ll do a story on it, and

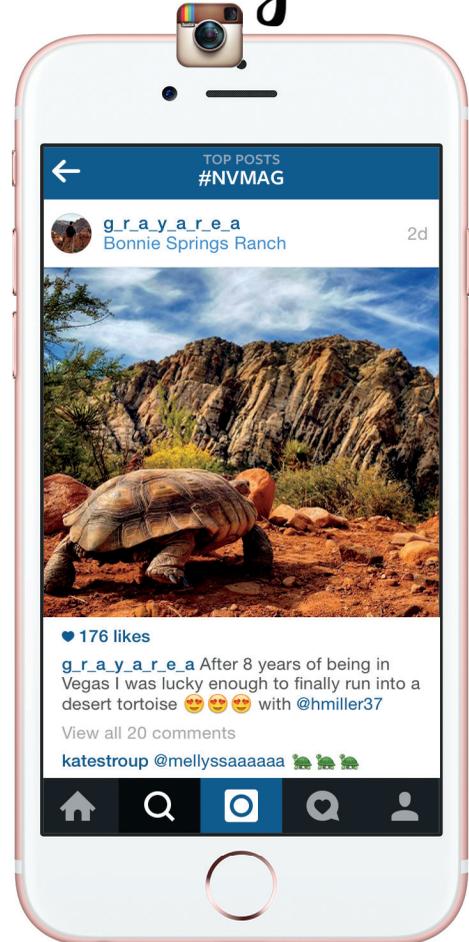
present residents with a plaque. Voting for the Jan./Feb. 2016 issue ends Nov. 13.

NOTE: Elko, Ely, Gardnerville, Laughlin, Las Vegas, Minden, Reno, Tonopah, and Virginia City are not eligible because they have already won.

Send your vote to editor@nevadamagazine.com with the town and “Tour Around NV” in the subject line. Only one vote per email address each voting session, and for full rules and information, visit nevadamagazine.com/tour.



FEATURED Instagram



Use #nvmag for a chance to be featured in future issues of *Nevada Magazine*.



FEATURED VIDEO

Visit nevadamagazine.com/kingston to see flying fish, Diana’s Punchbowl, and the Belmont Courthouse. Also, visit nevadamagazine.com/thirsty to check out how to set an oak cask ablaze!

One Excellent Adventure

This year marks my first full year as managing editor, and if you're a regular reader you can probably guess what I'm going to say next; I love my job. I've had other jobs I loved before, however. My first attempt at a job was when I was 13 and I went to work at a bakery frosting doughnuts. The job lasted exactly one night; apparently licking your fingers after every maple bar was not a good thing. My next job was when I was 14 and it lasted three years. I did get busted once for licking my fingers after making an ice cream cone; a compassionate customer handed me a dollar as she told me I shouldn't do that. I was embarrassed and irritated at the time, but I never forgot you could be kind while teaching a lesson. And I never licked my fingers again.

Extrinsic motivation is often effective, but to be honest, it's the intrinsic form I've always leaned toward. I think it aligns more closely with inspiration. You're motivated when you have to do something and you do it, but you're inspired when you want to do something and you do it. I'm inspired by our readers, by our geography, our residents, our skies, so I want to go out and write about Nevada.

That's not to say I don't love a good reward, and *Nevada Magazine* recently received one. The magazine won the Nevada Press Association's award for General Excellence, which is the top prize for magazines in the entire state. In all, we took home 10 awards, and I am still floating. The contest was judged by our peers at the Wyoming Press Association, and to me, it's the perfect recognition of our very small team's consistently great work. If you're interested, you can see all the awards we won at nevadamagazine.com/npa15.

Time to turn the page and head into another year. Awards or no, we're going to keep being inspired by you and our great state, so here's to 2016!

MORE IN THIS ISSUE

Keeping with that generally excellent theme, we have some incredible stories this issue. We have our Tour Around Nevada 2015 winner, and if you think you know what to expect...think again. Check that out on page 72. We also take a look at one of reality



TV's biggest stars—Rick Harrison of *Pawn Stars*—to see what makes him, and his shop, tick. You can read that on page 22.

Harolds Club in Reno closed 20 years ago, but this innovative casino left its mark on gaming forever; read about it on page 28. We've got some tasty discoveries in *Cravings* this month (can you say dessert?) which you'll find on page 56. If you're still not sated, check out our feature on Nevada's burgeoning craft distilleries and breweries on page 64.

Rounding out these great stories out is a look back at the incredible projects still happening because of Nevada's 150th birthday celebration; look for this story on page 60. And because we started the year with an incredible roadtrip, it was only fair (to us) that we end it that way. Eric and I took a different pace this time, and rooted ourselves, albeit briefly, in one of Nevada's most beautiful and soul-quenching places. We almost didn't want to tell anyone how great it is, but our boss made us, so you'll find that story on page 34.

Check out our holiday card on page 80, and to everyone reading I want to give you my most heartfelt thanks. Your letters, emails, notes, and calls are the gifts you give us every day. Hopefully you'll consider this issue our thank-you card.

Megg Mueller, Managing Editor
mmueller@nevadamagazine.com

HUNTING STORY HITS THE MARK

I have subscribed to your fine publication for many years, and I must congratulate you on your excellent article "Hunters and Conservation are a Natural Pair" (Sept./Oct. 2015). Without scientifically managed hunting and work performed by conservation groups, the wildlife we treasure would slowly disappear. Your article went a long way in educating the public as to the role played by hunters and conservation groups in protecting wildlife in America.

— **Nick Byrne**, La Canada, Calif.

TWO FOR THE ROAD

I've been a long time subscriber to *Nevada Magazine*, and I've never enjoyed it more than since you joined as managing editor. Your style is easy going, personal and enjoyable. Each month I look forward to reading the stories you and Eric Cachinero collaborate on, especially those where you travel the state. The duo of Megg and Eric has something special about it.

— **Manuel J. Raposa**, Sparks

CORRECTIONS

Editor's note: We received many letters from our brilliant readers, pointing out a big error...read on for one of them, and thank you everyone who set us straight!

You may have received comment about the Hoover Dam article. "The Name Game" on page 68 could be interpreted that FDR dedicated the dam in 1947. Not possible! He died here in Georgia at Warm Springs in April 1945.

— **Robert G. Williamson, Jr.**, McDonough, Ga.

WE VALUE YOUR INPUT

Let us know how we're doing! Write to editor@nevadamagazine.com or via mail at 401 N. Carson St., Carson City, NV 89701. You can also comment on stories and read more letters at nevadamagazine.com. Letters and comments are subject to editing.

CONTRIBUTORS

DORESA BANNING



Doreasa Banning is a Reno-based writer whose blog—It Really Happened (author.doresabanning.com)—tells wild and fascinating casino/gaming-related stories of the past. "A Bold Gamble at

Lake Tahoe: Crime and Corruption in a Casino's Evolution" will be released in 2016. Like or follow her on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or Instagram.

■ PG. 28-32

To find out how to contribute, visit nevadamagazine.com/writer

NELLIE DAY



Nellie Day is a freelance writer who splits her time between Las Vegas and San Diego. Her writing focuses on craft beer, bars, and spirits, in addition to commercial real estate,

travel, and luxury lifestyle trends. She obtained her master's degree in journalism from USC and her bachelors' in English and sociology from UC Irvine. In her spare time, Nellie and her surly bull terrier enjoy pumpkin-flavored treats and praying to the football gods that USC's program turns around. ■ PG. 64-70

KATHIE TAYLOR

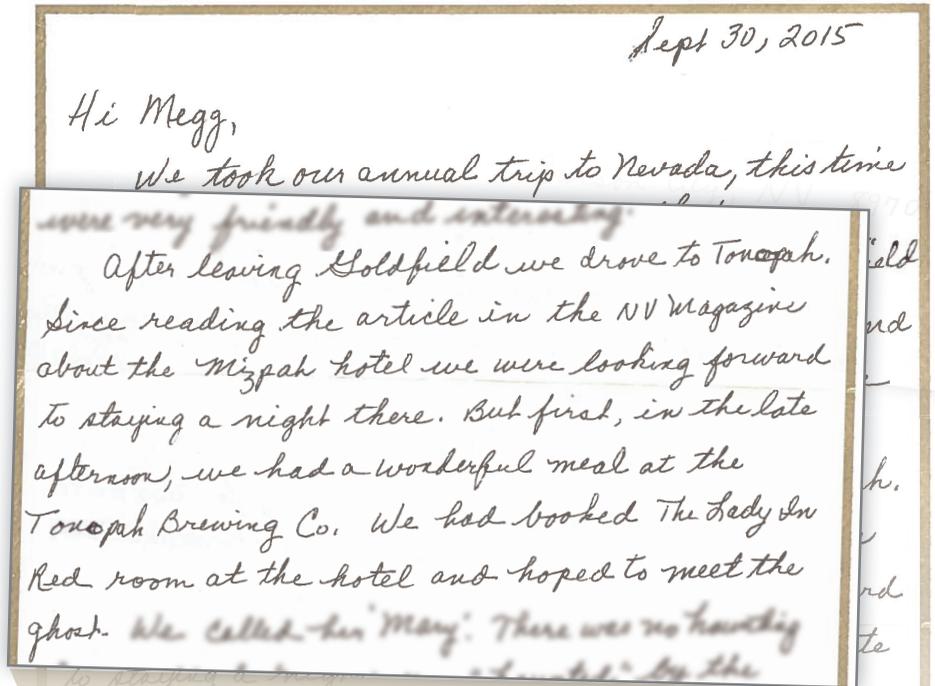


Kathie Taylor caught the writing bug as a child and has never stopped. A freelance journalist and publicist, she specializes in ghostwriting, marketing, blogging,

and public and media relations. Kathie lives in Minden and has been known on occasion to wrestle with her mountain bike on some of the beautiful Carson Valley terrain. See more of Kathie's work at wordconsulting.com.

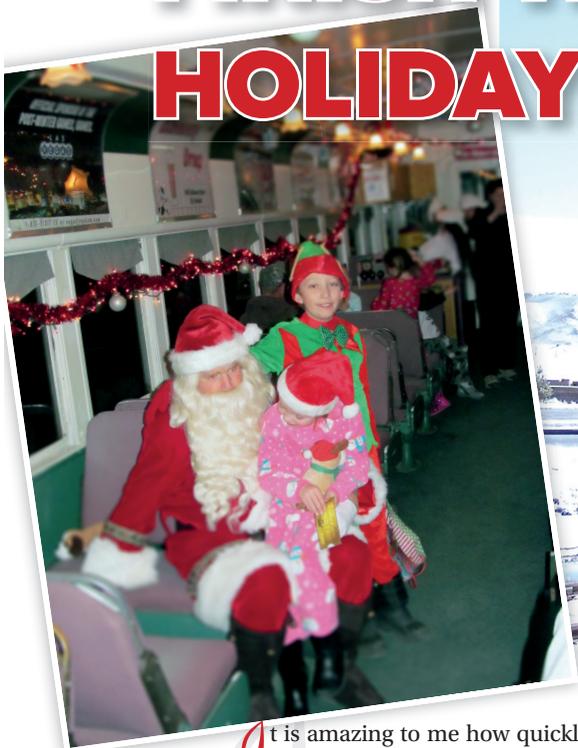
■ At nevadamagazine.com

TAKING YOUR ADVICE



To read Louise Doherty's full letter, visit nevadamagazine.com

FINISH THE YEAR IN HOLIDAY STYLE



It is amazing to me how quickly time passes and 2015 has proven to be no exception. We find ourselves on the cusp of the holiday season and it seems that just yesterday I was being sworn into office with my family at my side. Time flies when you enjoy what you do and I truly appreciate my role as Lieutenant Governor of the State of Nevada.

When I'm not focused on the affairs of the state, my family and friends are my two biggest priorities and this time of year is filled with wonderful opportunities to make lifelong memories with them. Whether you are a resident of the great Silver State or just here visiting, I encourage you to take in some of the opportunities here to create lasting memories and share the holiday spirit.

THE SEASON OF FAMILY AND FUN

Start a new family tradition and participate in a local Turkey Trot this Thanksgiving morning. For those of you in southern Nevada, Boulder City is home to the Six Tunnels to Hoover Dam Turkey Trot—one of the top-rated Turkey Trots in the nation. The out-and-back race course guides runners along the historic Railroad Trailhead with stunning views of Lake Mead and the Hoover Dam. Bring the family and don't forget to wear a festive costume—there will be plenty of runners dressed up in holiday-themed costumes. For those of you in northern Nevada, The Scheels Turkey Trot takes place at the Sparks Marina and the race proceeds benefit the Youth Scholarship Fund and the Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful organization.

Opportunity Village's West Oakey campus in Las Vegas transforms into a winter wonderland called the Magical Forest with thousands of glittering lights, an express passenger train, live entertainment, go-cart racing, an extensive array of food, and appear-

ances by St. Nick. All proceeds go to Opportunity Village—a local nonprofit serving people with intellectual disabilities. The Magical Forest runs from Nov. 20 through Jan. 3, 2016.

You can experience the magic of the holidays with an old-fashioned train ride. Ely's Nevada Northern Railway and the Virginia & Truckee Railway out of Carson City and Virginia City bring the classic children's book "The Polar Express" to life with special train rides to the North Pole. Sit back and enjoy the hour-long train ride to the North Pole while listening to the story of the Polar Express and enjoying hot chocolate and cookies served by Santa's helpers. When the train arrives at the North Pole, Santa is waiting with his bag full of goodies. Santa boards the train to spread his holiday cheer and presents each child with a special gift—a silver sleigh bell. Carson City's Polar Express runs Thursday through Sunday Nov. 19 through Dec. 22 and Ely's Polar Express runs select dates from Thanksgiving through Christmas.

No matter how you spend your holidays this year, I hope you are able to spend valuable time with family and friends. Have a wonderful holiday season.



Mark Hutchison
Lieutenant Governor
Chairman—Nevada Commission on Tourism
ltgov.nv.gov

CALIFORNIA

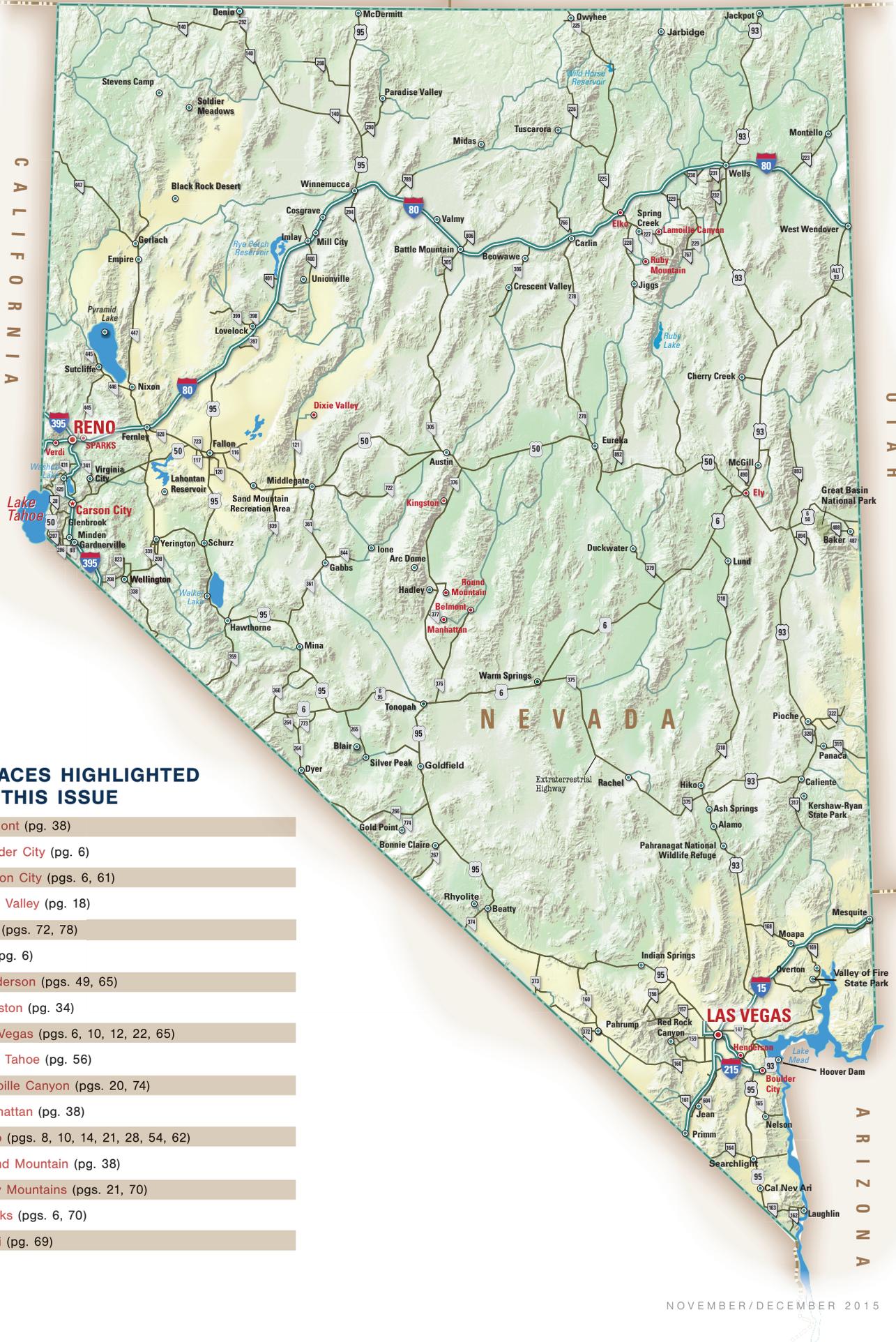
UTAH

NEVADA

ARIZONA

PLACES HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS ISSUE

- Belmont** (pg. 38)
- Boulder City** (pg. 6)
- Carson City** (pgs. 6, 61)
- Dixie Valley** (pg. 18)
- Elko** (pgs. 72, 78)
- Ely** (pg. 6)
- Henderson** (pgs. 49, 65)
- Kingston** (pg. 34)
- Las Vegas** (pgs. 6, 10, 12, 22, 65)
- Lake Tahoe** (pg. 56)
- Lamoille Canyon** (pgs. 20, 74)
- Manhattan** (pg. 38)
- Reno** (pgs. 8, 10, 14, 21, 28, 54, 62)
- Round Mountain** (pg. 38)
- Ruby Mountains** (pgs. 21, 70)
- Sparks** (pgs. 6, 70)
- Verdi** (pg. 69)



Up Front



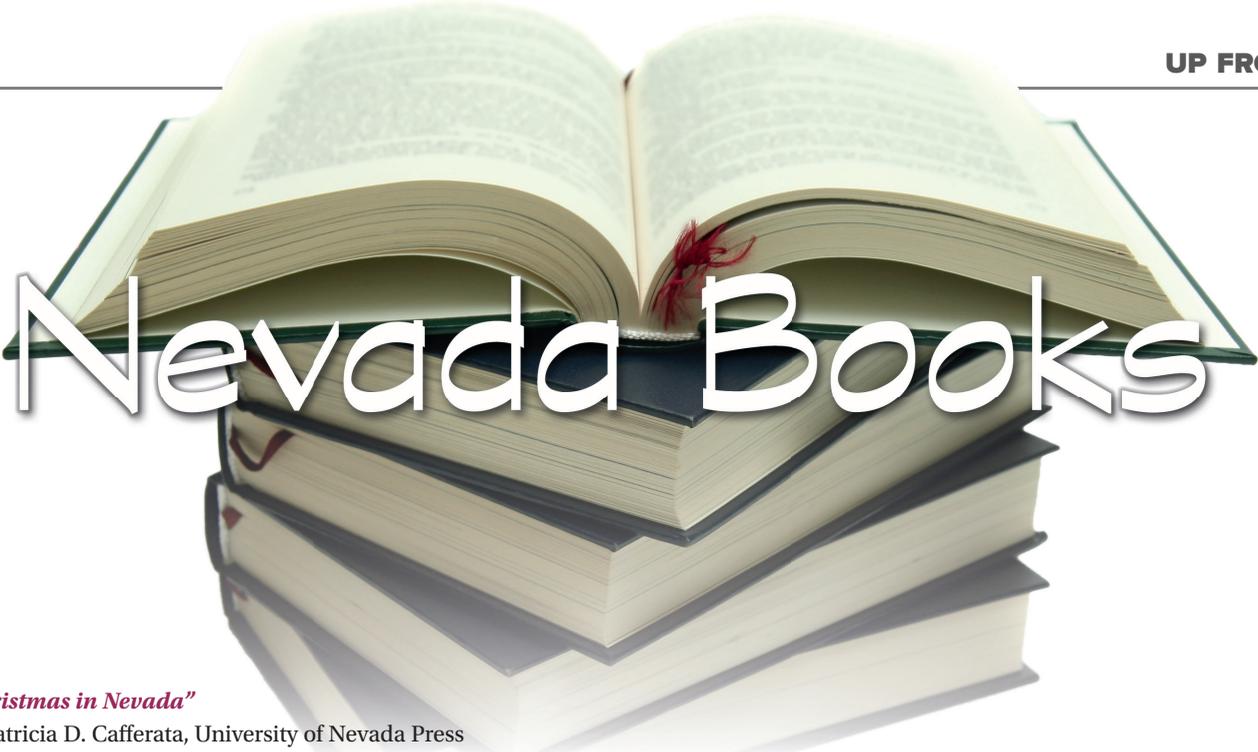
Grand Sierra Resort's Grand Theatre gets a makeover

The Grand Theatre at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno recently underwent a \$10 million renovation. The theatre first opened in 1978 as the Florenz Ziegfeld Showroom at the then-MGM Grand. Boasting the biggest stage in the word in the biggest showroom, the theatre was the host of the massive "Hello Hollywood, Hello" production where an actual 747 aircraft was rolled out on stage for each show.

