

El Rancho Vegas Revisited ★ The Great Verdi Train Robbery ★ Harrah's Cars
Romancing the Stones in Virgin Valley ★ Wildflowers ★ Photo Contest Winners!

NEVADA

THE MAGAZINE OF THE REAL WEST

JUNE 1986/\$2.25



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Las Vegas' Helldorado,
Reno Rodeo, and the Sport's
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NEVADA

Volume 46, Number 3

May/June 1986

Features

The Roots of Rodeo

The working cowboy hears no cheers, but he's the reason rodeo began. By Wayne Hage. Page 14

Helldorado: A Las Vegas Legacy

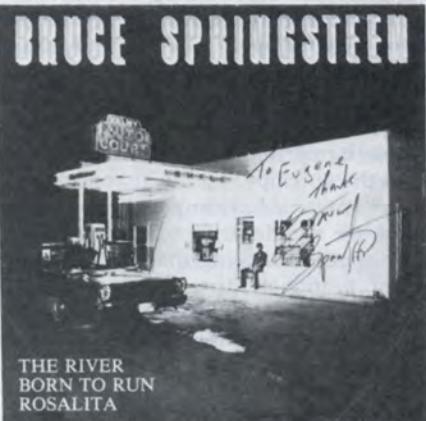
Since 1935 the Elks Helldorado has meant two things—a first-class rodeo and a whale of a party. By Geoff Schneider. Page 19

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This outdoor rodeo is still more down-home than uptown, and there isn't a bad seat in the house. By John Bardwell. Page 20

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Virgin Valley's opal barons invite gem hunters and history buffs to dig in and share the wealth. By Carolyn Dufurrena. Page 39

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When these former beasts of burden were put out to pasture, they weren't put out at all. Photograph by Tony Diebold. Page 63

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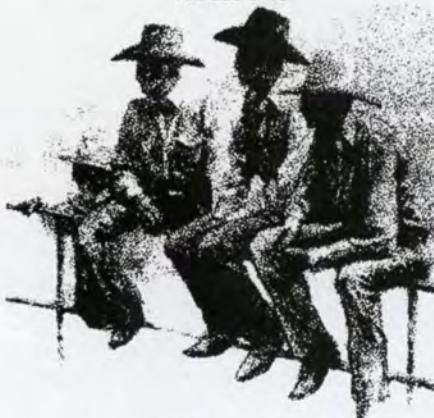
Nevada Bookshelf

In his new book, *Gentleman in the Outdoors*, Sessions S. Wheeler offers a portrait of philanthropist Max C. Fleischmann. Plus new releases. Page 67

Cover: Night Camp, Humboldt County, by Linda Dufurrena

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Up Front

'Untouched Wilderness' Touches Off Debate

When Verna Anderson read Pete Bradley's article, "Nevada's Untouched Wilderness," in the last issue, she saw not only bighorn sheep and mountain vistas. She also saw red. She and her husband, Vic, have the Porcupine Creek Ranch north of Winnemucca. "Because our ranch is in the foothills of the Santa Rosa Range and the proposed wilderness is right in our back yard, we have very strong feelings against it," she wrote in a letter to the editor.

Told of Anderson's letter, Bradley said, "No existing land use or access would be shut down by a wilderness designation. Areas that now have roads, grazing, and mining would remain the same." BLM and Forest Service spokesmen say that roads usually are not included in the wilderness designation. "It primarily protects those areas from future degradation of use," Bradley said.

Nevertheless, the Andersons are concerned that a few rules today will mean many more rules tomorrow. Verna Anderson offers her point of view:

☆

Pete Bradley writes well about "Nevada's Untouched Wilderness." He's sure to touch the hearts of the Sierra Club. Many persons will be easily convinced. Many of us are not.

One of his premises is wrong: The Santa Rosa Range is not "untouched wilderness." For more than 100 years, miners have staked their claims on its flanks and ranchers have grazed their cattle on its slopes and basins. Many people have fished its creeks and have hunted deer and cougar in its canyons.

Bradley speaks of thousands of square miles of unspoiled, often uncharted land. This is not a pristine area. Most of it has been traversed on foot, on horseback, in vehicles and even airplanes. Bush pilots have been known to land at the head of Chimney Creek. Air traffic is sometimes busy. B-52s and F-111s fly over daily. As for being charted, a geological team from Stanford charted the range in the 1930s.

Nearly every canyon has a road leading into it and sometimes into its cottonwood and quakie filled basins. Roads lead to favorite fishing holes, line camps, summer cabins, and the popular Lye Ba-

sin Campgrounds. The roads are well traveled because hunters and fishermen try to get as close to their place of action as possible in the rocky, rugged country. Late in June, people begin to drive the "circle"—Paradise to Hinkey to Buckskin to U.S. 95—just to see the masses of colorful wildflowers.

"Ancient wilderness lands of Nevada's valleys and mountains wait in a quiet limbo between preservation and neglect," Bradley says. He has it backwards. Our present controls will preserve it. The Department of Wildlife limits the fish and game to be taken each year. The U.S. Forest Service limits the number of cattle to be grazed, controls the number of years land may be leased, and manages the campsites and forest lands. These government agencies should feel complimented when Bradley calls the Santa Rosas untouched!

Here in Nevada we have the Jarbidge Wilderness Area and Death Valley and Lehman Caves national monuments. Plus, we have 21 state parks, the largest being the Valley of Fire near Overton. Some of us still hope that Blue Lake in Humboldt County might someday become a state park. The Sheldon Wildlife Refuge comprises 575,000 acres and protects the antelope.

Does anyone have any proof that these areas are deteriorating or that the wide open spaces are being spoiled?

My grandparents came to Paradise Valley in 1872; my husband's grandparents came to Porcupine Creek in 1888. We are the future generation from that time to now. There has been little change in these mountains. We doubt whether our great-great-grandchildren will see much change.

Bradley writes about "this wild land of desolation." Being on a mountaintop usually instills feelings of vastness, but not desolation. When one knows every farm and every ranch in sight and even farther in the mind's eye, one is never desolate. Unless, of course, we are shut out and just a select few are able to go into the wilderness. That would make anyone feel desolate.—Verna Anderson

Letters

Snakes, RVs, and Nevada's Image

Henderson's Basic Story

I read with much interest your article on the importance of Henderson to the Nevada economy. However, a more comprehensive report might have been made by referring to a story in *Nevada*, Jan-April 1951. Much note should be given Howard Eells, president of Basic Magnesia, in fathoming the project that resulted in Henderson, the largest industrial city in Nevada history. One might include Las Vegas in this action since the several thousand workers on the project did give the gambling birth to that area.

I well remember Las Vegas in the early '30s when Fremont Street harbored only the Sal Segay and the Apache hotels. Gabbs, the fountain from which sprung the project, is now very much idle and neglected due to the import of foreign steels, the manufacture of which Basic depends.

Nevada does owe a bit of honor and recognition to Basic and more particularly Mr. Eells, who while a Clevelander was 100-percent Nevadan in heart.

Norman E. Hanson
Former Nye County Assemblyman
Madera, CA.

As someone who considers herself a native Nevadan, although I've been gone for 40 years, you can imagine my disappointment that your Jan/Feb '86 issue contained no articles about Eastern Nevada.

And while I thought your winning photos in the 8th Annual Photo Finish were super photos, I'd hardly label them "Great Nevada Picture Hunt." But I shall continue to enjoy the magazine, hoping in the future to see more of home.

Mrs. E. Biesiadecki
San Antonio, TX.

I enjoyed the March/April '86 issue. The Nevada Note anecdotes and photos added a light, contemporary, humorous touch for the reader.

Laura Tennant
Dayton, NV

I just received my gift subscription to your wonderful magazine from my wife. Having been born and raised in Reno, it is really a pleasure to read of the happen-

ings in the Silver State. I'm glad to see there is such an informative, entertaining, and stimulating magazine for the nonresident, native Nevadan, or for that matter, the just plain curious reader.

Different subject: I'm looking for antique pitchers. Any suggestions where I might find same?

Gardell Simpson, Jr
Honorary Vice Consul
Republic of Indonesia
Honolulu, HI.

Good Times in Tignes

Bon jour! My comeback year is going well. I placed second in the first freestyle skiing world championships in Tignes, France, and second for the year on the World Cup. I also had the pleasure of traveling to Japan to compete in their nationals. I turned out to be Japanese national champion.

Lane Spina
Reno, NV

Not Stuck in Lodi

I'm happy to renew my subscription because, as a RV traveler, I have discovered many new places to visit in your state. I'm an ardent reader of Nevada, Arizona, and California history or pioneer days and like to visit historical places, so your magazine is a great help.

Joe Nemie
Lodi, CA.

I just returned from Las Vegas and had a wonderful time. In the year of 1987 I plan on driving up to Carson City and would like to meet the staff of the *Nevada Magazine*.

William F. McGill, Sr.
Fort Worth, TX.

Great Snakes

I have taken so much pleasure in my "Dancing Rattlesnakes" poster that I want to share one with a colleague. Accordingly I enclose my check for \$6.95.

Michael P. Donovan
School of Science
Southern Utah State College
Cedar City, UT.

Cannot get enough of this marvelous magazine. My greatest wish is for con-

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tinued success and a coming of the day when you can produce a monthly issue. We have a wonderful state and you have a wonderful way of telling its Western story.

The "Dancing Rattlesnakes" poster is uniquely Nevadan. Who are the photographer and graphic artist?

David E. Ford
Fernley, NV

Ford, the photo was taken by Gordon Wiltsie of Bishop, California, and the designer with the original brainstorm was Nevada art director Dale Smith.

We recently spent three delightful days at the Ormsby House and were greatly impressed with the *Nevada Magazine* photographs in the Legislative Building. Does David Muench have a gallery? We would like to obtain a poster of his bristlecone pine picture.

Mary F. Abrott
Redding, CA.

Abrott, we do have posters of Lake Tahoe and Valley of Fire by David Muench (\$5.50 each). A Muench bristlecone appeared on the last issue's cover, but no posters are available.—Ed.

On the plane home from Las Vegas the man next to me had your anniversary edition Jan/Feb '86 in his hands. I would like a copy of that magazine.

Jane R. Carrier
Horseheads, NY

Hadley Fans' Lament

I was saddened to learn of C.J. Hadley's resignation as publisher of *Nevada Magazine*. She was the driving force of the best regional magazine. I had the pleasure of meeting C.J. while attending a seminar at the University of Nevada-Reno. She has a sincere love for our beautiful state, and her style of writing and photography reflect that feeling.

I look forward to seeing her stories and photographs again as a contributor to *Nevada*. I have the feeling C.J. will be successful at anything she attempts. I only hope *Nevada Magazine* can live up to the standards she set.

Ted Roberson
Reno, NV

Caroline Hadley and *Nevada Magazine* are synonymous. *Nevada* without Hadley is unthinkable.

Brooking Parsons Tatum
Santa Rosa, CA.

Image Was a Mirage

I first entered Nevada in 1978 to visit a friend in Vegas, and we traveled U.S. 95 to Reno and went from the Biggest Little City in the World to Salt Lake City. That journey shattered my image of Nevada

as Las Vegas and desert. I find Nevadans' independent spirit and attitude of "live and let live" as refreshing as life without smog, constant traffic, and political crusaders that also seem to abound in California.

I would suggest, as touchy as it may be, an issue on Nevada's image. Recent remarks by Johnny Carson and Colorado's Governor "Doom" (Mr. Lamm) exaggerate misperceptions. I am always happy to remind Californians that Nevada does not coddle criminals like California's courts.

John Stetz
Fullerton, CA.

Love the articles on the casinos and things like that, and the other articles, too. Even your ads have a lot of appeal. I don't know why some of your readers are so critical. Guess it takes all kinds, right? From an appreciative Green Bay Packer Football Country subscriber.

Neil E. Bradley
Green Bay, WI.

Good Artistic Company

In the article "Cowboys on Canvas" (Jan/Feb '86) you put me in very good company indeed. Will James and Craig Sheppard are fine artists, and I first saw Maynard Dixon's work while I was in college and have admired it ever since. It's exciting to see my paintings published and the endorsements, such as yours, are the finest reward for my artistic endeavors. I'm very flattered.

As a short note, when my parents were living in Mesquite, I was born at the nearest hospital in the town of St. George, Utah. We moved to Henderson when I was still very young. Henderson is my hometown.

D. Pendleton Bennion
Las Vegas, NV

Making a List

I've truly enjoyed reading the Jan/Feb '86 issue. Some of the articles I remember from when they were hot off the press, but the others were first timers for me, such as "Cigarette George" among others. Good choices for a 50th anniversary issue.

As a collector of older issues of *Nevada* such as those highlighted in the anniversary issue, is there any way of your listing for us the number of issues produced for a given year since 1936? I have one of the magazines from 1936, and I would love to know how many others there are for 1936. I'd also love to hear from anyone who shares this interest.

Gerry Jailet
Santa Rosa, Ca.
Jailet, yes, we have such a list, which

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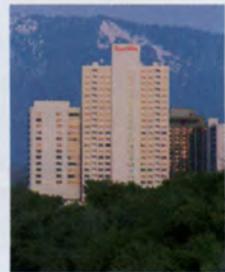
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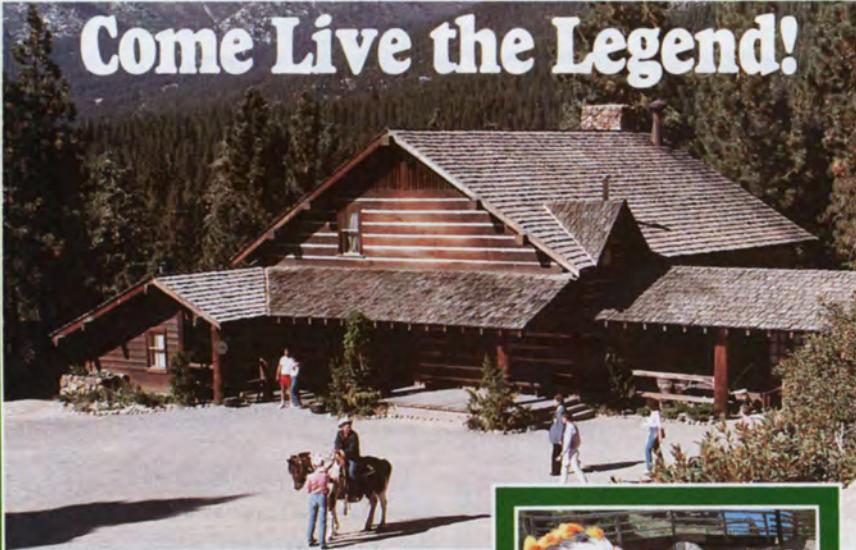
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Clint Holmes
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Billy Crystal
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May 16 thru 18
Gladys Knight & The Pips
Nipsey Russell
May 19 thru 22
Eddy Arnold
The Smothers Brothers
May 23 thru 29
Robin Williams
Bobby McFerrin
May 23 thru 24
(Special 3rd Show)
Don Rickles
Debbie Reynolds
May 30 thru June 5
Rich Little
Charo
June 6 thru 12
Sammy Davis, Jr.
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June 18 thru 19
Donna Summer
June 27 thru 29

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Ronnie Milsap
Apr. 24 thru 30
Eddie Rabbitt
May 1 thru 7
Charo
May 8 thru 14
Alan King
Florence Henderson
May 15 thru 21
Jim Nabors
Patti Page
May 22 thru 28
Suzanne Somers
Buddy Rich
May 29 thru June 4
Tony Orlando
June 5 thru 11
Mickey Gilley
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Debbie Reynolds
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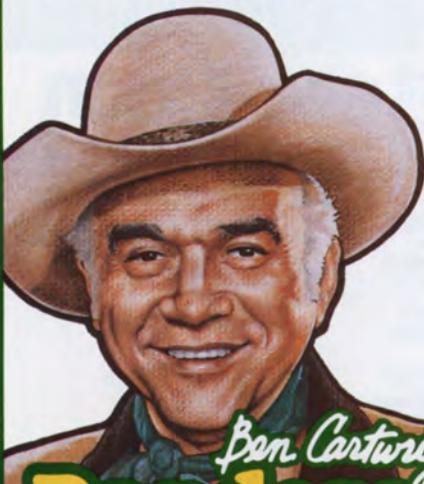
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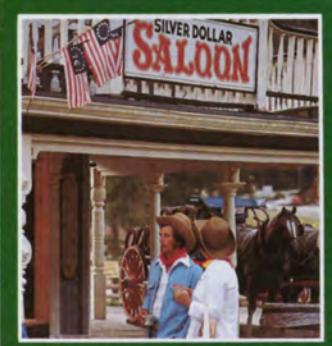
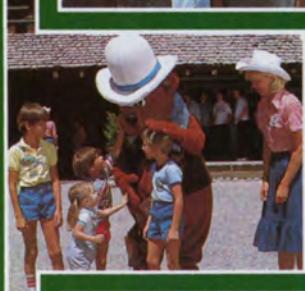
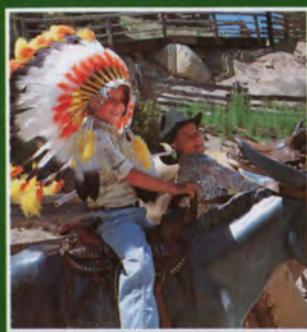
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we've sent to you. Readers are welcome to write for a copy; please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. By the way, the magazine appeared seven times in 1936—six bimonthly issues and a December special.—Ed.

Your issue of March/April '86 is perhaps the best edition to come out in a while. Don't pay any attention to some of your detractors because I think you are doing a great job. Your pictures are always interesting and well printed. I am a retired lithographer who visits Las Vegas and finds it a fascinating town.

Best of luck in the future printings.

Eugene C. Buonanno
Honolulu, HI.

I've crossed Nevada several times, and I've always wondered about the three little crosses on U.S. 50 east of Carson. I enjoyed reading the history about them in July/August '85. I read your magazine from cover to cover.

Bill Horak
Norton, KS.

Good Times at Goodsprings

Your July/August issue was a banquet, a smorgasbord, if you will, of nostalgia. In 1983 we were able to organize the Goodsprings Old Timers Association and held our first reunion in Goodsprings. We were able to muster 35 Old Timers and spouses in spite of short notice.

On May 25, 1985, we held our second reunion, and this time we had 61 Old Timers and spouses. Many of these survivors arrived as family members as far back as 1914. Many attended Goodsprings Elementary School, Las Vegas High School, and a few went on to the University of Nevada at Reno, years before Las Vegas realized a university. Some of the Old Timers hadn't seen each other in more than 60 years. So after much hugging and back slapping, everyone settle down to solid reminiscing, talk, and picture taking.

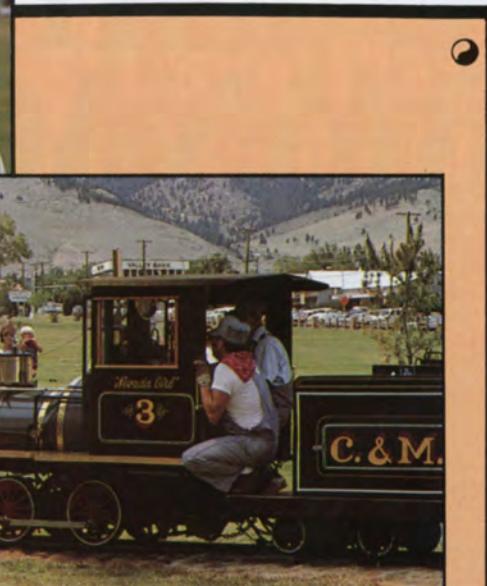
So, as you can well understand, a successful reunion, an article on Goodsprings, and the story on Rex Bell and Clara Bow really put it all together. (Rex and Clara were often guests at my father's place on Old 91.)

Paul F. Hughes
Victorville, CA.

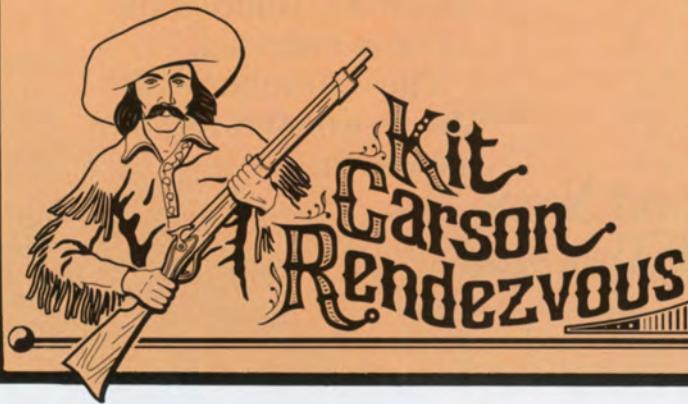
This Calendar Is History

I would like to take a moment to commend you on your historic calendar. It's great! We look forward to receiving each year's new copy. It's the only calendar we wish to use.

Sherri Henderson
Las Vegas, NV □



The Old West comes alive with buckskin-clad mountain men .. an Indian village with various tribes performing Indian ceremonial dances .. wagon train encampment .. train rides .. trader's row booths .. farrier's contest .. live entertainment and much more. Western barbecue dinner, and street dance Saturday night. Free admission both days! Join in the fun June 14 & 15, 1986, Mills Park, Carson City, Nevada. For further information send us the coupon or call 1-800-634-8700 (in Nevada 1-883-7442). See you at the Kit Carson Rendezvous!



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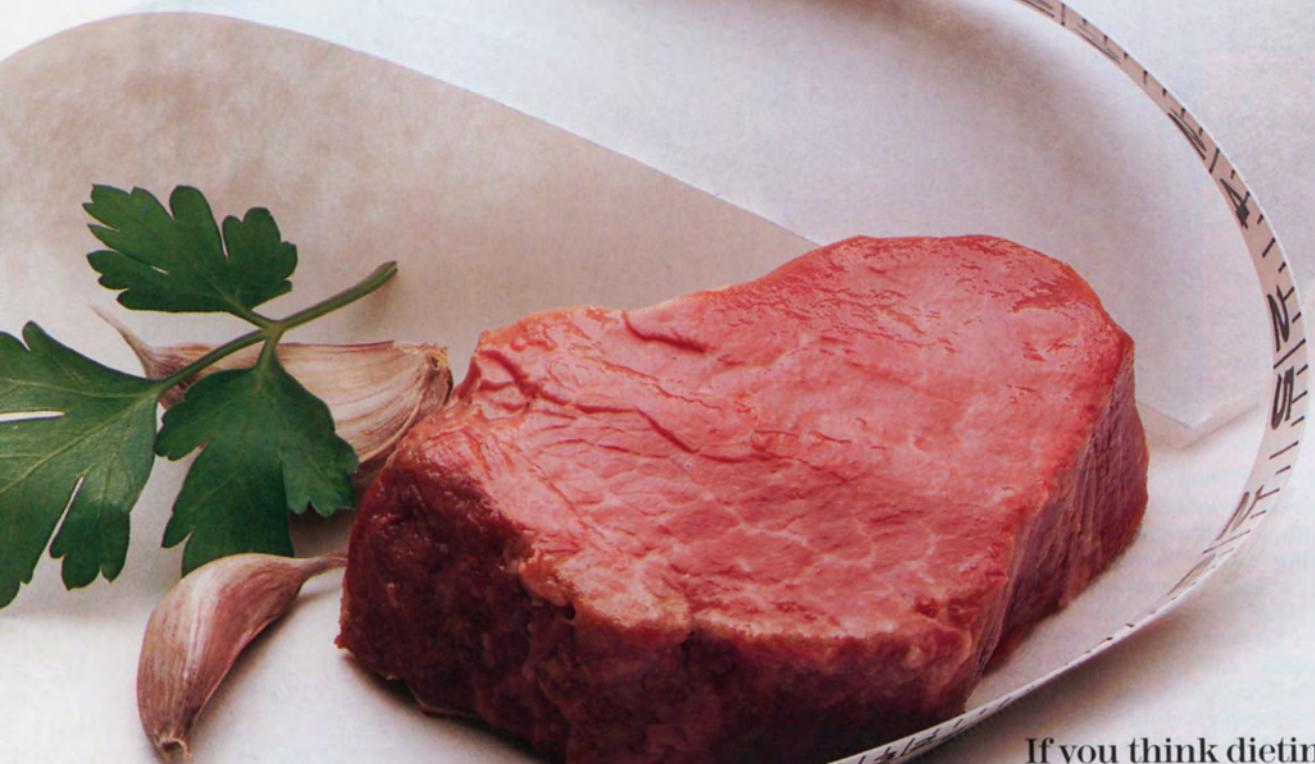
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Great Nevada Picture Hunt

Calling All Photographers

The 9th annual photo contest offers fame, fortune, great prizes, and lunch.

Test your photographic skills against Nevada's best and brightest in this year's Great Nevada Picture Hunt. It's open to all comers—pros and amateurs—who think they have captured the beauty and character of the Silver State on film. The contest's top finishers will appear in the magazine when the results are announced.

Here are the details:

Prizes: Cash prizes include first place, \$200; second, \$100; third, \$75; fourth, \$50; and fifth, \$25. The next 10 finishers will receive terrific Nevada prizes such as T-shirts. There also will be special awards for the persons who enter the best people, wildlife, and events photos.

Deadline: July 1, 1986.

Rules: Anyone not following the rules will be disqualified—so read carefully.

• All photos must be unpublished and taken in Nevada.

• The entry form must be filled out and included with your photos.

• You can enter up to five black-and-white prints and up to five color slides or prints, for a maximum of 10 entries.

- Your name and address must be on the back of each print or slide, along with the title, location, or description.

- Color slides must be 35mm or larger transparencies. If possible, present slides in a plastic sleeve. No metal or glass holders, though.

- Color prints and black-and-white prints must be 8x8" to 11x14" glossy or matte, and unmounted.

- You must enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope along with cardboard packing to ensure your photos' safe return. No checks or loose stamps or pickups at the office.

- The smaller and simpler the package, the easier it is to handle. Maximum size should be 12x16".

- Only one photographer per package.

Extra Bonus: Besides winning \$200, the first-place winner of the ninth annual Picture Hunt will be treated to lunch by the editors at a famous restaurant of mutual choice. Other winners will be invited, too. So get your entries in by July 1—and good luck. □

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Number of entries: Black-and-White Prints _____ (up to 5)

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Nevada Notes

Las Vegas in mint condition, Virginia City streakers, and Carson just sinking in the rain.

By Jim Crandall

Bucking 'Em With Megabucks

The next time you drop a few simoleons into the proper slot machine in Las Vegas, Reno, or Tahoe, you might be looking to win millions in a single yank. That's the lure of Megabucks, a state-wide network of progressive slots that casinos hope will compete with the California Lottery.

In the new system, which was developed by International Gaming Technology of Reno, four-reel slots offer stand-



Casino patrons will hear an increase in mega-screams with the new four-reelers.

ard payoffs on assorted fruit—plus the added incentive of jackpots of \$1 million or more. The machines are wired to a computer at IGT headquarters, which raises the progressive jackpot with every pull.

IGT, a major slot-machine supplier, tested the idea in nine Nevada casinos before officially launching the system last spring. Seven more casinos will feature the pie-in-the-sky machines, and IGT predicts there will be 450 Megabuck machines in the state within a year.

Small School Hoopla

Lately the Virginia City High School boys basketball team just can't be beat. With their hard-fought victory over the Pyramid Lake Lakers in the championship game last spring, the Muckers won their fifth straight B-division title and increased their winning streak to 92

games—a state record. Coach Fred Gladning, who has led the Muckers since 1981, attributes the streak to "high expectations and tremendous dedication." The new record by Virginia City, which has 79 students, surpassed the 77-game streak set by the Reno High girls basketball team.

Incidentally, the Muckers' 1985 title-game opponent, Pahrangat Valley High School in Alamo, moved up a division this season to make travel easier. But even though they had to play larger schools, the Panthers won the A-division state tournament.

The Hamburger Kid

Fifteen-year-old Terry Taylor of Reno is making a fortune from fast-food franchises. Last year he was paid \$5,700 for appearing in a McDonald's commercial, "Great Year," that was filmed in Reno. Then last February he was sitting in the Burger King on Kietzke Lane when Herb walked in.

You know Herb. According to Burger King legend, he was the only human who had never tasted a flame-broiled Whopper. The company was offering \$5,000 rewards to people who spotted the nerdy Herb at franchises around the country. Taylor says, "I saw him and ran over and grabbed him and said, 'Are you Herb, are you Herb?'" And he said he was. I started jumping up and down, I was so happy."

Taylor's glee was squelched, however,



One of the worst storms on record had Carson up to its axles in rain.

when the judge from Herb's entourage told him he had to be 16 to win the prize money and handed him a burger and a Coke instead. Taylor later complained to his vice principal at Wooster High, Ron Engel. Engel called the *Reno Gazette-Journal*, and a story about Taylor's missed fortune ran the next day.

Then local franchise owners Don White, George Sorrentino, and Bob Millichin called Burger King headquarters in Miami. White says, "We told them we wanted to give Taylor \$5,000 of our own money. They said it was OK as long as we made it clear that the money was coming out of our own pockets and that Taylor wouldn't be eligible for the \$1-million drawing."

Soon afterward, the local owners presented Taylor with a \$5,000 check. That could buy a lot of hamburgers, but he says he isn't hungry right now. He put the money in the bank for his college education.

Sinking in the Rain

"I'm swimming in numbers," State Climatologist John James says, referring to last February, which was one of Nevada's wettest and hottest months on record.

A nine-day storm dropped 9.73 inches of rain on Carson City, which was only an inch short of the town's average yearly precipitation. In the same storm, which caused severe flooding, Reno got 4.62 inches, which brought the month's total to 4.84 inches and made it the second wettest February on record.

When the storm subsided, the state was drenched in unseasonably sunny weather, and that nudged Las Vegas up to 87 degrees on February 26, an all-time high for the day.

Worth a Mint

Will the town that is famous for its "lucky buck" gambling coupons be allowed to start printing the real stuff? The U.S. Bureau of Printing and Engraving is looking for a site in the West to build a mint, and local officials think Las Vegas would be ideal.

They point out that McCarran International Airport provides the air service the feds require, and there are several armored car companies that serve the casinos. Also, as a metropolitan area surrounded by desert, Las Vegas' buffer zone would make it difficult for thieves to escape. Thus Nevada Development Authority members hope officials in Washington agree that Southern Nevada is a logical place to make money. □

Nevada Notes was compiled by Feature Editor Jim Crandall with contributions by Fred Hinners of Reno.

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THE ROOTS OF RODEO

The working cowboy hears no cheers, and his only audience may be a herd of cows and his horse. But he's the reason rodeo began.