Dinner shows are a thing of the past, and when the Meruelo Group took over the Grand Sierra Resort in 2011, it was determined the dated design of the theatre would receive a makeover with the aim of making it one of the top performing arts centers in the West. It now boasts a capacity of more than 2,700, including well-appointed luxury seats with more legroom, wider seats, and wider aisles. In addition, exclusive VIP booths with personalized beverage and bottle service are available for small groups and special occasions.

Designed by John Sergio Fisher & Associates, the theatre also includes a two-tiered entry with an all-new, enclosed lobby; state-of-the-art lighting and sound renovations; as well as new artist facilities including dressing rooms, green rooms, and an artist lounge. Upcoming artists include Godsmack, Melissa Etheridge, America's Got Talent All-Stars Tour, and "The Nutcracker." grandsierraresort.com, 775-789-2000





Nevada Books

"Christmas in Nevada"

By Patricia D. Cafferata, University of Nevada Press
 unevadapress.com, 800-621-2736, 224 pages

REVIEW BY JANET KINNEY

As the seasons change, our thoughts turn to the upcoming holidays and for me my favorite holiday is Christmas, so I decided to read "Christmas in Nevada."

Patricia is a life-long Reno resident and it certainly shows in the way she makes the small towns in Nevada come to life for Christmas. From the three workers in White Pine County who were trapped in a mine for 45 days in 1907 to the planting of the state evergreen tree in front of the Capitol, the stories celebrate the diverse history of our residents and the traditions that make this time of the year so special.

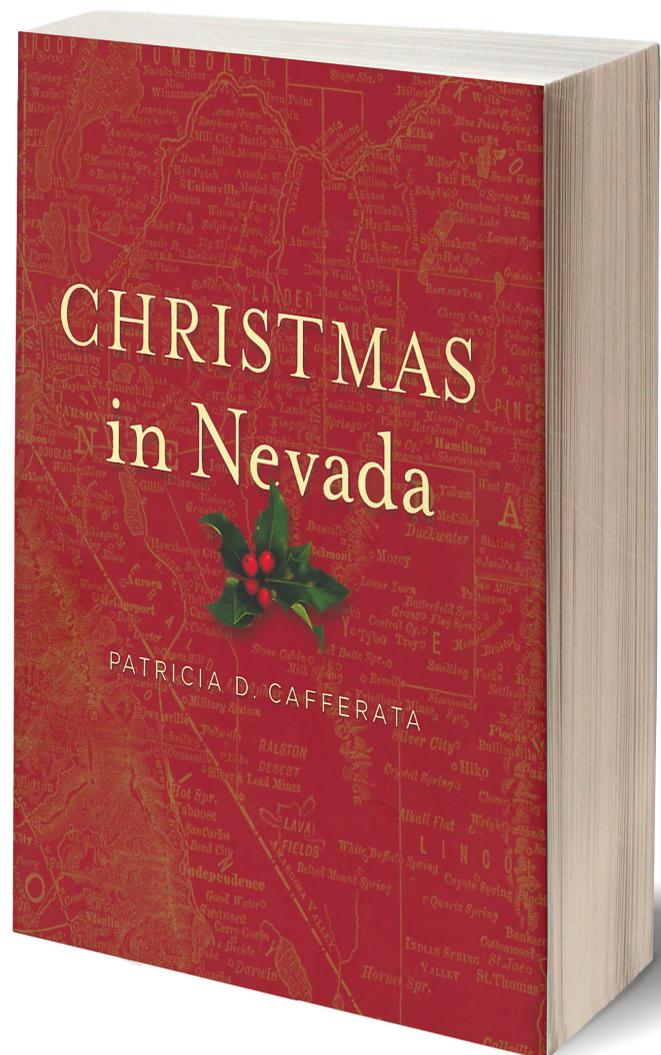
These 54 touching stories take us from 1858 to present day and are told by well-known Nevadans such as former governors Bob List and Richard Bryan and author and rancher Robert Laxalt, along with some ordinary Nevadans.

Patricia's research, interviews, and carefully chosen historic photos make these stories interesting and alive. Every chapter—from Santa arriving on a sleigh in the mining community of Silver Peak in 1905 to the story of "Willow Bill" Goulardt and the kids who create the willow reindeer that light up northern Nevada every Christmas—this heart-warming book will trigger great memories for readers, and will give them a sense of the holiday in the Silver State.

This book helped me learn more about the history and traditions of Nevada's diverse peoples, from the Basque families in eastern Nevada to the American Indians, Mexican Americans, and African Americans throughout the state.

Governor Brian Sandoval issued an executive order for the last chapter of this book, which provides a state plan for the visit of St. Nicholas and is a fitting end to a great read.

Patricia has served in the Nevada Assembly, was the Nevada state treasurer, and has been the district attorney in Lincoln, Lander, and Esmeralda counties. Not only is her book a real Nevada treasure, she is as well.



UP FRONT



■ The new **Vegas.com mobile app** was designed to help users find a place to eat, drink, party, buy show tickets, and book hotel rooms in Las Vegas from a mobile device. Users can see what's nearby their current location thanks to the app's GPS compatibility. The Vegas.com mobile app is available for iOS and Android devices. vegas.com, 866-983-4279

■ **The Neon Museum's** selection for its parent-artist residency Fall 2015 project is underway, and the winner will create a project for a two-day residency at the Neon Museum's North Gallery exhibition space Nov. 14-15. Following the exhibition at the Neon Museum, the artwork will be installed at UNLV's Marjorie Barrick Museum and on view from Nov. 19 through Dec. 19. The residency calls for working artists who are also parents or grandparents to create work inspired and enjoyed by children. neonmuseum.org, 702-387-6366

■ Las Vegas chef Roy Ellamar is set to debut a farm-to-table restaurant—**Harvest by Roy Ellamar**—at Bellagio Resort & Casino in December. Delivering an innovative, market-driven concept, Harvest will feature regional American dishes that include sustainable and locally grown products. bellagio.com, 888-987-6667

■ The city of Reno recently approved a **pesticide-free parks program** for 12 Reno parks. Born out of community concern about pesticide use, the 12 city parks were designated with the help of neighborhood advisory boards. Staff will discontinue the routine use of herbicides for general weed control in these 12 parks. Parks staff attended training sponsored by Beyond Pesticides—a national nonprofit organization promoting alternatives to pesticide use. reno.gov, 775-334-4636



LODGING

Get social at upgraded Las Vegas Hostel

The Downtown Project in Las Vegas has remodeled the Las Vegas Hostel in an effort to encourage visitors to embrace its three Cs: collisions, co-learning, and connectedness. The Las Vegas Hostel gives guests an opportunity to explore the area surrounding the Fremont Street District using the property's new bike sharing program or through guided tours. Guests can also socialize, swim, and cook at the newly renovated pool area and community barbecue.

The redesigned three-story property includes 38 private and shared rooms housing 154 beds. The Las Vegas Hostel has undergone upgrades in 2015 to the lobby, kitchen, dining, and pool areas, as well as new mattresses, bedding, and furnishings. Each room comes with an in-room bathroom. The hostel now also boasts a stadium-style entertainment room, as well as free Wi-Fi and breakfast for guests.

Those staying at the Las Vegas Hostel must be at least 18 years old and an out-of-state resident. lasvegashostel.net, 702-385-1150



ART

Reno's 94-year-old Latimer Art Club hosts art exhibition

The oldest active art club in Nevada—the Latimer Art Club—was founded in 1921 by students of artist Lorenzo Latimer, a watercolorist who came to Fallen Leaf Lake every fall for 19 years to capture the season.

The club's 2015 exhibition at the Nevada Historical Society in Reno is a show of more than 100 miniature paintings sized 36 square inches or less. The exhibition runs through Dec. 12, when a free closing reception will be held at the Society's History for the Holidays sale. museums.nevadaculture.org, 775-688-1190



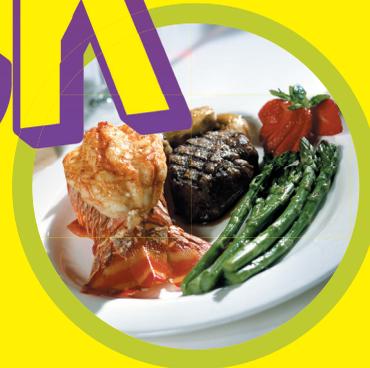
Best of Show 2014 by Carolyn Holt



KICK *it up*
or



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kick **BACK**



Mesquite is the perfect escape, no matter how you define it. If you're looking to let loose, Seasons Lounge at Eureka showcases live music, dancing and some of the liveliest shows around. If you want to soothe your senses, The Spa & Salon at CasaBlanca is a world-class retreat, complete with therapeutic massages and a full menu of salon services. In your spare time, you can always strike up some fun at the Virgin River Bowling Lanes. No matter what you're into, you'll find it in Mesquite.

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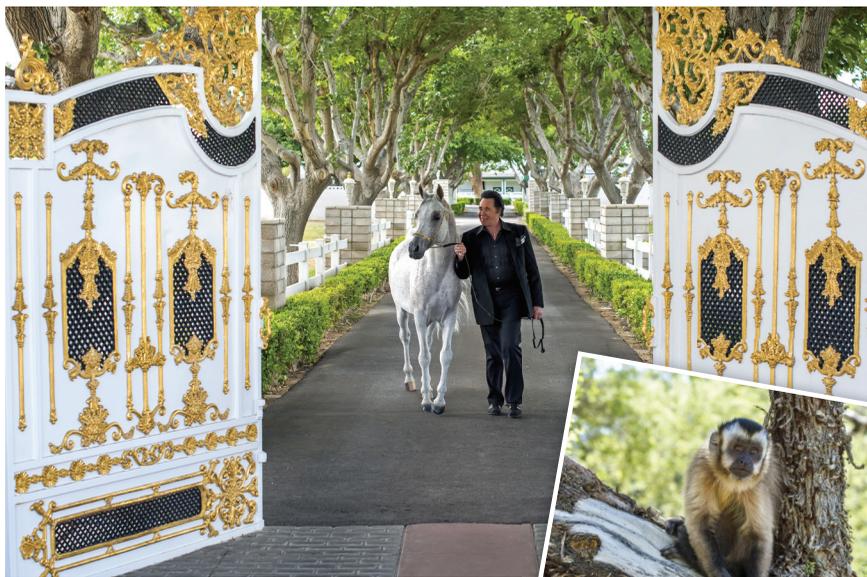
Battle Born Buzz

█ Epic Rides has announced the **Carson City Off-Road** mountain bike event and music festival scheduled for June 17-19, 2016. Epic Rides Off-Road Series events celebrate the backcountry trails experience while drawing all types of people to the sport through live music, libations, bike industry expos, and welcoming environments. The Carson City Off-Road will start and finish downtown and offer three courses: 15, 35, and 45 miles. The 35- and 45-mile routes will include sections of the Tahoe Rim Trail. epicrides.com, 520-623-1584

█ **Tatsuo Miyajima**—one of Japan's most influential artists—has debuted his work "HOTO" in the U.S. for the first time. Located at The Shops at Crystals in Las Vegas, the piece will be on display into 2016. Previously on display only in Japan and China, "HOTO" is inspired by Buddhist scripture, and means treasure pagoda. The mirrored pagoda measuring 18 feet high and more than 6 feet around is inlaid with nearly 4,000 vibrantly colored LED numerical displays in varying sizes. theshopsatcrystals.com, 702-590-9299

█ The **Western Folklife Center** is among 38 recipients of funding from ArtPlace America's 2015 National Grants Program. Selected by ArtPlace from a pool of nearly 1,300 applicants, the Folklife Center will help Elko's Downtown Corridor project by producing cultural programming that will increase foot traffic with exhibits, workshops and installations that connect activities in the Wiegand Gallery and G Three Bar Theatre to Railroad Street throughout the year. westernfolklife.org, 775-738-7508

█ Tickets for the world-famous **Electric Daisy Carnival** in Las Vegas are on sale for the June 17-19, 2016 event. North America's largest music festival will celebrate its 20th anniversary as it returns to the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. In 2015, a sold-out crowd of more than 400,000 attended the event. electricdaisycarnival.com



VINTAGE VEGAS

Wayne Newton's home ready for visitors

The gates to Mr. Las Vegas' home are now open to the public for the first time. Casa de Shenandoah—Wayne Newton's 52-acre sanctuary—takes fans inside the world of the legendary entertainer for a behind-the-scenes look at the life of the man who has made Las Vegas his home for more than 50 years.

Casa de Shenandoah has been Newton's sanctuary for more than four decades. With lush landscaping, natural artesian ponds and waterfalls, and towering oak trees, visitors can also see Newton's champion Arabian horses and meet his exotic pets including Boo the capuchin monkey, Charlie the penguin, wallabies, peacocks, and more.

Guests get an intimate glimpse of the life of the singer who has been synonymous with Las Vegas since he first took the stage as a teenager at the Fremont Hotel in 1959. The tour will show his collection of rare automobiles including cars formerly owned by Johnny Cash and Steve McQueen and a lifetime of memorabilia including gifts from friends such as Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, and Jack Benny.

Additionally, guests can explore Newton's rare Native American artifact collection, tour his private jet, and see rare military keepsakes and never-before-seen letters to Newton from U.S. presidents.

Tours are self-paced and can range from 90 minutes to four hours. Tour upgrades allow guests to step inside the Newton's residence, filled with hidden rooms and passageways, rare collectibles, art, and a priceless crystal pool table, or take a step back in time with a guided tour of Newton's childhood home. For the ultimate VIP experience, book a meet-and-greet and guided tour with Mr. Las Vegas himself. casadeshenandoah.com, 702-776-7491



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A STATE APART.

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Clark County Parks and Recreation presents **“Life in Death: Day of the Dead,”** a two-day festival featuring displays, an art exhibit, performances, craft sales, and food vendors at Winchester Cultural Center and Park in Las Vegas. The event will explore cultural traditions relating to the Mexican holiday of El Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. Admission to the festival is free. clarkcountynv.gov, 702-455-7340

The NBA Development League announced today that the **Reno Bighorns** are set to open the 2015-16 season at the Reno Events Center on Nov. 13, facing the Los Angeles D-Fenders. The Bighorns will play 48 regular season games, with 24 games at home. The Bighorns 2015-16 season marks the third year the team is a single affiliate with the Sacramento Kings. renobighorns.com, 775-853-8220

“Hot, Dry & Inked” is an exhibit of tattoo art and objects now on display at Springs Preserve in Las Vegas. Created by Las Vegas tattooers, the exhibit explores how the Mojave Desert influences their art on living and non-living canvases alike. It runs through Jan. 10, 2016. springspreserve.org, 702-822-7700

Downtown Summerlin will host the first annual **Downtown Summerlin Holiday Parade** on Nov. 20. The parade will continue for 20 nights—until Dec. 24—and will include eight floats, in addition to toy soldiers, snowflake princesses and princes, nutcrackers, dancers, drummers, and festive music. downtownsummerlin.com, 702-832-1000

MGM Resorts International has announced plans for an approximately 5,000-seat theater at **Monte Carlo Resort and Casino** in Las Vegas. The theater is expected to open at the end of 2016. montecarlo.com, 702-730-7777

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Historic collection of Western Shoshone documents on exhibit

For nearly 50 years, Native American ranchers, activists, and sisters Carrie and Mary Dann battled the federal government for control of Western Shoshone ancestral lands in northeastern Nevada. A special exhibit of the materials they collected during their legal battle is on display in the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center Special Collections at the University of Nevada, Reno runs through March 18, 2016.

In the newly available records, visitors can explore the Dann sisters' struggle, and that of the Western Shoshone, over issues of sovereign rights. The legal battle they waged was eventually decided against them by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The materials were previously only available to members of the Western Shoshone Nation. Carrie is now in her 80s and the only surviving sister; Mary died in 2005. Carrie recently donated the 120-carton collection of documents, ranging from the mid-1960s to 2010, to the University of Nevada, Reno. unr.edu, 775-682-5665



Carrie Dann (left) and her sister Mary Dann.