By Wayne Hage

The citizens of Mountain City had managed to completely block off the main street for the rodeo that day, as my father used to recall in one of his favorite stories. The south end of town had been barricaded by Albert Olin's light wagon, his four-horse team, and a couple of buckboards. All the side streets were blocked by vehicles and men on horseback, while the spaces between buildings were filled with spectators. Down by the hotel on the north end, the two big freight wagons of the Whiterock Store had been placed crossways, making one big arena out of the street.

It was July 4, 1910, and the occasion was the local bucking horse contest. There were riders in town from the 24 and YP outfits. Blue Creek Ranch was represented, as were outfits from the North Fork area as far south as Devils Gate.

The horses were tough, but so were the riders. Several times horses bucked up on the board sidewalks, and one almost got inside the Whitefront Saloon. Joe McKnight won on a little horse that "sunfished" so low to the ground that Joe's spur rowels left tracks in the dirt street.

The next day most of the cowboys headed back to their ranches, where for the rest of the year their bronc riding skills would be exhibited on the open range for an unappreciative audience of cows and horses. Then when it was rodeo time again, they would be back in the saddle—and hopefully long enough to win.

Rodeos in Nevada are no longer held on main streets. Today most take place in fairgrounds and even convention centers. The biggest, like Helldorado in Las Vegas and the Reno Rodeo this May and June, involve tremendous amounts of publicity



Rodeo has its roots in ranch work, but performers need a crowd. Here a Reno bronc rider hangs tight in a scene similar to the one in Mountain City.

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and winners' prize money. But just like a horse that learns good habits on the range, not in town, the events you see in modern rodeo have firm roots back home on the ranch. When we see those events today, we can get a glimpse of the origins of rodeo and how it has evolved from the cowboy's everyday work to the makings of a multimillion-dollar sport.

For instance, the saddle bronc riding event is not all that different from what the working cowboy encounters—often unexpectedly—on Nevada's rangelands. It's also very similar to what took place on the street in Mountain City in 1910. Sure, the equipment has changed.

Today's rodeo hand doesn't ride a regular working-stock saddle, but the horses are tough and the same skills are required to ride them. That's why saddle bronc riding is properly called the classic event of rodeo.

Calf roping is also directly connected to the range cowboy's work. Roping a calf for branding, catching one that has run off from the herd, putting a loop on a calf that refuses to cross high water in the spring—all are part of the cowboy's daily fare.

The differences between calf roping on the range and in a rodeo lie in the rules that make it a timed spectator event. The rodeo cowboy rides a highly trained horse and works in a flat, open arena. The range cowboy uses whatever horse he happens to be riding, even if it's only half broke, and he may have to catch his calf on a steep, brushy hillside. The rodeo cowboy is an expert at straight-ahead running shots over his horse's head. The range cowboy must be able to send many different throws in any direction from his horse's back. In the arena, the skills of both men and horses have been honed to a fine



CLIFF HOLLOWBECK

Team roping involves catching the animal around the neck and then by its hind feet. It's hard work, and it lasts from sunup to sundown.



JACK WILLIAMS



The author (above) is ready to catch a cow that seems equally determined to get away. Roping cattle in an outside "rodear," or roundup, the cowboy must be a skilled roper at different distances and angles. The original site of the author's Pine Creek Ranch (right) north of Tonopah was once a stage stop between Austin and Belmont. Such corrals create the working cowboy's rodeo arena.





CLIFF HOLLENBECK PHOTOS

Wrestling a calf to the ground for branding is called "flanking," among other things, by cowboys like Lawrence Goss (above). Whether in a rodeo or on the range, a calf roper must be quick as well as strong.

edge. If you like to observe superb athletic ability and well-trained animals, rodeo calf roping will never disappoint you.

Team roping is another event that stems from the cowboy's normal work routine. When an animal must be caught, and it's too large for one man to handle, two men will often team up on it. One will rope the animal by the neck or horns, and the other by the hind feet. That way the animal can be laid down with the two horses doing the holding.

There are a few differences between range and arena in this timed event. The rodeo cowboy, riding a specially trained horse, wraps his saddle horn with rubber so his dallies won't slip, thereby saving precious seconds. The range cowboy ropes with a slick horn and purposely lets his dallies slip to reduce the strain on

both animals. He often uses a longer rope and tends to throw a little further to make his catch.

Modern rodeo has four other events—bareback riding, bull riding, bulldogging and barrel racing. Some folks say these last four events did not derive from the cowboy's work. That may be technically true, but remember, cowboys have always liked to mix a little play with their work.

Take bareback riding. This event had its origins at horse branding time. Each spring at the horse roundup, unbranded horses were roped by the front feet, tied down, and branded. Now anyone who has wrestled horses in a corral all day knows that it is hard, dirty work. For a change of pace, a cowboy would take a handful of mane and, as the horse was being untied, attempt to ride it bareback.

Others would do the same. There were a lot of spills, but the contest added considerable fun and excitement to what otherwise was plain hard work, just as it adds fun and excitement to modern-day rodeo.

Bull riding started much the same way. Let's say a couple of range cowboys have to catch a wild cow or steer. Cowboys are a gritty bunch, and if there's more than one of them around when you have an animal that might buck, one of those cowboys is probably going to try to ride it. So while bull riding may not be required in his daily work, it's doubtful any real cowboy hasn't tried it a few times.

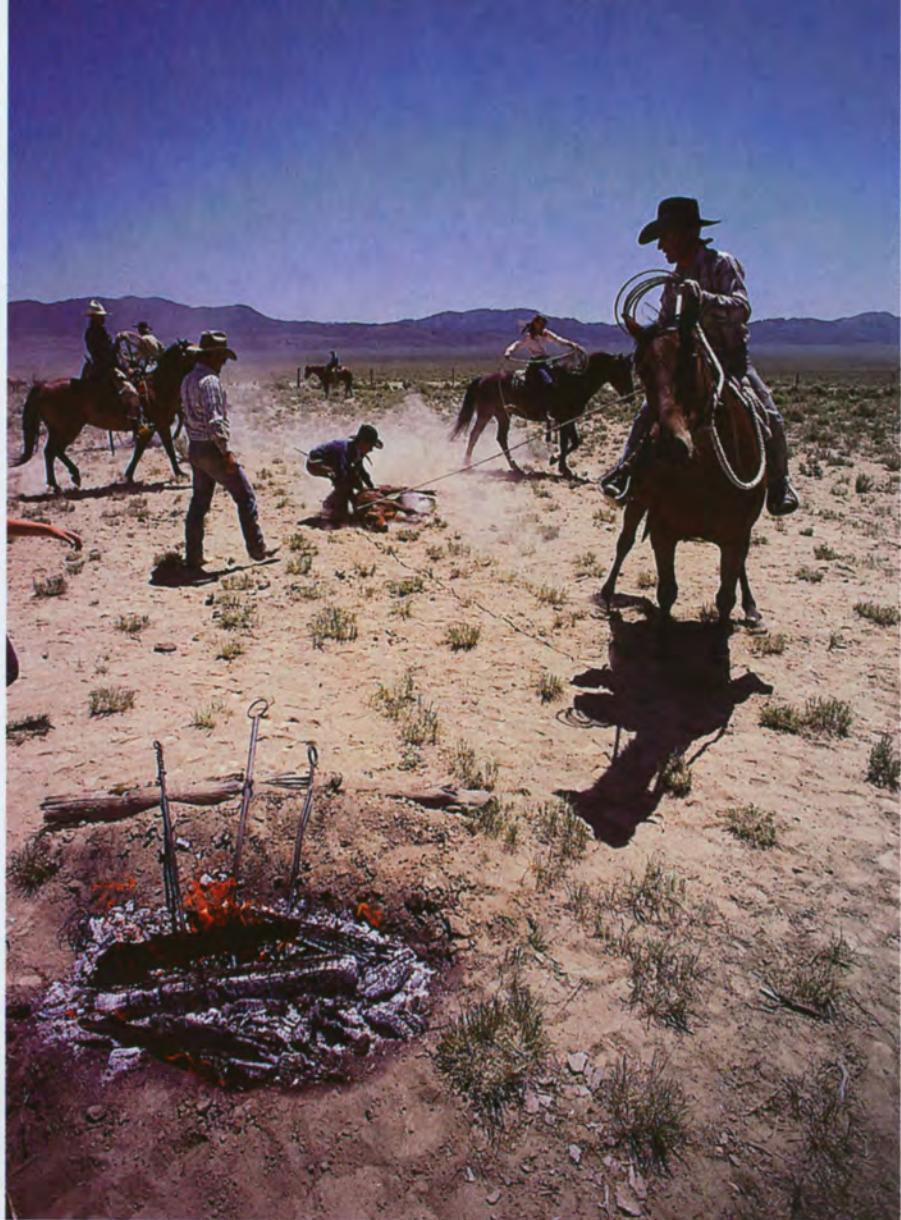
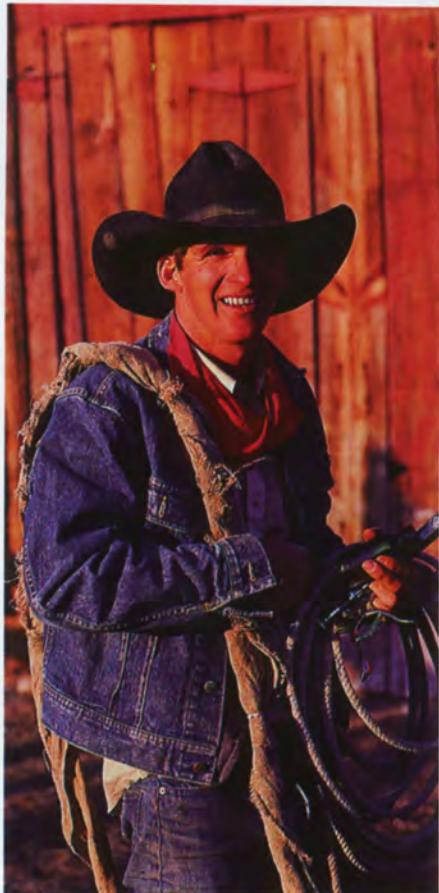
In rodeo, bull riding ranks as the most dangerous of all events. If you like high thrills, watch the bull riding from your grandstand seat. You'll love it.

Bull-dogging is the event where a man slips down from the back of a running horse, grabs the horns of a steer, stops the animal, and twists it to the ground. The range cowboy is not required to do this. If he needs to catch a steer, that's what his rope is for. However, anyone who has handled range cattle has encountered a cranky animal that won't turn when the brush is too thick to rope it. At those times the cowboy may wish he was big and tough enough to physically manhandle the animal on the spot.

Tradition tells us that years ago some cowboy found himself in this situation and was big enough and tough enough and mad enough to wrestle that steer to the ground. Thus was born the sport of bull-dogging, a big man's game that demands great athletic ability and the best of horses.

Barrel racing is the one event in rodeo that is dominated by women. The riders compete by racing around three barrels set in a triangle. The object is to see whose horse can turn the tightest at the greatest speed. While not an activity that the range cowboy would be involved in, it does stem from the training of ranch horses, which must be able to turn fast and tight when handling cattle.

All the events have changed in subtle ways over the years. It used to be that a person had to have equipment that he



CLIFF HOLLOWECK PHOTOS

At branding time, roping means muscle-aching teamwork (above), but it's still the best way to catch and hold a cow. From left are John Hanlon, Ray Kretchmer, Lawrence Goss (with calf), Margaret Hage, and Charlie Chapin. According to the author, Joe Hall (left) is "the best bronc rider I ever hired, just double-good." Here Hall carries some of the tools of his trade.

could use on the range, but since the '50s items like bronc riders' saddle horns and stirrup leathers have faded from the arena. One of the biggest changes has been in calf roping. On a ranch, you'll never see anyone dismount on the right side of a horse. It's always on the left. But in rodeo, dismounting on the left means the calf roper has to take time to duck under his rope. The solution? Teach his rodeo horse to let him leap off on the right, which might mean more prize money.

Modern contestants in bronc riding use gear that has been gradually modi-

fied from the old days. But the most important things—good balance and great horse sense—remain the same as when old Joe McKnight won the bucking horse contest on the main street of Mountain City. □

Wayne Hage owns the Pine Creek Ranch near Tonopah. He has been active in ranching and Nevada rodeo for almost 40 years. His ranch has furnished a number of top bucking horses to rodeo, including Flaxy, who has been a National Finals saddle bronc horse the last two years.

HELLDORADO

A LAS VEGAS LEGACY

Since 1935 the Elks Helldorado has meant two things
— a first-class rodeo and a whale of a party.

By Geoff Schneider

Peek behind its frilly petticoats and you'll find that Las Vegas is just an overgrown Western town. But it's not too overgrown to enjoy an old-fashioned hoedown or turn out by the thousands when it's rodeo time.

So don't be surprised when the whole town invites visitors to go Western from May 30 through June 8 in celebration of the 52nd annual Elks Helldorado and Rodeo. That's the one time of year when the community sheds its chic international image and puts on its real attire—cowboy boots, hats, and jeans.

The annual charity fundraiser is in fact two events—a rodeo and a major party, just as it was when civic-minded residents launched Helldorado in 1935. Each spring local interest grows in many ways. For the past several months about 150 Las Vegas desperados have been let-

ting their beards grow in anticipation of the Whiskerino Contest. Cowgirls have been prepping for the Helldorado queen showdown, and children have been waiting for the giant carnival.

This year's Helldorado, which has the theme "From Sagebrush to Neon," opens on Friday, May 30, with a barbecue and hoedown at the center of all activities, the Thomas and Mack Center on the University of Nevada-Las Vegas campus. More than 3,000 urban cowboys and cowgirls will two-step their way through the 5:30-8 p.m. event, which includes a street dance.

At 9 a.m. the next morning crowds will gather downtown along Fremont Street for the annual parade. This year's edition will feature about 150 entries that include marching bands, floats, clowns, and, of course, lots of horses

and pageantry. That night the rodeo opens in Thomas and Mack's 16,000-seat arena. The Helldorado prize money should be sufficient to make it one of the top 15 of the 660 pro rodeos held in the U.S. and Canada. (Nevada hosts two other top-15 rodeos—the Reno Rodeo and the prestigious National Finals Rodeo, which is held in December at the Thomas and Mack Center.)

In keeping with the current trend, Helldorado has been an indoor event for the past 14 years. And most spectators wouldn't have it any other way. What could be better than relaxing in theatre-type seats, with tiered seating and unobstructed views that put everyone close to the action? Other advantages are air conditioning and very little dust.

Since this is one of the nation's top rodeos, spectators have the opportunity of seeing the best riders and ropers, who in turn get a chance to test the arena in hopes of qualifying for the NFR.

While the rodeo competition is taking place inside, Nevada's largest carnival and midway is being staged outside. So popular have the rides and games become that the carnival attracts an even bigger crowd than the rodeo. Also outside is the Western Village with an exhibit hall showing everything from potato peeler to Western clothing.

The Elks estimate that Helldorado will attract 200,000 people, which will provide some hefty funds for their charitable works. And for all Southern Nevadans the event is a reminder that, despite the glitter, Las Vegas truly is a Western town. □

Geoff Schneider is a writer with the Las Vegas News Bureau.



Champion bull rider Don Gay rides high at last year's Helldorado Rodeo.



Jim Cashman, Sr. (right) and the Desert Love Buggy were Helldorado parade regulars. Here they're joined by another team—George Burns and Gracie Allen.

RENO RODEO

THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE

Happily, this outdoor rodeo is still more down-home than uptown, and there isn't a bad seat in the house.

By John Bardwell

Rodeo just ain't what it used to be. I'm sorry but it's true. We all hated to see the circus abandon the big top, and the Studebaker was a helluva car. But things change.

Hold on, you say. Look at the big prize money and the indoor crowds. They even got the rodeo on *Wide World of Sports*.

Exactly. I could rest my case right here, except I want to tell you how you can see what's left of rodeo before it's too late. Now, I'm talking about a *real* rodeo, not a slicked up Wild West show. I mean a rodeo where you sit outside on a hard grandstand bench. Where you might get sunburned and dusty and your senses will be assaulted by cow stuff, horse sweat, and spilled warm beer. There are such places.

The one I know best is surprisingly within five minutes of downtown Reno, just a crap shoot from Harrah's and the MGM Grand. But, be sure, this is the real McCoy. It's got everything a rodeo needs and some stuff it don't.

The Reno Rodeo is big, which is important if you want to see the events at their best. Maybe it does have a touch of Hollywood, but that goes way back. In fact, Reno's was one of the first rodeos to attract big tenderfoot audiences in the 1930s. And when you have a paying



NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This 1946 exhibition had both the roper and the crowd on their feet.

crowd that doesn't know a saddle bronc from a John Deere, you gotta give 'em some entertainment between events. So you will get plenty of venerable fillers: a chariot or chuck wagon race, trick riders, a dog and monkey show, some awful jokes, and lots of introductions.

Still, it's a real rodeo.

Most of the big rodeos have already moved indoors. Nice clean dirt is



VERN HOWELL

Bull-dogging requires a big man with a lot of nerve. The timed event is over when he has the steer lying down with its head and feet facing the same direction.

trucked in and offending odors are sucked out. Often the entertainment makes the Country Music Awards look sickly. But look, the indoors is for raising hamsters, not cattle. Cement buildings with no windows are all right for accountants, but cowboys belong out under those uncloudy skies.

A lot of money has been pumped into the professional rodeo circuit, which attracts a lot of cowboys who not only love what they do, but also can make a decent living doing it. That's good. However, the new wave cowboy is more likely to be a professional athlete than a working ranch hand. Like the real rodeo, the real cowboy is singin' a September song.

If you never saw the circus under a huge canvas tent; never skipped school to catch an afternoon baseball game played on real grass; or watched the sun set over the desert from a window of the *Super Chief*, you'll get by. But you've been shortchanged. So don't miss this chance to experience, first-hand, a genuine endangered piece of Americana.

This chance is June 20-29 when the Reno Rodeo is held at the Nevada State Fairgrounds, just a few blocks north of Interstate 80. It's not fancy, but the arena was built for rodeo and there isn't a bad seat in the place.

There will be five evening performances June 24-28 for those who can't take sunlight or want to stay and dance till midnight. But the Saturday and Sunday afternoon go-rounds (June 28-29) are just a bit more gritty.

Outside the arena are such family attractions as a carnival midway, Western art and crafts shows, and the Harolds Club Frontier Village. The annual Buckaroo Breakfast and the big downtown parade are Saturday June 21.

The main rodeo grandstand is shaded and affords a great view of the events. However, the cognoscente will be found on and around the bleachers, sun drenched and windblown. From the bleachers you'll have a privileged perspective of the chutes and stock pens where the real business of rodeo is conducted; it's something like watching an opera from backstage. You're free to roam around with the cowboys and rodeo groupies, but watch your step—not only for what can be stepped on, but also for what could step on you.

If this is to be your first real rodeo, don't be impatient with gaps in the activity. There's no script and the four-legged cast members can be a bit temperamental. And please whoop it up for the contestants; for most of 'em, it's the only prize they'll walk away with. □

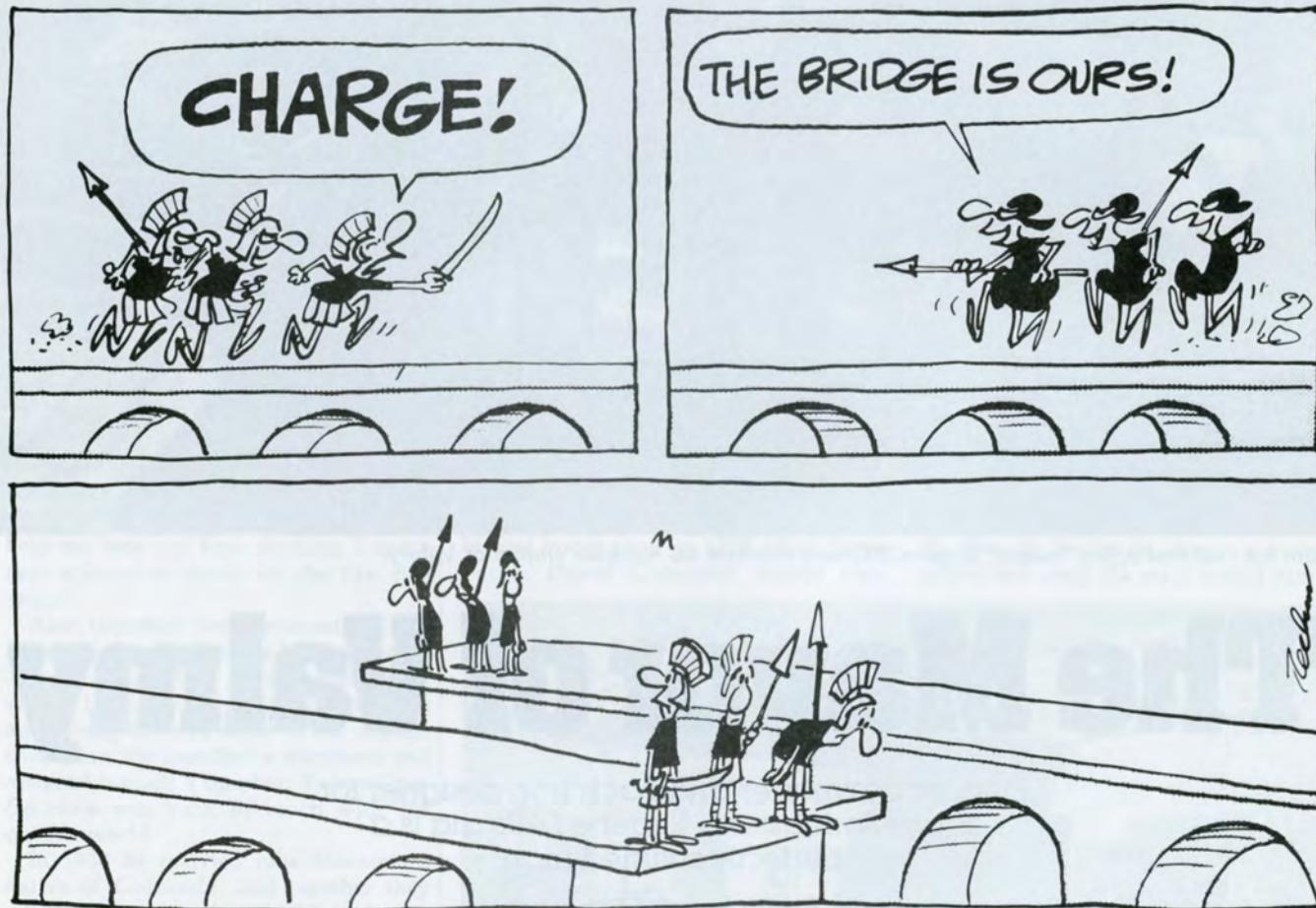
John Bardwell of Reno is a rodeo fan and former Nevada art director.



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RICHARD MENZIES PHOTOS

From his cluttered office "mayor" Eugene DiGrazia oversees his roadside empire at Valmy.

The Mayor of Valmy

Pioneer postmaster and backdrop designer for Bruce Springsteen, Eugene DiGrazia is a perfectly satisfied man.

By Richard Menzies

Clinging like a wood tick to the side of Interstate 80, the tiny village of Valmy is the sort of place most people pass by on their way to somewhere else. At 60 miles an hour it comes and goes in an eye-blink, so chances are you might not even see it, let alone bother to stop. But if you ever have, it's a sure bet you've run into Mr. Eugene DiGrazia.

DiGrazia was the genial fellow wearing the antique Shell cap who filled your tank at the gas station. If you mailed off a postcard to the folks back home, he was the postmaster who canceled your stamp. Or was that him you saw lounging in the old captain's chair by the stove in the general store? Come to think of it,

wasn't he also the garrulous character you sat next to in the restaurant?

Ubiquitous Gene has been hanging out in Valmy for more than 53 years now, but somehow he doesn't exactly come across as indigenous. For one thing, he's a lot more outgoing than your average desert rat, as wound up and talkative as a New York cabbie. DiGrazia himself is a bit puzzled by his position in life.

"Italians are supposed to hate the desert," he laughs. "Those who come out here, they're all in California now. They say you'd have to be crazy to live out here, but I love the desert. I like to look out the window and see 30, 40 miles around. No, I'm perfectly satisfied."

Looking around, you can see that it

doesn't take a lot to satisfy the man known as the mayor of Valmy. His backyard is a broad, treeless valley carpeted with sagebrush and enclosed by barren, sunbaked hills. To the south lies more of the same, miles of open acreage inhabited by widely scattered neighbors who are ranchers, trappers, and miners. The nearest towns are Battle Mountain, 15 miles to the east, and Golconda, 23 miles to the west. Nearby, the muddy Humboldt meanders lazily along its serpentine course to oblivion. Not exactly breathtaking, but there's more to it than meets the eye. As DiGrazia says, "You have to be a part of the country to really appreciate it."

DiGrazia has been part of the country

since he settled here in the fall of 1932. He was just 19 then, an only child born to Italian parents who'd immigrated to America at the turn of the century. For a time his father had run a saloon in Ogden, Utah, on its notorious 25th Street. The neighborhood was so rough, in fact, that Gene's mother was on the verge of booking passage back to the old country when Pete DiGrazia gave it up to take a job with the Southern Pacific Railroad as a section foreman in Palisade. Four years later the family moved to Battle Mountain, where young Gene got his schooling and starred on the high school basketball team.

Upon graduation he found that jobs were in short supply, so he decided to invent his own. With help from his father he negotiated with an ailing schoolmarm to buy up the business district of Valmy, which at the time consisted of one gas pump, a fourth-class post office, and a store stocked with \$300 worth of groceries. Valmy, improbably named after a famous battle site in France, was home to a handful of railroad maintenance workers, with a well and water tower for refilling the steam engines' boilers.

"There wasn't much to this place then," DiGrazia recalls. "In those days the roads were no good. U.S. 40 was no good, not much traffic, and I swore I wouldn't be here over six months. So help me, way out here, nothing. I damn near starved to death for the first five years."

Also famished for conversation, DiGrazia decided he needed a telephone. Trouble was, there was no telephone service to Valmy. So he bought 30 poles and strung his own wires to the nearest trunk line. He installed a telephone and assigned himself a number, Valmy One. DiGrazia was back in touch with the outside world.

In 1938 he married Julie Nannini, a native of Golconda, and together they set about turning their highway home-stead into a home. As the Great Depression lifted and traffic began to pick up, they added a six-room motel, a trailer court, and a restaurant, Gene's Golden Grill. They also dug a pond and stocked it with ducks and geese, creating a roadside aviary that remains a Valmy tradition.

In 1943 a new improved U.S. 40 was built a few hundred feet south of the old one; DiGrazia and Valmy's business district moved south with it. Twenty years later Interstate 80 was surveyed still farther to the south. He responded by raising a taller sign and set about building a 48-unit mobile home park.

In the course of plotting the park he made an interesting discovery. "We found out that the state had made a seri-

ous mistake when they surveyed for the freeway."

The upshot of the "serious mistake" was that DiGrazia owned the land under both ends of the interchange, about 200 yards' worth of interstate highway. "We coulda had a toll road on each end," he chuckles.

Reason prevailed, however, and the right-of-way problem was settled amicably, but not before DiGrazia managed to wrest a concession from the Highway

“

Famished for conversation, he decided he needed a telephone. Trouble was, there was no phone service to Valmy. So he bought 30 poles, strung his own wires, and assigned himself a phone number, Valmy One.

”

Department. He insisted that the state erect a road sign advising motorists that Valmy does indeed have an active post office.

Business picked up considerably as a result of the freeway, but no doubt the biggest boom came in 1978 when Sierra Pacific Power Company started con-

struction of a 500-megawatt power plant eight miles north of Valmy. At the height of construction the population of the town swelled to a historic high of 400. Completed last year, the plant's operation requires far fewer workers, most of whom, laments the mayor, prefer to live elsewhere.

Nowadays DiGrazia leases out his restaurant and hires help for the gas station and store. But he continues as Valmy's full-time postmaster, a position he's held since he was appointed by Postmaster James Farley in 1934. At the time Valmy was rated as a fourth-class post office with just a dozen boxes. Today, he's proud to say, it's a third-class office with 130 boxes. Two years ago he was named postmaster of the year in Nevada and was honored in Washington, D.C., with a gold plaque and diamond pin commemorating his half century on the job.

"I could retire anytime if I wanted to, but I don't feel like retiring," says DiGrazia, who's running on his fifth pacer. "They say I'm the oldest postmaster in seniority in the United States. I think there's one that has me beat, but I'm not sure. He's in New Hampshire, some old guy."

Eugene DiGrazia could probably qualify for a number of other spots in the Guinness Book of World Records. He's been a Shell station operator for 52 years, a Greyhound depot manager for 50. For 35 years he drove a county school bus until the state forced him to



DiGrazia's Shell station also is his headquarters in Valmy (pop. 150). Rock star Bruce Springsteen considered the place a piece of unspoiled Americana. He featured it, and himself, on the cover of his 1981 British tour album. DiGrazia keeps his autographed copy (left) on display with other treasures.

retire at the age of 65 after more than a million miles on the road with no accidents—not even a flat tire.

In a roundabout way, DiGrazia has even become an object of admiration in the rock music industry. He's not sure how it happened, but his gas station and storefront came to be featured on the cover of a Bruce Springsteen record album. Evidently Springsteen was cruising the country in search of a fragment of uncorrupted Americana and found what he was looking for right here in Northern Nevada at freeway exit number 216. Yes, folks, that's Bruce, the Boss himself, brooding under the canopy of DiGrazia's Shell Service. So in addition to hosting the usual flow of tourists, Gene conducts guided tours for groupies and itinerant members of musical groups whose names escape him.

But fame hasn't gone to the head of the mayor of Valmy. If you ask him which of his many accomplishments he's proudest of, he'll tell you about his two sons—Peter, who's a dentist in Reno, and Gary, a prominent Elko attorney.

In parting, he pulls out a worn back issue of *Reader's Digest* and opens it to a familiar page. And, no, the article he turns to isn't even about him. It's a story about an Italian kid born to poor immigrants who started out with nothing and ended up with something—a better life



Married 48 years, Julie and Gene DiGrazia stand on the centerline of what used to be U.S. 40.

for himself and especially for his children.

"It's not about me," DiGrazia explains, "but it could be. I'm him, see. That's just what I've done." □

Richard Menzies lives in Salt Lake City and travels in Nevada.

The Saga of Gene's Golden Grill

In addition to his regular chores as postmaster, gas pumper, landlord, restaurateur, storekeeper, fire chief, and ambulance driver Gene DiGrazia is a correspondent for the *Battle Mountain Bugle*. His regular column, "The Valmy Badger," keeps readers abreast of current events in and around the tiny town. The following excerpt from his January 16, 1985, column is typical of the journalist's lively style:

"Have you heard the two-month saga of the Golden Grill robbers here in Valmy? The first cook absconded with about \$700, including slot machine change and grill money. He was not apprehended.