HULLEAH J. TSINHNAHJINNIE

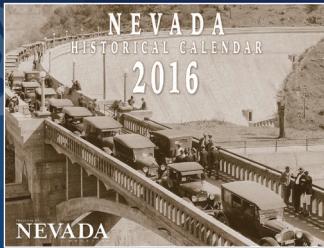
RURAL

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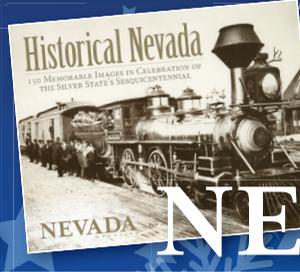


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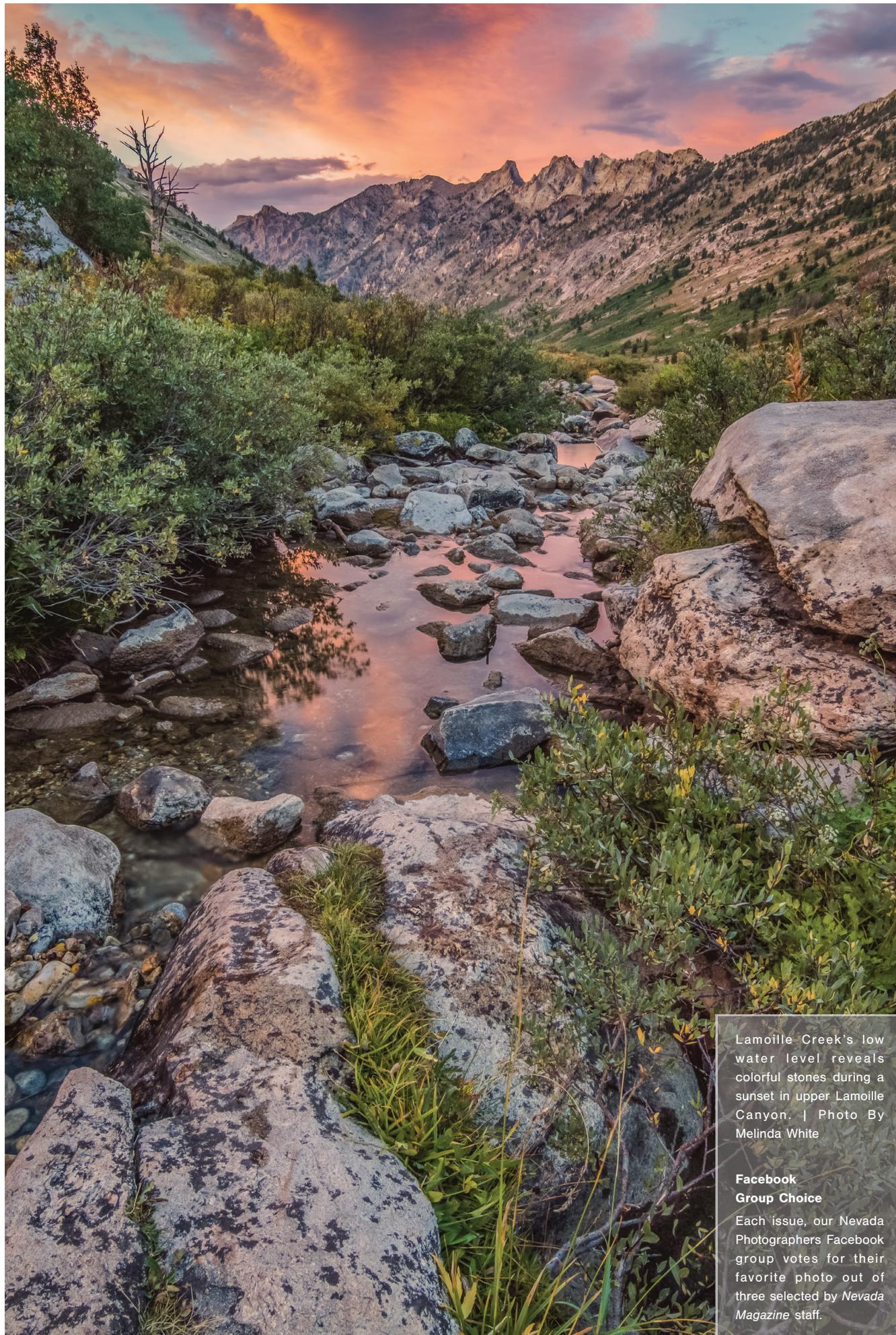
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VISIONS



Sparks fly during a starry night on a dry lakebed deep in the heart of Dixie Valley. The sparks are created by igniting steel wool, which is inside in a wire kitchen whisk that is spun rapidly using a portable electric drill. | Photo By Neil Lockhart





Lamoille Creek's low water level reveals colorful stones during a sunset in upper Lamaille Canyon. | Photo By Melinda White

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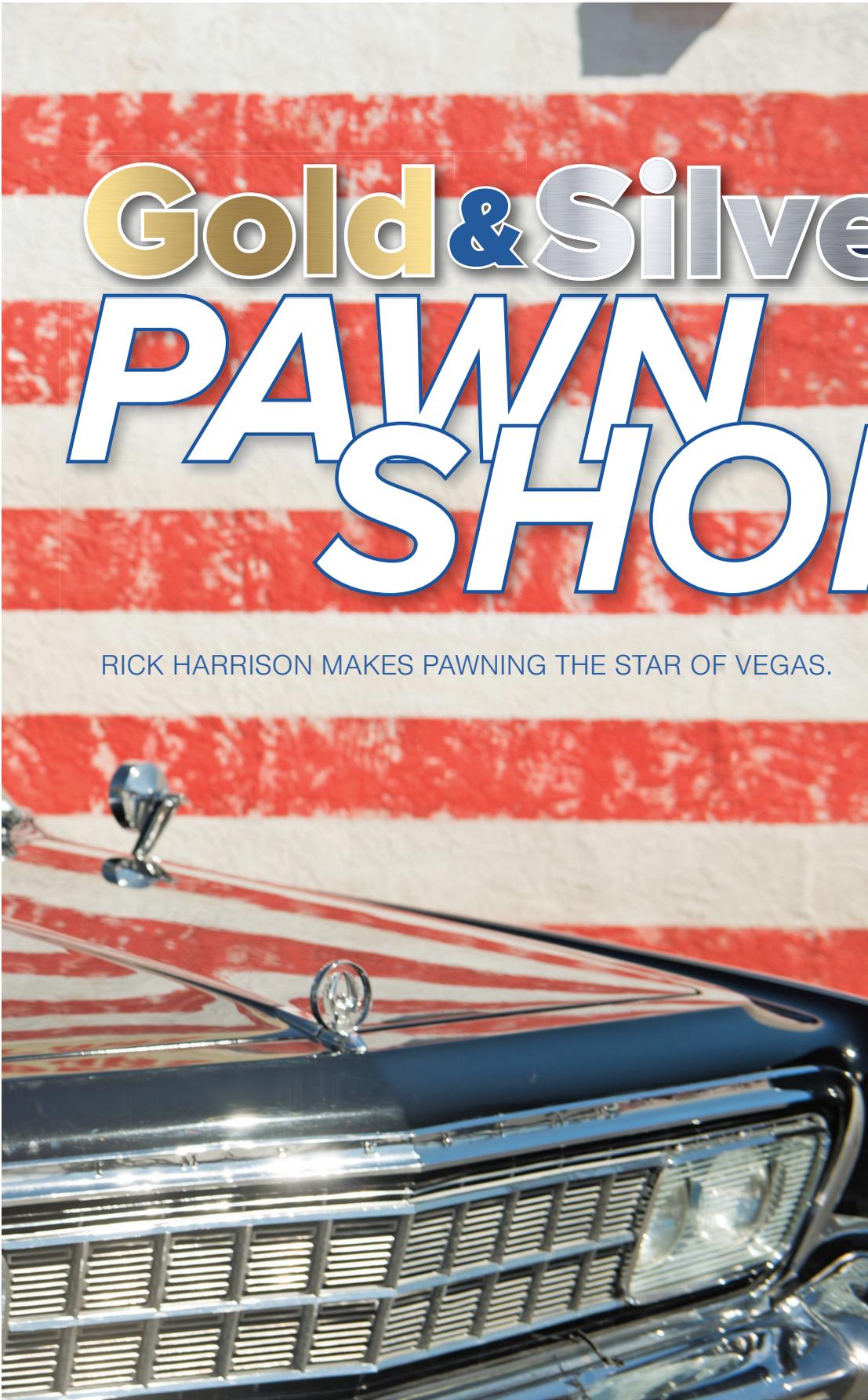
A red-tailed hawk takes flight after perching on a sprinkler in an agricultural area in Reno. | Photo By Richie Asencio

The majestic Ruby Mountains, as seen from Pleasant Valley, are dusted in snow and capped with clouds during a brisk winter day. | Photo By Kurt Kuznicki



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Gold & Silver PAWN SHOP

RICK HARRISON MAKES PAWNING THE STAR OF VEGAS.

BY MEGG MUELLER

Not all reality TV stars are the same. While some become household names due to poor behavior or their dating and fashion choices, others become famous for being genuinely entertaining.

Rick Harrison falls into the latter category. He is the owner of the Gold & Silver Pawn Shop in Las Vegas, which his father Richard—“The Old Man”—opened in 1988. He is also the star of HISTORY’S incredibly popular reality show “Pawn Stars,” based around the shop and its customers. The show launched in 2009, and life changed forever for Rick and his family. The unlikely star seems amused by his place in the spotlight.

“Ever since I was a kid, I was just a massive book worm. I’m a huge nerd. You could put Kim Kardashian in front of me and I wouldn’t know who she was,” Rick says. “I seriously have no idea what she looks like.”

So how does a self-confessed nerd end up becoming a TV star and owner of the No. 1 non-gaming attraction in Las Vegas? Let’s just say, it was in the stars.

GOLD & SILVER PAWN SHOP



EDISON GRAFF/STARDUST FALLOUT MEDIA

Rick Harrison's Pawn Plaza—an open-air retail center—opened in early October. Las Vegas Mayor Carolyn Goodman, Lt. Gov. Mark Hutchison, and 2016 Presidential Candidate Marco Rubio were on hand for the opening festivities.

A PENCHANT FOR PAWN

"I was definitely a history professor in a former life," Rick says, laughing. "The history lessons are my favorite part of the business."

History has long been a fascination for Rick, starting from when he was a young boy, dealing with epileptic seizures and headaches. He buried himself in books to ease the pain, and found solace in such stories such "The Great Brain"—a series of books by John D. Fitzgerald. The protagonist is a young hustler who uses his wits to create money-making schemes. Rick describes the character in his 2011 autobiography "License to Pawn: Deals, Steals, and My Life at the Gold & Silver" thusly:

He was a generous schemer, a con artist with a big heart. He'd do things like build a roller coaster in his backyard and charge to let people ride it, but there was always some twist at the end that caused him to have a crisis of conscience and give all the money back.

Rick was hooked on the adventures he found in books, and even admits he read a book about the history of batteries...twice.

He wasn't fond of school, but books gave him an education that is evident today as he deals with the goods that come into his store.

From treasures to trash, almost everything has or likely will pass through the doors of the Gold & Silver Pawn Shop. Rick and his son Corey—along with his dad and employee Austin "Chumlee" Russell—are challenged to determine the value of the items brought before them. Not every object is a diamond in the rough, but over the years, some unique things have made it into the shop.

"I get so much weird stuff," Rick says. "Sometimes you'll see me wearing a goofy-looking gold bracelet; it's a 1,200-year-old Viking bracelet."

A chair used by Nevada's Senator Pat McCarran to infamous casino owner Benny Binion's hat (verified by Benny's daughter and Rick's favorite Las Vegas item), and a Pony Express bible are just a few of the things people have brought into the shop to sell or pawn. Rick believes his store's location is a major reason so many eclectic items are seen.



"The whole fact that I'm on Las Vegas Boulevard... so many wealthy people retire in Vegas," he explains. "If it's not the most eclectic city, it's one of the most. That's why I get so much great stuff."

STILL JUST A SHOP

In 1988, if the store had 70 customers a day, that was considered good. Today, that number is slightly different; upwards of 4,000 people a day pass through the doors of the Gold & Silver. Many spend hours waiting to get in, and while a line snakes through the display cabinets showing the store's wares, some just come for the Chumlee T-shirt or Old Man silver coins that are but a few of the souvenirs available of the now-famous quartet.

Becoming a tourist attraction was great for business, but Rick acknowledges the skyrocketing popularity of the show required some adjustments in the day-to-day operations.

"Your business model changes a lot," he says. "The pawn business has definitely been impacted. But my regular customers know they can go to the front of the line and get in."

Rick shows his soft spot for his home since 1981; anyone with a Nevada ID can move to the front of the line, too.

"People in town are always wanting to bring friends down. I don't want to make those people wait," he says.

Along with the lines, being a celebrity on reality television has meant the store closes during filming, often three times a day for an hour at a time. It's an unavoidable byproduct of fame, but there are some cool benefits, too.

Rick shows his soft spot for his home since 1981; anyone with a Nevada ID can move to the front of the line.



PHOTOS: GOLD & SILVER PAWN SHOP

The Gold & Silver Pawn Shop's business is booming, with more than 4,000 customers lining up to peruse the merchandise every day. Top: Austin "Chumlee" Russell, Corey "Big Hoss" Harrison, Rick Harrison, and Richard "The Old Man" Harrison.

CASHING IN ON FAME

His celebrity status helped spur the creation of the Pawn Stars Poker Run to benefit the Epilepsy Foundation of Nevada. Rick has grown out of the seizures that plagued him as a child, but the mark they left is indelible, and the Poker Run—which had its second run in October—is a way to help others afflicted by epilepsy.

"It's just the most underfunded charity...there's so many people affected by it but it doesn't get the props or money it deserves," he says. "The money raised goes to hospital visits and research."

There's no doubt the pawn shop has helped revive the north end of The Strip, and Rick's Pawn Plaza will continue that trend. The newly opened shopping, dining, and entertainment center is located just across from the Gold & Silver and is Rick's vision of a cool place to hang out.



PLAN YOUR TRIP

Gold & Silver Pawn Shop
713 S. Las Vegas Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
gspawn.com, 702-385-7912

EDISON GRAFF/STARDUST FALLOUT MEDIA

Rick tends bar at Rick's Rollin' Smoke BBQ & Tavern during the opening of the Pawn Plaza. Mark Hall-Patton (wearing hat) of the Clark County Museum attended the opening.

Tenants such as Vegas Flip Flops, BodySpa Salon, Pawn Plaza Vow Renewals by vegasweddings.com, Inna Gadda di Pizza, Pawn Donut & Coffee, So-Cal Speed Shop, Rick's Rollin' Smoke BBQ & Tavern, Smoke's Pouterie, and Rita's Italian Ice were hand-selected for their cool factor. A lot of large chain stores wanted in, Rick recounts, and despite a promise of five-year contracts that would bring a lot of money, he declined.

"My dad was literally freaking out, but I was saying no," he says. "There are amazing brands that make lots of money, but you never go to them...you end up at them. I could have built the center for half the price, but I didn't want it to be some place to just stop at, but a place that was a destination."

And despite promises to his wife that life will slow down in the next couple of years, he is planning on tending bar at the barbecue joint on Friday and Saturday nights. Just don't expect any Tom Cruise in "Cocktail" flair; Rick admits the only drinks he can make are the ones that have the ingredients in the name (think: rum and coke).

While he may not be a font of libation information—or pseudo celebrities—Rick's considerable knowledge has certainly created one of the most entertaining, if unlikely, attractions in Las Vegas. And luckily, he shows no signs of selling that treasure anytime soon. ▾



RENO BIGHORNS

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					13 LA 7:00PM	14
15 BAK 5:00PM	16	17	18	19	20	21 LA 6:30PM
22 SCW 6:00PM	23	24	25	26	27 IDA 6:00PM	28 IDA 6:00PM
29		1 AUS 7:00PM	2	3	4 RGV 5:00PM	5 AUS 5:00PM
6	7	8 RGV 7:00PM	9 RGV 7:00PM	10	11	12
13	14	15 OKC 5:00PM	16	17	18 TEX 5:00PM	19 TEX 5:00PM
20	21	22 FTW 4:00PM	23 IOW 5:00PM	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 BAK 7:00PM			
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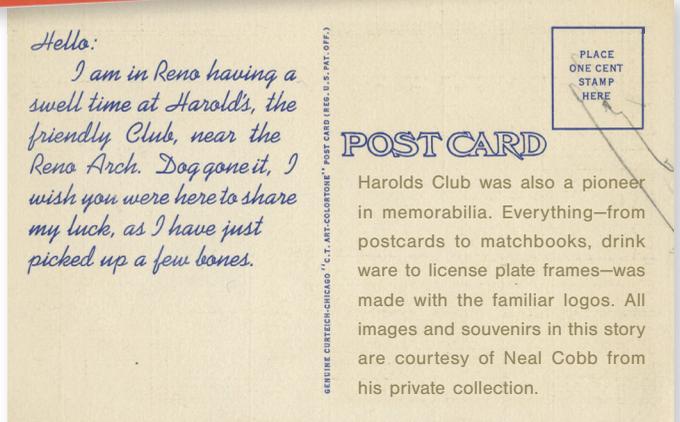
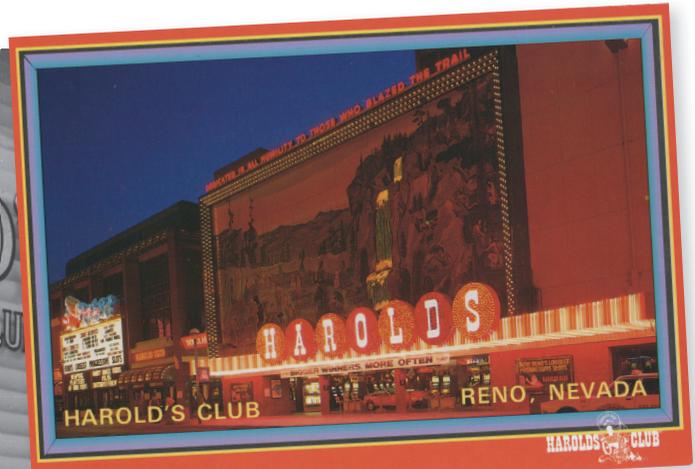
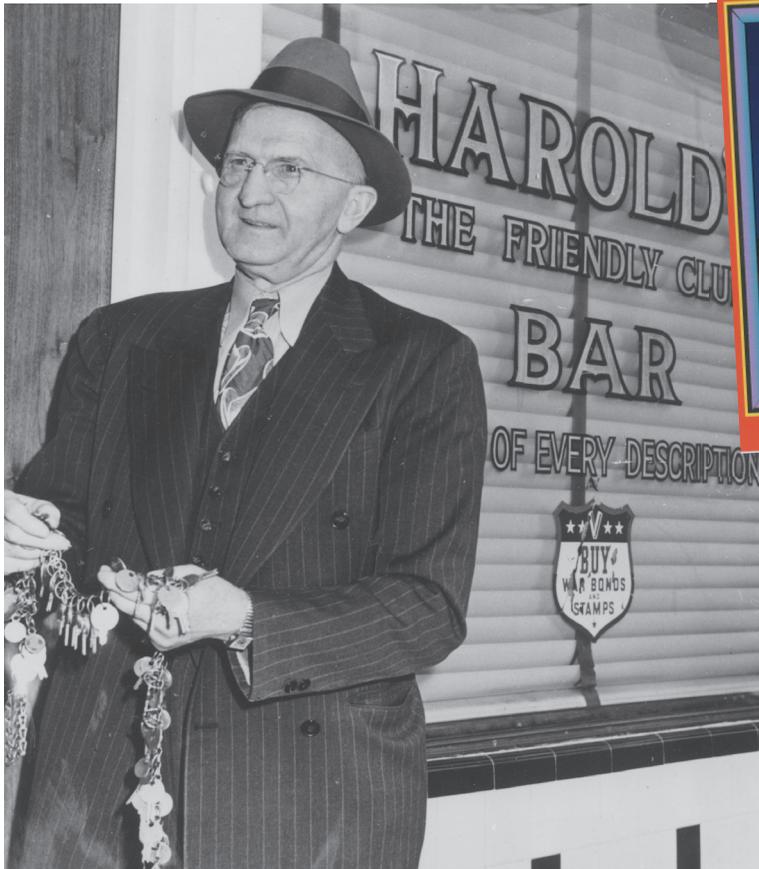
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Harolds Club was a bold and bustling staple of Virginia Street's casinos for 60 years.

Opposite page: Pappy Smith shows his collection of slot machine keys. The gaming pioneer was once asked if he was a jailor.



Harolds Club

RENO'S WILD WEST CASINO EXPERIMENT LEAVES LASTING IMPRESSION ON GAMING.

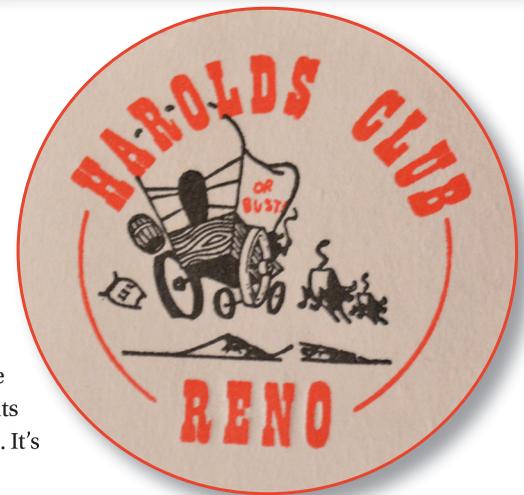
BY DORESA BANNING

The giant, \$60,000 mural that once hung over Harolds Club's South Virginia Street entrance in Reno now stands in front of the Reno-Sparks Livestock Center as an homage to this pioneering Nevada casino. The 70-foot-long, 35-foot-tall painting is vibrant in its depiction of the Wild West and is three times the square footage of a standard billboard. It's a fitting reminder of how great an impact Harolds Club had on Nevada and gaming.

"It was a wonderful place to be a part of," says Neal Cobb, a Harolds Club historian and former employee (craps dealer). "[The Smiths] took care of us and the community."

In 1935, brothers Harold Sr. and Raymond A. Smith parlayed a \$500 investment and their carnival work experience into the operation. Along with their father—Raymond I. Smith, or "Pappy," who joined them as the general manager—they started the club with one game and two slot machines in 3,750 square feet of space. In the 1950s and 60s, Harolds Club grew to 1,525 slots and 61 table games, making it the Nevada casino with the most gaming offerings at that time. In later years, it also housed a restaurant, several bars, headliner entertainment (Petula Clark, Louis Armstrong, Brenda Lee, and many others), and spanned seven floors.

"It was the most successful, dysfunctional family there ever was," Neal says, referring to the dynamics between Pappy and Harold Sr., which manifested at the club. Harold was a drinker and gambler; Pappy wasn't. The two didn't always agree on club matters, which led to arguments, and sometimes, overruling each other's directives.





Raymond A. Smith and Pappy Smith (from left) take delivery of their first silver dollar slot machines in this early 1940s photo.

PEOPLE FIRST, THEN PROFITS

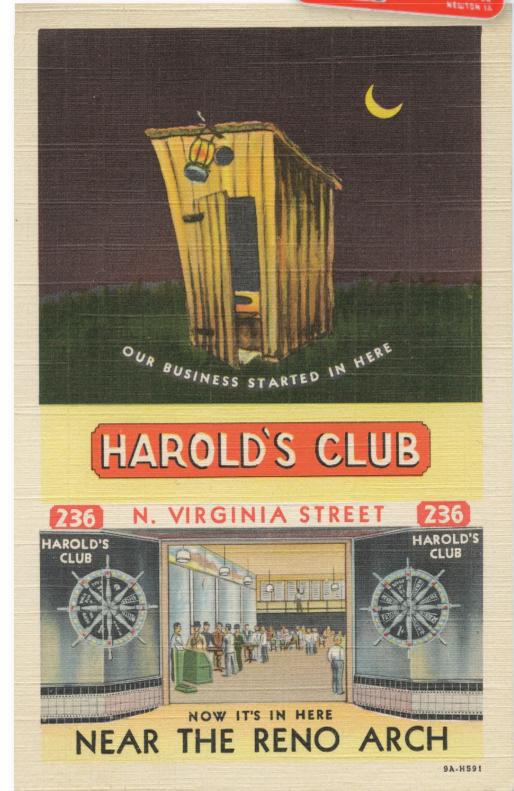
In Harolds, Pappy and Harold Sr. created a fun, friendly place for employees and guests, in part relying on gimmicks to do so. Raymond A. primarily handled behind-the-scenes administrative tasks. Harold Sr., who managed the casino during the swing shift, often wore unusual getups and resorted to wild antics—such as riding his horse into the club or playing his violin over the loud-speaker. Pappy—considered by many to be the grandfather of gaming in Nevada—occasionally doubled the payouts for customers at random tables. Guests never knew what to expect, and the ambience appealed to the everyday person, not just serious gamblers. Dealers were encouraged to get to know patrons, making them feel as though they were a part of the extended Harolds Club family.

The casino's generous policies were unprecedented. The Once Only Book, for example, helped those who'd gambled all their money get home. Anyone in that circumstance could get a loan up to \$50 (a \$500 value today) per year. If they repaid it, they could borrow again. Customers sometimes asked Pappy for the money back that they'd gambled, as they'd spent what they'd needed to live on, and frequently, he refunded them.

The Smiths catered to children as well. In the 1950s, they opened a theater where movies for youngsters were shown. It was so popular, more than 60,000 children visited it each year. The Roaring Camp Room, which housed a sizable museum of western guns and other artifacts, was open to all ages. The collection was auctioned off piece by piece in 1994.

Along with the patrons, the Smiths treated the employees more like loved ones than workers, truly caring about each one and availing themselves at all times to discuss anything. Some employees even received personal loans from the bosses when they asked. Consequently, they enjoyed their work and turnover was minimal, with some staying on for 20, 30, even 40 years. Today, a cadre (72 currently) of former staff members—the Harolds Club Pioneers—meets regularly to socialize and continue the philanthropy for which the Smiths were known. The group routinely raises and donates funds to local charities.

“The Smiths couldn’t do enough for you as an employee or a customer,” says Dwayne Kling, historian, author, and former Harolds Club floor manager. “They’d lean over backwards to give the customer a break. The customer was always right.”



DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

Harolds Club was the first casino in Nevada to hire women to work as dealers, and the customers—male and female—loved it. The first ladies hired in the late 1930s were Smith family members, but by the early 1940s, employment was open to all women, and they numbered nine out of every 10 workers. This radically different approach lent Nevada's gaming industry a respectability and credibility, which at the time was desperately needed.

Depicting a Western motif, the business was also a model for today's themed casinos. Rooms bore names that conjured up visions of cowboys and pioneer days, indoor paintings portrayed significant events in American history, the custom-made carpeting featured a covered-wagon design, and employees wore Western-style uniforms.

Gambling advertising was illegal at the time, but that didn't stop Harolds Club. In fact, it launched the industry's first expansive advertising campaign in the 1940s, which turned Harolds Club into the best-known casino in the world in the 1950s. Billboards showed a cartoon-like scene of a character heading for the Reno establishment in a comedic way, like by river raft, with the message: Harolds Club or Bust. At the peak, these enticements appeared in 45 states and worldwide.

"The sign campaign was far more successful than they could imagine," Neal says.

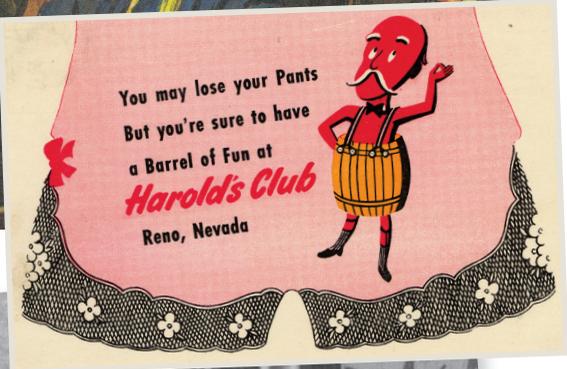
The Smiths' seemingly outlandish strategies worked as customers were not only loyal, but flocked en masse to Harolds. During Labor Day weekend 1952, 44,206 people entered the club.



Images of Harolds Club memorabilia, including a license plate topper in the shape of a wagon, and matchbooks with their iconic slogan. Above left, one of Harolds Club's pioneering female blackjack dealers.



Above: The Smiths commissioned a series of paintings depicting scenes from Nevada's glorious past, and captured them in a commemorative book for the state's centennial celebration in 1964. Below: The Roaring Camp bar on Lake Street just before it was bought by Harolds Club in 1949. The barstools were topped by saddles and had a coin-op mechanism that was often used to play tricks on inebriated patrons.



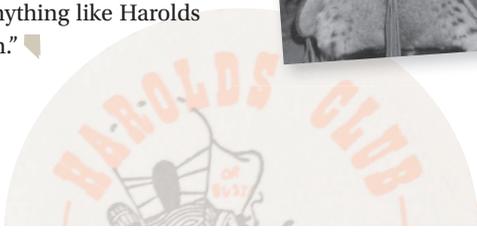
THE END OF AN ERA

In 1970, three years after Pappy succumbed to cancer, Summa Corp. (today, the Howard Hughes Corp.) acquired Harolds Club for an estimated \$11 million. It introduced new management and rules and abandoned many of the strategies responsible for the resort's success.

"It definitely was the end of an era," Dwayne says about Pappy's passing and the sale. "The whole philosophy of the operation changed completely."

Eighteen years later, Hughes' company sold Harolds to the Lincoln Management Group (later, the Fitzgerald Gaming Corp.), which aimed to add a hotel. Unable to obtain a construction loan, the operation closed on March 31, 1995. Harrah's bought the property in 1999, had it demolished, and today uses the site for its plaza.

Gone but not forgotten, Dwayne sums up the casino's legacy: "There was never anything like Harolds Club, and there never will be again." ▾



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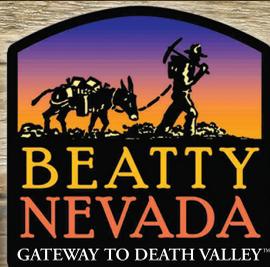
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There's a funny conundrum travel writers often face. We're tasked with discovering little-known gems and encouraging readers to feed their wanderlust and emulate our adventures. Except, we really don't want any of you to go to Kingston.

OK, that's not completely true, but the area is so special, so pristine, it elicits a protective vibe. Alas, it is our job to reveal the hidden splendor in this central Nevada region—Kingston is just one part, to be honest. Realizing it had been much too long since our last adventure, Eric and I head out for a slightly different roadtrip. This time, we swap our quest of major miles and myriad destinations for a slightly slower pace, a base of operations, and we savor a sliver of the Silver State.

KINGSTON

FOR A DAY, OR THREE

TINY TOWN SERVES AS A PERFECT BASE FOR MIDDLE-OF-NEVADA ROADTRIP.

BY MEGG MUELLER & ERIC CACHINERO

PHOTO: MEGG MUELLER





WIDE OPEN « Kingston

Previous page: *Nevada Magazine* Associate Editor Eric Cachinero serenades Zee—the Kingston resident dog—in Miles End B&B. This page: Kingston Canyon is home to an abundance of wildlife, including mule deer and trout.

LARRY BURTON



Day 1

THE ROAD TO VALHALLA

The drive to Kingston—about 30 miles south of Austin—is much like the town itself; both wide open and intimate. The familiar Highway 50 route beckons, but we're encouraged to take State Route 722 as a scenic alternative. The road connects to Hwy. 50 just past Middlegate, and we cruise toward Carroll Summit. A recent wildfire has occurred and we can detect the residue of the blaze in the air, but we still love to discover new roads.

As we bisect the Smith Creek Valley, we come upon a sight we seldom see: road construction. We laugh as we see signs warning us of delays—we haven't seen a car in almost an hour—but suddenly, there is a flagger. We're the first car she's stopped today, and it's almost 11 a.m. The day before, she stopped six cars total. That's rural Nevada traffic, right there.

After a brief delay, we continue our drive and pop out just west of Austin, where we stop for our Highway 50 passport stamp and to chat with Dee Helming at the Austin Chamber of Commerce. We've barely begun our trip, but Dee's stories of Austin events have us planning the next one. We ask about the drive through Kingston Canyon—the “back” way into Kingston—and she assures us it's passable.

I had heard the word “treacherous” used about the canyon road;

that, and the three switchbacks leading to the summit leave me and my infuriating fear of cliffs a little triggered. The person wielding that scary word also said to travel from north to south through the canyon, and that was the perfect advice. The road was sound, and the few drop-offs were on the driver's side, which I gallantly let Eric take. Any tense moments are easily made up for by the breathtaking views. A couple of cows near the summit are more surprised at our approach than the mule deer we see later, and flocks of sheep along the canyon walls remind us of the Basque sheepherders who were here a hundred years before.

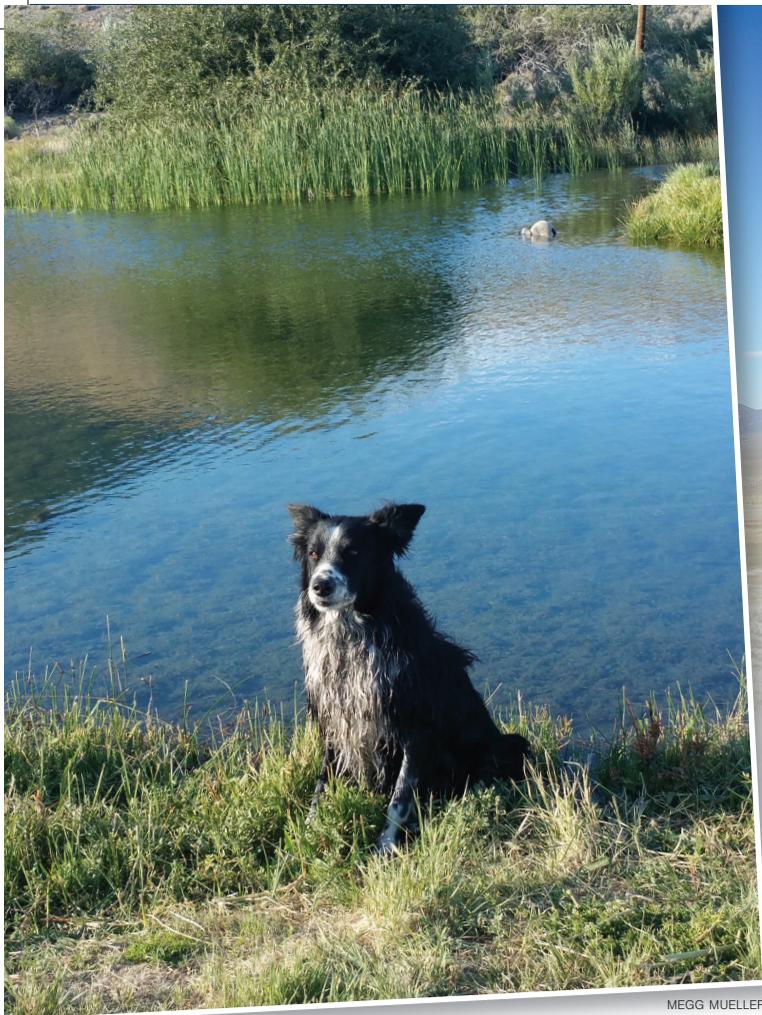
Campsites dot the creek—some official—and while we see almost no one, we know there are others enjoying the canyon's isolated beauty. Houses start to appear, sporadically for sure but definitely the mark of a town. We have arrived in the fabled Kingston.

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF ZEE

About 70 full-time residents live here; there's no gas, one saloon, one store with odd hours, and one place to stay. We pull into the Miles End B&B parking lot, and are greeted by Zee—a sweet collie mix and resident dog—and John Miles, who defies such easy identification. After some small talk about our trip, I ask John how we check in for the night.

“You just did,” he says.

Life just got real simple, real quick. John and his wife, Ann, have owned Miles End since 2004, opening it as a B&B in 2009. It began



MEGG MUELLER

Kingston resident dog Zee dries off after chasing some trout in Kingston's catch-and-release pond.

life as Valhalla for Carl and Del Haas in the 1970s, but I'm comfortable saying it never reached that lofty description until Ann and John took over. To say we were gobsmacked as we tour the property is so inadequate. Not a detail is overlooked or skimmed on. The rooms are thoughtfully appointed, ripe with rustic charm, and more comfortable than home. Miles End is all that, and so much more.

Eric and I decide to head to Zach's Lucky Spur—the local watering hole. Owner Mike "Zach" Zacharius has visited us in our offices, and we want to return the favor, but on our way we spy the town's fishing pond. Stocked with rainbow trout, it beckons us. A vending machine dispenses fish food for a quarter, so we stop and feed the town pets. The frenzy we witness as we toss in the pellets is more than we can stand and we bolt for our fishing rods.

Strictly catch-and-release, the pond is home to at least one beauty more than two-feet in length and Eric and I scramble to get our lines in the water. We are almost giddy with the action this small, simple pond provides and as ever, cannot believe our good fortune as we fish during our workday.

The day ends with a visit to Zach's, and then John's incredible chicken piccata for dinner. Our fellow guests—a mother and daughter driving cross-country—found Miles End by accident, and are blown away by their experience. As I head back to my room, I get lost in the gorgeous sky above me. The Milky Way is fully visible in this remote setting, and I don't know how long I stare upward before going inside.

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The Belmont welcome sign blends nicely with the rustic feel of the town. Inset: Eric (left) receives a Belmont Courthouse tour from Belmont resident Rick Motis.



PHOTOS: MEGG MUELLER



Megg's Day 2

COMING FULL CIRCLE

To say I slept well is akin to saying I sort of like my job. I found my version of heaven; my door was left open without fear, the gentle winds cooled my room and tinkled with the sounds of rustling leaves, and the bed was a cloud wrapped in epically soft sheets. I wake and immediately think “I’m so glad we’re staying here again tonight.”

We join John and the other guests for breakfast—Ann’s already at work at her newly opened medical clinic—and are greeted with blueberry pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, and fresh fruit. Heaven exists outside my room, too.

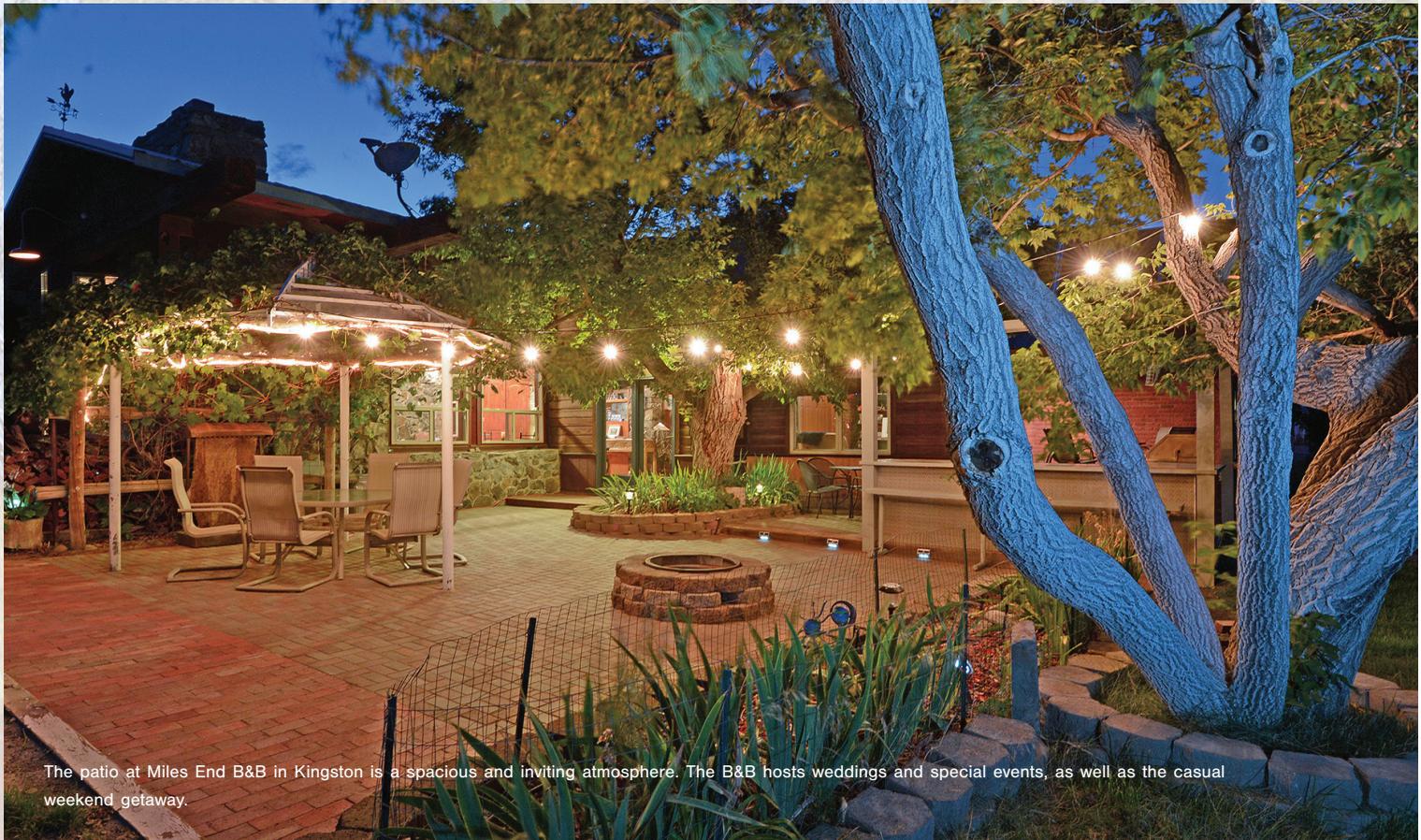
I’d love to linger, but there are places to explore. Our plan is to basically loop the Toquima Range and end back up in Kingston that evening, so we head south through the Big Smoky Valley. Sadly, California wildfires make it seem more like Big Hazy Valley, and our first stop is Round Mountain to collect pictures for a coworker. As we drive up and down the town’s streets, we’re thinking maybe it got lost in that haze. Very few habitable structures exist here, despite the massive open-pit gold mine that butts up against the

town. More than 750 people work at the mining operation, but you’d be hard pressed to see where they live. Until you look across the highway, that is. The town of Hadley—where Round Mountain golf course sits—is clearly the domestic hub.

DON'T CALL THEM GHOST TOWNS

Manhattan is home to maybe 125 people and a ton of abandoned buildings that just scream photo op. We wander around the abandoned church that once lived in Belmont, and try to capture the breathtaking desertion represented by the Nye & Ormsby County Bank building that is bizarrely intact, complete with original vault. The color and pulse is what you’d expect of a place so sparsely populated, but the Manhattan Bar and Motel is still open for visitors who want to take in the sublime feel of very rural Nevada. Next trip.

Belmont is next, and this is another bucket-list town for me. Rick and Donna Motis keep us up to date on the Belmont Courthouse preservation efforts, so we decide to surprise them. We stop at Dirty Dick’s Saloon—one of a handful of businesses in town—for directions. The Motis’ live nearby so we head over and surprise! But wait, they surprise us with an offer of a personal courthouse tour! Rick needs to finish some chores, so we beeline back to Dirty Dick’s where we chat up some hunters and wait for our tour. The real sur-



The patio at Miles End B&B in Kingston is a spacious and inviting atmosphere. The B&B hosts weddings and special events, as well as the casual weekend getaway.