"Bring on the second cook. A few weeks into the job, he too got the brilliant idea, taking off with \$600 under the same conditions. He got caught in Winnemucca and served some time. A third cook was hired who appeared honest. Lasting several weeks until the dark of the night, he took off with a lesser amount, this time about \$500.

"The Golden Grill has finally come to the conclusion to hire no one."—RM

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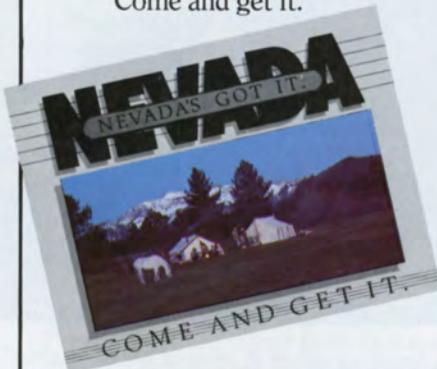
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On April 3, 1941, El Rancho Vegas broke new territory when it opened on the "strip" of highway that led away from Las Vegas towards Los Angeles. El Rancho was located across the street from the present site of the Sahara. Until 1960, when El Rancho was destroyed by fire, the club helped mold the little desert town into a celebrated gambling center. At right, the author interviews Lili St. Cyr, the glamorous stripper who found that dressing on stage was more sexy than slipping her clothes off.



TRICIA HURST COLLECTION

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ONCE UPON A TIME IN LAS VEGAS

As a PR person for El Rancho, I discovered a glamorous small town where women wore mink, men dressed black-tie, and the dancers wore nothing at all.

By Tricia Hurst

Recently I returned to Las Vegas with my youngest daughter. I wanted her to experience the unusual world I had known for a year doing publicity for one of the casinos on the Strip. The town had changed greatly in the last three decades, but it still retained its unique character for my daughter to see, and, for me, the memories came flooding back.

When I stepped off the plane in the summer of 1952, I was in my early 20s and in for a shock. The dry desert heat almost knocked me over, although I soon found it preferable to New York's humidity. The airport was tiny, and the area had a country, dirt-road look. In town, the neon lights of the Golden Nugget and other gambling emporiums didn't overcome the small-town feeling. It was as if I had stepped onto the set of a grade-B western.

I had never been in the West and assumed my new home was typical of the territory. I soon discovered how naive that was. I came to learn there was no other place like the crazy town in which I found myself and, certainly, nothing to equal the glamorous Strip.

As a representative for a New York public relations firm, I was to promote Beldon Katleman's El Rancho Vegas. That included sending column items to the East and to Hollywood, and setting up newspaper and magazine features. There was enough material under my nose to make the job a cinch.

Only half a dozen casinos were on the highway then. The Kosloff brothers' Last Frontier was just down from El Rancho, and across the road were the Flamingo, the Sahara, and Wilbur Clark's Desert Inn. The Sands opened while I was there. That road, the Strip, was a town within a town. Everyone knew one another and as much as possible about one another's business.

This never-never land of around-the-clock living was a tight-knit community with a great deal of in-fighting and competition. It also was a place where good judgment often went out the window. Chips, chits, and vouchers were a way of life; money flowed as if the pit were bottomless, and the weight of the silver dollar made even the poorest man feel rich.

Las Vegas was more posh, glamorous, and laid-back than it is now, but so was the rest of the country in the '40s and '50s. In that more romantic era, men dressed black-tie and women wore evening gowns and cocktail dresses once the sun had set.

I had arrived in Nevada with riding clothes and boots, skirts, sweaters, penny loafers, and a couple of bathing suits with little flounces on the bottom. I was strictly out of Lord & Taylor and out of swing with the clothing found in the shops on the Strip—sweaters with pearls and sea shells, short mink sports jackets, dresses almost as frontless as they were backless, and bikini bathing suits 20 years ahead of their time.

I soon became used to the chorus girls sitting topless at their make-up tables as the chorus boys ran in and out of the dressing rooms without blinking an eye.

This desert oasis was awash with enough legal tender to start a medium-sized country, so a representative of one of the more elegant furriers in New York would appear on the scene once or twice a year to give showings for the wives, daughters, and girl friends of the various casino bigwigs. When one wife chose a dozen furs at one sitting, I decided that if she was typical of the rest of the ladies, the fox and cat families would soon be extinct. My one mink jacket languished in cold storage back home. I had thought it too dressy to wear in the Wild West, but it never could have competed with that company.

Along with my bungalow and the use of a station wagon and motor launch on Lake Mead, my meals and drinks were free, and I had a budget for entertaining celebrities and press people. I also found a new world when I learned I could have my hair done at the salon on the premises. I had always washed and set my natural ash-blonde hair, but this was too good an offer to pass up. I tried just about every color they had.

I felt my little churchmouse image was a thing of the past. Then one day I walked into the El Rancho casino after having become a flaming redhead. Carl Cohen, a dear man who was the casino boss and who had been very protective of me, took me firmly by the arm and said, "You look like a tramp and you're not a tramp. Why don't you go back to the beauty parlor and see if you can find the real you? That was a very nice color you arrived with."

I did exactly as he suggested, and I was never sorry.

My job involved dealing closely with the performers who were appearing in the Opera House, the El Rancho's showroom. I found that with actors, dancers, singers, and comedians, one could form a warm relationship and repartee, but the booking usually was for only two to four weeks. Show business people learn to make friends with ease, and when the time comes to move on, they are just as easily forgotten.

The El Rancho's motor launch often took us for cruises on Lake Mead. We also had picnics, swam in the pool, or sat around in the Chuck Wagon. Every casino had a version of the El Rancho's Chuck Wagon. Open 24 hours a day, it served buffet-style food that couldn't be beaten—roast beef, shrimp, salmon, you name it, and all at rock-bottom prices. The object, of course, was to lure people into the casinos to gamble, but the food was terrific.

A good deal of my public relations work went into making sure certain celebrities got mentioned in the columns—or were kept out of them. When Bill Willard, the Walter Winchell of Las Vegas, would make his rounds to pick up news and gossip for his column, he'd head for the Chuck Wagon. There, I could tell him Mickey Rooney had arrived with yet another bride and was stashed away in a certain bungalow; but I'd been given strict instructions not to mention that Mrs. Adlai Stevenson was in another bungalow waiting for her divorce from the Democratic candidate for President of the United States.

Once in a while, I would call Walter Winchell, Dorothy Kilgallen, or Ed Sullivan in New York, or Hedda Hopper and Louella Parsons in Hollywood with a scoop. When Rooney married for the



Hurst learned that public relations involved more than entertaining. On Mickey Rooney's wedding night, she turned his growls into romantic prose for the press.



Celebrity night at El Rancho: From left are comedian Joe E. Lewis, El Rancho owner Beldon Katleman, stripper Lili St. Cyr, and Eleanor Roosevelt.



Ashore at Mead are singer Billy Daniels and Variety columnist Bill Willard.



umteenth time, Louella Parsons insisted I get a direct quote from the new groom. I was a little hesitant about knocking on his door on his wedding night, but I gave it a try. Calling through the door, I told him the columnist wanted a few well-chosen words from him.

Rooney yelled something back that was never going to be printed then or now. So I told Parsons that the pint-sized actor could be quoted as saying, "I want that wonderful lady to be the first to know I have at last found true happiness." Louella printed the item the following morning.

The next day, Rooney and his bride made an appearance, and I interviewed him and got some pictures. He thanked me for the "delicate handling" of his current marriage. It was then I realized that public relations consisted of saying as little as possible about private relations.

I had grown up in an upper-class environment, but, like almost everyone, I was curious about people in the public eye. I wasn't awed by celebrity because I had been exposed to superstars since childhood—my two godfathers were Noel Coward and Hoagy Carmichael, and Tallulah Bankhead used to spend weekends at my family's home having knock-down drag-out spats with her various amours.

My interest lay in seeing only what public people were like when they weren't "on." The Vegas job gave me an insight I might not have otherwise known; I learned that under the facade of glitter and glitz, we are all more alike than we are different.

One example was a precocious teenager who had grown up in show business as the son of comedian Mickey Katz. He was short, not very pretty, and usually complaining about not getting enough publicity. He had put together a song-and-dance act which was good, but not great. But a few years later, with a new nose and wavy hair, Joel Grey was a huge success starring with Liza Minnelli in both the Broadway and Hollywood versions of *Cabaret*. In that he was great, and also a little older and wiser.

Among those who appeared on the El Rancho stage while I was there were Louis Prima and Keely Smith, Jerry Lester, the Kean Sisters, Russell Nype, Helen O'Connell, and Sophie Tucker.

Singer Billy Daniels was a hot ticket at the time. Famous for his rendition of "That Old Black Magic," he was accompanied on piano by Benny Payne. Billy often could be seen eating and drinking in the bar and Chuck Wagon, which, unfortunately, was somewhat unusual for a black entertainer then. Although times were changing, many black entertainers could not stay at the casinos.

These were the days when segregation was almost universally accepted. One night we all went over to the Elks Club in the black section of town. One of the Mills Brothers approached me as we sat at the bar.

"Lady," he said, "you really shouldn't be seen here. White women who are seen with black men can get a bad reputation."

This black man meant it kindly, but it made me very angry and sad. That was probably my most uncomfortable moment in Vegas. So much for democracy in action in the '50s.

In a more cheerful moment, someone took a picture of me with the Ritz Brothers, three zany comedians who had appeared in a number of Hollywood musicals. When I was given a print, I cut the photograph off at the knees. We were all in bathing suits, and my legs were larger than any of theirs. I've always told myself they had unusually spindly limbs.

Then there was Lili St. Cyr, the most beautiful and popular stripper at the time. Tom Douglas, who had decorated the casino, had designed her set and choreographed her performance. It had an interesting twist: instead of undressing, Lili rose from her bath and languidly dressed. It was far more sexy than the old take-it-off routine, and Lili was a sensation.

Although he was appearing at the Sands, I came to know Ray Bolger, the dancer and comedian, and his wife. No matter how many parts he may play in his career, he will be most remembered as the Scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*. The opening night at the Sands was also Ray's birthday. At the end of his performance, I trotted up on the stage with a cake, and the audience chimed in as I sang "Happy Birthday." Then, as I reached out towards the star, I tripped in my high heels, and we both ended up with our noses deep in the mocha frosting. We received one of the bigger rounds of applause of the evening.

Mike Neale was the Strip's reigning showgirl and, although well into her 30s or possibly even early 40s, she was the personification of glamour. She would carry a tiny French poodle on stage, and when she held it up, it looked like a muff with button eyes.

One day at the Desert Inn Moe Dalitz, one of the owners, asked me to join his table. He was sitting with a tall, good looking, gangling man who was wearing dirty sneakers, with the big toe worn through on the left one. The typical Strip male was a pretty natty dude, so I figured the newcomer was not one of the shakers and breakers. On the other hand, he had an aura of a man who got what he wanted, and he was, above all, very sexy. He looked like he had the tiger

by the tail, but in the ensuing years he was to suffer severe whiplash. That was my first and last introduction to Howard Hughes.

In the nattily dressed department, one man outshone everyone else, and he fascinated me. He looked as if his suits had been tailored on Saville Road; his diction, manners, and demeanor were reminiscent of Cary Grant in his most sophisticated role. One day I noticed his cufflinks, and I told him I would like to get something similar for my fiancé back East. He said they were custom-made, but a few weeks later he handed me a small velvet box containing exact duplicates of his. He would not let me pay for them.

My fascination went far beyond the man himself. I made discreet inquiries as to his occupation and found out that my polished, polite gentleman acquaintance was a mob enforcer.

All things being equal, I figured I hadn't offended anyone in my stay in Vegas and so was not on his hit list. Thus I remained calm and composed each time we met, able to exchange a few pleasantries.

El Rancho wasn't the most opulent or heavily financed casino on the Strip, so many of the big names appeared at other casinos. Liberace, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Lena Horne were superstars, but the



TRICIA HURST COLLECTION

Long before Joel Grey found fame with Cabaret, he lamented his lack of PR.

icing on the cake was Frank Sinatra. On one of his opening nights I found it was impossible to get tickets. I had resigned myself to missing it and was curled up in a chair in my bungalow when the phone rang. Peter Lawford, an old friend from New York, was calling to ask if I was free for the evening. Not only did I make the big event of the season, but Peter and I sat at Sinatra's table after the show along with a number of the singer's cronies.

When Peter dropped me off at my bungalow, my phone was ringing. It was my fiancé, in New York, complaining that he'd been trying to get me all evening.

"Oh, Bob, I'm sorry," I said, "but I had to attend the Sinatra opening and then there was no way I could get out of sitting with him and Peter after the show. You know how it is in this business. There are some things you just have to do."

Probably the most traumatic time during my year in Vegas was the long Labor Day Weekend when I played hostess to *Look Magazine* and, at the same time, entertained an old family friend who appeared on the scene.

I'd worked for a long while to get the magazine people to come out and do a spread on Vegas, and especially on El Rancho. Editor Ben Wickersham and photographer John Vachon chose the busiest time of the year.

The week before, my friend had phoned from New York and said he was curious to see the West and what a gambling town was like. I asked the manager, Archie Loveland, if he would make a reservation. Archie pointed out that it was the biggest weekend of the year and we were fully booked with high rollers from all over the country. In other words, there was no room at the inn.



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Being a gentle and polite man, he offered to take my friend's name in case there was a last minute cancellation. I gave it to him—John Jacob Astor. As if by magic a spacious bungalow materialized along with flowers, fruit, and a bottle of good Scotch. Meals and drinks were also on the house.

Jack was a very tall and portly man. He liked his liquor and was known to finish off a couple of dozen oysters before he started on the soup course. I figured this was going to prove a major expenditure for management.

Look's Wickersham and Vachon arrived on the same flight as Jack Astor, so for the next few days I was juggling two major events. The magazine guys wanted to get shots of Jack and include him in the story, but I knew my friend hated publicity and there was no way he would be induced to participate. The only thing I hoped was that he'd do just enough gambling at least to pay his way. I hadn't promised anyone he would gamble, and I wasn't acting as a shill, but I was feeling just a bit guilty.

I also began to feel like a yo-yo, running between the *Look* guys and Jack. I would spend the day with Wickersham and Vachon out on Lake Mead, taking pictures from the El Rancho launch, then race back to set my hair, change clothes, and have a long and leisurely dinner

with my guest.

Luckily, freebees or not, Jack wasn't all that thrilled with life in the gambling world. He turned in early, leaving me free to take the magazine guys to other casinos to shoot their shows. I didn't get three hours of sleep a night for five days.

Unknown to me, photographer Vachon sneaked a few shots of Jack and me as we were about to depart for the airport. As we walked through the casino, Jack showed his first—and last—interest in taking a chance. Taking a silver dollar from his pocket, he put it in a slot machine and pulled the lever. When there was no payoff, he turned and grumbled, "I knew that gambling here had to be crooked."

I tried to explain that casinos didn't have to be dishonest because the percentages were with the house. But it was probably the first time he'd invested in anything other than Standard Oil of New Jersey, General Motors, or IBM, and he wasn't to be persuaded.

Later, my mother told me Jack had said that I was living in a den of iniquity and was obviously being overworked because I had circles under my eyes and had almost fallen asleep at the table one night. I don't know about the iniquity, but on that memorable Labor Day Weekend, I did give my all. It was worth it. The *Look* layout was fantastic, with

El Rancho receiving the largest hunk of magazine space.

Seven years after I left El Rancho I learned that it had burned down. I actually cried, recalling the happiness and fun I had had, and the many interesting and oddly assorted types of people I had known there. I didn't belong in that world, but I had learned a great deal from it and made some good friends.

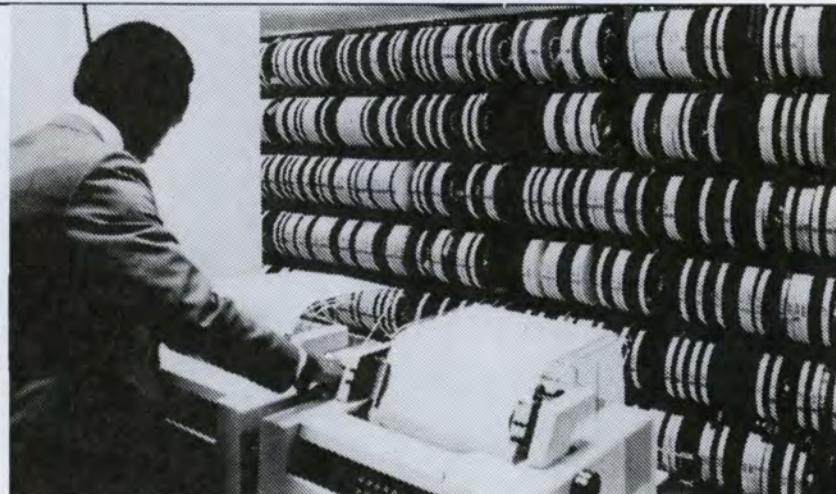
When my daughter and I paid our visit to Vegas, she was just about the age I had been when I first saw it. I had only two pieces of advice to give her as we drove down the Strip.

"You might lose or win some money, but either way you'll have a lot of fun," I said. "And, oh yes, the glitz and glitter is all surface. These are very real people when they're not 'on.' "

I'll always remember Las Vegas with fondness, and, as the gray hairs begin to appear at my temples, I am reminded of Carl Cohen. I wonder if he'd mind if I had just a little touch-up? □

Tricia Hurst is a freelance writer with many awards to her credit who now lives in the artist colony of Taos, New Mexico. She adds that she married her New York fiancé, but it only lasted a year because "anyone who calls you at 4 a.m. in Vegas and expects you to be home can't be all that bright."

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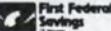
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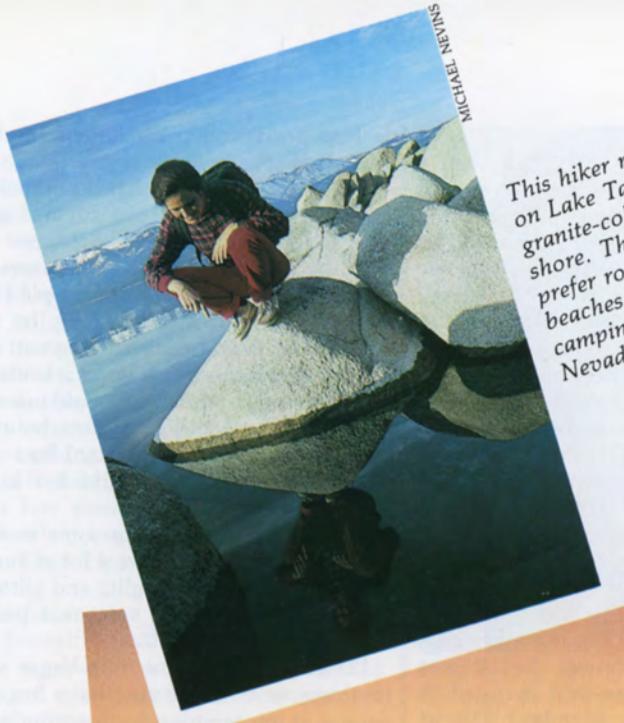
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This hiker reflects on Lake Tahoe's granite-cobbled shore. Those who prefer rockless beaches (and camping) will like Nevada Beach.

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Walker Lake campers can swap fish stories at campgrounds on the ancient lake's west side.

At Lake Lahontan campers can drive to miles of cottonwood-shaded coves. There also are long stretches on the southeast shore accessible only by boat—or parachute.



JANICE OTT



HARRY UPSON

Camping: Out Back, Up Close, and Off Beat

From beached lizard-fish to cathedrals of clay, Nevada offers adventuresome campers wonders beyond the usual bounds.

By Jim Crandall

When Mother Nature set about decorating the West, she chose Nevada as her base camp. Before she pitched her tent, she took a rake the size of Florida and scraped off all the crud. Then she put up the Sierra Nevada as a windbreak.

During the day she hiked off to other states and fashioned postcard-perfect mountains and valleys. But at night, inspired by the glow of her campfire and the unblemished sweep of the Nevada desert, she indulged in a little free-form creation. The result was a wild mix of mountains, lakes, deserts, canyons, and forests spread across the state's 110,543 square miles.

When men showed up, they added interesting twists to the peculiar landscape, building fossil shrines and desert dams. When they were finished, they called them state parks, national forests, and recreation areas, and they invited the world to have a look.

And so it is that campers with an eye for the outlandish flock to the

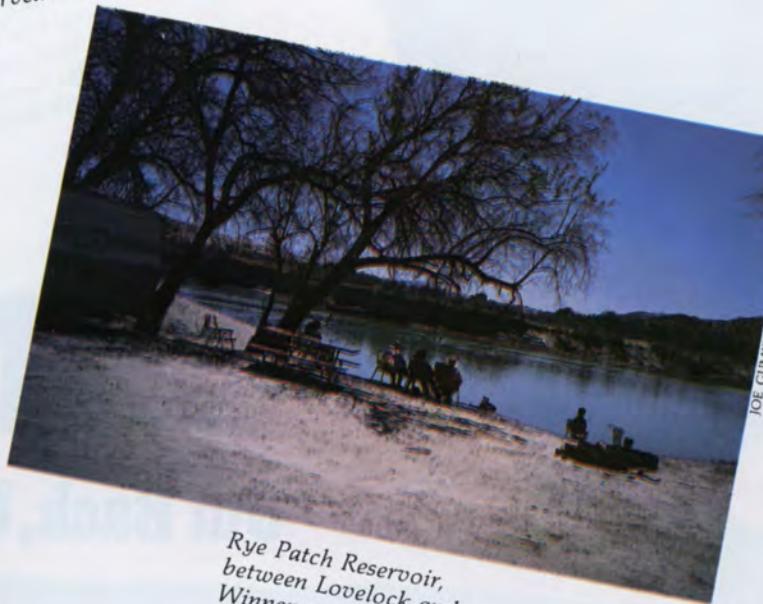
Since so much of Nevada is public property, pull-off camping is possible in many areas.

CHRISTOPHER KARY



RICHARD ROWAN

Lamoille Canyon is adorned with waterfalls, lush meadows, quaking aspens, and glacier-carved walls.



JOE GUIMIENSKY/NEVADA STATE

Rye Patch Reservoir, between Lovelock and Winnemucca, is a refreshing stop on Interstate 80.

Nevada outland. Following is a sample of those camping attractions—both natural and man-made—that will keep explorers busy this summer.

Desert Camping

When you ask people for their impressions of the Black Rock Desert, you hear a lot of words like tranquil, powerful, stark, and beautiful. "It's almost a religious experience," says Bob Goodman, a Reno resident who camps in the Black Rock frequently. "I stood there one night, out on all that white playa that stretches away for miles, and watched the moon rise. It seemed that I could actually feel the rotation of the earth. It's like camping on a cloud."

The desert is named for Black Rock Point, a basaltic promontory at the southern end of the Black Rock Range 40 miles north of Gerlach. Nineteenth-century immigrants used the rock as a landmark on the Applegate-Lassen Trail to California and Oregon. Today's explorers use it to find Double Hot Springs,

a set of steamy desert pools on the west side of the range.

From Reno it is about 100 miles to the Black Rock by Interstate 80 and State Route 447 through Gerlach. Most of the

desert is on uninhabited BLM land, so make sure you travel with water and other essentials. In places the playa is hard and easily navigable even by Winnebagos except during the rainy season.

Camper Hot Lines

To keep Nevada's outback in perspective, you can get maps, brochures, and advice on camping from the following agencies. The outdoor agencies oversee a variety of campgrounds, as noted in the story. The area code throughout Nevada is 702.

Nevada Commission on Tourism, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV 89710 (885-3636). Ask for the free Nevada camping brochure that lists more than 150 public and private campgrounds and parks.

Nevada Division of State Parks, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV 89710 (885-4387).

Bureau of Land Management, Box

12000, Reno, NV 89520 (784-5496); or for district offices: Box 26569, Las Vegas, NV 89126 (388-6403); 1535 Hot Springs Road, Suite 300, Carson City, NV 89701 (882-1631); Box 831, Elko, NV 89801 (738-4071).

Humboldt National Forest, 976 Mountain City Highway, Elko, NV 89801 (738-5171).

Lake Mead National Recreation Area, National Park Service, 601 Nevada Highway, Boulder City, NV 89005 (293-8906).

Toiyabe National Forest, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431 (784-5331), or 550 East Charleston, Las Vegas, NV 89104 (388-6503).—JC

Alpine Camping

Mother Nature did such a first-class job of creating Lake Tahoe that 20 million people visit the lake each year. That fact helps explain why it's so difficult to get one of the 54 campsites at Nevada Beach.

Located on U.S. Forest Service land between the high-rise casinos of Stateline and the condos of Round Hill, Nevada Beach offers a glimpse of the Tahoe campground of yesteryear. The shady grounds do not have RV hookups or showers, but there are barbecues, tables, drinking water, and a sandy beach that's popular with swimmers and windsurfers.

Ranger Don Lane, who has lived at the beach for 16 years, advises trying for a campsite between Labor Day and October, when the grounds close, or trying mid-week during the summer. No reservations are taken. A campsite costs \$7 a night, and there's a \$2 day-use fee.

To get there, travel two miles north on U.S. 50 from Stateline to Round Hill, and turn left at the traffic light at Elk Point Road. The beach is a mile and a half down the road.

Camping in the Rye

For campers in a hurry, there's Rye Patch Reservoir, a watery retreat just off Interstate 80 between Lovelock and Winnemucca.

Created by a dam built across the Humboldt River in 1935, the lake swells a 22-mile stretch of the river's ancient banks.

This state recreation area is busy on summer weekends when hordes of boaters and splashers from nearby towns come to cool off. It's also a favorite fishing spot, holding a bounty of walleye, white and black bass, crappie, and catfish. Some big cats lurk in the shadows of the river below the dam.

The two campgrounds, one on the lake and one on the river, offer everything but showers. The day-use fee is \$2; it's \$4 to stay overnight. There are some primitive camping spots on the unimproved roads that skirt the reservoir.

Canyon Camping

From Interstate 80 near Elko, the Ruby Mountains look like an immense green mirage. If you go 25 miles on Route 227 south from Elko, you'll find the Rubies are quite real. You'll also discover the scenic wonders of Lamoille Canyon.

The canyon's soaring, glacier-carved walls embrace meadows, tall pines, quaking aspens, and mountain streams. The paved road that runs 12 miles up the canyon dead-ends at 8,780 feet, giving hikers easy access to the Ruby Crest Trail. About halfway up the road is the Thomas Canyon Campground, where

Forest Service campsites (\$4 per night) are nestled among cottonwoods and aspens. Campers can get supplies and a taste of country life in the little town of Lamoille just north of the canyon's mouth.

Beach Camping

In summer, about every third vehicle traveling on U.S. 50 between Carson City and Fallon is a boat. That's because there's a big lake out there in the middle of all those alkali flats. With 10,000 acres of water and 69 miles of sandy cottonwood-shaded shores, Lake Lahontan is a boater's and camper's paradise.

The 70-year-old reservoir was the creation of the Newlands Project, the first U.S. reclamation job. The project built Lahontan Dam on the Carson River, diverted water from the Truckee River, and turned the Fallon area into a garden spot. Today Lahontan, 60 miles east of Reno, is a state recreation area. It has campgrounds with showers and miles of primitive beaches.

It also has lots of people. On summer weekends the place is a madhouse filled with speedboaters, waterskiers, sailors, windsurfers, and anglers casting for white bass, crappie, and catfish. So, to avoid the crowds, visit on weekdays and try cruising the dirt roads on the west shore. Once you stake your claim to a



Statewide RV Guide for 1986

RV Park	Phone	Location	No. Spaces	Max RV Size	Basic Fee*	gasoline	groceries	ice	parts	tents allowed	children	pets	swim pool	rec room
LAS VEGAS	American Campground	643-1222	3440 LV Blvd. N.	19	none	\$8								
	California	385-1222	Downtown	200	40'	\$8 Opens 9/86								
	Cheyenne Motel 7 RV	642-0155	3227 Civic Cen. NLV	47	none	\$8	✓	✓	✓					
	Circusland	734-0410	Strip	421	none	\$10	✓	✓	✓					
	Hacienda	739-8911	Strip	451	none	\$10								
	Hitchin' Post Camper Park	644-1043	3640 LV Blvd. N.	79	40'	\$8								
	Holiday Travel Trailer Park	451-8005	3890 S. Nellis Blvd.	376	40'	\$12								
	Las Vegas KOA	451-5527	4315 Boulder Hwy.	300	45'	\$14.95	✓							
	King's Row Trailer Park	457-3606	3660 Boulder Hwy.	160	40'	\$8								
	Nevada Palace	451-0232	5325 Boulder Hwy.	204	40'	\$7								
	Riviera Travel Trailer Park	457-8700	2200 Palm	135	40'	\$10								
	Sam's Town	454-8056	5111 Boulder Hwy.	208	40'	\$7.50								
LAKE MEAD	Silver Nugget	649-4133	2240 LV Blvd. N. NLV	152	40'	\$8	✓	✓						
	Stardust Camperland	732-6466	Strip	377	40'	\$8	✓	✓	✓					
	Lakeshore Trailer Village	293-2540	6 mi. from Boulder	80	40'	\$9								
	Callville Bay Marina	565-8956		10	30'	\$9.50	✓	✓	✓					
	Echo Bay Resort	394-4000		58	none	\$9.50	✓	✓	✓					
	Overton Beach Resort	394-4040		13	none	\$9	✓	✓	✓					
	Cottonwood Cove Resort	297-1464		75	none	\$9.50	✓	✓	✓					
	Riverside Resort	298-2535	Laughlin	**	40'	\$12								
	Robbins Nest Mobile Village	397-2364	479 S. Main St.	145	40'	\$8								
	GLENDALE	864-2277	I-15	22	none	\$8.50	✓	✓	✓					
	MESQUITE	346-5232	I-15	120	40'	\$5	✓	✓	✓					
BEATTY	Bailey's Hot Springs	553-2395	6 mi. N. on U.S. 95	14	none	\$9.50								
	Rio Rancho	553-2238		35	none	\$10								
	TONOPAH	482-9777	U.S. 95	21	35'	\$12	✓	✓						
	MINA	573-2214	U.S. 95	30	none	\$8								
	HAWTHORNE	945-2906	Walker Lake	26	none	\$8								
	Frontier RV Park	945-2733	5th & L	40	none	\$9	✓	✓	✓					
	TOPAZ	266-3434	Hwys 395 & 208	45	65'	\$10	✓	✓	✓					
	Holbrook Station	266-3550	U.S. 395	15	none	\$8								
	WELLINGTON	465-2304		18	none	\$8	✓	✓	✓					
	LAKE TAHOE	588-6644	South Shore	105	none	\$16.75	✓	✓	✓					
	CARSON CITY	883-1123	2438 N. U.S. 395	74	none	\$11								
	Comstock RV Park	246-3129	Hwys 50 & 341	24	40'	\$12	✓	✓	✓					
RENO/SPARKS	Oasis Trailer Haven	882-1375	4550 S. Carson	18	none	\$10.60								
	Snedaker's Comstock	882-2445	5400 S. Carson	68	35'	\$12	✓	✓	✓					
	Cedar Lodge RV Park	853-3232	12765 S. Virginia	35	35'	\$9								
	Chisum Trailer Park	322-2281	1300 W. 2nd	35	35'	\$10								
	Four Seasons RV Park	853-1423	13109 S. Virginia	36	40'	\$10								
	Green Acres Trailer Park	827-2482	501 W. Moana	23	30'	\$9								
	Hill-Top Bonanza RV Park	329-9624	4800 Stoltz	79	40'	\$10.50								
	MGM Camperland	789-2129	Mill Street	452	none	\$12	✓	✓	✓					
	Rivers Edge RV Park	358-8533	1405 S. Rock, Sparks	164	40'	\$12								
	Reno/Sparks KOA	323-1447	600 Newport	230	55'	\$11.75	✓	✓	✓					
	Tiki Village	825-1507	4055 S. Virginia St.	16	35'	\$12	✓	✓	✓					
	United Campgrounds of Reno	329-0688	2220 Clearacre	110	35'	\$12	✓	✓	✓					
VERDI	River Bend RV Park	345-0574	Old U.S. 40	60	28'	\$10								
	FERNLEY	575-4455	530 West Main	12	40'	\$8	✓	✓						
	YERINGTON	463-2426	15 West Bridge St.	15	none	\$9								
	Yerington Mobile Village	463-2989	South Main	5	none	\$5								
	FALLON	867-3636	3 mi. W. on U.S. 50	44	42'	\$10								
	LOVELOCK	273-2276	East end of town	79	none	\$12	✓	✓	✓					
	MILL CITY	538-7327	I-80	33	none	\$8	✓	✓	✓					
	WINNEMUCCA	623-5797	Old U.S. 40	136	none	\$11	✓	✓	✓					
	Westerner Lodge	623-2907	800 E. 4th St.	25	none	\$9								
	Hi-Desert RV Park	623-4513	5575 E. Winn. Blvd.	132	none	\$10	✓	✓	✓					
	ELY	289-3413	On U.S. 93, 6, & 50	102	none	\$11	✓	✓	✓					
	ELKO	738-6898	10 mi. E. on I-80	78	40'	\$9	✓	✓	✓					
WENDOVER	Cimarron West	738-8733	1400 Mt. City Hwy.	160	none	\$9	✓	✓	✓					
	Crested Acres	752-3557	3½ mi. W. off I-80	200	none	\$10	✓	✓	✓					
	Nevada Crossing KOA	664-3221	I-80	39	none	\$11	✓	✓	✓					
	JACKPOT	755-2321	U.S. 93	30	none	\$4	✓	✓	✓					
WILD HORSE	Cactus Pete's East Park	755-2321	U.S. 93	56	none	\$7	✓	✓	✓					
	Wildhorse Resort	NF 6472	60 mi. N. of Elko	34	none	\$6	✓	✓	✓					

*Basic price may not include full hookups; **Subject to summer construction plans

cove, most other campers will respect your space.