CHRIS TALBOT/TRAVEL NEVADA

prise comes when Rick tells us we have a flat tire.

Lucky for me, Eric makes short work of it, and we're ready to tour the historic building. The only courthouse in the world registered to a department of motor vehicles (the commemorative license plate is proudly on display), the Belmont Courthouse is a spectacular example of Italianate architecture and the fortitude of its supporters. Built in 1876, the courthouse was once home to Nevada Governor and U.S. Senator Tasker Oddie, Tonopah's Jim Butler, and much later and very briefly, Charles Manson and his followers. Luckily, the Friends of the Belmont Courthouse are protecting the wild and important history of the building. Rick's tour covers the architecture, the rebuilding, the people who worked at the courthouse, and everything in between. He is the consummate tour guide, and what he and Donna do deserves a story of its own; stay tuned.

We could spend so much more time in Belmont, but John and Ann have a Dutch-oven lamb dinner and about 30 people awaiting our return, so we bid farewell and turn our car north in search of a natural wonder.



MEGG MUELLER

Guests of the B&B are treated to a host of different breakfast dishes. Pancakes, sausage, eggs, fresh fruit, orange juice, and coffee are some comforts found at Miles End.



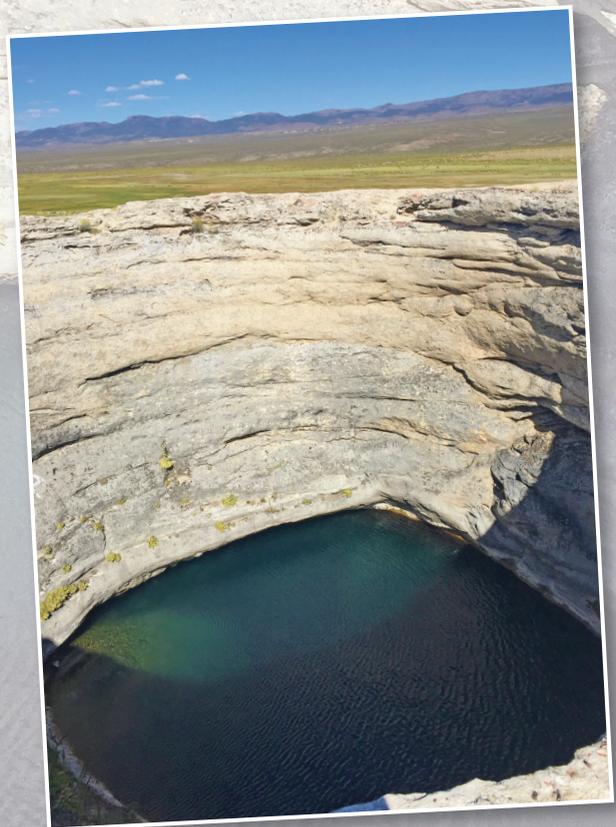
Diana's Punchbowl, as seen from a distance, first appears as a small, white hill located in an otherwise relatively flat terrain. Below: Peering down into the punchbowl reveals remarkable geothermal activity with water much too hot for soaking.

PHOTOS: MEGG MUELLER

PUNCHBOWLS AND PICTOGRAPHS

Diana's Punchbowl is a hot springs set deep in the center of Monitor Valley. When I say deep, it's not a euphemism. Most people likely drive past the mound of travertine that juts up on the east side of secondary State Route 82, but it's well worth the diversion. As we approach the top, the crater appears and we stop. I get out and cautiously walk to the edge and peer down about 30 feet to a pool of deep blue and green steaming water. The wind is blowing mercilessly, and as I lean in for a closer view, the wind changes directions and I keep finding myself jerking forward and back. So I let Eric take most the pictures and all of the video. The walls of the "punchbowl" are pretty much straight down, and the temperature of the water exceeds 140 degrees; this is not the place to lose your footing. A brave and ignorant soul has tagged the rock wall and only for a moment do I hope they got at least a little scalded. I don't know who Diana is or why this spectacular sight is named after a serving dish, but I do know it's something that should be treated with more respect so everyone can enjoy it.

I wait for Eric to stop getting so close to the edge of the hot springs, and we head for our final stop of the day: Toquima Cave. I'm beat, and ready for a shower before dinner. I'm thinking about the fish, Zee, and another night of stargazing, but I want to see the cave. The Native American pictographs that cover the walls are incredible, and the area around Pete's Summit is so lush it makes sense they would have chosen the cave as a dwelling. It's well worth the short hike, and delaying my shower for. Time for some Kingston hospitality.



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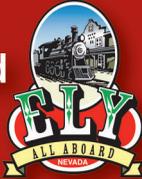
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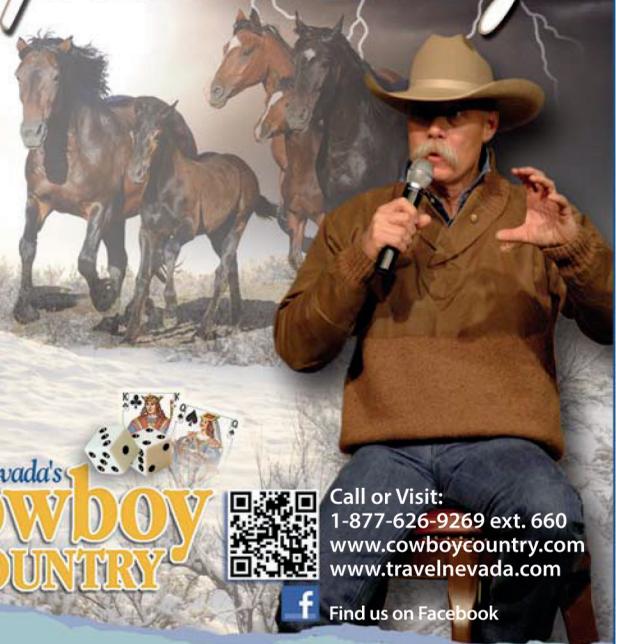
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Eric's Day 2

BLUEBERRY PANCAKES

I wake with chicken piccata on my mind. Not the kind that's served on a tray table during a cheap flight, but the kind that is cooked with Nevada love. Love that we got a small dose of the day before, and are about to fall head-over-heels with. I take a couple extra minutes to lie in bed and think about the supper John created and was consequently inhaled the night before, while taking pleasure in the fluffiness of the pillows that rest my head. Unbeknownst to me at the time, the pillows wouldn't be our fluffiest encounter of the day.

As I swing open the burly lumber door that greets guests of Miles End, Megg, John, and trusty canine, Zee, are preparing for the day by drinking coffee, whipping up breakfast, and sniffing around for scraps, respectively. We reunite with our guests from the previous evening and are seated for our next fluffy encounter of the day: John's delectable blueberry pancakes and scrambled eggs, accompanied by sausage links, fresh fruit, and a glass of orange juice. As we eat, we chat about the usual topics: ghost towns, geological features, the ability of the state vehicle to survive the perilous routes we're sometimes "forced" to take. And, before long, the tires meet highway, aimed for fresh adventures in fresh territory.

THE LITTLE APPLE

Arc Dome Wilderness is kind on the eyes as we drive south on State Route 376 with Carvers in our crosshairs. Haphazardly pulling off at various times to snap photos of Arc Dome, and after fueling up in Carvers, we arrive in Round Mountain—home to the impressively colossal Round Mountain Gold Mine. After tooling around a bit, we're back on the road again, en route to Manhattan.

I've been to Manhattan in New York City a time or two, and when compared to Manhattan, Nevada, I can unequivocally, indisputably, indubitably contend that they do have a similarity: their name.

Though certainly not a ghost town, Manhattan still lives and breathes the old West. As far as services, Manhattan provides the vitals: alcohol and a place to sleep. The Manhattan Bar & Motel is the town's only functioning business, and has been a part of the town's history since the early 1900s.

Megg and I decide to explore for a bit, beginning with one of the most impressive historic ruins in town: The Nye & Ormsby County Bank. According to a plaque outside, the bank was constructed in 1906 and is the "oldest and only stone commercial building to be erected in Manhattan." As we explore, I am excited to see that the safe is still intact and slightly open. I peek behind the door expecting to find a whiskey keg half filled with golden nuggets, but to no avail. With pockets empty we depart Manhattan no richer than we arrived, save the memories of this historic town.





PHOTOS: ERIC CACHINERO

Clockwise from below: Eric rolls in the dirt as he fixes a flat tire. John's famous biscuits and gravy will impress the snootiest gravy connoisseur. Groves Lake provides great fishing, and can be a great spot to relax with your feet in the water. A panoramic shot of Miles End reveals the shaded patio area and spacious lawn. The exterior of the Belmont Courthouse now has all of its windows replaced. Charles Manson presumably scratched his notorious signature into the courthouse walls.



MEGG MUELLER

TESTIMONY OF THE TIRE

It is inexcusable that I have lived in this state for my entire life and had never been to Belmont. That would change today.

Megg and I act no different than two tourists seeing the Las Vegas Strip for the first time, oohing and ahing as we drive into Belmont. We head straight to one of the town's most extraordinary and renowned structures: The Belmont Courthouse. I've seen dozens if not hundreds of photos of this historic building, none of which give justice to the impression it leaves as it towers over me.

We rendezvous with Rick and Donna Motis—presidents of Friends of the Belmont Courthouse and downright wonderful people—who agree to give us a tour of the courthouse. Seeing as they have a couple of tasks to finish before we begin, Megg and I head over to the local watering hole: Dirty Dick's.

Dirty Dick's is the quintessential Nevada saloon. Equally intriguing as the relics that adorn the walls of this historical joint are the conversations being had by the bartender, thirsty hunters, and a living Nevada relic or two perched upon the barstools. Megg and I join in the conversation before a familiar voice can be heard outside.

"Errrrriiiicccc," Rick says with a sliver of humor and concern as I spin around on my bar stool. I expect my summoning to be followed by confirmation he is ready for the tour. That is what I expect, but not what I receive.

"You've got a flat tire," he says.

There are far, far worse places in Nevada to be caught with a flat tire than in a historic town surrounded by friendly people. Nonetheless, our first flat tire while on assignment for the magazine sets us behind schedule. After rolling around in the dirt for a couple minutes, the tire is swapped with the spare and we're ready to go again.

The tour of the courthouse is enlightening, to say the least. As a Nevada-history nerd, I listen attentively as Rick and Donna show us the ins and outs of the incredible structure.

Construction of the courthouse was completed in time for July 4, 1876—the centennial of the U.S. It served the community until 1905, when the Nye County seat was moved to Tonopah and the courthouse was emptied, becoming completely abandoned in the 1920s. Over the decades, the building fell victim to vandals and disrepair, before windows were boarded and doors locked in the 1970s.

Rick and Donna are *the* courthouse experts. Thanks to their leadership and the contributions from countless organizations and individuals, Friends of the Belmont Courthouse—the organization in charge of protecting the structure—has painstakingly replaced all the windows in the historic building, among many other preservation projects.

The inner walls of the courthouse bleed history, due in part to the graffiti that has collected on the walls dating back to the 1920s. Rick and Donna take us room to room, telling us of the men and women the walls used to see more than a century ago. Eventually, we happen upon a more recent tattoo of notoriety: a cryptic note scratched into the wall that reads "Charlie Manson + Family 1969."

PUNCH IT

Even without a spare, we decide to press on, now a bit behind schedule. Our next destination, some 36 miles north of Belmont, is Diana's Punchbowl. The punchbowl looks like a miniature white volcano, located in the geothermic Monitor Valley. Visitors can peer down into the giant cauldron hot spring, but not much else. The water is scalding and the sheer cliffs spell certain demise for anyone unlucky enough to fall in. Please be aware the punchbowl is on private property and can be very dangerous. As with many things in Nevada, use your head and you'll be fine.

Next stop is Toquima Cave—a must see if you're in the area. A half-mile walk from a primitive campground leads to the cave, which was used by American Indians, as evidenced by the myriad pictographs that cover its walls. Megg and I spend time examining the tan, red, and yellow symbols before hiking back to the campground and making our way back to Kingston for dinner. At this point, I'm so hungry I swear I can already smell dinner cooking.

MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB

There is no combination of words that can adequately articulate my love for Dutch-oven cooking, which is why when we arrive back in Kingston to a Dutch oven lamb cookout at Miles End, I need not one more reason to convince me I'm in heaven. As luck would have it, Ann and John are hosting a shindig and invited Megg and me to join. We waste no time loading our plates with lamb, scalloped potatoes, biscuits, salad, and other dishes before stuffing our faces and chatting with the Kingston locals in between bites. Campfires and conversations occupy the rest of our night before it's time once again for me to rest my head on the fluffiest pillow I've ever encountered.

Clockwise starting from bottom: The exterior of Miles End reveals the impressive stone work that the B&B is composed of. A sign leading to Kingston Canyon warns unprepared travelers of a bumpy and windy road ahead. Zach's Lucky Spur in Kingston fittingly displays a massive collection of antique spurs and on its walls. A historic church in Manhattan sits upon a hilltop.



PHOTOS TOP: MEGG MUELLER; MIDDLE: ERIC CACHINERO, MEGG MUELLER; BOTTOM: CHRIS TALBOT/TRAVEL NEVADA



Day 3

STUCK IN THE MIDDLE WITH YOU

The next morning begins much like the last, substituting pancakes for some scrumptious biscuits and gravy. After breakfast, John shows Megg and I some Nevada hospitality and patches our spare tire for us, knowing we might need it for the day ahead. Soon, we say goodbye to John and Ann and head out in search of the geographic center of Nevada.

The geographic center is located about 14.5 miles south of Highway 50 via decent dirt roads. However, as we approach the area where we expect it to be, we see nothing more than an anomaly: a metal spike sticking out of the ground in the middle of the desert. The spike is supposed to be accompanied by a sign—provided by Zach of Zach’s Lucky Spur Saloon—marking the location, but is unfortunately missing. We do, however, find a geocache in the area, filled with marks of Nevadans and visitors from near and far. We make our mark and get back on the road.

ALL GOOD THINGS

Though we’re cruising back to Reno on the “Loneliest Road in America,” it sure doesn’t feel lonely. Bertha Raffetto got it right when she included the line “it’s the place of a thousand thrills” in

Nevada’s state song. How can we be lonely when there are literally thousands of thrills right outside our windows?

Nevada roadtrips are special. Miles and miles of what some unfortunate people describe as “nothing” contain more beauty than imaginable. Seemingly infinite vistas of rolling sagebrush entwined with the low drone of tires on pavement can be a meditative practice. Towns dotted across the landscape give refuge during long drives, each with its own elements that create its character. Nevada gives us room to think, room to breathe, and room to find ourselves. Dirt roads take us further from human interaction and deeper into this majestic terrain, till occasionally the only things left is our connection with the sun, sky, clouds, and earth. It can make a person feel infinitesimal. It can also make a person feel omnipotent.

Nevada is a cauldron bubbling with thousands of thrills. All you have to do is pick a road and see where it takes you. ▀

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For videos from our journey, including jumping fish, Diana’s Punchbowl, and the courthouse tour, visit nevadamagazine.com/kingston



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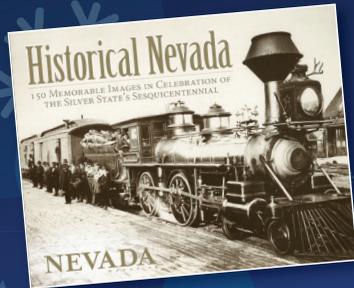
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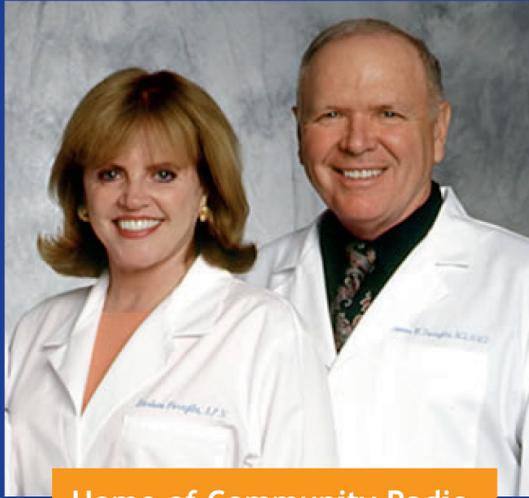
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Henderson Events Plaza

Dec. 11-12

Mixing merriment with the magic of the holidays, WinterFest makes for some jolly good fun. Experience the excitement of a winter wonderland with activities for the entire family, including Christmas tree lighting, Santa Claus visits, and entertainment. Don't miss the WinterFest evening light parade at 5 p.m. on Dec. 12.

JINGLE BELL RUN

Pecos Legacy Park

Dec. 19

Be there with bells on—jingle bells, that is! Ring in the holiday season with a Christmas fun run for the entire family. Don your best holiday apparel and jingle all the way down a 3.1-mile course. Afterwards, enjoy your favorite holiday music and chat with old St. Nick.

HENDERSON STROLL 'N ROLL

Henderson

Nov. 14

Experience a fun way to bike, walk, skate, and play. Visitors can enjoy the community's largest car-free street festival, spanning three parks and chock full of family fun. The celebration features children's activities, live entertainment, fitness classes, and food trucks.



HOLIDAY CHEER

Henderson City Hall

240 Water St.

Henderson, NV 89015

cityofhenderson.com, 702-267-2323



VINCENT PERINI

MAROON 5

RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH WORLD-RENOWNED GROUP.

Three-time Grammy Award-winning band Maroon 5 returns to Las Vegas for its fourth consecutive New Year's weekend performances at Mandalay Bay Events Center on Wednesday, Dec. 30 and Thursday, Dec. 31. The shows highlight Mandalay Bay's annual "Paint the Town Gold" resort-wide celebration.

Capturing the first of three Grammy Awards as "Best New Artist" of 2005 and going on to sell more than 17 million albums worldwide, Maroon 5's releases have gone gold and platinum in more than 35 countries. The band quickly won over fans and critics alike with the hybrid rock/R&B sound they introduced on their debut album, "Songs About Jane" and their double-platinum release, "It Won't Be Soon Before Long." In 2010, the band debuted its third studio album, "Hands All Over," which featured the group's chart-topping smash single "Moves Like Jagger." The song has since gone on to become one of the best-selling singles of all time. The group's latest release, "V," debuted at No. 1 on Billboard's Top 200 chart and features the hit singles "Maps," "Animals," and "Sugar," all of which hit No. 1 on the Top 40 chart.

WHERE

Mandalay Bay Events Center

WHEN

Dec. 30-31

TICKETS

mandalaybay.com, 702-632-7777

Starting at \$99.50

WORTH A CLICK

maroon5.com

ALSO AT MANDALAY BAY

King Diamond, Nov. 9

Collective Soul, Nov. 12

Heart, Nov. 19

Roberto Carlos, Nov. 20

las vegas shows



MUST SEE

RISE AGAINST & KILLSWITCH ENGAGE

Downtown Las Vegas Events Center

Nov. 21

dlvec.com, 800-745-3000

Rock band Rise Against is taking over the Downtown Las Vegas Events Center on Saturday, Nov. 21. The rockers are supported by metal band Killswitch Engage.

After 15 years and six incendiary albums, Rise Against has become one of the most successful punk rock bands on the planet. Featuring lead singer Tim McIlrath, bassist Joe Principe, guitarist Zach Blair, and drummer Brandon Barnes, the group has sold more than 4 million albums globally during its last four releases, with 2011's "Endgame" debuting at No. 1 in Germany and Canada and No. 2 on the U.S. Billboard charts.

Killswitch Engage is an American metal band from Westfield, Mass., that formed in 1999. The band features vocalist Jesse Leach, bassist Mike D'Antonio, guitarists Joel Stroetzel and Adam Dutkiewicz, and drummer Justin Foley. The band has released six studio albums and one DVD.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Dead & Company—the reincarnated version of iconic rock band the Grateful Dead—is bringing its psychedelic music to life at the MGM Grand Garden Arena for a special two-night performance Nov. 27-28. mgmgrand.com, 702-891-1111

Grammy award-winning band **Train**, accompanied by celebrated rockers **The Fray**, is playing the Downtown Las Vegas Events Center on Saturday, Nov. 7. dlvec.com, 800-745-3000

HOTTEST SHOWS

GARFUNKLE & OATES

Venetian

Nov. 7

venetian.com

702-414-1000

GODSMACK

Palms

Nov. 14

palms.com

702-942-7777

BRET MICHAELS

Orleans Showroom

Nov. 21-22

orleansarena.com

702-365-7111

BILLY GARDELL

Treasure Island

Nov. 27

treasureisland.com

702-894-7111

TANYA TUCKER

Golden Nugget

Dec. 3

goldennugget.com

702-385-7111

JOSH TURNER

Orleans Showroom

Dec. 4-5

orleansarena.com

702-365-7111

LEANN RIMES

Golden Nugget

Dec. 9

goldennugget.com

702-385-7111

MARTIN NIEVERA

M Resort

Dec. 12

themresort.com

702-797-1000



EVENTS & SHOWS « **Calendar**

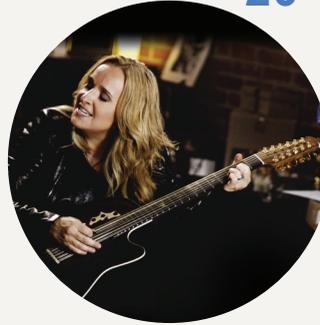
Nov. 10-12



NEVADA OPEN

Various golf courses, Mesquite
 nvopen.com, 888-711-4653
 Top golfers from around the world tee off in Mesquite Nov. 10-12 during the Nevada Open. The event is Nevada's longest running professional golf tournament. With more than 300 days of sunshine each year, Mesquite is the perfect venue for the event.

Nov. 20



MELISSA ETHERIDGE

Grand Sierra Resort, Reno
 grandsierraresort.com,
 775-789-2000
 Academy Award and Grammy-winning artist Melissa Etheridge is taking the stage at Grand Sierra Resort's all-new Grand Theatre on Nov. 20 to perform some of her greatest hits like "Come to My Window," "I'm The Only One," and "I Want to Come Over."

NOVEMBER

1-15

SALTORIYA

Eldorado, Reno
 eldoradoreno.com, 800-648-5966

7

FANTASIES IN CHOCOLATE

Grand Sierra Resort, Reno
 fantasiesinchocolate.com, 775-789-2000

LIFE IN COLOR

Reno Events Center, Reno
 lifeincolor.com

**11-
Dec. 31**

ETHEL M CHOCOLATES HOLIDAY CACTUS GARDEN

Ethel M Botanical Garden, Henderson
 ethelm.com, 702-435-2655

13

FOGHAT

Cactus Pete's, Jackpot
 ameristar.com, 775-755-2321

**13-
Jan. 3**

GLITTERING LIGHTS

Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Las Vegas
 glitteringlightslasvegas.com

**19-
Dec. 22**

POLAR EXPRESS

Eastgate Depot, Carson City
 vtrailway.com, 775-291-0208

20-21

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Eureka Opera House, Eureka
 co.eureka.nv.us, 775-237-6006

21

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Wells
 wellsnevada.com

SORORITY CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Austin
 austinnevada.com, 775-964-2200

**21-
Dec. 29**

POLAR EXPRESS

Nevada Northern Railway, Ely
 nnry.com, 775-289-2085

22

AMERICA'S GOT TALENT LIVE: THE ALL-STARS TOUR!

Grand Sierra Resort, Reno
 grandsierraresort.com, 800-501-2651

**24-
Dec. 27**

EBENEZER

Eldorado, Reno
 eldoradoreno.com, 800-648-5966

**26-
27**

CONTINENTAL TIRE LAS VEGAS INVITATIONAL

Orleans Arena, Las Vegas
 orleansarena.com, 702-284-7777

27-29

Dec.

V&T CANDY CANE EXPRESS

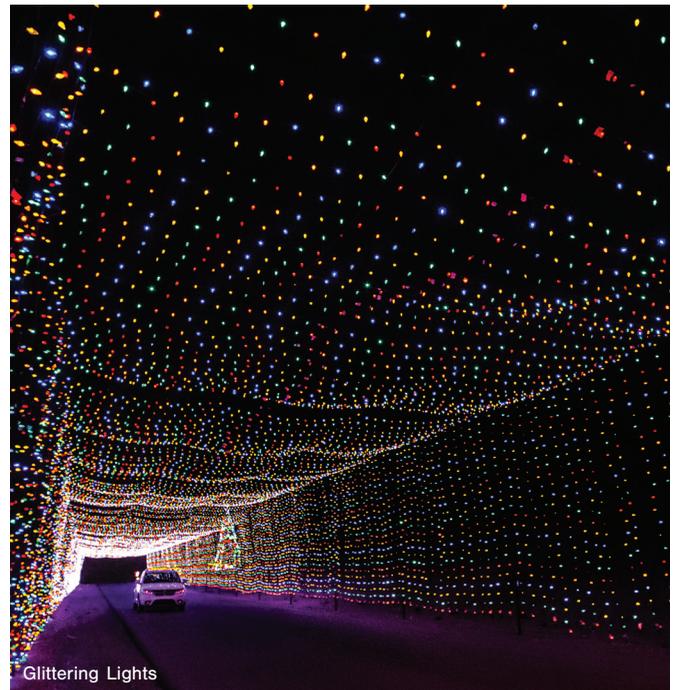
Virginia City
 visitvirginiacitynv.com, 775-847-7500

**5-6,
12-13**

**30-
Dec. 2**

FESTIVAL OF TREES

Elko
 elkocva.com, 775-738-4091



Glittering Lights

DAVID TINGEY, SHOTS FIRED PHOTOS

CALENDAR

Dec. 3-12



WRANGLER NATIONAL FINALS RODEO

Thomas & Mack Center, Las Vegas
 nfrexperience.com, 702-260-8605
 Referred to by some as the Super Bowl of Rodeo, the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas has delivered cowboy action for decades. Besides rodeo, the event offers Cowboy Christmas—a Western-themed marketplace featuring great holiday gift ideas.

Dec. 11-13



THE NUTCRACKER

Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, Reno
 avaballet.com, 775-762-5165
 The stage at the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts comes alive with a sugar plum fairy and dancing mice as A.V.A. Ballet Theatre presents the annual Nutcracker Ballet on Dec. 11-13.

DECEMBER

1-31

CHRISTMAS ON THE COMSTOCK

Virginia City
 visitvirginiacitynv.com, 775-847-7500

2-6

LAKE TAHOE FESTIVAL OF TREES & LIGHTS

Montbleu Resort Convention Center, Stateline
 festivaloftreeslaketahoe.com, 530-543-5909

4

WENDOVER IN LIGHTS

West Wendover
 westwendovercity.com, 866-299-2489

4-5

SPARKS HOMETOWNE CHRISTMAS

Victorian Square, Sparks
 cityofsparks.us, 775-353-5555

5

LAS VEGAS GREAT SANTA RUN

Downtown Las Vegas
 opportunityvillage.org, 702-259-3741

NEAL MCCOY

Cactus Pete's, Jackpot
 ameristar.com, 775-755-2321

**5-6,
12-13,
19-20**

SANTA TRAIN

Nevada Southern Railway, Boulder City
 nevadasouthern.com, 702-486-5933

7-9

WENDOVER ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

West Wendover
 westwendovercity.com, 866-299-2489

10-12

BOYD GAMING CHUTE-OUT RODEO

Orleans Arena, Las Vegas
 boydgamingevents.com, 702-284-7777

12

RENO SANTA CRAWL

Downtown Reno
 renosantacrawl.com

13

GINGERBREAD SOCIAL & AUCTION

Virginia City
 visitvirginiacitynv.com, 775-847-7500

18

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS CONTEST

Wells
 wellsnevada.com

**29 -
Jan. 2**

ZOOT SUIT RIOT

Eldorado, Reno
 eldoradoreno.com, 800-648-5966

31

HOTEL CALIFORNIA

Peppermill Concert Hall, Wendover
 wendoverfun.com, 800-217-0049

NEW YEARS EVE BRONC BASH

Elko
 elkocva.com, 775-738-4091

NEW YEARS EVE WITH UNITED COUNTRY

Mizpah Hotel, Tonopah
 mizpahhotel.net, 775-482-3030



Reno Santa Crawl

SYDNEY MARTINEZ/TRAVEL NEVADA

‘MONSTER FISH: IN SEARCH OF THE LAST RIVER GIANTS’

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S TRAVELING EXHIBITION DEBUTS IN THE BIGGEST LITTLE CITY.



MARK THEISSEN

The Terry Lee Wells Nevada Discovery Museum is welcoming the nationwide traveling debut of “Monster Fish: In Search of the Last River Giants”—a 6,000-square-foot traveling exhibition from *National Geographic*, coming to Reno Nov. 14. The exhibit—presented in partnership with the University of Nevada, Reno College of Science—will be at The Discovery for a limited engagement.

This incredible exhibit is exciting for northern Nevada as it has a local connection. University of Nevada, Reno professor and Nat Geo WILD series host of “Monster Fish,” Dr. Zeb Hogan, is at the heart of the experience. Dr. Hogan takes viewers on an around-the-world journey to explore colossal freshwater “monster” fish, their habitats, and the people that depend on them. Dr. Hogan played a key role in making Reno the first stop on the exhibit’s world tour. “Monster Fish” has spent nearly two decades searching for and studying rare, large freshwater fish species and these efforts are showcased in the exhibition.

“It is truly significant for The Discovery and our community that we were chosen as the first traveling stop for this exhibition,” says Mat Sinclair, executive director at The Discovery.

“Monster Fish: In Search of the Last River Giants” features life-size sculptures, hands-on interactive exhibits, and video installations that put you face-to-face with more than 20 species—each at

least six feet long and weighing more than 200 pounds. Guests will embark on a global journey to storied river basins with Dr. Hogan on his quest to find, research, and protect these freshwater giants and the habitats they call home.

Visitors can also test their survival skills in the obstacle course game “Monster Size Me” or they can assist Dr. Hogan in completing a series of scientific missions in “A Monster Mission,” a touch-table game. Guests can also attempt to gather enough people to equal the colossal weight of a 1,984-lb. white sturgeon in the game “Minnow or Monster?” Young visitors can go fishing with magnetic poles along a stylized riverbank and carefully release their catches back into the river through clear chutes, while older explorers take the “Fishin’ Decision” digital challenge to see how many fish species they can quickly decide to keep or release.

EXPERIENCE THE UNKNOWN

“Monster Fish: In Search of the Last River Giants”

Terry Lee Wells Nevada Discovery Museum, Reno
Through mid-April 2016
nvdn.org/monsterfish, 775-786-1000

ARTIFACTS & ARTISTRY

FAMILY FUN SATURDAY: EL DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS OR DAY OF THE DEAD

Nevada State Museum, Carson City
Nov. 7
museums.nevadaculture.org, 775-687-6953

“BREATHE ONTO THE MIRROR”

Sahara West Library, Las Vegas
Through Nov. 9
arts4nevada.org, 702-507-6222

LOST CITY MUSEUM NATIVE AMERICAN DAY

Lost City Museum, Overton
Nov. 14
museums.nevadaculture.org, 702-397-2193

“IN FOCUS: DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE”

Historic Fifth Street School Mayor’s Gallery, Las Vegas
Through Nov. 25
artslasvegas.org, 702-229-4631

SCHEELS

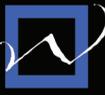


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LONE EAGLE Grille

Pastry chef Guido Landolt prepares about 200 Baked Tahoe desserts at a time. Photos: Megg Mueller.

LAKE TAHOE'S CELEBRATED DINING STAPLE IS ANYTHING BUT PREDICTABLE.

BY MEGG MUELLER

Life is short; eat dessert first. — author uncertain

Vanilla ice cream laced with toffee chips; a moist, gluten-free buckwheat brownie; and an expertly flambéed secret-recipe merengue towered atop an intricate molasses drizzle.

Take a moment to let your brain build a picture of this decadent dessert.

What you're now salivating for is the Baked Tahoe—the Lone Eagle Grille's take on the Baked Alaska that will have you forgetting its originator after one bite of this pine-cone-shaped indulgence. A bold statement perhaps, but that is what the Lone Eagle Grille's Chef de Cuisine Shane Hammett is all about.

The Baked Tahoe—a creation of Daniel Zajac and refined by fellow pastry chef Guido Landolt—is the last remaining item on the menu Shane inherited when he assumed the role of lead chef for the restaurant in 2012. Stepping into the formidable shoes before him, Shane insinuated himself into the restaurant's successful "high Tahoe" culture and made it his own.

UNWITTING INSPIRATION

Shane grew up in Sacramento, Calif., and he didn't realize it, but the stage was being set for his culinary career. He grew up hunting and fishing, and remembers his mom cooking duck in the crockpot, even though she wasn't a big fan. Her meals and those memories have informed the choices he makes today.

"My mom thinks it's crazy that I have duck on the menu, because she didn't like it," he says, laughing. "But she cooked it because we had it."

Being a chef wasn't Shane's dream until he was 17. While studying at the Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Program at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco, he realized he had a knack for creating amazing dishes. As he modestly puts it, he "ended up being successful at it."

He'd spent time in the Lake Tahoe area as a kid, hiking and snowboarding, and after graduating from culinary school, knew where he wanted to be.

"I spent seven years bouncing around the East Bay and Napa, but my wife and I wanted to live in Tahoe," he says.

CRYSTAL BLUE PERSUASION

The Lone Eagle Grille opened in the winter of 1994 and is arguably the most popular restaurant on the north shore, due in part to the spectacular lakeside views, but mostly to its creative dining options. With polished stone walls, grand high ceilings, rough-hewn woods, and two-story windows, Lone Eagle is both inviting and impressive. The first thing you see is the lounge with its incredible view of the crystal blue waters and soft sandy beaches of Lake Tahoe. Venturing in further, two immense stone fireplaces bookend the main dining area, with alpine-lodge inspired touches melding with elegant Mission-era lighting and colors.

The locale of Lone Eagle Grille plays an obvious role in the décor, but also the food. Shane's seasonal menus have taken the restaurant past its prime rib and French onion soup days, to feature such elegant and earthy items as a candy striped beet salad with a blue cheese fritter and candied pecans dressed with a pear vinaigrette, and a grilled prime Brandt strip loin with a brandied peppercorn mousse and bordelaise sauce. The freedom to create such seasonal delights in an alpine environment is not lost on Shane, who works with the Tahoe Food Hub—a local nonprofit that connects area farmers with local restaurants. Using locally sourced foods sparks Shane's creativity.

"I love my job. I get to buy the best ingredients and create whatever I want," he says. "Right now, I get better produce because it's from within 100 miles of us. I'm using organic polenta, heirloom tomatoes, lemon-infused olive oil...all from local farmers."



MEGG MUELLER



TOP & BOTTOM: HYATT REGENCY LAKE TAHOE

Top: The view from the patio is unparalleled. Middle: A fresh take on a beet salad includes a bleu cheese fritter. Bottom: Tables by the window make for a gorgeous dining experience.



Chef Shane Hammet

STAYING CONNECTED

The food community surrounding Lake Tahoe is growing, and is where Shane continues to look for inspiration. From going out to eat and seeing what other chefs are creating, to searching for new ways to be involved in food, being a part of the area's food scene is reflected in the meals he creates for Lone Eagle Grille.

"Tahoe Food Hub is a big part of that. We did crop planning with a few growers, and all the Hyatt chefs visited some farms to see what they were planting. We have these relationships with the people growing the food," he explains.

Shane is also a big proponent of using all the food-related resources of the area. To that end, he created an industry dinner where farmers and other restaurant owners and staff were invited to get together and mingle. Such events spur his motivation to keep his menus creative and engaging. His staff is another huge component.

"I've got the best kitchen team I've ever worked with," he says. "From people who've been with us more than 20 years to people who just came on board. They are fantastic."

And a fantastic experience is what Shane hopes his guests remember.

"Dining is emotional, and food is nurturing. A meal needs to have that connection. I hope the memory of their dining experience at Lone Eagle is the one they compare all other dining experiences to," he says. ▽



PHOTOS: HYATT REGENCY LAKE TAHOE

Top: The angus burger with fried egg, bacon, herb aioli, and boursin cheese fondue is a tasty step above a traditional burger at lunch. Above: The bison tenderloin is served with bone marrow butter and garnished with cherries.



PLAN YOUR TRIP

Lone Eagle Grille
 111 Country Club Dr.
 Incline Village, NV 89451
 loneeaglegrille.com, 775-886-6899

MORE TASTY TIPS

- The Hyatt Tahoe VIP card—available for locals with proof of residency in zip codes 89402 through 89820 and 96140 through 96162—offers 20-percent off dining and the spa.
- During Tahoe Tuesdays from 5:30-8 p.m., listen to live music along with food and drink specials.
- Happy hour runs Sunday through Wednesday. Enjoy half-off wine by the glass from 3-6 p.m. in the lounge.



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- Trailer Hitches
- All your Trailer needs



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Above: Former Lieutenant Governor Brian Krolicki (left) and Governor Brian Sandoval display a silver bar used to make sesquicentennial medallions, provided by Coeur Mining. Inset: The official sesquicentennial book "Nevada: 150 Years in the Silver State" features a combination of Silver State writing and photography.

Nevada 150 Legacy Projects

THE SILVER STATE'S SPECIAL BIRTHDAY BROUGHT LASTING CHANGES.

BY ERIC CACHINERO

Sesquicentennial. The impossible word is back. Not in the sense that we're celebrating Nevada's 150th birthday all over again, but that reverberations from the yearlong celebration in 2014 are continuing to echo throughout the state. Nevada's sesquicentennial came and went; swelling pride from the streets of Jarbidge to the Las Vegas Strip and everywhere in-between.

The Nevada 150 Commission—the organization that spearheaded the celebration—approved a seemingly endless supply of sesquicentennial events, education, special projects, and grants, and the momentum hasn't ceased. The commission hoped facilitate several projects following the momentous birthday, some of which are here for the long haul.

Oct. 31, 2014 was certainly a day in Nevada's history not soon forgotten, and thanks to the hard work of the Nevada 150 Commission and countless dedicated Nevadans, talk of the sesquicentennial will continue as we usher in another 150 years.



Left: Nevada politicians and representatives applaud the unveiling of the Valley of Fire U.S. postage stamp. Below: Artist Benjamin Victor poses with his President Abraham Lincoln bronze relief.

HISTORICAL MARKER LEGACY PROJECT

In September, Governor Brian Sandoval announced completion of a project that promotes and preserves Nevada's history statewide. Thanks to collaboration between the Nevada 150 Commission, sign company YESCO, and other community partners, 116 of the more than 260 state historical markers have been replaced. Many of the markers fall victim to vandalism and disrepair, and some contain outdated wording.

"Our state's culture and heritage will be remembered for years to come through the renewal of these important historic markers around the great state of Nevada," Sandoval said, while speaking at an unveiling ceremony in Las Vegas.

Monetary contributions from partners reached approximately \$215,000, (\$165,000 provided by the Nevada 150 Commission and \$50,000 in in-kind contributions from YESCO) allowing the project to be completed in record time. Typically the State Historic Preservation Office budget only allows for one or two markers to be replaced per year. Without these contributions, it may have taken 60-100 years to replace that many markers.

LINCOLN BRONZE

In February, former Lieutenant Governor Brian Krolicki, along with members of the Nevada Sesquicentennial Commission, presented a bronze relief of President Abraham Lincoln to the Nevada State Senate. The relief is 48 inches in diameter, and hangs in the senate chamber.

Artist Benjamin Victor, who created the piece as a Sesquicentennial Legacy Project, has previously graced the world with his

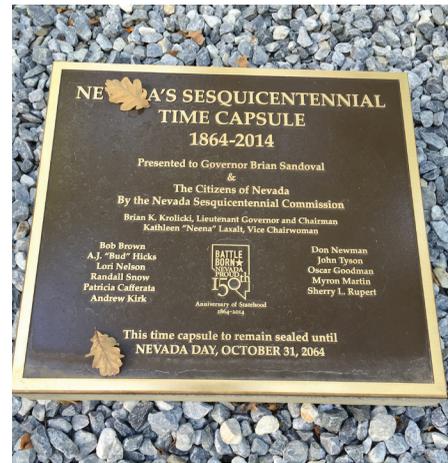
creations. His Sarah Winnemucca statue resides in Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol, with a replica piece located in the Nevada State Capitol in Carson City. The artist has also created a sculpture of Helen J. Stewart, which graces the ground of the Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park in Las Vegas.