You can find that area by driving four miles south of Silver Springs on U.S. 95A and then turning at the signs to Silver Springs Beach.

The other entrance is off U.S. 50 between Silver Springs and Fallon. This side offers only primitive camping and is popular with anglers who vie for fat catfish in the deep water near the dam. Fees are \$2 for day use, \$4 for overnighters.

Ancient Lake Camping

Walker Lake is best known for its ancestry and some monstrous trout. Set in a bowl created by the Wassuk and Gillis ranges, Walker's 38,000 surface acres are but a puddle of the ancient Lake Lahontan that covered most of Western Nevada and parts of California.

You can see the scars of bygone water levels on the mountains from the two Bureau of Land Management campgrounds just off U.S. 95 on Walker's west shore about 15 miles north of Hawthorne. Tamarack Point has 10 campsites, and Sportsman's Beach has 17 and a boat ramp. There are two other ramps—one at the state-park picnic area and another at Cliff House Marina, the informal headquarters for Walker boaters and anglers.

All four places get a lot of action from watersports fans in summer. Then, in winter, attention is focused on the lake's cutthroat trout when Hawthorne's El Capitan Casino holds its annual fishing derby from November through April.

Cave Camping

About an hour's drive from Ely are two spectacles that are as different as night and day—literally.

Wheeler Peak is the state's second highest mountain, poking its bald head above stands of ancient bristlecone pines to reach 13,063 feet. On the east side of Wheeler is Lehman Caves National Monument. There, the trail through the limestone labyrinth is almost a mile long and passes through many chambers, each decorated with its own colors and eerie shapes.

You can camp at several Humboldt National Forest campgrounds. Three miles northwest of the caves is Lehman Trailer Campground, which has pull-through RV sites but no hookups. Lehman Creek Campground is set among aspens and pinyon pines. You also can take the 12-mile drive up to the Wheeler Peak Campground. It's at 9,900 feet and offers hiking trails to the peak.

The caves are 70 miles east of Ely near Baker by way of U.S. 50. Tours cost \$2, and it's \$4 to spend the night at each campground.



Ichthyosaur Camping

For much of the world the name Berlin conjures up visions of a German city with a split personality. For Nevadans the name means a ghost town—and lizards

the size of tractor-trailers.

At Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park you can visit the remains of Berlin, a mining town that thrived briefly at the turn of the century. The miners found bones as well as bullion, which led to the discovery of the remains of ancient fish-lizards called ichthyosaurs. The 70-foot-long, 60-ton mammals once splashed in a warm, shallow ocean that covered Nevada between 70 and 185 million years ago. Their fossils are on display.

The park is 23 miles from Gabbs, 17 miles of which are paved. The campground has everything but showers, and the fee is \$4. If you get tired of old bones and empty buildings, you can visit Ione, seven miles west. A near ghost town, Ione has a bar, restaurant, store, and gas pumps.

Cathedral Camping

Fifteen miles north of Caliente is Cathedral Gorge State Park, an inspiring canyon of water-carved clay spires and cliffs. Despite the formations' heavenly appearance, midday summer temperatures can reach into the 90s. One saving grace is the fact that the park has showers at its 16-site campground. Camping is \$5, a day visit \$2.

There are full services and RV parks in Caliente and Pioche. The quiet town of Panaca, which was founded in 1864 by

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Mormon pioneers, is two miles east and features a store and gas pumps.

Mountain Camping

When summer temperatures soar in Southern Nevada, Las Vegans don't have to fight to stay cool. They can simply make a change in climate by driving 40 miles to Mount Charleston, Nevada's fifth highest peak at 11,918 feet and a revered refuge with campgrounds, shady views, and temperatures 20 to 30 degrees cooler than in the city.

To find that relief you travel northwest on U.S. 95 and State Route 157 or 156. Kyle Canyon has two U.S. Forest Service campgrounds at about 7,000 feet, and Lee Canyon has two at 8,500 feet. There's also Hilltop, a campsite at 8,400 feet midway between the two canyons. RVs are discouraged at Hilltop because of its narrow road.

Overnight fees are \$5 first come, first served. Charleston also has group RV and picnic areas that require reservations with the Toiyabe National Forest office in Las Vegas.

Houseboat Camping

Perhaps the best collaboration of man and Mother Nature is in the 1.5 million-acre Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Encompassing Lakes Mead and Mohave, Hoover Dam, and the surrounding hills, the area offers camping year-round.

There are government-issue campgrounds on both lakes, but the best way to truly relax on the water is to rent a houseboat. Like a floating summer cabin it comes with stereo, kitchen, shower, and great views in all directions. Once aboard, you can pilot your way to secret coves along Mead's 550 miles of scalloped shoreline or along the ornate cliffs of Mohave to the base of Hoover Dam.

Play Mate Resorts rents houseboats at Echo Bay, Temple Bar, and Lake Mead Marina on Mead and at Katherine's Landing on Mohave. Forever Resorts offers them at Callville Bay on Mead and Cottonwood Cove on Mohave. Summer prices range from \$500 for a three-night rental of a six-passenger boat to up to \$1,400 for seven nights on a 10-to-12 passenger cruiser. These houseboats are extremely popular at vacation time, so call well in advance for reservations.

Should you tire of the nautical camping life, just jump in an RV and head 25 miles west to Las Vegas. There you'll find the most unusual campgrounds of all—casino campgrounds with RV hookups, swimming pools, and shuttle buses provided. □

Feature Editor Jim Crandall is packing his moon boots for a trip to the Black Rock Desert this summer.



A precious black fire opal in its raw state from the Royal Peacock.

WILSON COLLECTION

Romancing the Stones

Virgin Valley's opal barons invite gem hunters and history buffs to dig in and share the wealth.

By Carolyn Dufurrena

The year is 1970. The month is July, when the midday sun in Northwestern Nevada's Virgin Valley is hot enough to make a lizard sweat.

Lamar Taggart hauls his lanky frame off the D-9 cat. His raven's eye has picked up a glint of light in the dull gray clay three feet in front of the tractor's heavy blade. He picks up a big dirt clod and rubs it. As the dirt crumbles, a grin cracks Taggart's weathered face. Filling his hand is a huge black opal, flashing with a rainbow of fire in the sunlight.

"There weren't any rockhounds out that day," recalls Harry Wilson, owner of the Royal Peacock Mine where Taggart was digging. "There were just the three of us, Tag, Bill Kelley, and myself. We'd been working that face for days. When Tag showed us that stone, we were flabbergasted." The three men took the opal down to Wilson's house, opened a bottle of cheap whiskey, and got smashed. During the celebration they

christened the stone the Royal Peacock Opal.

"We were so excited about the potential of this stone that we drove to Reno and flew it to Kelley's lab in Cleveland that same day," Wilson says. "We knew it was a hell of a find, but we didn't know until it was dried and cut that it was worth upwards of \$250,000."

The three-and-a-quarter-pound opal produced several five-carat stones, the 20-carat Little Black Peacock, which sold for \$15,000, and the 169-carat heart of the stone, the Black Peacock. That was sold unmounted for \$45,000 to a collector in Massachusetts. He had it made into a broach, surrounding it with sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds. "The raw stone was the most flawless, perfect stone ever to come from this valley," Wilson says.

"If Harry Bill wants to say that, I guess that's OK," says Wilson's neighbor, Keith Hodson, who owns the Rainbow



Keith Hodson is the extroverted operator of the Rainbow Ridge, which his father, an accountant, bought in the '40s.



Opal magnate Harry Wilson also is a rancher who appreciates cattle, horses, and African bullfrogs.

Ridge Mine across the valley. "We're good friends and good neighbors. We've known each other for years. But," he adds, "I'd be hard pressed to agree with him. I think the Robeling Opal was the epitome of fine opals from Virgin Valley. It got tons of publicity and was valued at a quarter-million dollars, and that was way back in 1917. I'm not just saying that because it came out of my mine. It was found here long before my time."

Indeed, the Robeling Opal was a famous find. The one-and-a-half pound stone was given to the Smithsonian Institute by Colonel W. A. Robeling, a civil engineer known for his work on the Brooklyn Bridge. The big black fire opal is on display in the Smithsonian's Gem Hall along with a few stones from the Royal Peacock.

Wilson, who is known as Harry Bill to his friends, and Keith Hodson might have a friendly debate about the value of the legendary stones at their next monthly poker game. But on one thing they will always agree: The black opals of Virgin Valley rival those of any other district in the world for fire, value, and sheer beauty.

Although the opal is a common stone, gem-quality fire opal is found only in a few places. "The main producers of gem opal are Australia, Mexico, and the Virgin Valley," says Fred Carrillo, Nevada mineral officer for the U.S. Bureau of Mines. "Australia and Mexico produce great quantities, but Virgin Valley opals are some of the most beautiful in the world."

Because of their beauty, the valley's black opals may command as much as \$2,500 per carat. A five-carat stone—about the size of a dime—could cost \$12,500, the same as an investment-quality one-carat diamond.

There are about 150 mining claims and seven mines in the valley, but Wilson and Hodson are the only operators that welcome rockhounds and amateur prospectors. They relish the company of people who come from all over the world to sift through the tailings, dig in virgin ground, and swap opal stories in this remote corner of Nevada.

Virgin Valley is located near the Oregon border in the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, 125 miles northwest of Winnemucca. Unlike most of the state's long, narrow valleys, this one is roughly circular. It is the floor of a 20-million-year-old collapsed caldera, where volcanoes and earthquakes once shook the landscape (see page 42). The valley's walls are cracked, revealing red-rock canyons hundreds of feet deep. Warm springs bubble into sandy pools. Most people come here to camp at the warm springs, to fish the ponds and nearby Big Springs Reservoir, and to hunt opals.

The dirt road that turns south from State Route 140 forks at the campground. Each fork leads to one of the mines. To the right, by Virgin Creek, is Wilson's Royal Peacock Mine. To the left, toward Sagebrush Creek, a battered sign points the way to Keith Hodson's Rainbow Ridge Mine.

Hodson usually can be found rummaging through his dumps or standing behind the counter in his shop telling rockhounds about his old mine tunnel and new open pit. If his sons Glenn, 25, and Brian, 38, are up from Arizona, where the family winters and has shops in Phoenix and Carefree, they'll be working the new diggings.

Hodson inherited the Rainbow Ridge from his father, an Indiana accountant who brought his family out on vacation in 1947 and, by 1949, had bought the mine and moved lock, stock, and barrel to Virgin Valley. They added on to the old stone ranch house, which dates from 1919, bringing stacks of white oak and cypress by train from Indiana to finish the interior. "We added gas lights when we bought the place, and then later electricity. It was a long trip into Winnemucca for groceries then," he says, pointing to his garden. A two-story greenhouse holds an untold number of tomato plants in

wooden boxes. Rose bushes, peach trees, and wind chimes surround the house. "One time a biologist came here to dig opals and told me this was the perfect place to grow nectarines," Hodson says.

He hasn't started the nectarine orchard yet, but last summer the 64-year-old Hodson pulled two opals out of the ground that were larger than Arnold Schwarzenegger's fists, and a lot prettier. Another major find came in two stages: Hodson's wife, Agnes, found half of a softball-sized red opal, and the other half was found by a visiting rockhound.

Before those finds there were a few lean years digging in the old tunnel, which dates back to 1905. Then Hodson tried a new tactic last year. "We just decided to take the bulldozer and open up the back end," he says, waving his pipe. After moving his equipment around to the other side of the hill and digging in, he wasn't disappointed. "We've found a lot of good new fire, and some wood replacement, called conk."

While Hodson is excited about the mine's future, he's also proud of its past. "Mrs. Flora Lockheed, the wife of the aviation magnate, used to spend a lot of time out here," he says. "She first arrived in the 1920s as a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. She just fell in love with the place and never really left again. She spent years here, living in a tent, prospecting and putting her finds in trunks." Hodson says she'd fill glory holes with old newspapers after she read them, and the Wilsons still find *Chronicles* from the '20s and '30s.

In her later years, it is said, Mrs. Lockheed slipped away from home and stole out to the valley against the wishes of her family. Once she came in a taxicab—all the way from San Francisco. Her children soon fetched her in a limousine. Hodson says most of the claims in the valley were named by Flora Lockheed and another opal addict, Mark Foster.

Foster was a retread gold prospector who came to Nevada from Northern California. Timid and frail-looking until he had a taste of the grape, Foster was once 86'ed from Winnemucca for a year and a half. Police wouldn't let him cross the bridge into town without throwing him in jail for causing a ruckus. He also was seduced by the black opals of Virgin Valley and lived in tents near his claims.

Today, with gem opals growing in popularity, more claims are being staked in the valley all the time. But the main producers continue to be Hodson, who also owns the Bonanza mine, and the Wilson family.

Harry Bill Wilson is a four-decade resident of Nevada, a weather-beaten rancher with a devilish grin. He's been known to take a gamble on more than a few things in life, and the Royal Peacock Mine is one that has paid off handsomely. "When my dad bought the opal claims in 1937 the precious opal wasn't even for sale," he says.

Wilson's mine is just a stone's throw from the barns at the family ranch, where many a rockhound has relaxed in the shade of its tall trees with a glass of iced tea after a hard day at the dumps across the creek. Cattle graze in the meadow between the ranch and the mine, and the music of untold numbers of African bullfrogs fills the air. Wilson introduced a few pairs of the fat green frogs to the ponds several years ago to satisfy his occasional hankering for frog legs.

These days he spends most of his time ranching, leaving the mining business to his wife, Joy, his daughter-in-law, Mary Ann, and his 30-year-old son, Walt. A man of few words and a quiet smile, Walt is a jeweler and the outfit's principal miner. He uses a bulldozer to open new cuts in the hillside and then picks through for major finds.

"The opals occur in layers, at four different levels in the side of the hill," Walt explains. "Each level here has a different kind of fire. One layer has the red Mexican fire, one has black opals with pinpoint iridescence. As you go farther north into the



Agnes Hodson found half of a softball-sized red fire opal—a major find. A visiting rockhound discovered the other half.



When Virgin Valley bubbled and boiled, it brewed up the right formula for some of the most beautiful gems on earth.



Reno rockhound digs at the Royal Peacock. "They really keep the place going," Joy Wilson says of weekend prospectors.



How Opals Are Formed

Imagine yourself on a high ridge looking into a vast, circular depression. Inside the bowl is a lake surrounded by low hills. A few streams wind down to the bottom of the basin. Huge sequoias wave in the breeze below. The ancestors of today's horses wander the hills. Periodically, the earth rumbles.

The scene takes place 20 million years ago, and you are standing on the rim of a collapsed caldera, a volcanic engine at rest. The rumblings are earthquakes. Soon a fissure will open in one of the hills, or perhaps a rising dome will break the surface of the lake, sending columns of steam hundreds of feet in the air spewing fragments of pumice over the land. When it happens, unpredictably and quickly, the pumice smothers the trees and the lake. All life is snuffed out. But in this destruction are the seeds of creation.

After the volcanic engine shuts down, there is hydrothermal activity. Hot springs bubble through the layers of tuff and ash. The steaming fluids leach silica from fine glass particles. Pine cones, twigs, trees, and the bones of horses, covered where they fell, lie in the path of these warm underground waters. Atom by atom the hydrothermal fluid dissolves the organic matter and leaves in its place a network of tiny water-saturated spheres the consistency of gelatin. They are perfect mimics of twigs and pine cones made of hydrated amorphous silica—better known as opal.

And so nature transforms the organisms buried by the volcano into jewels.

The opal hardens very slowly over millions of years, gradually losing water from its interior. A drop in the water level can leave the process unfinished. But if conditions are right, the result is a perfect black fire opal, one of the world's rarest gems.

A diamond refracts light by breaking it into all the colors of the rainbow and shooting each color back through the prism of its crystallographic structure; it is a strictly controlled box-work of atoms. But the opal's silica gel diffracts sunlight unlike any other gem. Because the gem has no ordered internal structure, light is trapped inside the hardened gel and broken into rainbows that bounce around inside the silica spheres, creating waves of color. Thus, the fire of the precious opal is born.—CD

valley, you get more white and jelly opals."

There are more than 30 levels with opalization, but only four have the kind of fire Walt wants to see. In all, about 15 percent of the precious opal found here has the valuable black fire. "We think the black opals may have some relationship to ancient fires, probably set by lightning," he explains. "We usually find charcoal with them." It is possible that carbon from the burned wood is incorporated in the opal, producing its characteristic dark background.

Walt adds, "Anybody who's ever dug opals will tell you you've really got something if you find a puffball." The best stones are usually hidden beneath the puffballs, which are mixtures of fused glass and ash from volcanoes. It may be that the puffballs leach an increased concentration of silica into the water table below.

In addition to straight gem opal, there are strange and unique varieties of opalized wood and pine cones. Even opalized horse and camel teeth have been found by the Wilsons.

Despite their beauty, Virgin Valley black opals were undervalued until recent years. "When we bought the opal claims from Mark Foster," Harry Bill says, "my dad was the buckaroo boss on this ranch, then owned by Miller and Lux. He rode a chuckwagon all over these parts for



Opalization sometimes reveals the original organic forms, such as a pine cone (top left) and piece of wood (above).

26 years. Sure was hard to get him to go on a picnic. Anyway, we bought the moss opal and fluorescent opal, which glows green in ultraviolet light but doesn't have any fire. They are valuable only as mineral specimens.

"Then Mark Foster threw in the precious opal claims as a novelty. It just goes to show you what the value of things was then. The buckaroos used to go up there on the hill and dig around till they found a nice opal, and ride into Denio with it to trade for a couple of shots of whiskey."

The man who changed that view of opals was William F. Kelley, then-curator of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and founder of the Cleveland Aquarium. A chemical engineer, Kelley came to Virgin Valley in 1965 looking for specimens for the museum. He fell in love with the local black fire and decided that the gems were destined for greatness.

Soon he founded Opals, Inc., to produce and promote the precious stones. Blessed with a silver tongue and wealthy backers, Kelley set about convincing the captains of industry that their wives and mistresses needed black opals to complete their jewelry collections. From 1968 to 1973 the value of black opals rose from pennies to thousands of dollars per carat. Kelley's flamboyant personality drew investors from around the world, and by the time he left in 1974, he had put Virgin Valley on the gem map.

Kelley's other major contribution was his discovery of a way to keep the newly uncovered gems from cracking as they dehydrated. Virgin Valley opals contain seven to 15 percent water, according to the Wilsons. Unless you happen to find one that is already sun-cured, care is needed when the opal first sees the light of day. The opals have spent about 15 million years at a constant, cool temperature. If they are abruptly hauled up into the hot summer sun, chances are they will dehydrate too quickly. Walt adds, "The only opals I cut right away are the really good black fire stones. The rest of the stones I put in an oil bath."

The oil bath was developed by Kelley, but only after he had tried a few other approaches. "He flew to Canada and talked the Canadian government into letting him put some opals into one of their small nuclear reactors. The process worked great," the elder Wilson says. But apparently Kelley didn't want to build even a little nuclear reactor in the valley, so he developed the oil treatment. "Keith Hodson puts his opals in a water bath. We think oil works better. I use mineral oil, but olive oil works, too."

Many of the Royal Peacock's gems go to a specialty jewelry store in Hawaii. Finished stones and jewelry also can be purchased at the Royal Peacock's gem shop.

Mining the opals is a lucrative business for the Wilsons, but it's the rockhounds that make the difference. Joy Wilson says, "The rockhounds really keep the place going, although sometimes it makes Walter cry when they take out a gallon bucket of opals worth \$10,000 after digging four or five days."

Walt adds, "I tell people that if they can only spend a day, they may not find much. But if they have the time to spend four or five days, their chances of taking home something are pretty good."

Of course, the value of a trip to Virgin Valley can't be measured entirely in carats. The rewards sometimes come from the camaraderie with other rockhounds and the chance to meet these opal barons. Here you can forget the rat race while enjoying the simple pleasures of sifting through a pile of dirt.

While digging, however, you might find an oddly shaped lump of clay. And when you rub the crust away, there will be a large black stone staring up at you, sparkling with fire. □

Carolyn Dufurrena is a consulting geologist based in Winnemucca who likes to hunt opals now and then.



Virgin Valley Opal Odysseys

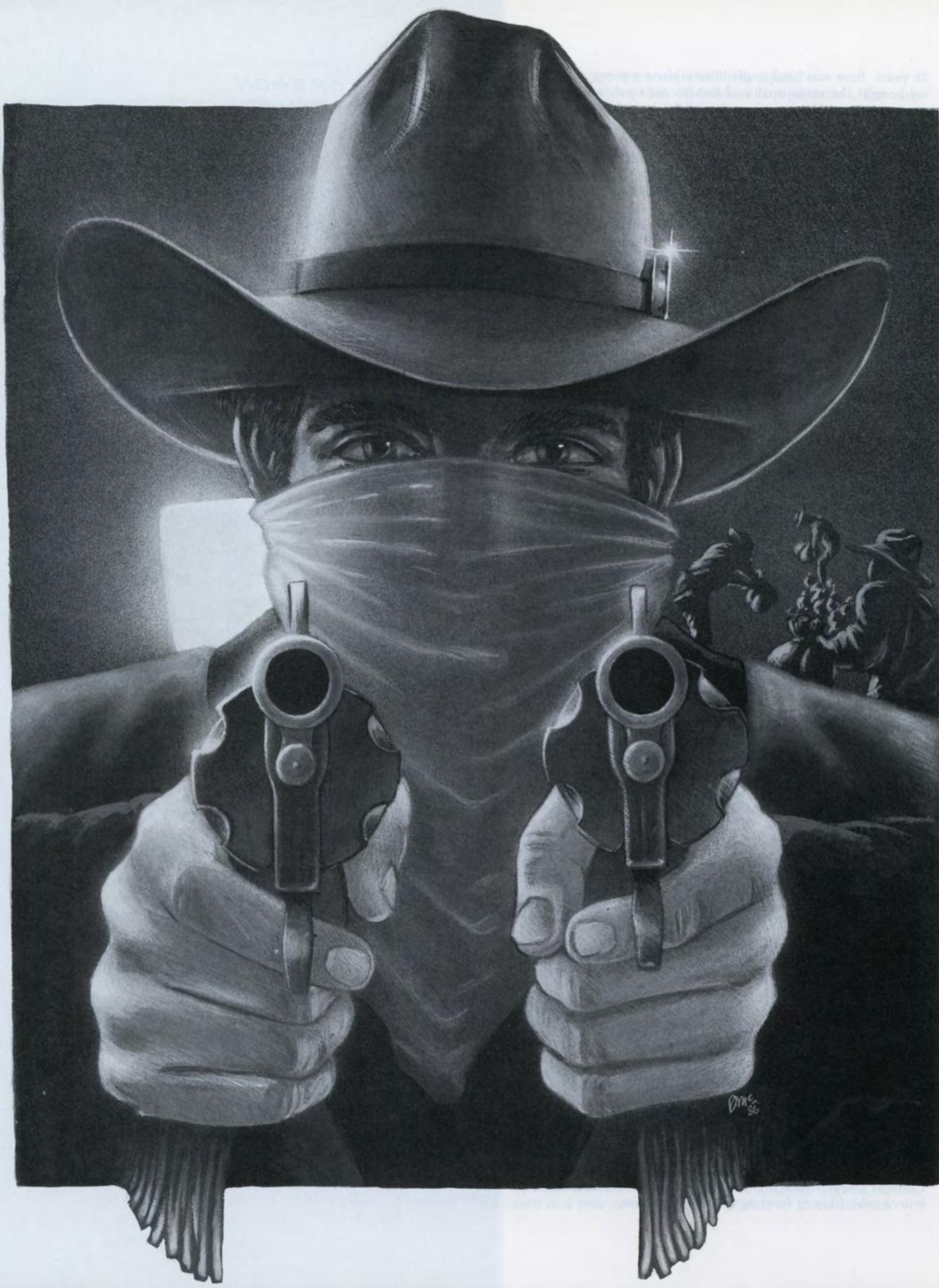
Virgin Valley is 125 miles northwest of Winnemucca via U.S. 95 and State Route 140. Closer but a lot smaller than Winnemucca is Denio Junction, the last stop for gas, beer, or bait before you climb onto the Oregon plateau country and head west 25 miles to the valley.

Opal hunting in the tailings at Keith Hodson's Rainbow Ridge costs \$20 per day. At the Wilson's Royal Peacock, it's \$15 for digging in the tailings and \$30 to explore virgin ground. You can buy mineral specimens and jewelry at the rock and gem shops at both places.

Both mines are open from May 15 through the end of October, depending on weather. Tent camping is free, and the Royal Peacock has 10 camper hookups. There's also Virgin Valley Camp, a government campground at the warm springs on the way into the valley, just a few minutes from the mines. Call the Royal Peacock at 702-941-0236, or the Rainbow Ridge at 702-941-0270.

If you wish to sample the area's nightlife, the local version thrives at Lee Greenstreet's Denio Junction, three miles south of Denio. It features a restaurant, bar, motel, gas pumps, and a dozen RV hookups (\$6 a night, \$40 a week).

Just up the road in greater downtown Denio, you can get in a game of shuffleboard and jaw with Ted Hartman, the local saddlemaker and owner of the Diamond Inn. The world-famous Denio Barbecue is scheduled for the first weekend in June, and on the Fourth of July, Denio Junction throws its annual jubilee, a five-day affair that includes a fishing derby, barbecue (entrees run from chicken to buffalo), and dance beginning July 2. Call Lee or Nancy Greenstreet at 702-941-0371 for details.—CD



The Great Train Robbery

The West's first train robbery was a work of daring and criminal genius, but the robbers left behind a few too many tracks.

By Terri Sprenger-Farley

It was about midnight on November 4, 1870, when the Central Pacific's Atlantic Express slowed for Verdi. The conductor stepped onto an open car platform for a breath of air—and stopped. The bell cord was cut.

He squinted to be sure and then swung back toward the engine. Facing him were three men in black masks.

Two more figures scrambled over the tender's woodpile and dropped into the engine compartment. Six-shooters slid from holsters, and a voice ordered the engineer to slow the train.

Silhouetted against a moonlit doorway, one masked man used his gun to motion the engineer, Henry S. Small, and his fireman down from their posts. He followed them to the door of the express car, knocked, and stepped back.

"Who's there?" asked the Wells, Fargo guard inside.

"Engineer Small," came the reply.

When the guard opened the door, he was staring at three steady revolvers.

Seconds later the loot was divided. "We're glad we didn't have to kill you," one of the bandits said to the guard.

Then all six were in the saddle.

"Ride like hell!" yelled the leader, jerking his mask free as he disappeared in the dark.

That night the six horsemen rode off with more than \$40,000 in gold. They also earned themselves a large measure of fame, as newspapers soon told the nation how the gang had pulled off the first train robbery in the Western U.S.

Such daring should have meant the gang members would live to old age in wealth. And that might have happened if it hadn't been for a nervous robber and a red horse named Cockedoodle.

The robbery was Smiling Jack Davis' idea, spun out while he pretended respectability in Gold Hill. Manager of a livery stable and recorder for the Flower Mining District on the outskirts of Virginia City, Davis also taught Sunday school and ran a small mill in Six Mile Canyon.

His success mystified those who didn't

know that Davis mined the bulk of his profits from stagecoaches on Geiger Grade.