TIME CAPSULES

In May, Gov. Sandoval, Lt. Gov. Krolicki, and members of the Nevada 150 Commission gathered at the Nevada State Museum at the Springs Preserve Las Vegas to literally preserve history. A time capsule was buried at the location, with plans to be reopened in 50 years, when Nevadans will be celebrating the state's bicentennial.

The capsule is buried on a pathway connecting the Springs Preserve with the Nevada State Museum. Contents include items





from the yearlong sesquicentennial celebration, including letters from Gov. Sandoval and Lt. Gov. Krolicki, Nevada 150 commemorative medallions, the sesquicentennial final report, and various Las Vegas-themed tchotchkes. Also included were mementos from the All-Star Sesquicentennial Concert at the Smith Center, Las Vegas' first Nevada Day Parade; all eight *Nevada Magazine* special issues, and more.

"Our goal with the time capsule is to capture the emotions and highlights of this past year, delivering to future Nevadans the opportunity to tangibly discover this part of their rich heritage," said Lt. Gov. Krolicki, while speaking at the time-capsule burial.

There was also a separate time capsule buried on the Nevada State Capitol grounds. The Capitol capsule contains a commemorative belt buckle; copper medallions; a copy of the official sesquicentennial poem, "Dame Nevada;" and *Nevada Magazine* special issues, among other various knickknacks.

Left: People celebrate in front of Bowers Mansion during the Pioneer Proud Picnic. Above: A plaque commemorating the sesquicentennial time capsule is located at the Nevada State Capitol.

NEVADA 150 EXHIBIT

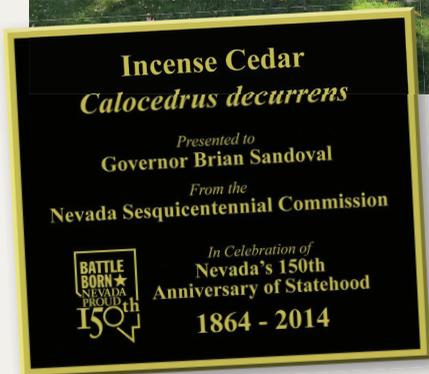
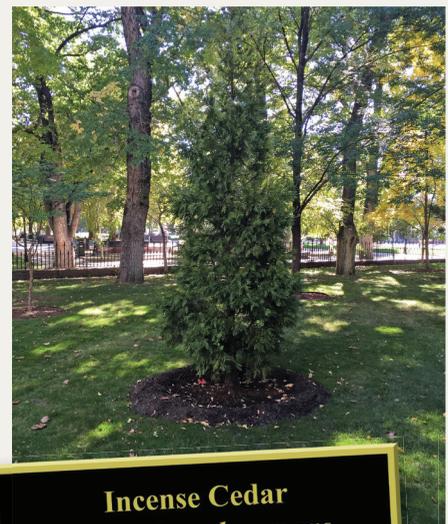
Due to be located in the newly renamed "Battle Born Hall" on the second floor of the Capitol building, the Nevada 150 exhibit will soon be here to stay. The collection features a handmade saddle using sesquicentennial silver medallions by J.M. Capriolas in Elko, a diorama titled "Home Means Nevada" using Silver State materials, a replica of the Governor's Mansion using historical Nevada playing cards, and many other commemorative objects.

Before arriving at its final destination at the Capitol, the exhibit traveled to the Nevada Legislature in Carson City, the Northeastern Nevada Museum in Elko, and the Grant Sawyer Building in Las Vegas.

BOOKS & GRANTS

The Nevada 150 Foundation—an organization responsible for completing the final directions of the Nevada 150 Commission—has also helped education and areas of historical significance through the offering of grants. In April, the foundation awarded \$50,000 in total education grants in Washoe County and to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to support Nevada history in schools. In addition, more than 100 copies of the official sesquicentennial book "Nevada: 150 Years in the Silver State" have been donated to public libraries throughout Nevada.

The Nevada Indian Commission also received a grant in the amount of \$20,000 to preserve oral history surrounding the Stewart Indian School in Carson City. The grant is being used to hire an oral historian to compile in-depth accounts of personal experiences and reflections related to the historic school. Audio recordings of the interviews are being archived with the Indian Commission, State Library and Archives, and Special Collections at the University of Nevada, Reno. ▾



Sesquicentennial Tree

In October, the Nevada Sesquicentennial Commission presented Governor Brian Sandoval with a special tree to in recognition of the sesquicentennial. The incense cedar tree is planted on the southwest lawn of the Capitol building and serves as a lasting reminder of the momentous milestone.



Nevada 150 License Plates

If you haven't purchased a Nevada 150 commemorative license plate yet, you'll want to get in gear, as the plates are only available through 2016. Nevada residents can purchase their plates online at dmv.nv.com or at DMV locations throughout the state.

Winnemucca

There's More Than Meets the Eye...

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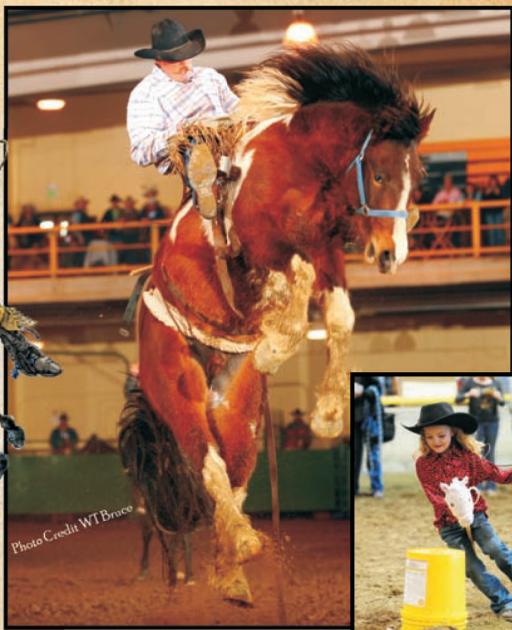




Photo Credit: WT Bruce

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BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES OLD AND NEW STEEP SPIRIT IN THE SILVER STATE.

BY NELLIE DAY & ERIC CACHINERO

Suds, booze, brew, hooch, firewater...the list goes on. Many Nevadans love their alcoholic beverages. And though the days of running illegal moonshine across the Colorado River to buyers in Arizona are long gone (we think), there are other ways the Silver State imbibes. Breweries and distilleries have become an important part of the culture in many towns across the state—both rural and urban—each with its own atmosphere and flavors. Buy your booze from an in-state manufacturer, and decide for yourself which one best satiates your thirst.

With so many alcohol-oriented social hubs popping up all over Nevada, there's no way we could cover them all, but we hope this list gives some insight into some of the clever concoctions cooking up across the state.

SOUTHERN NEVADA

CRAFTHAUS BREWERY

Boasting Nevada's only female head brewer, it's no surprise CraftHaus Brewery in Henderson threw a Glitter Bomb Party to celebrate its first anniversary and the release of its Glitter Bomb sour table beer in September. But if you think the innovative team of Dave and Wyndee Forrest is all fluff, think again. The husband-and-wife owners took it upon themselves to lobby for change in Henderson licensing laws, allowing craft breweries throughout the state to open without the previously required video poker machines.

CraftHaus is known for its IPAs and Saisons, though its seasonal craft brew selections offer something for nearly everyone. Having paved the way for other brewers to get off the ground easier in the state, the pair is very enthusiastic about supporting the beer community. They offer beer from other local outlets in the Pallet Lounge, which, like the taproom, has large windows that let the guests see the brewery team—another husband-and-wife pair—in action.

Aside from traditional events like tastings and tours, CraftHaus offers a selection of beer-centric activities. Groups can enjoy childhood games like Connect Four, or they can get physical during Booze Yoga. Those who prefer to sit back and observe can do that as well. CraftHaus offers movie screenings of classics like "Sharknado 3," in addition to dinner and brunch pairings with some of Vegas' standout eateries like Downtown Las Vegas' O Face Doughnuts.—*Nellie Day*

LAS VEGAS DISTILLERY

Nevada's first post-Prohibition distillery has all the hard alcohol needed to brighten your spirits. Whether you want to learn about the distilling process or taste some of Grandma's Apple Pie Moonshine the locals are talking about, Booze District pioneer George Racz has you covered. The distillery offers daily guided tours and tastings, which include its vodka, gin, rum, moonshine, standard whiskey, bourbon, and Rumskey—a 50-50 blend of rum and whiskey.

Larger groups can schedule private tours or rent out the distillery for private events. Speaking of events, George and his head distiller, Sid Kindler II, have been known to throw quite the party since opening in 2011. They celebrate everything from the day Prohibition was repealed to the barreling and release of their next genius batch of craft spirits.

Their next big shindig takes place at the distillery Saturday, Nov. 14, when the pair plans to release seven new whiskeys, including a single-malt barley, rye, oat, and millet whiskey. Those looking for a side of education with their shenanigans are also in luck. George offers a variety of courses that focus on the distilling process.

Photo opportunities also abound at the Las Vegas Distillery. It's hard to walk out of the place without a bottle of something special, but it's equally as difficult to pass the famous "Copper Angels"—George's two gigantic pot stills—without a snap or two.—*Nellie Day*



Opposite page: Old School Brewing Company's Christine Johnson (aka Redd) fills a growler with beer. This page: CraftHaus Brewery owners Dave and Wyndee Forrest (top) stand beneath a brewery sign. CraftHaus beer kegs (middle) include signature lime-green labels. Bottom: Las Vegas Distillery's George Racz (left) and Sid Kindler II pose near the distillery's equipment.



PHOTOS: KAMI BECKWITH



BAD BEAT BREWING

Bad Beat Brewing owner Nathan Hall might have had gambling on his mind when he initially moved to Vegas to play poker professionally when he was 21. Though he put every last penny of his savings into opening the brewery in July 2014, he didn't see this venture as a gamble—and it shows.

"Making it in the beer world isn't a gamble, it's a game of skill. At Bad Beat Brewing, we play to drink, and drink to win," reads the motto on the brewery's website.

If your life motto also involves playing, then you'll appreciate the trivia, shuffleboard, darts, original Nintendo Entertainment System, and card games offered at Bad Beat Brewing. Somehow, it's doubtful you'll go just for the shuffleboard, though. Bad Beat offers six craft beers year-round, including the poker-themed Ante Up Amber, the Bluffing Isn't Weisse Hefeweizen, and the Ace in the Hole basil pale ale. The brewery also provides a selection of rotating and guest taps.

The creativity doesn't end with the catchy names, however. Nathan and his team go out of their way to keep guests on their toes. For instance, if you happened to stumble upon the brewery around 10 a.m. on Sept. 13, you would've encountered a gaggle of pajama-wearing, beer-drinking adults who were celebrating the release of Morning Pay Off imperial breakfast stout with a little food from Kraken Cafe. A "bad beat" may be a seemingly strong hand that nevertheless loses in poker, but Nathan's crafts are flush in flavor and creativity—a winning combination. —Nellie Day



OLD SCHOOL BREWING COMPANY

The newest entry into southern Nevada's craft beer scene is Old School Brewing Company, which opened in the northwest part of Las Vegas in January. The brewpub currently has six of its beers on tap, including a root beer porter and a peach honey blond. It's also known for its food menu, which features crafty concoctions like a bacon pb&j and a whiskey bread pudding.

Owner Jim Wilson and his two partners purposely designed Old School Brewing to be part family friendly, part Sin City fun and full Seattle Seahawks supporters. The restaurant portion of the brewpub offers old-fashion Milton Bradley-type board games even the kids can enjoy, while the rowdier pub side features Cards Against Humanity, Drunk Quest, and an Atari filled with old school arcade games many of us grew up playing.

In addition to being known to rock a kilt when his March Irish Red Ale is on tap, Jim is also famous for bringing people together. The brewpub offers Tabletop Tuesdays where all are welcome to bring their board games, as well as Geeks Who Drink live-action trivia. Then there are the bi-monthly speed-dating events and lock-and-key parties where participants must find their other half. Being a Seahawks bar, Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays are naturally dedicated to the NFL. True to his Pacific Northwest roots—Jim started homebrewing while working as a mechanic for a Porsche race car team sponsored by Portland Brewing Co.—the brewpub also sponsors the Washington State University Alumni group on college football Saturdays. —Nellie Day





Opposite page: Patrons of Bad Beat Brewing (top) sip several of the beers on-tap. Bad Beat's The Heater imperial stout (middle) is brewed with Serrano peppers. The team at Old School Brewing Company (bottom) poses next to brewing equipment. This page: Old School offers Tabletop Tuesdays game night, where guests can drink while they play.

KAMI BECKWITH

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PHOTOS: ERIC CACHINERO

From top down: Branded Hearts Distillery offers several different types of rum and whiskey, and is constantly cooking up new spirits. Single malt scotch is pulled straight from the barrel and delivered to a tasting glass. Branded Hearts co-owner Joshua Nichols leans across the distillery's tasting counter.



MEGG MUELLER

NORTHERN NEVADA BRANDED HEARTS DISTILLERY

What is a branded heart? When owners and founders Joshua Nichols and Ryan Cherrick opened their distillery, they wanted not only to brand the oak heart barrels that they use to flavor their spirits, but also sought to brand the hearts of each and every person lucky enough to have a taste. The duo came on to the Reno scene in August 2014 and have been perfecting recipes—and trying some completely new ones—ever since.

Branded Hearts does things differently. From charring their own oak barrels on site to experimenting by warming the barrels in the setting Sierra sun and even using unorthodox ingredients, their spirits certainly reflect the hard work and care that is put into creating them. Their signature Dark Panela Rum—smooth rum made using panela (unrefined whole cane sugar)—is available in both 90 and 120 proof. Branded Hearts Single Malt Whiskey—revered for its complex characteristics and chocolate and toffee flavors—is made using malted barley. The spirits are cooked up in the on-site 1,000-liter-capacity still—an impressive contraption that uses mineral oil to ensure proper heat distribution.

Besides their spirits, Branded Hearts is working with several local businesses to spread the love throughout the community. IceCycle Creamery in Reno serves up “A Gentlemen’s Affair”—an ice cream Sunday made with pecan, pralines, butterscotch, and Branded Hearts Single Malt Whiskey. Nevada Brining Company has created a boozy pickle using Branded Hearts Single Malt Whiskey. They even send their used whiskey barrels to Under the Rose Brewing Company, which uses them to brew up special beers before sending them back to Branded Hearts to be reused, and the cycle continues.

Branded Hearts is open to the public and has a comfortable and rustic tasting room, where tasters interact directly with Joshua and Ryan. The duo also has plans to convert a portion of the distillery into a lounge area where guests can sip on local spirits and watch the distilling action happen. Not surprisingly, Branded Hearts has no intentions of slowing down.

“We would like to be known throughout the west as one of the most innovative and sought-after spirits labels,” says Ryan.

“It’s all about quality,” adds Joshua.—*Eric Cachinero*

VERDI LOCAL DISTILLERY

Verdi Local Distillery is testament to the saying “good things come in small packages.” As the smallest distillery in the world (unofficially, pending validation from Guinness World Records), the 744-square-foot operation specializes in producing flavored whiskeys and other unconventional spirits. The distillery is owned and operated by husband-and-wife team Jeremy and Katey Bauman, who do all of the distilling, bottling, labeling, and the many other jobs that come with producing their distilled drinks.

The Baumans pride themselves on doing things the nontraditional way, and it shows in their creations. Apple Cinnamon Whiskey—the distillery’s first release—is a hand-crafted spirit with hints of cinnamon that complement the subtle sweetness of apples, made using real and all-natural ingredients. Other whiskeys include Lemon Whiskey—a special summer release perfect for enjoying outdoors—and the newly released Mahogany Whiskey—a corn- and rye-based whiskey that is aged for a minimum of 30 days with locally-harvested mahogany. If bloody Mary’s are more your thing, try Garlic Whiskey blended with Verdi Local Distillery’s award-winning bloody Mary mix. If whiskey isn’t doing it for you, the distillery also produces Yeti Jackalope Gin—an orange/yellow-colored gin that is distilled with juniper berries, Nevada-grown juniper needles and leaves, and orange peel.

It’s not just the spirits that have spirit, though. The distillery offers warm and inviting décor that keeps tasters occupied while they sip. Guests can swing by and see where the action happens, or they can grab a taste at several bars and stores around Reno.—*Eric Cachinero*



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SYDNEY MARTINEZ/TRAVEL NEVADA

RUBY MOUNTAIN BREWING COMPANY

Anyone who's ever been to the Ruby Mountains in the winter has witnessed their splendor. Tall, snow-capped peaks seem to carry on to the ends of the state. These peaks are covered in cool, clean snow, which is what gives Ruby Mountain Brewing Company beer the taste it's become known for.

When owners Steve and Maggie Safford entered their Angel Creek Amber Ale into the Great American Beer Festival in 1996, their brewing success took off. Fast-forward to 2015, and Ruby Mountain Brewing Company now can be found in stores across the region. With many different beers available in bottles—including Angel Creek Amber Ale, Wild West Hefeweizen, Bristlecone Brown Porter, and Vienna-style Lager—Ruby Mountain is truly a success story.

Part of what lends to the Safford's success, besides delicious beer, is their location and the experience they offer. Many breweries never offer the chance to meet the people that create the beer; that's not the case here. Located roughly 10 miles south of Wells in Clover Valley, the tours are by appointment only and Steve himself pours the beer. It's humble Nevada spirit that makes this gem in the desert so much more worth the trip.

SEVEN TROUGHS DISTILLING CO.

In Nevada, history can lend spirit to spirits, and Seven Troughs Distilling Co. naturally achieves this. Located in Sparks, the distillery aims to create spirits using old-fashioned ingredients and methods. "We're intensely handcrafted," says CEO Tom Adams, whose passion for distilling spirits started at a young age. Such is the case with Old Commissary—a 100-percent barley white whiskey that is reportedly made using the same recipe that Nevada's first commercial whiskey was made with circa 1862. Seven Troughs' Recession Proof Moonshine also lends itself to history, modeling a 19th century recipe for sweet-mash corn whiskey.

Seven Troughs isn't strictly whiskey, though. The distillery carries Black Rock Rum, Reno Rodeo Legacy Vodka, and is in collaboration with Great Basin Brewing Company in Reno to create a Great Basin Single Malt Gin.

Seven Troughs is also intensely local. The distillery sources grains from area farms, ensuring ingredients come from producers that are as passionate about the quality of their grains as Seven Troughs is about their spirits. In addition to being able to drop by and try spirits straight from the source, those curious to taste for themselves can expect to find Seven Troughs being served and sold in many bars and stores in northern Nevada. ▾



SEVEN TROUGHS DISTILLING CO.



ERIC CACHINERO

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Henderson, NV 89011
crafthausbrewery.com, 702-415-9184

Las Vegas Distillery

330 Eastgate Rd.
Henderson, NV 89011
lasvegasdistillery.com, 702-629-7534

Bad Beat Brewing

7380 Eastgate Rd., Ste. 110
Henderson, NV 89011
badbeatbrewing.com, 702-463-4199

Old School Brewing Company

8410 W. Desert Inn Rd.
Las Vegas, NV 89117
oldschoolbrewing.com, 702-273-9782

Branded Hearts Distillery

121 Woodland Ave #160
Reno, NV 89523
brandedheartsdistillery.com, 775-336-8195

Verdi Local Distillery

1155 Old Highway 40 Unit B
Verdi, NV 89439
verdilocaldistillery.com, 775-247-4628

Ruby Mountain Brewing Company

H.C. 60 Box 100
Clover Valley, NV 89835
rubymountainbrewing.com, 775-752-2337

Seven Troughs Distilling Co.

1155 Watson Way, Ste. 5
Sparks, NV 89431
7troughsdistilling.com, 775-219-9403

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Fallon, NV 89406
churchillvineyards.com, 775-423-4000

Sanders Family Winery
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Pahrump, NV 89061
sanderswinery.com, 775-727-1776

Tahoe Ridge Winery & Bistro
1105 S. Carson St.
Carson City, NV 89701
tahoeridgewinery.com, 775-473-1790

Pahrump Valley Winery
3810 Winery Rd.
Pahrump, NV 89048
pahrumpwinery.com, 775-751-7800



ERIC CACHINERO

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CAN!

According to *Time* magazine, the first can of beer was sold on Jan. 24, 1935. Be sure to wish canned beer a happy belated by cracking a cold one in its honor.