In planning the great train heist, Davis couldn't figure why such a robbery hadn't been tried before—but he was confident. He rounded up three old road-agent buddies, Tilton Cockerell, John Squires, and E.N. Parsons. A rider named Sol Jones was recommended by Chat Roberts, a friend who managed a stagecoach station. The least experienced member of the band was James Gilchrist. A miner like Davis, though a sight poorer, Gilchrist was a novice determined to make good in the highwayman's world.

On October 25, Davis' friend, J.H. Chapman, left Reno for San Francisco. Supplied with a special code that Davis had devised, Chapman nosed around. Then he heard about the November 4 train through Verdi: It would be carrying the payroll for Gold Hill's rich Yellow Jacket Mine.

Davis and his henchmen set up camp north of Reno near Peavine Mountain, where they stockpiled shotguns, six-shooters, and masks. To keep the boys happy, Davis brought them good food from Reno's Capitol House, where he ran the saloon. One day Davis was on such an errand when Sol Jones ran into the hideout, yelling, "I've got it, Jack!" He had a telegram:

"San Francisco November 1870

"S. Jones. Send me sixty dollars, if possible and oblige, (signed) Joseph Enrique."

Davis read it again. "Sixty" meant the treasure had only six guards. He smiled at the men around him. They'd be more than a match for those railroaders. The gray fall day turned bright as a birthday party.

On the appointed day Jones went to town for horses, and by the time he returned the others were set to go. Tilton Cockerell took the red horse named Cockedoodle, and the gang set out for the old stone quarry at Lawton Hot Springs, six miles west of Reno. After days spent waiting, the men eagerly blocked the tracks with a stack of rail-

road ties and rocks. By nightfall all was ready.

Jones staked the horses so they could be released quickly and watched the others hike up the tracks to Verdi, four miles farther west. Being a boss had its advantages. Jones hunkered down on his heels to wait. In less than an hour, he figured, he'd be rich.

Central Pacific No. 1 was pulling out of Verdi for the downhill run into Reno when the rest of Davis' gang jumped aboard and directed Engineer Small to ease back on the throttle.

Seconds later the engine seemed to lean forward and glide a bit faster. The engineer saw the eyes above the black masks exchange looks of jubilation, and then he understood. The express car full of money, along with the engine and the tender, were free, uncoupled from the rest of the train.

Engineer Small saw the gang's barricade and brought the engine to a stop. He cooperated, but it galled him to escort the outlaws into the car, right past Frank Marshall, the guard from Wells, Fargo.

"Give us the treasure and we will not hurt you," one robber promised.

Marshall watched as they axed open the money boxes and found \$41,600 in \$20 gold pieces, which they bagged and threw through the door. The robbers moaned having to leave behind more than \$8,000 in silver bars because they were too heavy to carry, and thanked Marshall for refraining from a show of heroism that would have gotten him killed.

As they swung down from the train, they could see the rest of the cars coasting back to the engine. The train would be recoupled and reach Reno in minutes, and then the telegraph lines would sing.

The horsemen hit their saddles and rode whooping into the darkness.

Ever since stagecoaches began carrying Western payrolls and mine profits, the Wells, Fargo and Company's guards, riding shotgun, had shown themselves as tough as any outlaws. "By God and by Wells, Fargo," was

the slogan used by the company bankers, but highway robbers knew another: "Wells, Fargo Never Forgets."

As he had watched Jack Davis' band of robbers throw the heavy sacks of gold through the door, guard Frank Marshall had not been contemplating the gun poked in his ribs. He'd been watching his reputation fly into the night. And there was only one way to save it—find the culprits.

When the train arrived in Reno, Marshall wired San Francisco for help, and soon every lawman in Northern Nevada had joined the hunt.

"No further news in regard to the great robbery on the Central Pacific Railroad

yesterday morning," Virginia City's *Territorial Enterprise* said. "The officers who went to the scene have not yet returned or been heard from."

No doubt those local lawmen had heard what half the country knew. The prize for capturing the West's first train robbers was rich: Wells, Fargo offered \$10,000 for the robbers; Nevada Governor Henry G. Blasdel put up \$20,000, and the U.S. Post Office threw in another \$500.

The robbery site swarmed with trackers. Among them were Marshall and another Wells, Fargo agent, C.C. Pennington.

But it was Washoe County Under-

sheriff James H. Kinkead of Reno who single-handedly captured half the gang.

Although gang members Gilchrist, Parsons, and Squires had split up after the robbery, they spent the night at the same hotel in Sardine Valley, about 10 miles west of Verdi. Parsons and Squires left at daybreak, but Gilchrist, the novice, woke to hear Undersheriff Kinkead inquiring about suspicious guests.

When Kinkead rode off, the robber bolted for the outhouse, and the innkeeper's wife saw him sprint from there to his horse. She started to call out, but then stopped. On a hunch, she hurried to the privy with a candle and found part of Gilchrist's hidden treasure—\$120 in gold coins.

Kinkead soon caught up with Gilchrist and herded him into the Truckee jail, where he became the first thread to start unraveling the perfect crime. First Gilchrist said he lived in Meadow Lake, but he couldn't say where. And maybe he'd spent the night before last in Cisco. Maybe. After prodding from Kinkead, however, he confessed to the robbery and told the lawman where to look for Squires and Parsons.

Following Gilchrist's clues, Kinkead inquired at a Loyalton hotel and was told an armed stranger was asleep upstairs. It turned out to be Parsons. Spurred on by thoughts of reward money, Kinkead stopped that same day at Squires' brother's ranch—and found the third robber.

Further interrogation broke Gilchrist completely. He revealed the names of everyone involved in the plot.

Shortly afterward, Tilton Cockerell was arrested in a saloon north of Reno. Chat Roberts was taken at his stage station. A Wells, Fargo detective found Sol Jones at the cabin of a gambler friend. Chapman, the San Francisco snoop, had just climbed down from a train and was heading to a nearby saloon for a celebratory drink when he, too, was nabbed.

Smiling Jack Davis showed himself all over Virginia City. He thought he'd make it plain he had nothing to hide. But he was under surveillance.

When his tail, Deputy Merrow, was sent to make the arrest, he was shocked by a strange occurrence. Davis' teeth, "which are generally brilliantly white, turned blue," Merrow told the *Territorial Enterprise*.

When Merrow hauled the robber before Police Chief Downey, it happened again during an exchange between the chief and Davis.

"We seem to have one of the train robbers in custody," said Downey.

"I'll bet you \$2.50 you haven't," smiled Davis.

"I'll bet you \$2.50 that I have one of them right here in town."

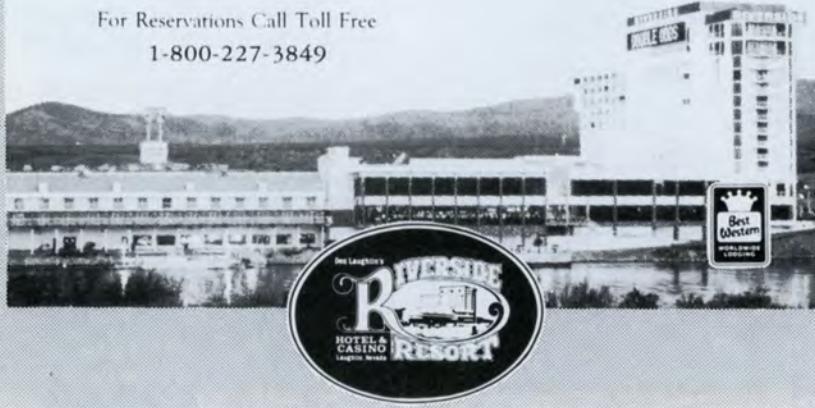
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"Where?" asked Davis.

"There!" Downey said, pointing at Davis.

Once more, according to witnesses, Smiling Jack Davis' famous grin turned blue.

Jailed, the robbers showed little loyalty. They spilled the whole story and tripped over each other in a rush to lead authorities to their hidden treasure.

Gilchrist led lawmen to a canyon off Honey Lake Road and pointed out a ledge hiding his share. Jones described the Peavine Mountain cache which held his \$7,345. Davis made much of his reluctance, but he finally gave in. He led deputies to three large sagebrush bushes 100 yards above Hunter's Bridge on the Truckee. One kick at the edge, and gold glinted in the soil. Soon, according to the *Enterprise*, "The twenties were scooped up by the double handfuls. Davis did not assist in this work, but stood by looking on—doubtless almost sick at heart to see his booty scratched to the last coin."

When the search ended, \$3,000 was still missing, and rumor had it that Davis might know its whereabouts.

By December 20, the day the robbers' trial began, Davis' wild bunch had been curried up. "In fact," mused the *Enterprise*, "they were the finest appearing men in the court—no disrespect to the attorneys."

Three of the spiffy defendants, Gilchrist, Jones, and Chat Roberts, turned state's evidence. And a certain red horse kept nudging his way into the courtroom, adding insult to incrimination.

Chat's son, J.C. Roberts, remembered hiding some money for Jones and noticing Cockerell's horse, Cockedoodle.

George B. Hill, a livery owner, knew Jack Davis. He'd rented him space for a strange red horse named Cockedoodle.

"I saw Cockerell at Roberts' ranch after the robbery. He came out on horseback on the morning of the fifth of November," swore rancher George Evans. "The horse he rode was called Cockedoodle."

The robbers had probably ceased listening when the final witness, Wells, Fargo's F.T. Burke, claimed, "I arrested Jones at Mapes Ranch—he was on horseback, leading a horse known as" did the agent pause for groans from the gang?—"Cockedoodle."

Jail sentences came down fast. Gilchrist and Roberts went free for their testimony. Jones received five years in the state prison. Davis got 10 years, Chapman 18. Parsons and Squires were both sentenced to 20 years. Cockerell, the man on the red horse, received 22 years.

Less than a year after sentencing, Cockerell, Chapman, Parsons, and Squires joined in a bloody prison break. The warden was battered and a man in town died. All the escapees were eventually captured, although Parsons remained free for five years.

Jack Davis declined to join in the break. In fact, he was such a cooperative prisoner that he was paroled after only three years.

And \$3,000 was still missing, recalled those who watched Davis leave. Perhaps he had stashed it away in Six Mile Canyon or on the Truckee River.

Davis worked the Virginia City mines once more, but two years after his re-

lease he was dead, shot in the back by a Wells, Fargo guard riding shotgun on a stagecoach carrying a shipment of gold.

Local men later ventured into Six Mile Canyon, to look for Davis' fabled gold cache. However, according to the *Territorial Enterprise*, a huge bearded ghost, laughing fiendishly, rose from the earth. The treasure hunters, terrified, chose to follow the advice offered by Davis himself a decade before.

They jammed their hats down over their ears, swung their ponies around, and rode like hell. □

Terri Sprenger-Farley is a teacher and freelance writer who lives in Verdi.

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Muench's Gallery

David Muench visits the Newberries.

Nevada's southernmost range, the Newberry Mountains display their volcanic history with a mixture of sharp and smooth formations. The range runs northwest of Laughlin along Lake Mohave and is named for J. S. Newberry, a geologist who climbed its granite pathways as a member of the 1858 Ives expedition of the lower Colorado River.

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

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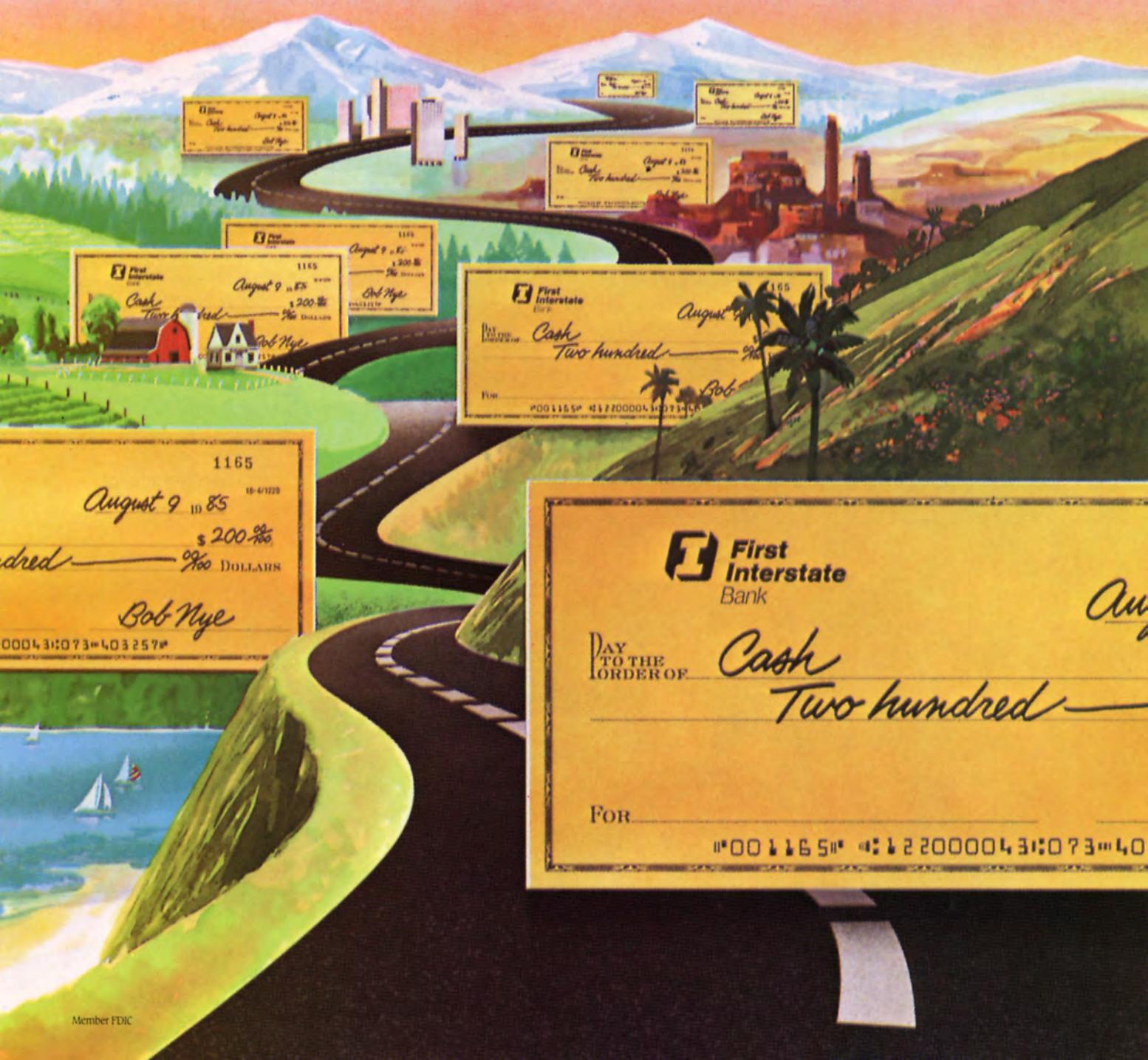
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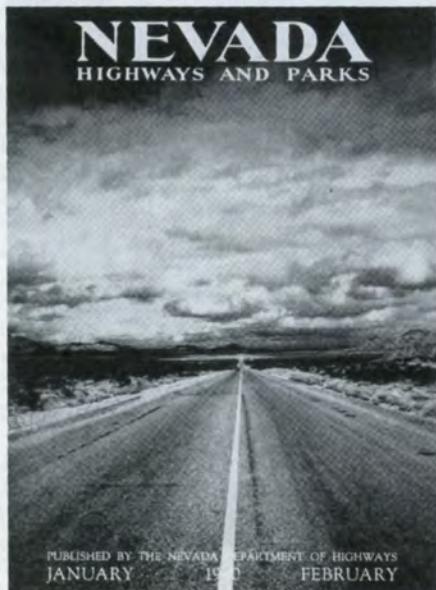
NEVADA

IN WAR AND PEACE

After World War II Americans were traveling again, and Nevada welcomed them with open roads.

In January 1940, the future of *Nevada Highways and Parks* seemed as unlimited as the landscape on its new cover, which showed a highway running straight to an endless horizon. But the photo's cloudy sky foretold another fate. Two issues later the four-year-old state bulletin, the forerunner of today's *Nevada Magazine*, ceased publication. War was imminent.

Five years later the magazine was back on the road with a 16-page January/February 1946 edition. An uplifting item noted, "Americans have at last emerged from the A-card era and entered the 'fill 'er up' stage. The Great War has ended. Gas rationing is out. Tourists are reviving and brushing off their dreams." Although the magazine assured visitors that "our highways have come through the war in good shape," it offered a gentle warning: "We do not wish to imply that our highways are perfect, for they have been through the rigors of four years of wartime travel."



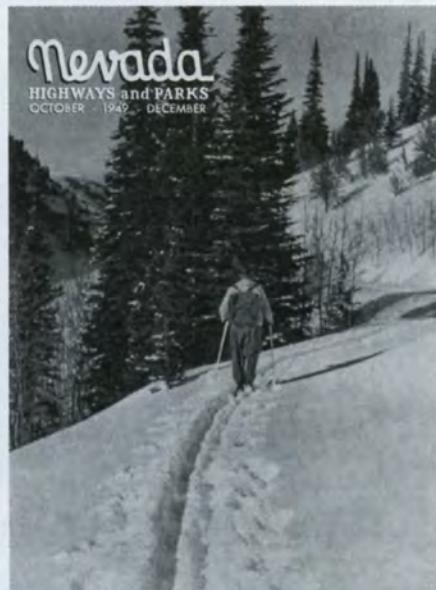
JAN / FEB 1940

"Several miles north of Las Vegas. There's a heap of pleasure in a journey through southern Nevada during the winter season. Main highways, and even the less traveled roads servicing the semi-isolated sections, are free of snow. Travel over these roads is a real treat, for the colorful mountains are at their best."



SEPTEMBER 1940

"Customs and traditions of the old, rough-and-ready West, of which Reno was an integral part, were not easily laid aside, and for this reason the tolerance of gambling and liberality of thought and action, typical of early-day mining camps, has been retained as part of the modern set-up."



OCT / DEC 1949

"Snow conditions in the Jarbidge area during the winter of 1948-1949 were perhaps the worst ever seen by old-timers who came into the noted mining camp soon after it was established in 1910. Skis were used in many cases of emergencies to bring mail and other supplies into camp. Through this method, contact was maintained with other snow-bound communities."

While road crews went to work on potholes, editor Fred Greulich, the Highway Department's publicist, began reshaping the magazine. The second issue of 1946 used color photos for the first time. The next issue was the first to be printed in its present size, 8 1/2-by-11-inches, as the old 6-by-9-inch format was discarded. Stories promoted tourism with optimistic titles like "Nevada's Colorful Scenic Features Are Now Accessible" and "Here Is Information About Mason and Smith Valleys."

Despite the improvements the decade's last cover seemed to reveal a somewhat tethered optimism. Unlike the pre-war cover that spread its asphalt arms wide to the world, the final cover of 1949 featured a lone skier trudging off through heavy snows into a forest.

Today, as the magazine celebrates its 50th anniversary, we know they could have shown the skier yodeling merrily in the snow, because from there it was all downhill.—Jim Crandall

ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

Good Times in Town

Baseball, water slides, and other summery diversions to be enjoyed around Las Vegas, Reno, and Tahoe.

Las Vegas by Kate Butler

Kick Up Your Heels

Get in the swing of things at the Western Dance Hall in Sam's Town. Located above the main casino, the Western-style bar and dance floor is open nightly from 6 p.m. until early morning. Free lessons in dances like the Cowboy Boogie and Cotton-eyed Joe are taught in the evening. Later on you can join the crowd, with or without a partner. Dress is optional, but most folks wear country. Sam's Town is located at 5111 Boulder Highway in Las Vegas; call 702-456-7777.

The Fun Isn't Miniature

Everyone has a good time at Scandia. The attractions include three 18-hole miniature golf courses that wind through

a fantasyland of walkways, small lakes, and bridges, at \$3.75 per person; motorized bumper boats that ply through a four-foot deep pond, at \$2.75; racing cars; batting cages; and an arcade. A multi-attraction pass is \$8. Scandia Family Fun Center is at 2900 Sirius Avenue; call 702-364-0070.

What the Shadow Knows

You can freeze your shadow on the wall at the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society in Lorenzi Park with the Shadow Maker. This is one of several explorations of light and color designed for children but equally intriguing for adults. Other galleries at the museum trace the anthropology and natural history of the Southern Nevada region. In May, the world-famous Boone and Crockett display of big game trophies opens for three to four weeks. The museum is open 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday, and 8:30 a.m. to

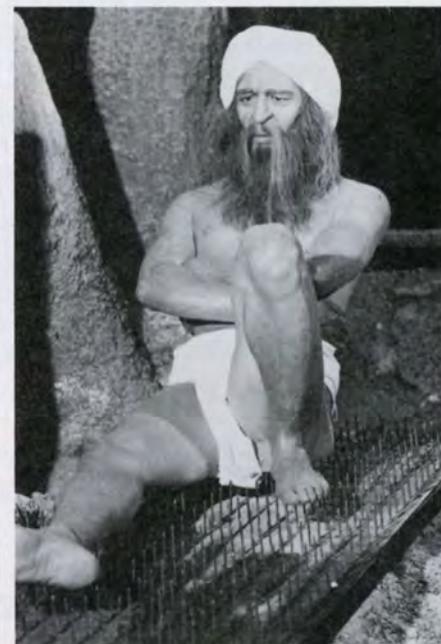
4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. There is no admission charge, but a donation of \$1 per adult is suggested. The Nevada State Museum and Historical Society is located at 700 Twin Lakes Drive; phone 702-385-0115.

Grab Sun Fun

The biggest warm-weather rage on the Las Vegas Strip is the Wet 'n Wild water park. It has a large children's section, Tarzan ropes, helicopter rides, and canons that shoot water sprays. Thrill seekers will love the Raging Rapids and Bonzai Boggan rides and the ultimate challenge—De Stupka, a 120-foot body slide into a small pool of water. The 1986 season opened April 12 and continues until September 29. Hours are 10 a.m. to early evening. Admission is \$11.95 for adults, \$8.95 for ages three to 12, and free for children under three. For information call 702-737-7873.

Odds Are You'll Believe It

The largest Ripley's Believe It Or Not! collection has come to the Four Queens Hotel in downtown Las Vegas. Ten spacious theme rooms hold more than 1,000



A wax fakir points the way to salvation at the new Ripley's in Las Vegas.

mysterious, fascinating, sometimes gruesome exhibits, with 54 of the world's most unique people, as well as a three-legged horse, shrunken heads, and strange underwater creatures—all re-created in wax. The 9,100-square-foot Auditorium was ingeniously designed with theme atmospheres that give impact to the collections that Ripley gathered during his travels through more than 190 countries. If possible, allow at least an hour to tour the exhibits, and bring your



This 1907 Thomas Flyer earned a place among the classics of Harrah's Auto Museum when it won the New York to Paris race of 1908.

camera. Admission is \$4.95 for adults; \$3.95 for seniors; \$2.50 for children six to 12; and free to youngsters five and under. Hours are 10 a.m. to midnight Sunday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Call 702-385-4011. □

Reno/Tahoe

By Andrea Michelsen

Taking the Historical View

Sharing a hillside with the Fleischmann Planetarium, the Nevada Historical Society has a panoramic view of both Reno and the state's pioneer past. Displays include Indian artifacts, rare photos, and starting April 27 a special exhibit, "Desert Mirage: Casino Gaming and the Image of Nevada," which describes the architecture of our glittering desert spas. Admission is free. Nevada Historical Society, 1650 North Virginia, Reno, 702-789-0190.

Automania

An all-time favorite for antique-car purveyors has a new name—the William F. Harrah Automobile Foundation. To fans, it will always be known simply as "the collection," but no matter what you call it, the display of cars is impressive—and shrinking. At its peak it boasted more than 1,000 rare and classic cars, but that's been whittled down to 500, with 200 more to be auctioned off June 27-29 before the collection shifts from Harrah's corporate domain to a non-profit foundation. Still, an auto enthusiast can find weeks of pleasure here and barely begin to see all the wonders. The easiest way to get to the East Glendale Avenue site is to catch the free double-decker bus from Harrah's downtown. General admission is \$5.50, junior (6-15 years) is free. Write Harrah Automobile Museum, Box 10, Reno, NV. 89504 or phone 702-344-3400.

A Park to Idle a While

A mile west of downtown Reno, Idlewild Park is a great place for a lazy afternoon stroll or a vigorous morning workout. The park borders the Truckee River and has ponds, playgrounds, an outdoor swimming pool, softball diamonds, jogging paths, a course for exercisers, and a beautiful rose garden that is in full bloom this time of the year. If you bring children who don't like flowers or running, there's also a miniature train for an old-fashioned ride.

Home Off the Range

If Nevada inspires that secret cowboy in you, then stroll the long aisles at Parker's Western Wear and pick out a Stetson or

get some expert advice on the best boots for a greenhorn. Located in downtown Reno at 151 North Sierra Street, Parker's is one of the places where working cowboys go when they need outfitting.

Beach Blanket Bonanza

On Lake Tahoe's southeast shore, Zephyr Cove is a place you can sun, swim, sail, horseback ride, and take a boat cruise—or two if you want. The *M.S. Dixie*, a 350-passenger stern-wheeler, has a sunset-dinner cruise that offers all the wine you want, live music, and a steak dinner for \$24; call 702-882-0786. For a ride closer to the waves, the lake's only sailing cruise boat, the 41-

foot *Woodwind*, cuts through the afternoon waters for \$9 per person. At sunset you can drink champagne for an extra \$6; phone 702-588-3000.

Ben Rode Here

The Ponderosa Ranch near Incline Village is an entertaining replica of *Bonanza*'s set. In fact, it's so good that 250,000 people pay \$4.50 each year to visit the 600-acre "town" built around the famous Cartwright spread. Look for the antiques and general restoration work done by owner Bill Anderson. There's even an old Kansas church that has been reassembled at this higher elevation. Phone 702-831-0691.

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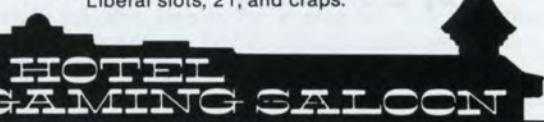
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"Fog, Carson Valley"
Harry Upson, Jr., Reno
Best of Show, Black and White

NEVADA 86

Winning pix from Elko's traveling picture show.

By C. J. Hadley

Ataste has to be developed for escargot, avocado, and tequila, and the same can be said about Nevada. To some, the place is threatening, its landscapes bleak, people much too independent. But to others, the state is perfect just as it is.

To share their views of the real Nevada, photographers for the past 10 years have seen their work published in this magazine as part of the state's best photo contests—Nevada 86, the traveling show of Elko's Northeastern Nevada Museum, and *Nevada Magazine*'s own Great Nevada Picture Hunt, which is calling for entries now (see page 11).

Here we present the top finishers in Nevada 86, which will attract thousands of viewers during its travels around the state. Overall, the contest's winners excelled in composition and cropping, the use of color and light, and the difficult job of impressing three highly opinionated judges—Howard Hickson, Rocky Bush, and me.

This potpourri of talent (the photographers) and opinion



"Autumn's Golden Magic"
Leslie Wright, Elko
Best of Show, Color Prints

(the judges) somehow works into a beautiful exhibit, partly because of good photos but also because of the talents of the show's founder and producer, Howard Hickson.

"Nevada is real, it's not fuzzed out or softened," says Hickson, director of the Elko museum. "There's no hanky-panky about Nevada, and we try to portray that in the show."

The photographers seemed to focus best on the great outdoors. Of nearly a thousand photographs entered, very few showed people, action, cities, or industry, which made those types attractive simply because they were rare. Most entries were landscapes in glowing color. Some were humorous, imaginative, or technically perfect, others oddly dramatic. Photos that were clichés, overly busy, blurred, or poorly exposed or cropped were passed by; photos that were sharp, with good design and quality, usually scored well; and photos that touched the senses were always seriously considered.

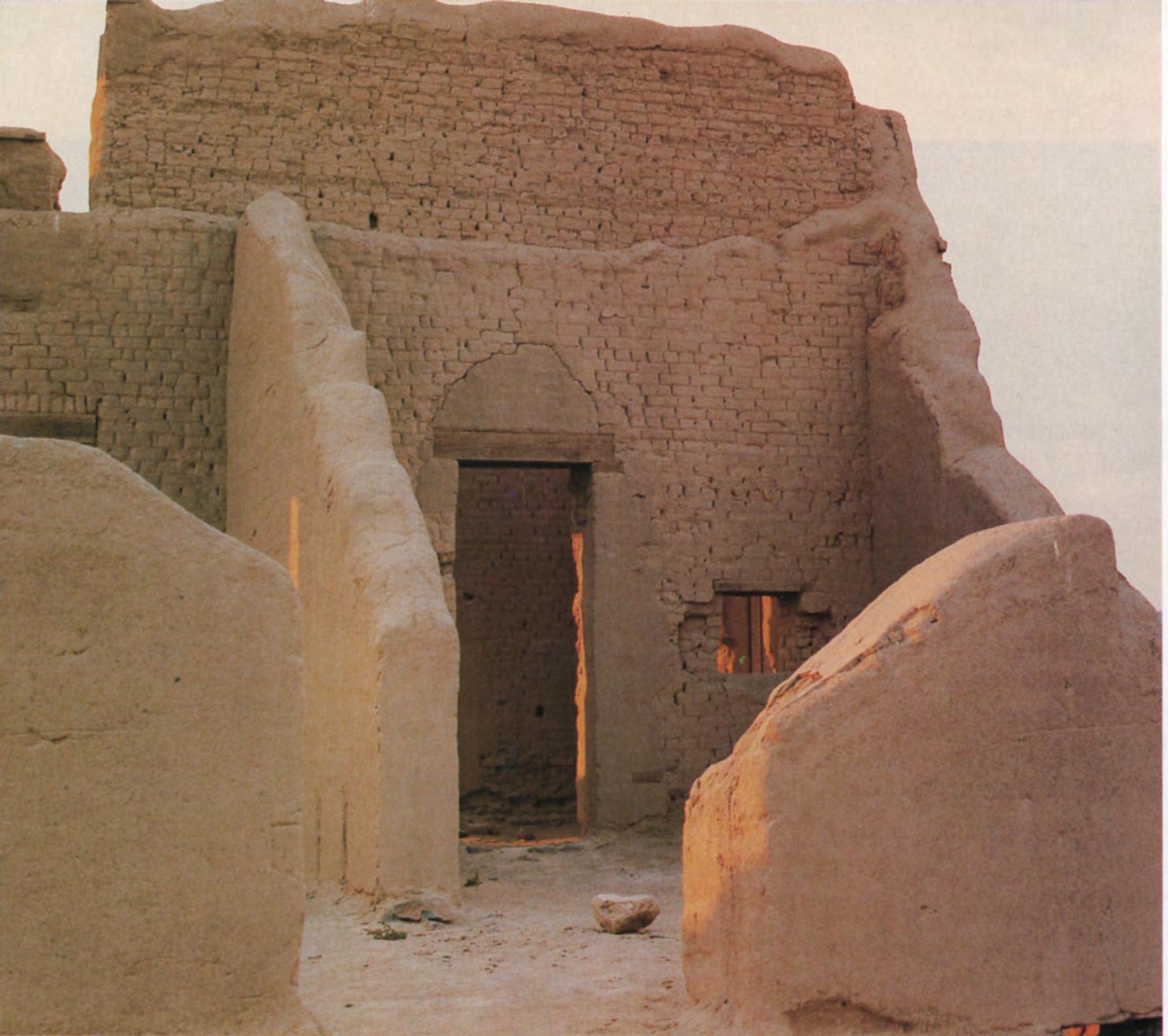
"There's a lot of really good photography here," said Rocky Bush, an Elko photographer, "but the best ones jump out and

make you stand back to simply look at them."

After many hours of analysis, fun, and argument, the three of us finally did agree. What's shown on these pages is a small sample of the winners' work. The rest of the best, 140 slides and 120 prints, can be seen in the complete show, which will be traveling all year (see page 59) to towns throughout the state.

There are few photography books on Nevada, perhaps because the state is considered too barren by out-of-state publishing houses. Obviously, we disagree. The pictorial legacy of Nevada is portrayed in *Nevada 86*, with fine images that demand respect. And the photographers who capture this state on film should be applauded, because they have left another superb record of what Nevada really is. *(Continued)*

C.J. Hadley of Gardnerville is former Nevada publisher and currently is *On the Road* as a writer and photographer. She usually can't help judging at least two photo contests a year.



"Shapes, Fort Churchill"
Linda Dufurrena, Winnemucca
First, Color Prints



"Lamoille Mutual Admiration Society"
Judith S. Miller, Lamoille
Second, Color Slides



"Bare Trees at Pyramid Lake"
W. William Serniuk, So. Lake Tahoe, CA.
Best of Show, Color Slides



"Morning Coffee, Wells"
Chuck Ferris, Las Vegas
Third, Color Slides



"Soft Shoulders"
Linda Dufurrena, Winnemucca
Fourth (Tie), Color Slides



"Sentry, Rabbit Creek"

Carolyn B. Steninger

Elko

Second, Color Prints



"Calm Morning at Wild Horse"

June Stone, Ely

First, Color Slides

Where to See the Show

Nevada 86 already has visited Elko and Winnemucca, but it is making a dozen more stops around the state this year:
Lovelock: April 24-May 8, County Library
Reno: May 15-June 12, County Library
Reno: June 17-July 2, Hist. Soc. Downtown
Carson City: July 9-Aug. 13, State Museum
Genoa: Aug. 20-Sept. 3, Courthouse Museum
Fallon: Sept. 10-24, Community Center
Hawthorne: Oct. 1-15, Arts Alliance
Tonopah: Oct. 22-Nov. 5, CN Museum
Las Vegas: Nov. 12-Dec. 10, LV Library
Valley of Fire State Park: Dec. 15-Jan. 4
Ely: Jan. 13-29, County Library
Pioche: Feb. 2-18, County Courthouse

Nevada 86 Winners' Roll

Color Prints

Best of Show: "Autumn's Golden Magic," Leslie Wright, Elko. **First:** "Shapes, Fort Churchill," Linda Dufurrena, Winnemucca. **Second:** "Sentry, Rabbit Creek," Carolyn B. Steninger, Elko. **Third:** "Black Rock Panoramic Desolation," Dave Kelley, Incline Village. **Fourth:** "Here's Looking at You, Lake Mead," Janet P. Sabin, Las Vegas.

Merits: "Making Tracks," Patricia L. Coyner, Carson City. "Spring Cleaning," Matthew Budak, Ely. "Work Detail," Leslie Wright, Elko. "Looking Back," Linda Zunino, Jiggs. "Snow Storm," Roxanne Carnevale, Las Vegas. "Sun Thru Pogonip," Kazuko Nojima, Fallon. "A Good Man's Gold," Tracy Mori, Tuscarora. "Waitin'" Chris Harris, Ogden, UT. "Their Boots," Ellen Kallery, Ely.

Black and White Prints

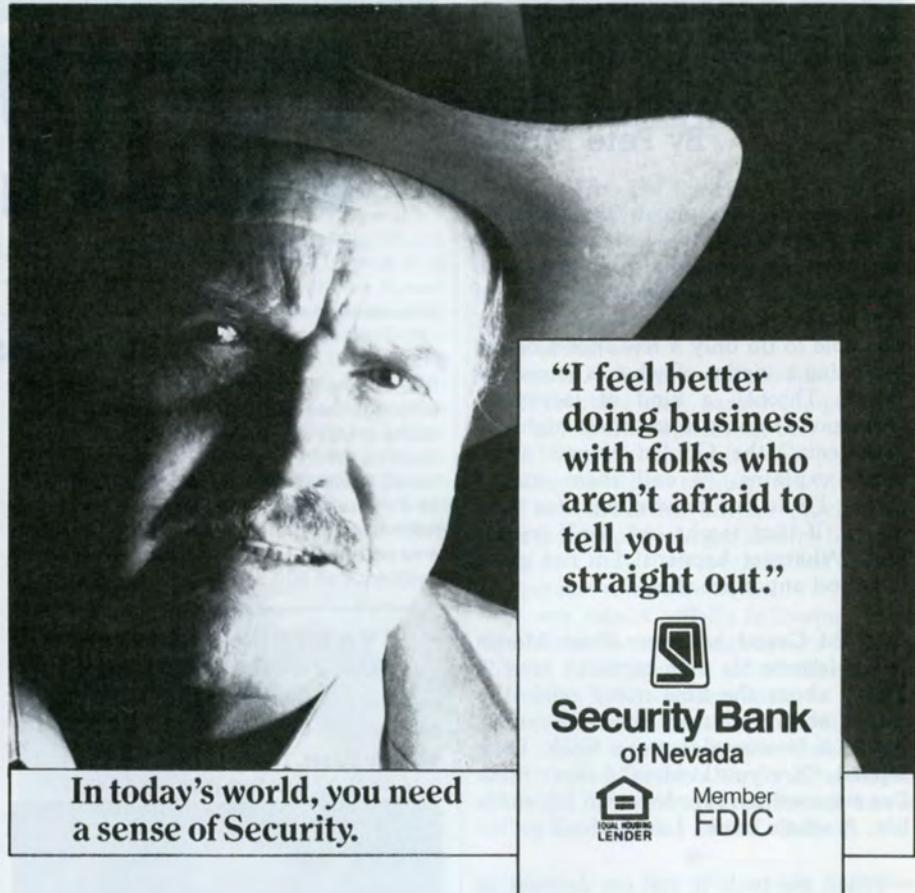
Best of Show: "Fog, Carson Valley;" **First:** "Geothermal Power;" **Second:** "Fog and Pogonip;" and **Third:** "Genoa Fence," all by Harry Upson, Jr., Reno. **Fourth:** "Bilk Creek Reservoir," Reinhold Schable, Washougal, WA.

Merits: "Washoe Lake, 1956," Daun Bohal, Carson City. "Elko Basque," Chris Priaulx, Elko. "Halleck," Peter Graham Church, San Francisco, CA. "Pogonip Shack," James Gilmore, Carson City.

Color Slides

Best of Show: "Bare Trees at Pyramid Lake," W. William Serniuk, South Lake Tahoe, CA. **First:** "Calm Morning at Wild Horse," June Stone, Ely. **Second:** "Lamoille Mutual Admiration Society," Judith S. Miller, Lamoille. **Third:** "Morning Coffee, Wells," Chuck Ferris, Las Vegas. **Fourth (Tie):** "Cathedral Gorge," John H. Lehr, Boulder City, and "Soft Shoulders," Linda Dufurrena, Winnemucca.

Merits: "Ripples in the Sand," Chuck Ferris, Las Vegas. "Washoe Frost," Syd Brown, Carson City. "Modern Mine Tunnel," Doyen Salsig, Flagstaff, AZ. "Baby Hummingbirds," Jack Peters, Elko.



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Southern Nevada Show Notes

By Pete Mikla

It's hard to slow down the energetic Dolly Parton, but five years ago the dry Southern Nevada air did. Parton, who was scheduled to perform a couple of two-week engagements at the Riviera, was able to do only a few shows before becoming a victim of what is known as "Vegas Throat," a kind of laryngitis. "For now, I'm only doing three-night engagements," the Golden Nugget songstress explains. "I call them 'smart' shows. I'll do one show a night for three nights. If that works out, we'll try for four. Whatever happens, I'm not going to cancel any more shows."

☆

MGM Grand headliner Dean Martin will celebrate his 69th birthday June 7. That's about the time many celebrities think about writing their memoirs. Asked if he was planning a book, Dino replied, "Are you kidding? I don't think I've even written four letters in my entire life. A whole book? I don't think so."

☆

When the rock 'n' roll era dawned 30 years ago, singers discovered they had to be songwriters, too. Las Vegas favorite Paul Anka recalls that it was simply a matter of survival. "Cole Porter, Sammy Cahn, and Irving Berlin were busy writing songs for the likes of Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, and Perry Como," he says. "It seemed like nobody wanted us. We were compelled to write our own songs because nobody else was doing it for us." Anka has a good survival record here, too, having played the big rooms at Caesars, MGM, Sahara, and now the Golden Nugget.

☆

Rising costs seem to be gradually erasing one of Las Vegas' most treasured traditions, the dinner show. Regular dinner service before the early show is now available in only four showrooms: the Flamingo Hilton, the Hacienda, the Tropicana, and the Union Plaza. However, the Hacienda added its dinner service in January, so maybe that's a sign the tide is turning. Also, the Sahara has offered dinner during selected engagements, usually Don Rickles. Recently the Riviera added a new wrinkle by giving showroom patrons the option of cocktails or a visit to the hotel's gourmet buffet before or after a show. □

Pete Mikla is entertainment editor for the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

SHOWGUIDE

Where the stars and shows are playing this May and June.

By Melissa Loomis

Following is a muster of the stars, revues, and extravaganzas you can see in Nevada showrooms in May and June. Hotels and casinos are listed by territory as shown on the map in this issue's Nevada Calendar. Schedules can change, so it's wise to call ahead for times, dates, and reservations. For out-of-state callers, Nevada's area code is 702. For the hotels' toll-free phone numbers, call 800-555-1212.

LAS VEGAS TERRITORY

Aladdin, 736-0111 Lounge entertainment

Barbary Coast, 737-7111 Irish Showband, thru 5/14 and 6/12-8/6; Sam Butera, 5/15-6/11



Marilyn Monroe is re-created by Susan Griffiths in the Imperial Palace's "Legends in Concert."

Caesars Palace, 731-7333: Joan Rivers/Jim Stafford, thru 5/8; Buddy Hackett, 5/9-12; George Burns/Jennifer Holliday, 5/14-22 (dark 5/20); Patti La Belle, 5/23-28; Bill Cosby 5/29-6/9; Joan Rivers/Jim Stafford, 6/11-17; David Copperfield, 6/18-30 (dark 6/24)

Circus Circus, 734-0410: Circus acts

Desert Inn, 733-4566: Sammy Davis, Jr., 5/22-6/11; Janie Fricke/Ray Stevens, 6/12-7/2

Dunes, 737-4110: Roy Clayborne, thru 5/19; C.C. Carr, 4/29-5/19; Jonas, 5/6-18

Edgewater, Laughlin, 298-2453

El Rancho, 796-2222: Lounge entertainment

Flamingo Hilton, 733-3333: "City Lites," revue, indf., 7:45pm dinner show from \$18.95, 11pm cocktail show \$12.95, includes 2 drinks; **Casino Lounge**: Sonny Turner/Power Play, thru 5/12; Briefcase Blues Band, 5/13-6/2; Dae Han Sisters, 5/13-6/9; Coasters, 6/3-30

Four Queens, 385-4011 Dondino, thru 7/5; Platters, 5/6-6/1; Frank Sinatra, Jr., 6/3-15; Vandells, 6/17-7/6; Monday Night Jazz, indf.

Frontier, 734-0240: Siegfried & Roy in "Beyond Belief," indf.; 7pm and 11pm cocktail shows Tues.-Sun., dark Mon.; family show (no nudity) on 5/3 at 6pm followed by 9:15pm and 12:15am cocktail shows

Golden Nugget, 386-8100: Paul Anka, 5/1-12; Dolly Parton, 5/15-17; Frank Sinatra, 5/22-25; Alan King, 5/22-27; Lou Rawls, 5/29-6/3; Harry Belafonte, 6/5-7; Paul Anka, 6/19-24; Alan King, 6/26-7/1

Hacienda, 798-0571 "Norman, Is That You?" Broadway entertainment, indf.; 8pm optional dinner show from \$15.95, 8pm and 11pm cocktail shows \$10.95, dark Thurs.

Holiday, 369-5222: "Rocky Sennes' Roaring '20s," indf., 9pm and 11:30pm Mon.-Fri., 8pm, 10pm, and 12:30am Sat., dark Sun.; \$6.95, includes 2 drinks

Imperial Palace, 733-0234: "Legends in Concert," indf.; 8pm and 11pm cocktail shows \$11.95, dark Sun.

Landmark, 733-1110: Mickey Finn Show, indf.

Las Vegas Hilton, 732-5661 "Bal du Moulin Rouge," indf.; 8pm and 11:30pm shows; McGuire Sisters/Jeff McBride, thru 5/6; Vic Damone/Scott Record, 5/7-27; George Carl/Vic Damone, 5/28-6/17

MGM Grand Hotel, 739-4567: *Ziegfeld Theatre*: "Jubilee!" indf., 7:30pm and 11pm, dark Wed., \$25; *Celebrity Room*: Dean Martin, 5/1-7; Engelbert Humperdinck, 5/8-14; Oak Ridge Boys, 5/15-21

Marina, 739-1500: "Burlesque '86" with Bob Mitchell, indf.; 8pm and 10pm, \$6.95; dark Mon.

Maxim, 731-4300: *Playboy's Girls of Rock and Roll*, indf.; 8pm and 10:15pm Wed.-Mon. with additional 12:30am performance on Sat., \$9.95, dark Tues.

Mint, 387-6468: Entertainment noon-4:30am

Palace Station, 367-2411 Lounge shows

Peppermill Resort, Mesquite, 346-5232: Nightly entertainment

Regency Casino, Laughlin, 298-2439; Piano bar, Wed.-Sun.

Riverside Resort, Laughlin, 298-2535

Riviera, 734-5301 "Splash!" production show, indf., with Joey Villa thru 5/6; Buddy Greco 5/8-27; Joey Villa 5/29-6/24; 5th Dimension 6/26-7/22; "An Evening at La Cage," indf.

Royal Casino, 733-4000: Nightly entertainment

Sahara, 737-2424: "A Chorus Line," Broadway musical, indf.

Sam Boyd's California, 385-1222: Nightly entertainment, 7pm-7am

Sam's Town, 456-7777: Randy Anderson, thru 5/22; Danny Byrd, thru 7/10

Sam's Town Gold River, Laughlin, 298-2242

Sands, 733-5000: "Sizzle," revue, indf., 7pm, 9pm, and 11pm, dark Mon., \$9.95, includes 2 drinks

Silver Slipper, 734-1212: "Boylesque," revue, indf.; 8pm, 10pm, and midnight, dark Thurs., \$6.95

Stardust, 732-6325: "Lido de Paris" starring Bobby Beresini's orangutans, indf.; 7pm and 11pm, \$17.50, includes 2 drinks

Sundance, 382-6111 Kathy Dahl/Richard Yusco, indf.

Tropicana, 739-2411: "Folies Bergere," indf., 8pm optional dinner show \$15.95; 8pm cocktail show \$13.95; 11:30pm cocktail show \$11.95, dark Thurs.

Union Plaza, 386-2444: Broadway entertainment nightly; 8pm dinner show from \$11.95, 11:45pm cocktail show from \$7.50

Whiskey Pete's, on I-15 at the California border, 382-4388: Lounge entertainment

RENO/TAHOE TERRITORY

Caesars Tahoe, 588-3515: "All New Star Street," revue, indf., Red Skelton, 6/20-22; Dave Mason, 6/27-29; Kenny Loggins, 6/30-7/6

Carson City Nugget, 882-1626: Motifs/Four Tunes, 5/6-18; Lelands, 5/20-6/1 Cheryl Cotton, 6/3-29

Carson Valley Inn, Minden, 782-9711 Garfin Gathering, 5/1-3; Yours Truly, 5/5-17 Network, 5/19-31 Motifs, 6/2-28

Circus Circus, Reno, 329-0711 Circus acts



A favorite with the crowds, piano player Vince Cardell is on key at Harveys in May.

Crystal Bay Club, North Tahoe, 831-0512: Au jus, 4/29-5/11 Street Talk, 5/13-25; Yours Truly, 5/27-6/8

Del Webb's High Sierra, Tahoe, 588-6211 *Lily's Dance Hall*: Briefcase Blues Band, 4/28-5/3; France, 5/19-31 *Pine Cone Lounge*: Zella Lehr, thru 5/4; Pete Barbutti, 5/6-11 Doug Kershaw,

5/13-25; Danny Marona, 5/27-6/15

Eldorado, Reno, 786-5700: Music Wed.-Mon.

Harolds Club, Reno, 329-0881 Ricky Santos/Bobby Reynon, thru 5/18 and 6/2-9/7 Lin Maureen and Dennis, thru 6/1 and 6/16-9/7 Soft Touch, 5/19-6/15

Harrah's Lake Tahoe, 588-6611 *South Shore Room*: Waylon Jennings/Jessi Colter, thru 5/1 Bill Cosby/Clint Holmes, 5/2-8; Liza Minnelli, 5/9-12; Billy Crystal, 5/13-15; Jeffrey Osborne, 5/16-18; Gladys Knight and the Pips/Nipsey Russell, 5/19-22; Eddy Arnold/Smothers Brothers, 5/23-29; Robin Williams, 5/23-24; Don Rickles/Debbie Reynolds, 5/30-6/5; Rich Little/Charo, 6/6-12; Sammy Davis, Jr., 6/13-26; Donna Summer, 6/27-29; Neil Sedaka/Nell Carter, 6/30-7/3; *Stateline Cabaret*: "Breakin' Loose," revue, thru 5/12, Wed.-Mon., Bus Boys, thru 5/4; Rob Hanna Salutes Rod Stewart, 5/6-11 Paul Revere and the Raiders, 5/13-25; Bottoms Up '87, 5/14-12/15; Jack Mack and the Heart Attack, 6/3-8; Amazing Kreskin, 6/10-15; Platters, 6/17-29



Gimme A Break star Nell Carter plays Harrah's Lake Tahoe in June.

Harrah's Reno, 329-4422: *Headliner Room*: Eddie Rabbitt, 5/1-7 Charo, 5/8-14; Alan King/Florence Henderson, 5/15-21 Jim Nabors/Patti Page, 5/22-28; Suzanne Somers/Buddy Rich, 5/29-6/4; Tony Orlando, 6/5-11 Mickey Gilley, 6/12-18; Mac Davis, 6/19-7/2; *Casino Cabaret*: "New Attitude," revue, thru 8/19; Jay Leno, 4/29-5/4; Bus Boys, 5/6-11 Jerry Van Dyke/Wright Brothers, 5/20-25; Rob Hanna Salutes Rod Stewart, 5/27-6/1 Platters, 6/3-15; Amazing Kreskin, 6/17-22; Gary Raffanelli and Sandy Selby, 6/24-7/6

Harveys, Tahoe, 588-2411 *Top of the Wheel*: Ron Rose Sound, indf., Ceci Shilling, thru 5/18; Dare, 5/19-6/15; All Nite Express, 6/30-7/27 *Theatre Lounge*: "Feminine Touch," revue, indf., "Body Language," revue, indf.; Entertainment Committee, thru 5/4; Right Touch, thru 5/27 Coast to Coast, 5/5-18; Vince Cardell, 5/5-25; Sonny Turner, 5/19-6/29; Atlantis, 5/26-6/22

Hyatt Lake Tahoe, 831-1111 Garfin Gathering, 5/6-18; Jay Ramsey Band, 6/10-22; Dae Han Sisters, 6/24-7/13

Northern Nevada Show Notes

By Guy Richardson

All those people dancing in the streets aren't going wild over the warm weather. They are Vince Cardell fans. Their mourning endeth, and their cup of joy runneth over now that the pianist is appearing again in Northern Nevada, this May at Harvey's.

Cardell, who plays piano like Rambo plays machine gun, parted company (as they say in the euphemism biz) with the MGM Grand-Reno earlier this year. Depending on who's talking, the MGM either tossed Cardell out for playing too loud in the open lounge, and for bouts of snit, or Cardell left because his artistic temperament became stifled.

In any case, Cardell's following, huge and vocal (write a negative review on him in Reno, and the post office has to hire extra help) can rest easy.

And reviewers can start getting nervous again. The best line on Cardell I've heard came from Mark Crawford: "When I see him go for a note, I know he's got one chance in 88." Ooooh.

When Liza Minnelli was a kid, she stayed in one of Harrah's "cottages" at Lake Tahoe while her mother performed there. Minnelli performs at Harrah's herself this month for a rare week.

And the cottage? She bought it and now lives there with memories floating through the clean mountain air.

There's nothing else to say but "that's nice" and go on to the next item before we become awash in insulin.

"Nostalgia," said Jerry Van Dyke, "isn't what it used to be." Easy for him to say—he doesn't have a "cottage" at Tahoe now. Of course, he doesn't have "My Mother, the Car," either, so it's not all bad. Van Dyke, one of the funniest men alive, plays Harrah's Reno lounge.

This is one to mark on the calendar: Red Skelton at Caesars Tahoe on June 20-22, his first non-Sparks Nugget appearance in Nevada since Grant Sawyer had a crewcut. Other comics at Skelton's age do bits about being old. Skelton keeps doing stuff a 25-year-old would sweat keeping up with. He's a classic.

Here's a Skelton line to remember: "I've tasted escargot twice. Once going down." □

Guy Richardson covers the entertainment beat for the Reno Gazette-Journal.

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John Ascuaga's Nugget, Sparks, 356-3300: *Celebrity Cabaret*: Barbara Eden, thru 5/11; *Clint Holmes*, 5/12-25; *5th Dimension*, 5/26-6/8; *Doug Kershaw*, 6/9-22; *Casino Lounge*: *Command Performance*, thru 5/11; *Whiskey Ridge*, thru 5/11; *Eleventh Hour*, 5/12-25; *Gary Wade and the Bump*, 5/13-25; *Chris David*, 5/27-6/8

Karl's, Sparks, 358-4771: Gary Xavier at the piano, days, indf.; entertainment nightly featuring Mokikei

MGM Grand Hotel, Reno, 789-2285: *Ziegfeld Theatre*: "Hello Hollywood Hello," indf., *Lion's Den*: Pat Collins/Franco and Mary Jane, 4/30-5/27; *Diamonds/Coast to Coast*, 5/28-6/24; *Danny Marona*, 6/25-7/22

Mother Lode, Carson City, 883-0900: Two of Clubs, 5/12-25; *Spice*, 5/27-6/8; *Scooter and the Bee*, 6/10-29

Ormsby House, Carson City, 882-1890: *Marcy and Ray*, 5/5-25; *Garfin Gathering*, 5/20-6/1; *Heads Up*, 5/26-6/8; Two of Clubs, 6/9-22; *Four Tunes*, 6/17-7/6; *Smokey and Bonnie*, 6/24-7/7

Peppermill, Reno, 826-2121: *Tommy Bell*, thru 5/4; *Wray Brothers*, thru 6/1; *Connection*, 5/5-6/1; *Reaction*, 6/2-28

Pick Hobson's Riverside, Reno, 786-4400: Nightly dancing, Tues.-Sun.

Reno Hilton, 785-7100: Entertainment TBA

Reno Ramada, 788-2000: 24-hour live entertainment in circular showbar

Sharkey's Nugget, Gardnerville, 782-3133

Topaz Lodge, Topaz Lake, 266-3339

Western Village, Sparks, 331-1069: *Last Rodeo Band*, 5/18; *Tommy Bell*, 5/5-6/1; *David Proud*, 5/19-6/15; *Wray Brothers*, 6/2-29; *Lelands*, 6/16-7/6

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Elko: Commercial Hotel, 738-3181; *Red Lion*, 738-2111; *Suzie Sneed and L.A. Line*, 5/6-19; *Dr. Maynard*, 5/20-6/2; *Johnny Lee*, 5/26; *Stockmen's Hotel*, 738-5141; *Right Touch*, 4/29-5/18

Ely: Hotel Nevada, 289-4414

Fallon: Fallon Nugget, 423-3111

Jackpot: Cactus Pete's, 755-2321; *Horseshu*, 755-2331

Pahrump: Saddle West Casino, 727-5953: *Outrageous/CJ and Showdown/Craig Harrison*, thru 6/30

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

Wendover: Nevada Crossing, 664-4000: Live entertainment nightly, Tues.-Sun., *Peppermill*, 664-2255; *Red Garter Casino*, 664-2111; *State Line Casino*, 664-2221

Winnemucca: *Winners Hotel-Casino*, 623-2511

Yerington: Casino West, 463-2481; *Dini's Lucky Club*, 463-2868: Live entertainment weekends □



Wild Burros

When these former beasts of burden were put out to pasture, they weren't put out at all.

Photograph by **Tony Diebold**

The braying beast of burden known as the burro can be as stubborn as the desert. Hardy and intelligent, burros readily adapt to harsh habitats. In times of drought, burros can withstand a water loss equivalent to 30 percent of their weight and at the same time survive on the stems and roots of small plants. There is probably no other domestic animal that requires so little sustenance to perform so much work.

Miners profited from the burro's sturdy character during the gold rush of the mid-1800s, but as the boom years ended, the gold seeker and his sure-footed companion had to part. It must have been comical: The miner, realizing he has no further use for his burro, sends the docile animal free with a slap on the rump. The burro, in a way typical even today, holds his ground, stares back with big almond-shaped eyes,

tilts his head in curiosity, and completely ruins the farewell.

Although first domesticated in Africa thousands of years ago and later brought to North America by Spanish explorers, the burro has not always been appreciated for its past labors. By the 1950s growing burro herds were said to be threatening other animals, such as deer, cattle, and sheep. Man retaliated, and many burros were destroyed before the Wild, Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act in 1971 put the creatures under federal supervision.

Today, roughly 1,800 wild burros live in Nevada. Although some herds can be found in the northwestern part of the state—where Gerlach photographer Tony Diebold spotted the group above—most burros live in the desert around Las Vegas, Hawthorne, and Ely.—*Scott Shelley*



"A Lake For All Seasons"

POLAGE, 19"

"Northern Nevada is beautiful, and Lake Tahoe is so rich in imagery. I tried to show not only the changing daylight colors but also the changing seasons."

"Desert Bloom"

POLAGE, 38"

"I sketched this one near Lake Mead in the spring when all the wildflowers were blooming. I tried to give a sense of the changing light, from the cool morning colors through the evening sunset."



Austine Wood

Instead of a brush and paint, this artist uses a knife and cellophane to create her 'polages.'



box. But when they pick up a polarizing filter and look through it, they start to giggle like kids, and say things like, 'Wow! Did you see that?' and, 'Look at this!' It's like they can't believe what they're seeing."

What they're seeing through the rotating circular filter is a metamorphosis of color, shape, and light. The effect is similar to that of a flower opening and closing by time-lapse photography, except that Wood's scenes go through even more stunning changes. "My work promotes playfulness," she says. "There's a lot of excitement when you participate in something that seems like magic."

Of course, her work isn't all magic. Twenty years ago Wood was growing bored with conventional art when a physicist

"Art galleries are kind of stuffy places," Boulder City artist Austine Wood says. "So when people see my work, they're fun to watch. First, all they see is a flat gray surface in front of a light-

showed her the phenomenon. She saw that if you put clear cellophane between two polarizing filters (the same filters used in sunglasses), the cellophane becomes a prism. She discovered she could control the colors by layering the cellophane. She also found that when she mounted the cellophane on one of the filters and rotated the other, the colors would change in intensity.

"To be able to make color in a whole different way was very exciting," she says. "It became a challenge just to control the medium." Wood decided to call her creations "polages," a combination of "polarize" and "collage."

The two scenes above are from the same polage, "Desert Bloom." The piece was inspired by the landscape around Lake Mead, which is just over the hill from her home in Boulder City. She discovered the beauty of the Southern Nevada desert in 1976 when her husband, David Comarow, was hired by Clark County Community College to develop a solar technology program. Now Wood splits her time between her studios in Boulder City and Solana Beach, California, but she still calls Nevada home.

Her polages can be seen at her studios and in galleries across the country, including the Alexis Park Hotel and Marcus Gallery in Las Vegas, the New Mexico Museum of Natural History in Albuquerque, and EPCOT Center in Orlando, Florida.—Jim Crandall

Travel Guide

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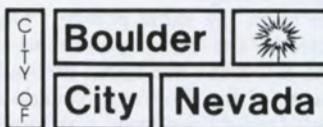
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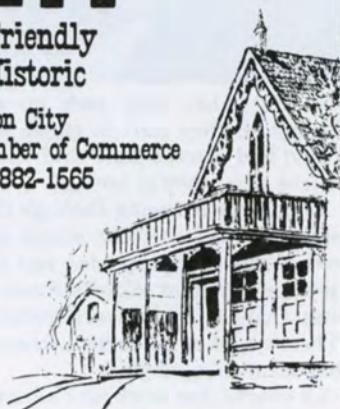


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Travels With the Major

In his new book, *Gentleman in the Outdoors*, Sessions S. Wheeler offers a portrait of Major Max C. Fleischmann, an avid angler as well as Nevada's most generous philanthropist. The following selections describe the two men's first meeting and a later trip to the Colorado River

Maybe almost everyone, before reaching the age of 30, does something stupid which, in the long run, turns out all right

The golf course at Glenbrook, Lake Tahoe, was crowded on that July day in 1939; we had waited for almost an hour for our turn to start around the scenic nine holes. Finally the foursome ahead was moving down the fairway, and I stepped up to the driving-line markers.

I was bending down to place my ball when a very large man strode up and nonchalantly pushed a tee into the turf. Adrenaline started flowing, and I was about to say, "Please get your tee out of that grass," when I heard someone call, "One moment." I paused; an elderly man with a tanned, craggy face and wearing a broad-rimmed hat was hurrying toward me. He said, "May I explain something to you?" Extending his hand, he added, "My name is Max Fleischmann."

I had never met Mr. Fleischmann, but like many Nevadans, I felt gratitude for his aid to our university, Boy Scout camp, and other Nevada institutions. His eyes were amused. "I think you were about to take on my playing partner, Max Baer, and I thought I'd better explain that on this nine-hole course, players coming in from their first round have the right-of-way on the tee to complete their 18-hole game."