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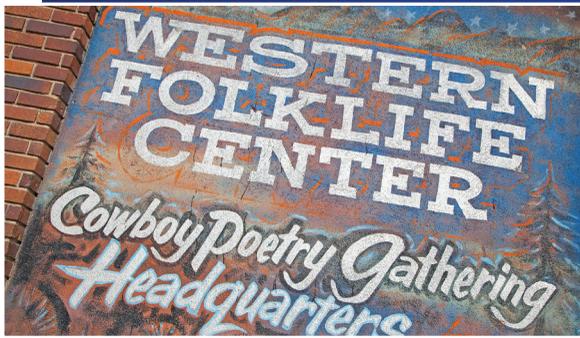
Elko

EXPECTEDLY, THIS NORTHEASTERN TOWN IS HOME TO EVERYTHING UNEXPECTED.

BY MEGG MUELLER

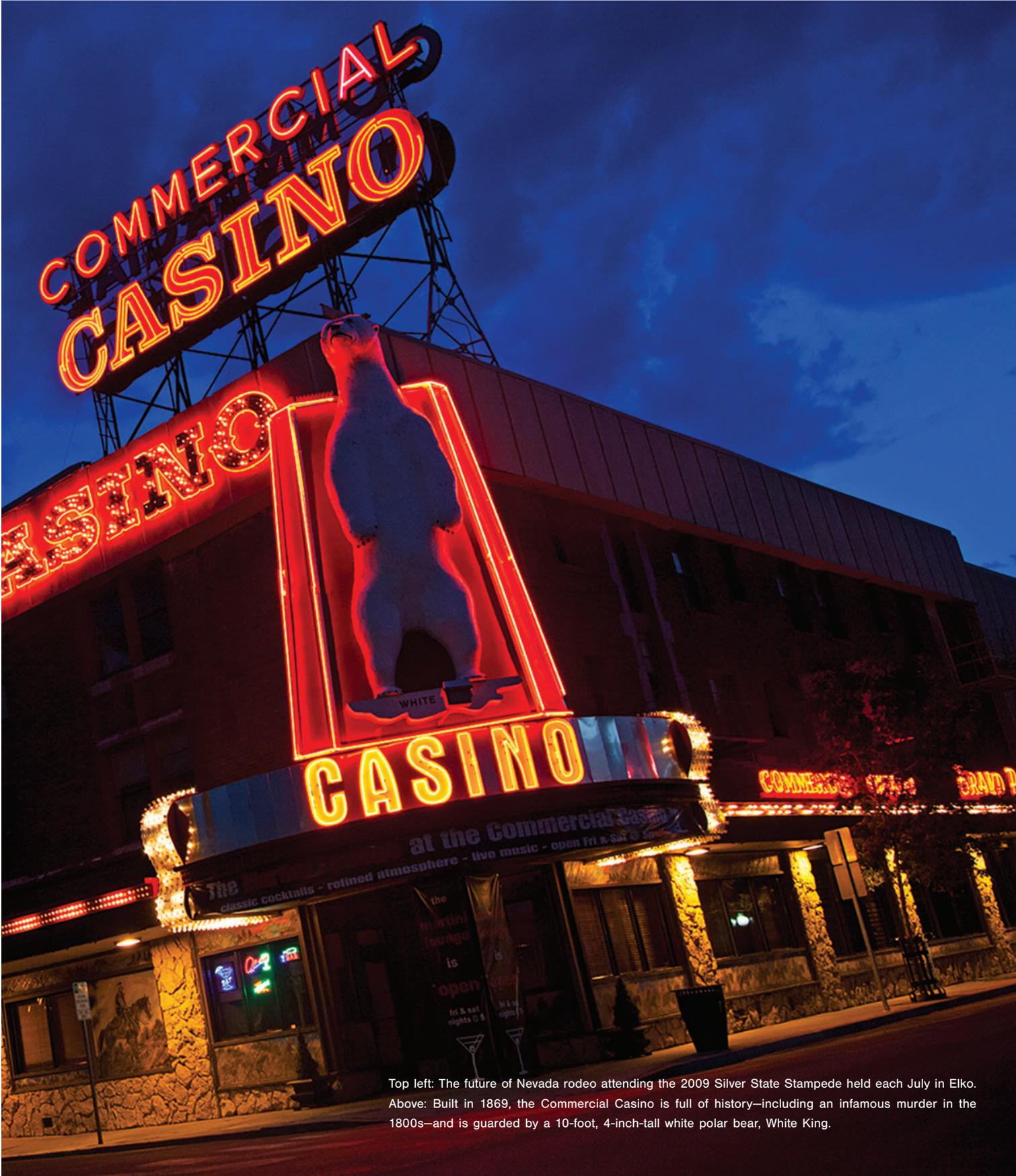


DINI ESPLIN



SYDNEY MARTINEZ/TRAVEL NEVADA





Top left: The future of Nevada rodeo attending the 2009 Silver State Stampede held each July in Elko. Above: Built in 1869, the Commercial Casino is full of history—including an infamous murder in the 1800s—and is guarded by a 10-foot, 4-inch-tall white polar bear, White King.

SYDNEY MARTINEZ/TRAVEL NEVADA

Great expectations can sometimes lead to disappointment; no expectations can create a sense of boredom. Go ahead and toss both those notions out the window, if you please. This is Elko we're talking about.

"We were a cow town, a railroad town, and a sheep town. Now we're a mining town," says Don Newman, executive director of the Elko Convention & Visitors Authority and Elko Convention Center. "Each of those industries has lent themselves to the town's diverse culture."

This melting pot of people, economic history, and geographic diversity makes Elko's popularity in our Tour Around Nevada 2015 contest no surprise. The town was also a winner in our 2010 vote. So what makes the area so special it garners national accolades despite its relatively small size? I'm glad you asked:



- National Basque Festival
- Lamoille Canyon
- Elko Motorcycle Jamboree
- California Trail Interpretive Center
- National Cowboy Poetry Gathering
- Ruby Mountains
- Northeastern Nevada Museum
- Western Folklife Center

Numerous car shows, a county fair, the Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival, award-winning snowmobiling, incredible dining, and so much more. For a town that incorporated just 98 years ago, that's an impressive list.

RIDING IN ON A RAIL

The path to Elko was laid years before it officially became a town as hundreds of thousands of people crossed the valley in search of land, gold, and adventure. The California Trail covered more than 2,000 miles and went through Elko County, leaving a few settlers who discovered the gentle terrain along the Humboldt River was worth more than a passing glance.

The town of Elko first drew attention in 1868 when Central Pacific Railroad built a hub in the once-desolate county. In no time the town blossomed; in 1869 it became the county seat and by 1873, home to the state's first university. Elko wasn't kidding around; it was here to stay and in the early 1900s the population flourished as gold rush towns popped up all around and the Western Pacific Railroad came to town.

Eventually the gold waned, but Elko continued to be an important hub for the transportation of goods between Reno and Salt Lake City; it is still the largest city that sits between the two metropolitan areas today.

STEP BACK TO THE PERFECT PLACE IN TIME

Elko's location may seem remote to some, but its vantage point to the Ruby Mountains is inarguably perfect. A stone's throw to the south-east—past the bedroom community of Spring Creek, past tiny, historic Lamoille—the mountains give refuge to hunters, hikers, campers, fish-



PHOTOS: MEGG MUELLER

Left: The California Trail Interpretive Center. Top: Australian cowboy poet Carol Heuchan regales the crowd at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in 2015. Above: The Elko County Courthouse was completed in 1911. It is the second building to have been the county courthouse.

Pasty BASQUE

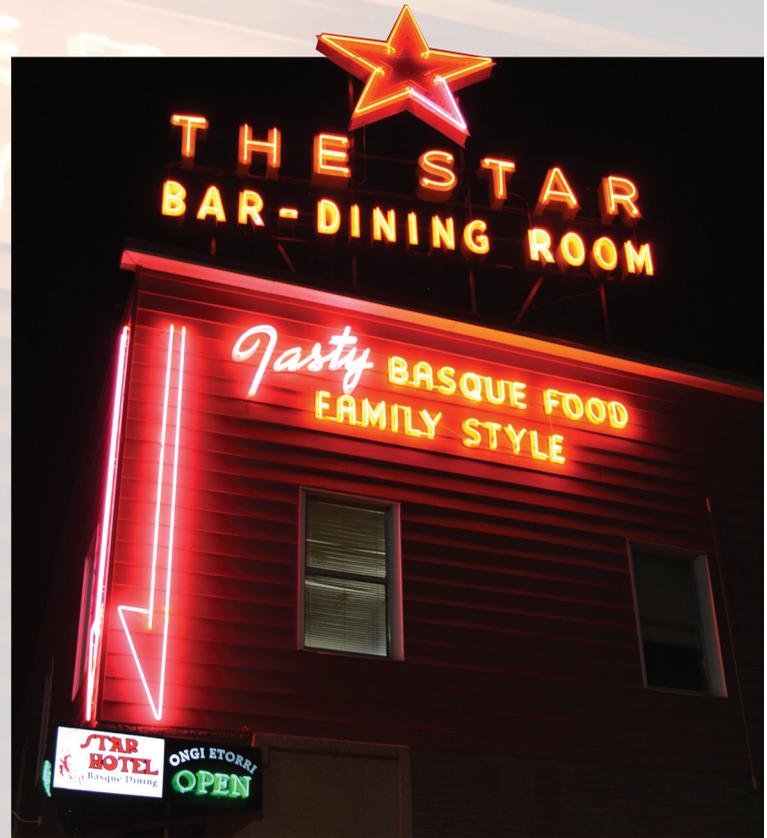
ermen, skiers, and others, but mostly to incredible splendor.

The landscape presents the dichotomy of desert and mountains like only Nevada can, and it draws people in just as it did all those years ago. But today, many look no further than Elko for a place to call home. Matthew Valdez and his family have lived in the Elko area a little more than three years. Matthew found work in Elko when the economy was depressed, but it was the community that really affected him.

“What has left a lasting impression on me is the refreshing optimism,” he explains. “When faced with low gold prices or droughts, I have seen many locals shrug in such a way that lets you know they have been through hard times before and have weathered them. I have come to appreciate the people here who embody that optimism authentically.”

Authenticity is rampant, and Elko is eager to share it. The National Cowboy Poetry Gathering began in Elko 31 years ago as a small gathering of cowboys eager to share their tales and songs of life on the range. Each year the festival grows as thousands come from around the globe to immerse themselves in one of the last authentic examples of cowboy culture.

The California Trail Interpretive Center—just west of the city—is an educational, immersive experience about the lives of settlers who traveled those long miles in search of a better life. At the Northeastern Nevada Museum, a world-class collection of Western art is being built and just across the museum you can find the bones of a 2 million-year-old Mastadon found in the area. It doesn’t get more real than that.



MEGG MUELLER

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NORTH AMERICA

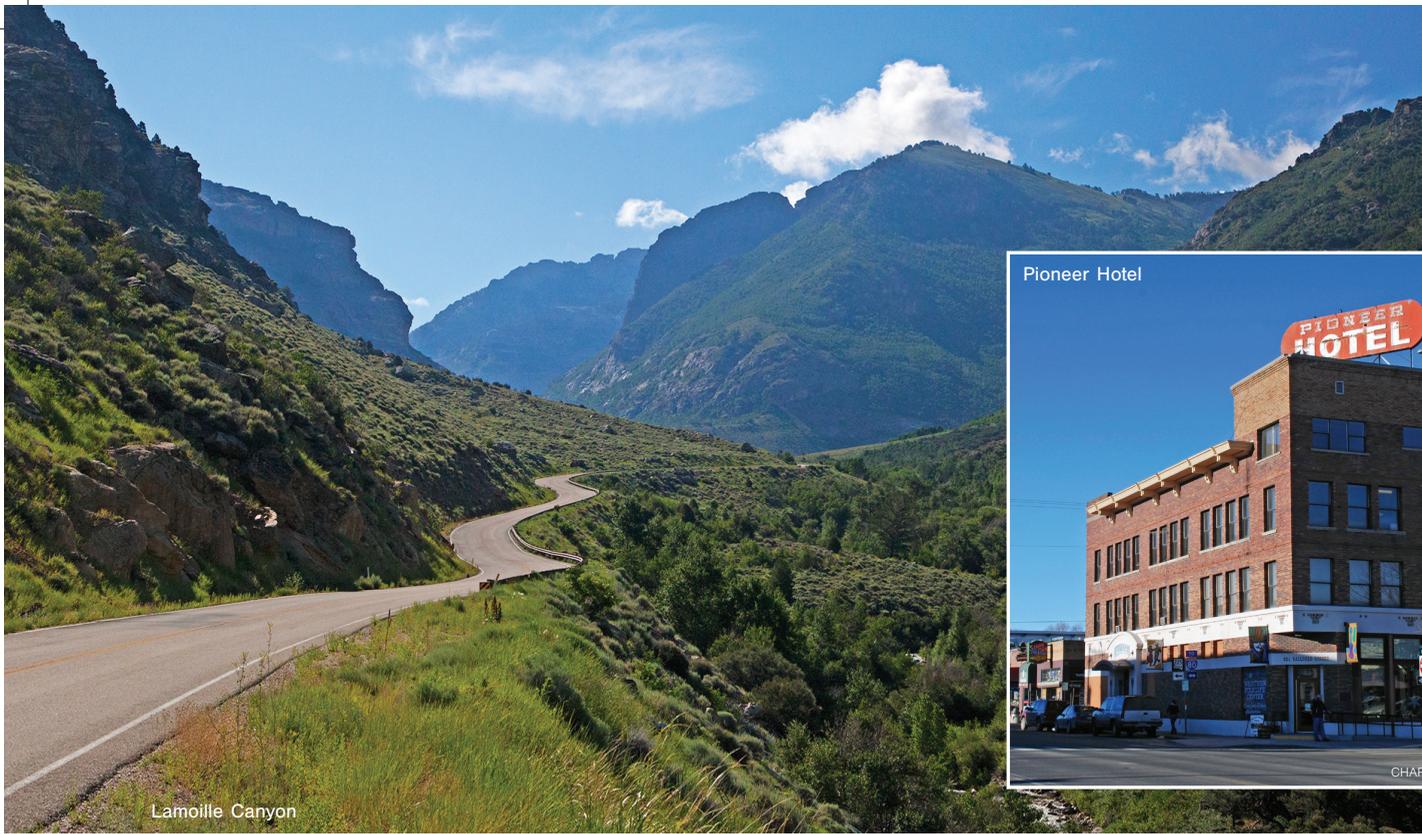
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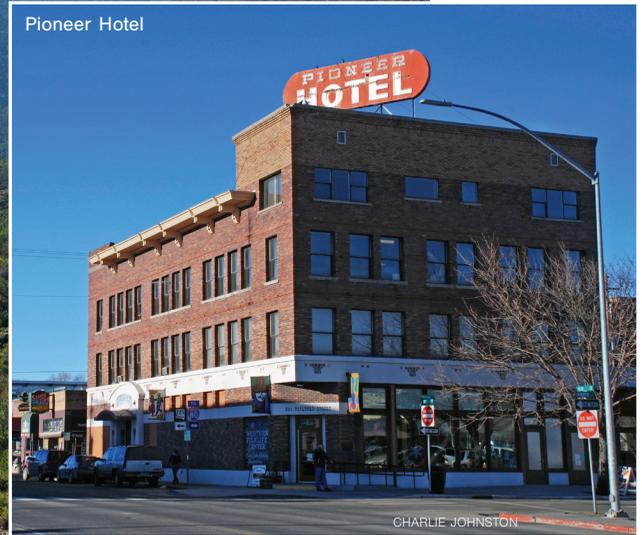
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SYDNEY MARTINEZ/TRAVEL NEVADA

COME WITH AN OPEN MIND

Expect the unexpected. It's Elko's motto, and it embodies what happens to most visitors.

"People haven't expected to have a meal like they did at The Star, or see the Will James collection, or find the California Trail center," Don says. "People will find that there's a lot of people in Elko that have lived all over the world. That lends itself to that unexpected experience."

The Basque culture lends a major flavor experience, quite literally. Perhaps the best-known Basque restaurant in Nevada, The Star has been serving delicious, authentic Basque food for more than 100 years. Another incredible Basque-American restaurant—Toki Ona—is also in Elko. Expected, perhaps. Some of the best sushi in the state can be found at The Flying Fish, or Blue Moon. Luciano's for delicious Italian; Machi's for upscale dining; McAdoo's for delightful breakfasts; B.J. Bull for tasty pasties; in a word, unexpected.

So what can you expect in Elko, exactly? Let's let the locals sum it up.

"People should expect to find some pretty diverse and friendly people when they come here, too," Don says. "There's lot of old timers that have been here for a long time."

"Elko is a place rich in history, with rugged, desolate beauty accentuating the general tenaciousness and determination of those who have settled here. Whenever I can, I will gladly listen to the stories of the old timers I happen to meet. Those folks who have family trees with roots running deep here have amazing tales to share," Matt says.

Elko is by far the largest city to win the Tour Around Nevada, and as such, there's just not enough room for all that makes it so amazing. ▾



Established: 1868
 Incorporated: 1917
 Population: 20,300
 (census.gov)
 Elevation: 5,067

CONTACT

Elko Convention & Visitors Authority
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Come meet Publisher Janet Geary and Sales Manager Adele Hoppe on Dec. 1 at the Festival of Trees when they present Elko its Tour Around Nevada 2015 plaque.



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Elko: Expect the Unexpected

One more day. It's something many vacationers and travelers wish they had, but seldom take even when they do. It's no secret that we're all busy, and getting back home a day early can make getting ready for the week that much easier. But staying just one more day can mean the difference between a quick glimpse and a comprehensive experience. So take the time to live your adventure to the fullest and do something special on your one more day. You owe it to yourself.

If you find yourself in Elko and you're looking for a one-more-day idea, give these a try:

Do

Lamoille Canyon is the epitome of Nevada beauty. The canyon's majestic walls encase scenery that is almost completely unscathed by human development. Trout swim freely in pristine mountain streams that resound mellifluously near hiking trails, ponds, and wildlife. Thomas Canyon Campground—located inside Lamoille Canyon—puts visitors in the heart of this beauty.

South Fork State Recreation Area—a Nevada State Park—is another good choice when you're in the Elko area. Known for its trophy-class trout and bass fishery, the destination is a favorite for anglers. Boaters, campers, and picnickers also find refuge here in the summer months.

See

As home to the Elko Chamber of Commerce, the historic **Sherman Station Visitor's Center** gives a look back at what life may have looked like 100 years ago. In 1997, the ranch house and five buildings were relocated to Elko from their former home in Huntington Valley (60 miles south of Elko). Built by the Walther family, the historic buildings house photographs and memorabilia from days past, and one of the structures dates to 1880. Guided group tours and self-guided walking tours are available.

Elko Railroad Park—located in the heart of downtown Elko—is the site of many summer activities. Paying homage to Elko's roots as a railroad town, the park has several decommissioned, authentic train cars and numerous informative plaques.



Lamoille Canyon

MATTHEW B. BROWN

WORTH A VISIT

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Sherman Station

MEGG MUELLER



South Fork Reservoir

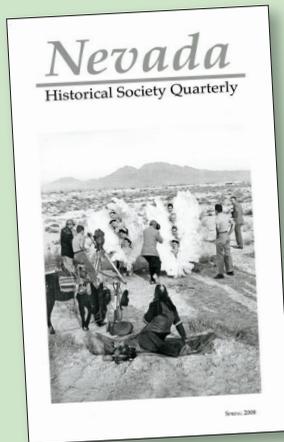
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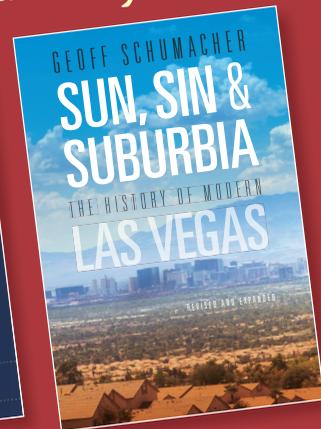
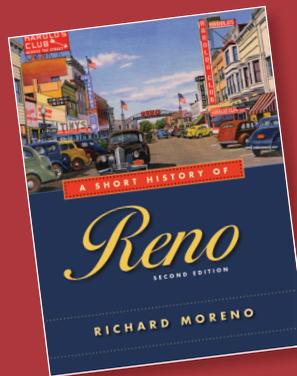
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-Eric

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Albert Bierstadt, *Twilight, Lake Tahoe*, circa 1870s, Oil on canvas, 37 x 52 inches, Private Collection



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