I immediately knew I was wrong, and the adrenal glands returned to normal activity. He introduced me to Baer, and while the big man (who five years before had been heavyweight boxing champion of the world) practiced his golf swing, Major Fleischmann and I talked fishing. I had heard that it was one of his favorite sports, and I saw his interest when I mentioned that I had found a Sierra lake which, with fly equipment, had recently yielded several two- to four-pound Eastern brook trout.

With the foursome ahead out of range, Baer hit a long drive which ended on the edge of the rough. Max Fleischmann followed with a shorter ball which stayed in

Gentleman IN THE Outdoors

A PORTRAIT OF
MAX C. FLEISCHMANN



SESSIONS S. WHEELER

Foreword by Governor Mike O'Callaghan

the middle of the fairway. As he left the tee, he stopped to say, "I'd surely like to fish that lake."

I said, "I'll call you next week."

It was the beginning of many years of fishing together in the western United States, Canada, and Alaska.

And it would not have happened if I had not become angry at Max Baer

★

During the spring of 1949, the Major and I had an exceptionally interesting trip. I had wanted him to see and fish the Colorado River, and partly because he had paid the expenses of our Oregon pack trip, I wrote him that on this one he would be my guest.

I suggested that he fly from Santa Barbara to Las Vegas where we would meet. He agreed and said that following our trip he had business in Reno and, if I could get to Las Vegas without my car, I could fly back with him.

It so happened that my assistant director of the Fish and Game Commission, Frank Groves, was scheduled to spend

two days at Nelson Landing, a fishing camp on the river where the Major and I would stay. We decided to drive down the day before the Major would arrive to take care of some business in Las Vegas.

The Major arrived fairly early in the morning, and Frank drove us to Nelson Landing which was operated by Murl Emery, one of the best-known fishing guides in the West.

Murl had several guest cabins, a small restaurant, and a large barge anchored to the bank of the river on which he had built his shop for repairing and storing outboard motors, selling fishing tackle, etc. On the downstream end, his rental boats were tied to the barge, and there was deck space with easy chairs where anglers could relax and tell their stories about the big ones that broke their leaders.

The stored water from the recently completed Davis Dam had backed up the river to within a short distance of the landing, but upstream, where we would fish, the river had not yet been affected.

I had known Murl since the state had begun planting large numbers of fingerling rainbow trout in the river. Probably everyone who knew him considered him an especially interesting character—a big man with a dry sense of humor who, according to the circumstances, could be a typical old-time riverman or a well-educated gentleman. I knew the Major would enjoy him.

On arriving at the river, Murl told us that he had two boats ready, and as soon as we had stored our bags in one of the cabins and put our tackle together, we would take off with him and his son as guides. Frank and I went with his son, and I asked Murl to take the Major in his boat and show him some of the remnants of the old days when riverboats, powered by steam, fought their way upstream against strong currents and through rapids. I had traveled the river many times with Murl and with our Southern Nevada game warden, Steve Fenton, who had pointed out the ring bolts anchored in giant boulders to which steamers had attached their winch ropes to help pull them through the heaviest water.

The fishing boats were equipped with large outboard motors, and we sped upriver through beautiful Eldorado Canyon for approximately 10 miles before turning back to fish and drift slowly downstream, dropping anchor in the best areas. The rainbows were fat and strong, and when we worked them to the side of the boat, they were released.

We were about halfway back to camp when Murl, pointing towards shore, motioned us to follow him. We saw that several desert bighorn sheep were feed-

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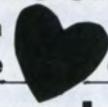
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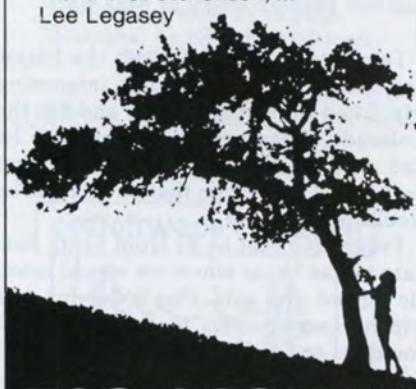
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ing near the river, but as we approached they withdrew up a draw in the canyon wall. We sat quietly in our boats hoping they would reappear. Suddenly a big ram, with an especially large curl of horns, walked out on a ridge above us. He seemed unafraid—the hunting of bighorn sheep had not been legal along the Colorado for many years—and we had the opportunity to study the marvelous creature. The Major did not take his eyes from it, and when we again started downstream, I saw that he had turned to watch the animal until we rounded a bend and it was lost from sight. He later told me that seeing that ram was worth the trip.

We had dinner that evening at the little restaurant, and when the waitress placed the check on the counter, the Major started to reach for it, but I quickly took it.

He said, "Buck, let me take care of the expenses."

I answered in a very definite tone of voice, "Major, I told you that this is my trip, and that is the way it is going to be! Nevada [the author's wife] and I have budgeted all of it."

He hesitated for a moment and then asked, "You mean that you have it on your monthly budget?"

I answered, "Absolutely."

"Well," he smiled, "I guess it's all right then."

Apparently, the Major had great respect for a budget.

Following dinner we walked down to Murl's barge where several other fishermen were relaxing. With the heat of the day cooled to a pleasant temperature and the sound of the river gently slapping against the sides of the barge, it was a pleasant atmosphere for sitting and talking.

Murl, who must have known something about the Major's hunting and fishing expeditions, began requesting information about certain places in Alaskan and Mexican waters. Surprisingly to me, the Major talked freely about his 21 Alaskan trips and his marlin fishing in southern waters.

Eventually we decided to get some sleep. Our cabin had bunk beds, and the Major insisted on sleeping on one of the top ones. I can still see him climbing up to his bed, wearing what appeared to be long underwear. During the night I awakened several times to hear him tossing. Frank says he clearly remembers that in the morning the Major was the first out of bed, calling, "Everybody up—there's no pleasure without pain." Later he admitted that he had not slept very soundly.

We fished for several hours that morning, and after lunch Frank was ready to

drive us back to Las Vegas. I left the Major packing his gear and went to the barge to settle my bill with Murl. I knew that anglers paid a premium price for his services, and I brought along my checkbook.

I asked Murl what I owed him. He answered, "Not one cent."

I said, "Listen, Murl, I know about what you charge, and I'm going to write a check for it."

He said, "Go ahead, but it will be wasted effort because I'll tear it up."

I started to ask why he wasn't charging me, but he interrupted to say, "Major Fleischmann is doing much for this state and you have helped this river."

I said, "The commission planted the fish in the river."

I guess he was tired of arguing; he said, "Listen, Buck, this is my place, my

“

We sat quietly in our boats, hoping the bighorn sheep would reappear. Suddenly a big ram, with an especially large curl of horns, walked out on a ridge above us.

”

boats, my cabins, and my guide service. I can charge any damn amount I want to charge. In this case the charge is zero. If you want to sue, get a lawyer."

I knew further argument was useless so I thanked him. I did manage to tip his son when Murl was not around.

On the way back to Las Vegas I told the Major, "Murl would not accept payment because of what you had done for Nevada." I could see that he was surprised and grateful, but he did not say anything. Frank, who would continue on to Tonopah, dropped us off at the Thunderbird Hotel where we had reserved rooms. In the lobby the Major asked, "Buck, will you do me a favor?"

I nodded, and he said, "You've taken me on a very enjoyable trip, but now the trip is over, and we are back in civilization. I want you to invite any friend or friends you have here in Las Vegas to come out to the hotel for dinner. And I want to pay the bill."

Because of the way he asked, it would have been ungracious to not accept; so I thanked him and said, "I would like to invite our state fish and game commissioner from Clark County. I know Cal

Liles would enjoy meeting you."

The three of us had an excellent dinner and afterwards moved outside to relax in lawn chairs beside the swimming pool. Like the previous evening, the weather was balmy, and the Major was again in a talkative mood. With Cal urging him on with questions, he related anecdotes and impressions of Teddy Roosevelt, Bernard Baruch (who had a plantation near the Major's in South Carolina), and his many other famous American friends.

Around eleven o'clock I began worrying about the Major's lack of sleep the preceding night, and I suggested that we call it an evening. Cal rose and thanked the Major and left. I thought the Major looked tired when we parted in the lobby.

The next morning when I paid the cashier for my room, I learned that the Major had already checked out. I knew the hotel's security man, and when I met him in the lobby he said that the Major had taken a short walk. He added, "When Major Fleischmann tried to pay his room bill, the management would not accept his money, saying it was their way of expressing gratitude for his aid to the university and other Nevada organizations."

The Major seemed to be rested and in a happy mood when we took a taxi and started for the airport. But about halfway there, he suddenly turned to me and said, "Damn it, Buck, why did you break it up so early last evening? I was having a hell of a good time."

Attempting to keep from smiling, I said, "We didn't get much sleep the night before."

We had a pleasant trip to Reno in the *Silver Falcon*, and as we parted at the airport he said, "Buck, it was a great trip." □

Gentleman in the Outdoors: A Portrait of Max C. Fleischmann by Sessions S. Wheeler, with a foreword by former Governor Mike O'Callaghan, is available in hardback for \$12.75 at bookstores or from the University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV. 89557.

New on the Shelf

By Guy Shipley

Gentleman in the Outdoors: A Portrait of Max C. Fleischmann, by Sessions S. Wheeler. University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV. 89557 \$12.75, 158 pages, hardcover.

Most Nevadans associate the name Max C. Fleischmann not so much with the wealthy sportsman as with the founda-



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A diner's guide to the Silver State

Following is a selective guide to reader-approved Nevada restaurants whose advertisements appear in this section. Besides descriptions of menu and atmosphere, the listings include prices, hours and other details for your convenience. If you have any comments on the establishments listed, drop us a line at Nevada Magazine, Sagebrush Gourmet, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV. 89710-0005.

CATTLEMENS

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tion that, after his death in 1951, contributed more than \$192 million in 1,956 grants to worthy projects, many of them in Nevada. The youngest of the foundation's trustees, Sessions "Buck" Wheeler, a Reno biologist and conservationist, has written about his friend, the Major. Although this is indeed not a complete biography, Wheeler has managed to paint a clear picture of his subject through well-chosen anecdotes and concise, clear descriptions of his adventures with Fleischmann. Former Governor Mike O'Calaghan found this effort so successful that he says in the book's foreword: "As a reader it made me wish I had been with the Major and Wheeler on at least one outing." Wheeler also includes a short history of the Fleischmann Foundation.

The Compleat Nevada Traveler: A Guide to the State, by David W. Toll. Gold Hill Publishing Co., Drawer F, Virginia City, NV. 89440. \$7.95, 192 pages, softcover.

This volume, now in its fourth printing, lives up to its title, covering the state from Rhyolite to Rawhide, from Laughlin to Lamoille. The book takes an offbeat look at Las Vegas and Reno, describing their origins and how they got to be the gambling capitals they are today. Toll also digs into the small towns and valleys that never make the headlines but have fascinating histories and character. The pages contain much practical advice on recreation, events, and traveler's services. Liberally sprinkled with historical and current photographs, paintings, and ads, the *Traveler* is, above all, fine reading.

On the Trail of Forgotten People: A Personal Account of the Life and Career of Mark Raymond Harrington, by Marie Harrington. Great Basin Press, Box 11162, Reno, NV. 89510. \$12.50, 322 pages, paperback.

Mark Raymond Harrington (1882-1971) was one of America's leading archaeologists and museum professionals for more than half of this century. Although he studied many Indian groups, Harrington is best remembered in Nevada for his work in the 1920s at the Lost City, Gypsum Cave, and Tule Springs in the Las Vegas area and at Pyramid Lake. He was also involved in the preservation of California's old Spanish missions. The author, his widow, draws from personal accounts and from Harrington's own clear, cogent writings.

Basque Sheepherders of the American West: A Photographic Documentary, by Richard H. Lane (photographs) and William A. Douglass (text). University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV. 89557 \$19.95,

185 pages, hardcover.

This latest in the University Press' Basque Series is a high-quality product that makes a unique coffee-table volume. For one thing, the text appears in four languages—English, Basque, Spanish, and French. For another, its photographs provide what Douglass in the preface rightly calls "a systematic visual record" of the Basque sheepherder. Lane, an anthropologist-photographer, began photographing life in the sheep camps of Northern Nevada in 1969 because, Douglass writes, "It was clear that the saga of the *artzainak* (Basque for "sheepherders") had entered a final phase and was in danger of passing from the scene." The photos (both color and black-and-white) and text are divided into sections—herding and trailing; camp life; lambing and shearing; and town life and Basque festivals.

Birds of the Great Basin: A Natural History, by Fred A. Ryser, Jr. University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV. 89557 604 pages, \$27.50 hardcover, \$15.00 softcover.

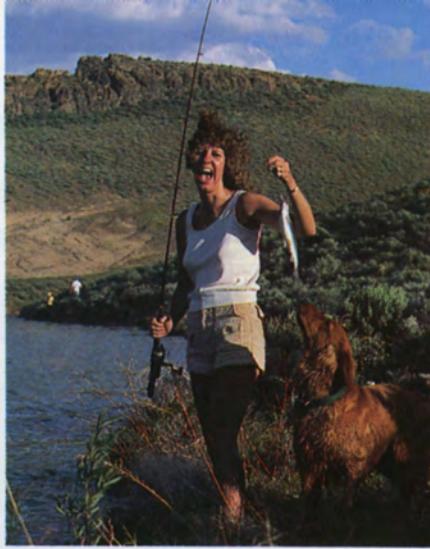
People who drive across the Great Basin for the first time usually see it as a vast wasteland. Thus they might assume that any book on the birds of the area would run about six pages, not 600. But it takes a large volume such as this one not only to do the kind of professional job Ryser has done but because nearly 400 species live in or traverse our state. Ryser, a member of the UNR biology department for 32 years, has written in a style that is understandable even to those whose knowledge of birds is limited to the annoying magpie that tries to take over the yard. The book carries drawings, maps, and charts as well as more than 60 color plates.

A Cup of Tea in Pamplona, by Robert Laxalt. University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV. 89557 84 pages, \$12.75 hardcover, \$100.00 limited edition leather-bound, signed, and numbered.

What makes Robert Laxalt Nevada's premier living author is his extraordinary talent for establishing mood, time, and place with seemingly effortless grace. That simplicity is evident in this novella, which like most of Laxalt's other writings skillfully combines allegory with harsh reality. We become part of a brief encounter with a smuggling incident in the Pyrenees, momentarily involved with the Basque conspirators. This rich work not only has been applauded by Nevadans and other Westerners interested in the Basque heritage; it also has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. □

Guy Shipley of Carson City is a columnist and TIME/LIFE correspondent.

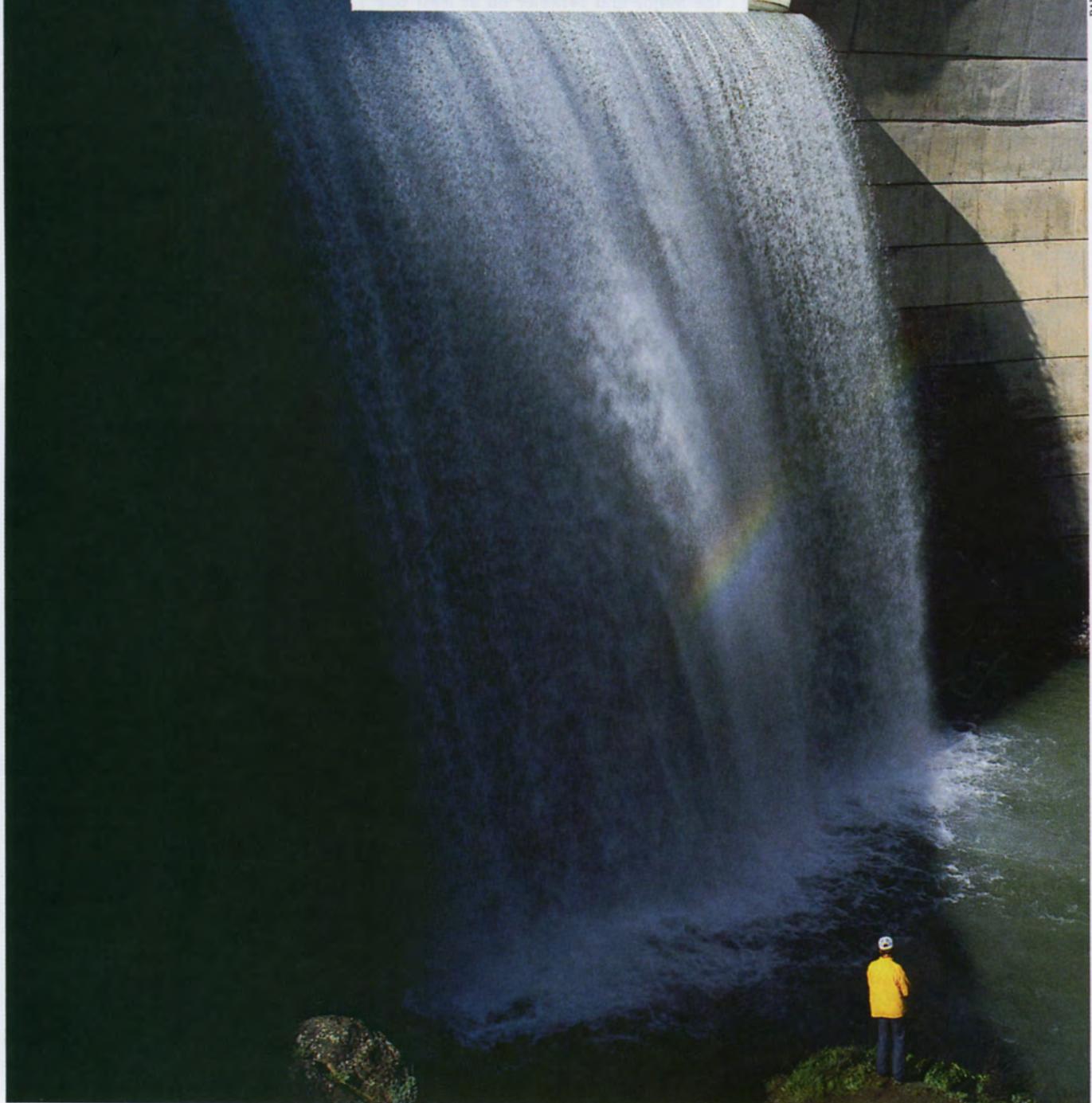
waterfall. The dam is a concrete structure with a height of 100 feet and a width of 100 feet. It is located in a valley with a river flowing through it. The dam is a concrete structure with a height of 100 feet and a width of 100 feet. It is located in a valley with a river flowing through it.



Judy Hicks of Sparks shows off a trout to her friend Dolly at Squaw Reservoir (left) while a lone angler at Wild Horse Dam on the Owyhee finds more than one kind of rainbow.



PAULA J. DEL GIUDICE PHOTOS





The author makes a sunset catch at Echo Canyon.

Backroad Fishing Holes

For the angler who likes both fish and elbowroom, here's a great cast of unknowns.

By Paula J. Del Giudice

Every summer weekend, one of the best unknown fishing holes in Nevada is right under the noses of scores of fishermen. Those fishermen are casting from boats and beaches on Wild Horse Reservoir north of Elko. The secret, meanwhile, is at the bottom of the dam, down in the Owyhee River, where the overspill has created holes that hide big, hungry trout.

There are many similar out-of-the-way places in the state that are used primarily by locals and knowledgeable visitors. These areas, like the five described here, usually owe their lack of reputations to their remote locations. Also, these retreats tend to be smaller than the state's busiest fishing holes (see page 74), so they don't get as much publicity.

But for many of us anglers, the more out of the way, the better. Such places are private and relaxing. For first-time anglers and children, the mood is right for learning. There can be great campsites, hiking trails, and historic towns to explore. Best of all, you get a chance to catch a lot of fish without bumping into a lot of fishermen.

ECHO CANYON RESERVOIR

Located 12 miles east of Pioche and 180 north of Las Vegas, Echo Canyon Reservoir is just right for the angler looking to catch lots of fish easily. In a day, it is easy for an angler of any skill level to catch a limit of 25 white crappies and some largemouth bass or rainbow trout.

The logistics are simple, too. At many Nevada reservoirs, fishing from shore can be unproductive, especially in summer. At Echo, however, shore fishermen often do as well or better than boaters, so it is a great spot for casual anglers who don't own a lot of specialized gear.

Also, because the scrappy crappies are so easy to catch, Echo is a good place to introduce youngsters to fishing. If kids can catch a bunch of fish without fight-

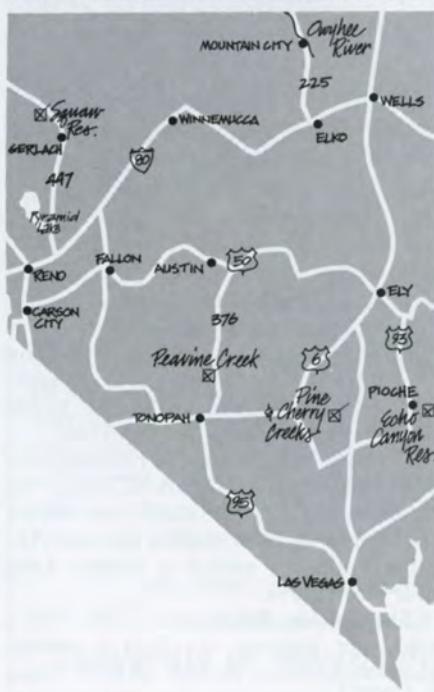
ing equipment, they'll be likely to stay hooked on the sport.

Echo's fishing is prime at dusk, when crappies usually feed most heavily. But don't put your rod away at noon and take a nap because crappies do roam the open waters to feed throughout the day. They like to hide near weed beds or sunken brush, and for that reason Echo's tackle-snaring northeastern portion is often very productive.

To make catching the diminutive fish more challenging, use light line in the four- to six-pound range and an ultralight rod and reel combination. Yellow-colored marabou jigs are the most popular lures; white jigs also work well. Although the jigs are known bass and crappie catchers, the rainbow trout at Echo also may succumb to your feathered lure.

After casting the line out, reel in slowly. If a fish hits your lure, a heavy hook-set isn't necessary—crappies have soft mouths.

To reach the reservoir, travel 12 miles east of Pioche on State Route 322 to Echo Canyon State Recreation Area. It has 34 camping spots; the overnight fee is \$4. Hiking the nearby hills and canyons is a popular activity for nonfishing guests. If the fishing slows at Echo Canyon, it is only nine miles further east to Spring Valley State Recreation Area and Eagle Valley Reservoir. The general store at Ursine has basic supplies. You'll find all services in Pioche, where you can visit historic sites like the Million Dollar Courthouse and stroll the streets of the



town that in the 1870s was known as the toughest in the West.

PEAVINE CREEK

Fifty miles north of Tonopah, Peavine Creek meanders quietly through a narrow canyon lined with quaking aspen. Here, in the southern end of the Toiyabe Range, is some of the most picturesque country in Nevada.

Not only are Peavine Creek and its small Forest Service campground real finds, but also the fishing is excellent. Brown trout of trophy size have been taken from the creek in recent years. Although five-pounders aren't caught every day, they and smaller browns lurk in the creek's small pools. You can use either a fly rod or spinning gear with bait, and by drifting a nymph or a salmon egg through the hole, you're likely to put fish in the frying pan.

Peavine Creek isn't well known outside the Tonopah area, as the distances from Las Vegas and Reno, 260 and 290 miles respectively, would suggest. But other attractions make the area great for nonfishing explorers, too. There's hiking in the Toiyabes, the scenery of Big Smoky Valley, and historic towns such as Tonopah, Austin, Manhattan, and Belmont.

And, if you time it right, the campground at Peavine Creek may be even more quiet than usual—as on Memorial Day Weekend, when in past years it has been nearly deserted because local anglers were in Tonopah, busy celebrating Jim Butler Days.

SQUAW RESERVOIR

Like many Nevada reservoirs, Squaw is a blue-green oasis set in brown rolling hills surrounded by sagebrush. It sits

within casting distance of State Route 447 20 miles north of Gerlach and 120 north of Reno. The reservoir gets its name from its location in Squaw Valley, which, with scrub-brush desert scenery, would never be confused with the Sierra Olympic site of the same name.

Squaw Reservoir is only 45 acres, but it makes up for its small size with good fishing for catfish, bluegills, and cutthroat and rainbow trout. Fishing is easy for shore fishermen and boaters, especially in spring and early summer.

First-time visitors may try all kinds of bait and lures before finding the perfect fish fooler. Good lures seem to be white Rooster Tails, Panther Martins, and Mepps spinners. With these flashy lures you'll have a chance to catch your share of rainbows and cutthroats in the nine- to 12-inch range.

As daytime temperatures rise later in the summer, it's often too hot for both anglers and fish. There are few trees along the shore, so bring your own shade. Unimproved campsites are available, and nonfishing types will enjoy walking in the nearby hills. Other attractions include the small town of Gerlach and the big, dry country of the Black Rock Desert.

PINE AND CHERRY CREEKS

The Grant Range is an area of dramatic topography. It includes the highest peaks between Las Vegas and Ely and comprises part of the Humboldt National Forest. Steep, rocky ledges line the small canyons through which Pine and Cherry creeks flow on the range's east side. And the drama is heightened when anglers wet their lines on the brook trout in those streams.

Brookies may be the easiest trout to catch, but they are wary, too, so be careful not to scare them with shadows and splashes. These fish can be caught with small flies, but young anglers may want to drift bait like salmon eggs or worms—an easier method.

The Grant Range is isolated even by rural Nevada standards. The nearest paved road to the creeks is State Route 318, the Sunnyside Cutoff, about 40 miles away by dirt road. Ask locally about road conditions. Once there, you can explore foot trails through the forest, relax in the pine-scented air, and catch a few brookies for supper.

OWYHEE RIVER

Wild Horse Reservoir is one of the most popular trout-fishing spots in the state, but many anglers don't look beyond the dam. Thus they miss fine opportunities for catching fish down below in the Owyhee River, which flows out of the reservoir 60 miles north of Elko.

The Line on Hot Spots

Here are some lakes and streams that anglers *really* know about:

Lake Mead receives more fishing pressure than any other place in the state. Striped bass are the most popular quarry, with largemouth bass running a close second. Crappies, bluegills, and catfish are also good catches. The exciting top-water fishing season for stripers should be getting underway in early summer. South of Hoover Dam, Lake Mohave is well known for its stripers and trout.

Lahontan Reservoir has good fishing all summer long for scrappy white bass, hefty walleyes, and largemouth bass. Catfish and perch are also caught.

Lake Tahoe provides a special fishing thrill for those deep-lining for mackinaw trout. Heavy equipment is required, and the casual angler would do well to hire a guide for a day. Shore fishermen can catch rainbows from the Cave Rock area.

The West Fork of the **Walker River** traditionally opens for fishing during the first weekend in May. The trout attract many local anglers, but there's always room for newcomers.

Rye Patch Reservoir is tops for walleye in Nevada, but it also has crappie, catfish, and white bass.

The **Ruby Lakes National Wildlife Refuge**—often called the Ruby Marshes—is one of the few spots where largemouth bass are prevalent in Northeastern Nevada. Last year was one of the best on record for the Marshes.

Comins Lake near Ely is home of trophy-sized northern pike. These unusual looking fish with snake-like bodies



and large teeth are especially lure-hungry in early summer.

Cave Lake is renowned for its trophy brown trout. Over Memorial Day Weekend last year, browns in the five- to 15-pound range were frequent catches.

Pyramid Lake is home of Nevada's trophy Lahontan cutthroat. During the summer, the fish are caught at depths from 50 to 100 feet trolling spoons. Another cutthroat mecca is **Walker Lake** near Hawthorne.

The **Truckee River** is one of the West's top trout streams. It offers a trophy catch-and-release section west of Reno for those fishing with flies and artificial lures. —PJD

Fishing Licenses

This year's general fishing license for Nevada residents costs \$15. The resident fee is \$5 for juniors (ages 12-15) and \$3 for seniors (65 or older). Permits are \$10 for 10 days and \$6 for three days.

A nonresident license is \$35, with juniors paying \$8. Ten-day permits are \$20, and three-day permits are \$12. Visitors fishing only Mead or Mohave can buy a special Colorado River license for \$20.

Also, anyone catching trout must have a \$5 trout stamp, which is new this year. Licenses are good through next February 28, and can be purchased at bait shops and sporting goods stores.

Youngsters 11 and under have it easiest—they don't need licenses or trout stamps.

For more information write the Nevada Department of Wildlife, Box 10678, Reno, NV. 89520 or call 702-789-0500. In Las Vegas write NDOW, State Mail Complex, Las Vegas, NV. 89158 or call 702-385-0285.

The best spot to catch large trout is just beneath the dam when the water is spilling in the spring. (During high water years, the dam may overflow into July.)

When the dam is spilling, the large pool underneath provides plenty of room to cast lures or flies. Rooster Tails are the best lures to try. Make sure to bring rain jackets because the spray created by the tumbling, crashing crest will soak any unprepared anglers. It can be chilly beneath the dam, even in mid-summer.

You can check on Owyhee conditions by calling Archie and Betty Corbari at Wildhorse Ranch and Resort. To reach them ask for North Fork 6471 through the Elko operator.

FINDING YOUR OWN

There are many other good fishing spots in Nevada that receive little attention or angling pressure. Finding one of those spots can be a rewarding adventure in itself.

Good clues are provided in a pamphlet published by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). "An Angler's Map of the Fishing Waters of Nevada" lists most of the fishable streams, lakes, and reservoirs in the state. Request it by writing the NDOW at Box 10678, Reno, NV. 89520 or phoning 702-789-0500. Then pick a spot from the map and explore the area on your own. Just remember, a lack of crowds doesn't mean a lack of fish. □

Paula J. Del Giudice of Reno writes for Outdoor Life and other publications.



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THE NEVADA CALENDAR

May & June 1986

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

Listing by Melissa Loomis, Prose by Lee Adler

LAS VEGAS TERRITORY

May

Art Exhibit, 4/27-5/15, works by Larry Yanez, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 386-6383

Desert Exhibit, 4/27-6/30, paintings, photos, Museum of Natural History, UNLV, 739-3381

PGA Panasonic Las Vegas Invitational, 4/30-5/4, major PGA Tour event with top pro golfers

and celebrity amateurs competing; five rounds and a \$1,205,000 purse for the pros at the Desert Inn, Spanish Trail, and Las Vegas country clubs, 382-6616

Planetarium Shows, thru 5/17 "Illusions," film narrated by Leonard Nimoy, and "Comet Halley Update," Thurs.-Fri. 6:30 and 8pm, Sat. 3:30, 6:30, and 8pm, Clark County Community College Planetarium, North Las Vegas, 643-6060

Art Exhibit, thru 5/30, contemporary and traditional art by members of the Moapa Indian Tribe, Lost City Museum, Overton, 397-2193

American Bowling Congress Tournament, thru 6/21 10,000 teams with 51,000 participants

play for \$1.7 million in prize money, Cashman Field Center, 386-7133

Art Exhibit, thru 6/30, bronze sculptures by J. Seward Johnson, Jr., Green Valley Professional Center, Las Vegas, 458-8855

Las Vegas Stars v. Hawaii Islanders, 1-4, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm Thurs.-Sat., 1:35pm Sun., Cashman Field, 386-7200

World Series of Poker, 1-22, \$4 million purse, big hold 'em game in last week, Binion's Horseshoe, 382-1600

"Something's Afoot," 2-18, musical spoof of Agatha Christie's mystery novels, Dept. of Theater Arts, Judy Bayley Theatre, UNLV, 739-3353



Red Hot Poker

The world's best will be going at it for the pride, the passion, and over \$4 million in prize money during the annual exercise in skill and audacity that is the World Series of Poker, May 1-22, at Binion's Horseshoe in downtown Las Vegas. Some shots from last year's tourney: Defending champion Bill Smith holds up some of his winnings (top left). Gene Fisher isn't a bad guy—he's just allergic to smoke (top right). Joe Slyman, Bob Stupak, Jack Binion, and Steve Wynn plan their moves during the casino owners game (bottom right).



JIM LAURIE

JIM LAURIE



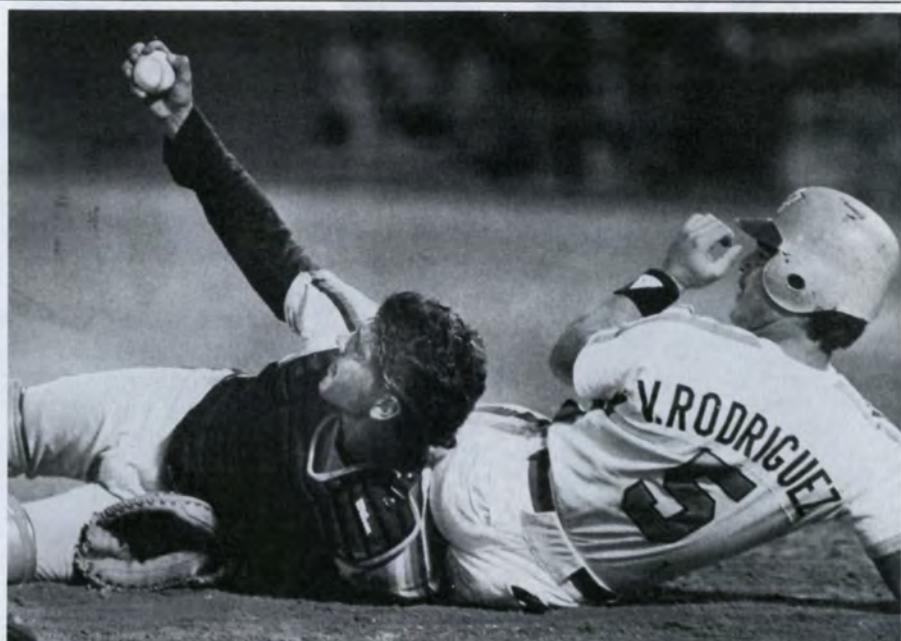
Mint 400 Returns

World-class drivers will be tuning up their nervous systems and fiddling with their engines as they prepare to tackle 400 miles of rocky road, washes, and dry lakes for \$300,000 in prize money. The starting point for the 19th Annual Mint 400 Desert Race is Sloan, about 17 miles south of downtown Las Vegas. The off-road event, set for May 7-11 is sponsored by Del Webb's Mint Hotel.



Toot Time for Ely

A big train party will be held May 24-26 at Ely in fond recollection of the state's last and longest operating shortline railroad. Friends of the Nevada Northern have scheduled spike-driving, handcar racing, and other old-time railroading events to honor the steam-belchers that served this Eastern Nevada community for seven decades beginning in 1907. The depot, transportation building, and freight barn—full of photos and antique furniture and equipment—will be open to the public during the celebration.



Diamonds in the Rough

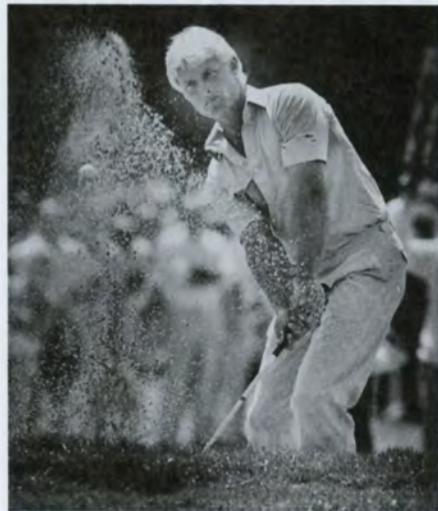
A close encounter of the most jarring kind is transformed by the camera into a timeless moment in a seemingly timeless pastime—baseball, Nevada style. The state's diamonds will sparkle this summer with play by the Las Vegas Stars of the Pacific Coast League at Cashman Field, and the Reno Padres of the California League at Moana Stadium. At the college level, the University of Nevada-Reno Wolf Pack bare their fangs—and the University of Nevada-Las Vegas Rebels their defiance—through most of the month of May.



CAROLINE J. HADLEY

Hot Time in Tonopah

Residents of Tonopah pay annual homage to the rancher-turned-sourdough who founded the town and helped pry around \$4 million in ore from its hardscrabble earth. It's called Jim Butler Days, and it includes such diversions as mucking, rock drilling, arm wrestling, and horseshoe-tossing competitions on May 22-26, Memorial Day weekend.



Swinging For the Green

Fans of the links have a rare opportunity to rub elbows with celebrities and watch the world's fanciest club swingers at the Panasonic Las Vegas Invitational. The pros, meanwhile, can chase the PGA tour's richest first-prize money of \$200,000, which is part of golf's richest purse of \$1,205,000. Golfers and fans get their chance April 30-May 4 during the play at the Desert Inn, Spanish Trail, and Las Vegas country clubs. Shown above is Bill Glasson in last year's tourney.



LAS VEGAS NEWS BUREAU

Rodeo: Fundamental Fun and Fury

It may take place in a new facility with plush sky boxes and "television-friendly" lighting, or in gritty, smelly, rickety arenas with benches that torment your tailbone.

They may offer prize money of thousands of dollars—or barely enough for bus fare out of town.

But when the chaps are down, these are all distinctions without a difference. They count for nothing from the moment the bronc clatters and snorts in its stall, the cowboy nervously adjusts his grips, and they both explode out of the chute.

Then it becomes a struggle for mastery, a battle for existence reduced to its elemental fury.

The essence, the lure of rodeo is this primitive flesh-on-flesh encounter in a society increasingly given-over to plastic and styrofoam excitements and seamless, docile machines that respond to the flip of a lever or a computerized command.

There's nothing docile about an indignant mass of muscle and horn that's cinched and prodded and intent upon throwing an equally determined human intruder off its back and out of its life.

It becomes a contest of courage and cruelty and perseverance that has been electrifying spectators since the early cowtowns of the American West.

No more so, in modern times, than at the annual Helldorado Days Rodeo (May 30-June 8) in Las Vegas and the Reno Rodeo (June 20-29).

Both events attract the world's top cowboys by offering top prize money and the opportunity to bask in the warm sunshine of international media attention.

The traditional roping, wrestling, and riding events form the centerpiece of a seemingly inexhaustible menu of special events that include parades, carnivals, arts and crafts exhibits, art shows, buckaroo breakfasts, golf shoot-outs, and enough gawking opportunities to throw your neck permanently out of whack.

And it doesn't end there.



BRENDA ALLEN

They'll be engaging in this rough-and-tumble remembrance of things past throughout Nevada during May and June. Specifically:

Cactus Pete's Rodeo events throughout May and June at Jackpot.

Boulder City Horsemen's Association Rodeo, May 10-11

Fallon's Wild Bunch Stampede, May 24-26.

Mel Thom Memorial All-Indian Rodeo, June 14-15, Walker Indian Reservation, Schurz.

Nevada High School State Finals Rodeo, 19-22, Fallon

Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Rodeo, June 27-29 at Wells.



Full Steam Ahead

The third annual Great Lake Tahoe Sternwheeler Race between the *Tahoe Queen* and *M.S. Dixie* promises to be a super splash dash this Memorial Day Weekend (May 26), since the ornate riverboats are tied at one win each going into the race. Both cruisers invite the public to dress in period riverboat gambler and floozy fashions and come aboard to drink champagne and cheer on their ship. The *Queen* takes on passengers at Ski Run Marina in South Lake Tahoe while the *Dixie* does the same at Zephyr Cove. The boats then square off at the state line and race along the south shore to Tahoe Keys and back. After the six-mile race the boats adjourn to Ski Run Marina, where the losing captain has to walk the plank. A celebration follows with Dixieland music and dancing aboard and on shore, all overlooked by an air show performed by the Tahoe Aces.

Star Walk, 3, bring flashlight, 8pm, meet at BLM's Red Rock Canyon Visitor Center, 17 miles west of Las Vegas, 363-1921

All-Star Wrestling, 3, Showboat, 385-9123

Cinco De Mayo, 3, celebration of Mexican Independence Day with folk dancing, music, and food, Community Center, Pahrump, 727-6265

Hobie Sailboat Regatta, 3-4, Special Events Beach, Lake Mead, 368-2885

Homecoming Program, 3-4, featuring 3 ballets, 8pm Sat., 2pm Sun., Nevada Dance Theatre, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV, 739-3838

Hawthorne's Big Day

Even if you don't get a bang out of touring the local military ammunition plant, you'll surely get a charge from the car races, truck pulls, parade, barbecue, boxing matches, and other fragments of small-town fun that will make up the May 15-18 observance of Armed Forces Day at Hawthorne.

Boulder City Spring Jamboree, 3, 11am parade, pancake breakfast, arts and crafts show, Little Mr. and Miss Spring Jamboree contest, golf tournament, outdoor displays, dog show, concert, art show, Boulder City, 293-2034

Las Vegas Stars v. Vancouver Canadians, 5-8, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm, Cashman Field, 386-7200

ESPN/Top Rank Boxing, 6, Sahara, 739-8911

Mint 400 Off-Road Race, 7-11 off-road race with car and driver registration Thurs.-Fri. and tech inspection for spectators Fri. at Mint Hotel; on Sat. racers make four laps on a 100-mile

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A Threesome in Tutus

The Nevada Dance Theater will be on its toes May 3 and 4 in Las Vegas with a triple ballet bill that includes a homage to composer Cole Porter; a comedy take-off on sports; and the dramatic "La Valse." You can see it by hot-footing it over to the Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall on the UNLV campus.

course south of Las Vegas; start-finish line at Sloan, 17 miles south of downtown Las Vegas; \$300,000 purse, Mint Hotel, 361-5404

UNLV v. San Jose State, 9-11, baseball, UNLV, 739-3207

Round Robin Invitational and Team Roping, 10, Peppermill Hotel, Mesquite, 346-5232

Rodeo, 10-11 open to all, on Fri. roping event free to public, on Sat.-Sun. traditional rodeo events, adults \$4, children 12 and under \$2.50, Boulder City Horsemen's Assn. Arena, 293-1337

Flower Walk, 11, bring quart of water, sturdy shoes, 9:30-11:30am, meet at BLM's Red Rock Canyon Visitor Center, 17 miles west of Las Vegas, 363-1921

Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra Concert, 12, 8pm, Ham Concert Hall, UNLV, 739-3420

Las Vegas Stars v. Calgary Cannons, 13-16, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm, Cashman Field, 386-7200

Jazz Concert, 17-18, on Sat. 3pm at Reed Whipple Cultural Arts Center; on Sun. 2pm at Lorenzi Park, 361-6211

Greek Food Festival, 18, Sahara, 739-8911

Jazz Concert, 18, 2pm, Lorenzi Park, 386-6211

Las Vegas Stars v. Edmonton Trappers, 21-24, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm, Cashman Field, 386-7200

Military Appreciation Luncheon, 22, open to public, meet Nellis officers, North Las Vegas Chamber, Nellis Air Force Base, 642-9595

"The Most Happy Fella," 22, 24-6/1, Broadway musical, Nevada Musical Theatre Guild, Temple Cong. Ner Tamid, 2761 Emmerson St., 739-8588

ESPN/Top Rank Boxing, 23, Showboat, 385-9123

Photo Exhibit, 23-7/6, juried show on Red Rock Canyon area, BLM's Red Rock Canyon Visitor Center, 17 miles west of Las Vegas, 363-1921

"The Emperor's New Clothes," 23-25, traditional children's tale, 7pm Fri., 2pm Sat.-Sun., Rainbow Company Children's Theatre, Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 386-6553

Military Appreciation Golf Tournament, 24, community challenge at Nellis Air Force Base, 642-9595

Spring Mountain Free Trappers Rendezvous, 24-25, emulating men and women of the fur trading times during the early 1800s, includes contests of knife and tomahawk throwing, survival runs, and storytelling around campfires, on the western slopes of Mount Charleston, 12 miles up

BC Jamboree

Sample the pancakes and find out why they call the place Boulder City. Only kidding—the flapjacks are as light as the mood during the Spring Jamboree, May 3 and 4, in the best Nevada town by a (Hoover) dam site.

Lee Canyon road off U.S. 95, 40 miles out of Las Vegas, 386-8746

Las Vegas Jazz Festival, 24-25, for benefit of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Sam Boyd Silver Bowl, 796-0069

Las Vegas Stars v. Phoenix Giants, 25-28, triple-A pro baseball, 1:35pm Sun., 7:35pm Mon.-Wed., Cashman Field, 386-7200

Art Show, 25-6/12, watercolors, Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 386-6211

Backgammon and Shuffleboard Tournaments, 27-6/1 open to the public, Sands Hotel, 733-5000

"The Emperor's New Clothes," 30-6/1 traditional children's tale, 7pm Fri., 2 and 7pm Sat., 2pm Sun., Rainbow Company Children's Theatre, Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 386-6553

Elks Helldorado Days, 30-6/8, on 5/30 street dance and barbecue, with carnival and midway and Helldorado Village Bar opening until 6/8; on 5/31 9am parade downtown and the Helldorado Championship Rodeo at 7:30pm through 6/7 at Thomas and Mack Center; on 6/2 shoot-out golf classic; on 6/3 Whiskerino Contest at Village Bar; on 6/4-7 Wrangler Bull Fighting, 385-1221

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All-Star Wrestling, 31 Showboat, 385-9123
Sailboard Regatta, 31-6/1 Special Events Beach, Lake Mead, 368-2885

June

Las Vegas Symphony Orchestra Concert, 1 2pm, Hall Concert Hall, UNLV, 739-3420
Art Show, 1-30, works by Paule Wheeler, Lost City Museum, 397-2193
20th Anniversary Celebration, 1-30, Four Queens Hotel, 385-4011
Exhibit, 1-10/10, Museum of International Folk Art's collection on transportation and movement, Charleston Heights Arts Center, 386-6383
Las Vegas Putting Tournament Classic, 2-6, Showboat Country Club, 385-9123
Photo Exhibit, 2-30, works by media members, Fine Arts Gallery, UNLV, 739-3893
Gun Show, 5-8, Sahara Hotel, 739-8911
"The Emperor's New Clothes," 6-8, traditional children's tale, 7pm Fri., 2 and 7pm Sat., 2pm Sun., Rainbow Company Children's Theatre, Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 386-6553
Myoflex Pro Football Team Arm Wrestling Championship, 8, open to public in showroom, free, Imperial Palace Hotel, 731-3311
U.S. BASS Grand National Fish-Off, 11-15, Lake Mead, 602-834-5045
Las Vegas Stars v. Tucson Toros, 11-13, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm Wed.-Thurs., 6:35pm doubleheader Fri., Cashman Field, 386-7200
"Bye Bye Birdie," 12-14, musical, bring blanket or lawn chair, gates open at 6pm, Spring Mountain Ranch State Park, 20 miles west of Las Vegas, 875-4141
Laughlin Classic, 12-15, several classes of boats

race on Colorado River in front of casino-hotels, Laughlin, 298-2214

ESPN/Top Rank Boxing, 13, Sahara Hotel, 739-8911

Las Vegas Stars v. Albuquerque Dukes, 14-17, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm, Cashman Field, 386-7200

Las Vegas Civic Symphony Concert, 15, 2pm, Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 386-6211

Las Vegas Stars v. Tacoma Tigers, 18-21, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm, Cashman Field, 386-7200

"Bye Bye Birdie," 19-21, musical, bring blanket or lawn chair, gates open at 6pm, Spring Mountain Ranch State Park, 20 miles west of Las Vegas, 875-4141

Coin, Stamp, and Baseball Card Expo, 19-22, Sahara Hotel, 739-8911

Las Vegas Celebrity Golf Classic, 20, Showboat Country Club, 385-9123

Ranch State Park, 20 miles west of Las Vegas, 385-2723

Las Vegas Stars v. Tucson Toros, 30-7/3, triple-A pro baseball, 7:35pm, Cashman Field, 386-7200

July 4th

July 4th Celebration, 4, 10pm fireworks, Stardust Hotel, 732-6234

Baseball and Fireworks, 4, Las Vegas Stars v. Albuquerque Dukes triple-A pro baseball game followed by fireworks, Cashman Field, 386-7200

GAMING TOURNAMENTS

Here's a roll call of gaming tournaments scheduled this summer in Las Vegas. They range from casual to high-roller affairs, so call ahead for details.

May

World Series of Poker, 1-22, \$4 million purse, Binion's Horseshoe Hotel, 382-1600

Blackjack Tournament, 2, almost every Wed. and every Fri. in May and June, Lady Luck Casino, 384-4680

Video Poker Tournament, 4, every Sun. in May and June, Lady Luck Casino, 384-4680

Friendly Frontier Cowboy Craps Tournament, Barbecue, and Jamboree, 4-6, Frontier Hotel, 734-0385

Craps Tournament, 6, every Tues. in May, Lady Luck Casino, 384-4680

Slot Tournament, 11-14, Lady Luck Casino, 384-4680

Basque-ing in Winnemucca

If you've an appetite for traditional dancing, games, and food on a soft spring day, then the Winnemucca Basque Festival, June 7-8 at the city fairgrounds, is precisely your cup of tea—or something a good deal stronger.

Bowling Tournament, 21-27, National Amateur Bowlers, Inc., open to public, Showboat Hotel, 385-9123

Las Vegas Symphony Concert, 22, Reed Whipple Cultural Center, 386-6211

"Bye Bye Birdie," 26-28, musical, bring blanket or lawn chair, gates open at 6pm, Spring Mountain

WESTERN CIVILIZATION

WINNEMUCCA HOTEL CASINO

Winnemucca. The Somewhere in the Middle of Nowhere.

Traveling across Nevada can be an uncivilized experience unless you know the right place to stop. Winnemucca is the place. The place to unwind with a cocktail and a superb meal. The place to relax in a comfortable room. The place to enjoy a turn of the cards, a pull of the handle or the beat of a show. Winnemucca is the place. And in Winnemucca it's the Winners Hotel/Casino and Model T. That's civilization, Western Style.

Blackjack Tournament, 16-18, Marina Hotel, 739-1500

Pan Tournament, 18-21, Union Plaza, 386-2110

June

Blackjack Tournament, 8-12, Sands Hotel, 733-5000

Gin Tournament, 8-12, Union Plaza, 386-2110

Slot Machine Tournament, 13-15, Marina Hotel, 739-1500

Slot Tournament, 15, Union Plaza, 386-2110

Blackjack Tournament, 22-25, Frontier Hotel, 734-0110

Blackjack Tournament, 22-26, Las Vegas Hilton, 732-5111

Slot Tournament, 28-7/2, Sands, 733-5000

Pan Tournament, 29-7/2, Union Plaza, 386-2110

PIONEER TERRITORY

May

Armed Forces Day Celebration, 15-18, on Sat. noon parade; queen contest, amateur boxing, stock car races, fireworks at dusk; also fire department water fights, barbecue, open house at Hawthorne Army Ammunition Plant, which includes train rides, tours of the plant, live music, and military displays, Hawthorne, 945-5896

Parkie Packrat Day, 17 bring lunch, water, and hiking shoes, 10am-2pm, Echo Canyon State Rec. Area, 728-4467

Jim Butler Days, 22-26, Founder's Day celebration; includes street dance on Fri., on Sat. chili cook-off in front of Station House, on Sun. State Championship Mucking and Hard Rock Drilling Contest followed by outdoor barbecue with live music at Station House; arm wrestling contest, dances, parade, arts and crafts show, fire department water contests, horseshoe pitching, from Fri.-Tues. Central Nevada Museum hosts "Tonopah 1913" and "Goldfield," movies and special displays, Tonopah, 482-3558

Lost City Exhibit, 23-6/23, on Nevada's ancient Pueblo Indians, Central Nevada Museum, Tonopah, 482-9676

'The Real West,' 24, movie narrated by Gary Cooper, 8:30pm, Spring Valley State Park, 962-5102

Flip, Flop and Fly

It's high-style horsing around in the high-desert town of Wells. A whirligig of froth and frenzy and flapping mailbags being passed from one rider to another as their mounts fuss and fidget and strain for the finish line of the 20-mile Pony Express races. It's fun at full-gallop, May 17

Slide Program, 24, 7:30pm, Echo Canyon State Rec. Area, 728-4467

Parkie Packrat Day, 24, bring lunch, water, and hiking shoes, 10am-noon, Cathedral Gorge State Park, 728-4467

Homecoming Celebration, 24-26, softball tournaments, horseshoe tournaments, pig wrestling, kids games, art show, piano concert, open pit barbecue picnic, Caliente, 726-3126



Flour Power

Reuel Gridley probably had no idea what he had started when he toted a 50-pound flour sack the length of Austin to pay off an election bet in 1864. He ended up, believe it or not, auctioning the sack for as much as \$250,000 and But wait, if you want to hear the rest of this floury tale and enjoy such down-home doings as a fiddle contest, good eats, and a commemorative sack race, then consider attending Gridley Days, June 14-15, in this delightfully remote Central Nevada community.

June

Art Exhibit, 2-30, Mineral County Museum, Hawthorne, 945-2395

Parkie Packrat Day, 7, bring lunch, water, hiking shoes, Spring Valley State Park, 962-5102



Buckskin Blowouts

Retreat to the world of "doughnut patterns" and "marshmallow wads": participate along with other buckskin and blue jeans-wearing folks in firing muzzleloaders, tossing tomahawks, and relying on primitive survival skills to negotiate the "Trail of Fears." Or just watch. One of these lively emulations of 19th-century American frontiersmen, trappers and mountain men will be the 10th Annual Spring Rendezvous and Blackpowder Shoot, May 24-26, along the Truckee River at Patrick, approximately 15 miles east of Reno. The other, scheduled for the Memorial Day weekend on the slopes of Mount Charleston 40 miles from Las Vegas is the Spring Mountain Free Trappers Rendezvous.

Moonlight Hike, 7 bring flashlight and water, 8:30-10pm, Cathedral Gorge State Park, 728-4467

Stargazing Slide Program, 14, 8:30pm, Cathedral Gorge State Park, 728-4467

Wildflowers Slide Program, 14, Echo Canyon State Rec. Area, 728-4467

Mel Thom Memorial All-Indian Rodeo, 14-15, cowgirls and cowboys from the Western states compete in bull riding, saddle bronc, bareback, cow milking, team roping, calf roping, steer wrestling, and barrel racing, Walker River Indian Reservation, Schurz, 773-2206

Steve Owen Memorial Liar's Race, 15, weird and wacky parade on water with anything that floats, no racing craft; three-person canoe race, homemade kite flying contest, prizes for fastest and most novel entries, Walker Lake, 945-5253

Children's Fishing Derby, 21 for children up to 16, licenses required for children 12-16, awards presented at evening movie, Spring Valley State Park, 962-5102

Snake Program, 21 7:30pm, Cathedral Gorge State Park, 728-4467

Wilderness Survival Program, 28, 3pm, Spring Valley State Park, 962-5102

Mining Program, 28, 8pm Echo Canyon State Rec. Area, 728-4467

Delamar 400, 28-29, off-road race, Caliente, 726-3126

July 4th

July 4th Children's Parade, 4, 10am, floats and walking groups, each child receives a silver dollar and an American flag from the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Main Street, Tonopah, 482-3558

July 4th Celebration, 4-6, Clover Creek off-road racing, fireworks, parade, horseshoe and softball tournaments, Caliente, 726-3126

PONY EXPRESS TERRITORY

May

Lost City Exhibit, thru 21 on Nevada's ancient Pueblo Indians, Lyon County Museum, Yerington, call Lost City Museum at 397-2193

Calf Branding and Stock Horse, 4, snaffle,

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hackamore, and bridle classes followed by four-man team branding, 9am sign up, fairgrounds, Yerington, 463-4033

Museum Opening, 4, open daily until 9/1, Eureka Sentinel Museum, 237-5557

Mason Valley Day, 10, Yerington, 463-3721

Hidden Cave Tours, 10 and 24, meet 9:30am at County Museum, Fallon, 882-1631 or 423-3677

Sentimental Journey, 17-18, train ride from Hazen to Sacramento and back, overnight in Old Sacramento, visit railroad museum, closing date for paid reservations is 4/28, meet at Hazen Bar on U.S. 50-A, 867-3066

Men's Golf Tournament, 17-18, open to amateurs with established handicaps, Ely, 289-4095

Horse Show, 18, English and Western classes, 7am sign up, fairgrounds, Yerington, 463-4785

Fallon's Wildbunch Stampede, 24-26, stock and bull sale, fairgrounds, Fallon, 423-6006

Railfair '86, 24-26, marks the anniversary of the Nevada Northern Railway Depot's designation as a national historic site, includes a Sat. parade, old-time railroad competitions, historical exhibits and displays, dinner, and music, Ely, 289-3226

Eureka High School Rodeo, 26-27 Eureka Rodeo Grounds, 237-5540

June

Pony Express Commemorative Re-Run, 5-7 ride along the Pony Express Trail from Sacramento, CA. to St. Joseph, MO., riders will go through Nevada 6/5-7 241-7602

Fernley Town Carnival, 7 booths, food, drink, In-Town Park, Fernley, 575-4674

Hazen Days, 8, 10am parade, melodramas, noon barbecue, street dancing, live music, food, arts and crafts, Nevada Civil War Volunteers, car show, Main St. Hazen on U.S. 50-A, 867-3066

Gymkhana, 8, classes for the whole family, 9am sign up, fairgrounds, Yerington, 463-2333

Gridley Days, 14-15, on Sat. 10am sack of flour race, Sat.-Sun. noon fiddle contest; Sun. barbecue, Austin Park, Austin, 964-2440

Hidden Cave Tours, 14 and 28, meet 9:30am, County Museum, Fallon, 882-1631 or 423-3677

Nevada High School Rodeo State Finals, 19-22, Fallon Regional Park, 423-4674

Calf Branding and Stock Horse, 20, snaffle, hackamore, and bridle classes, followed by four-man team branding, 6pm sign up, fairgrounds, Yerington, 463-4033

Horse Show, 22, English and Western classes, 7am sign up, fairgrounds, Yerington, 463-4785

Lost City Exhibit, 25-7/25, on Nevada's ancient Pueblo Indians, White Pine Public Museum, Ely, 289-4710

Stargazing Slide Program, 28, 8:30pm, Cave Lake State Park, 728-4467

Jackpot Roping and Barrel Race, 29, 9am sign up, fairgrounds, Yerington, 463-4360

July 4th

July 4th Celebration, 4, parade, barbecue at Lions Park, games, fireworks, Battle Mountain, 635-2193

July 4th Celebration, 4, 10am parade, barbecue, fireworks, and outdoor dance, Out-of-Town Park, Fernley, 575-4459

Auto Races, 4, stock car races and fireworks, 4, Fallon, 423-4391

July 4th Celebration, 4, parade, street games, on Main Street; dance with live music at firehouse, Austin, 964-2397

July 4th Celebration, 4, 10am parade followed by street games and barbecue, 9pm fireworks, Main Street, Eureka, 237-5262

COVERED WAGON TERRITORY

May

Nevada 86, thru 8, photo show, Country Library, Lovelock, 273-2216

Art Exhibit and Arts and Crafts Show, 1-6/2, watercolors by Kevin Heaney, Northeastern Nevada Museum, Elko, 738-3418

Air Races, 2, Peppermill Inn, Wendover, 664-2255

Bowling Tournament, 2-4, Red Garter Casino, Wendover, 664-2111

Calf Roping, 4-8/31, every Sun., rodeo grounds, Wells, 752-3355

Ranch Rodeo, 10-11 Jackpot, 755-2321

Longhorn Sale and Convention, 15-17 fairgrounds, Elko, 738-7135

Pony Express Races, 17-20 teams of 5 riders each run 4 miles each, fastest team wins, Wells, 752-3355

Cactus Pete's Air Race, 17 from Lander WY to Jackpot, 755-2321

Homing Pigeon Race, 17 4,000 birds fly from Jackpot to Oakland, CA, 755-2321

Endurance Bowling Tournament, 17-7/8, Red Garter Casino, Wendover, 664-2111

Bob Groom Memorial Race, 24, stock car races, Lovelock, 273-2949

Portuguese Festa, 24-25, Pentecostal celebration, religious and social event including dance, parade, dinner, and auction, Catholic Hall, Lovelock, 273-7144

Memorial Day Softball Tournament, 24-25, David McDougal Memorial Sports Complex, Lovelock, 273-7569

Western Festival, 31-6/1 11am parade, fly casting, pie eating, and watermelon eating contests, radio-controlled car racing, break dancers, Basque and Western dancers, jello wrestling, hot-air balloons, music, Elko, 738-7135

Elko High School Rodeo, 31-6/1 fairgrounds, Elko, 738-5294

June

Highpower Rifle Match, 1, 8am, 8 miles north of Winnemucca, 623-4117



Using this map as a key, you'll find each town's events under the territory designated by the Nevada Commission on Tourism. For more travel information, write the Commission on Tourism, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV 89710, or call 702-885-3636.

Art Show, 6-7/1 drawings and sculptures by Sarah Campsey, Northeastern Nevada Museum, Elko, 738-3418

Horse Show, 7 Jackpot, 755-2321

Northeastern Nevada Quarter Horse Assn. Show, 7 fairgrounds, Elko, 738-5294

Gun Show, 7-8, Elko Convention Center, 738-2666

Winnemucca Basque Festival, 7-8, on Sat. 11:30am parade, 1:30pm games at fairgrounds followed by 9pm dance; on Sun. 11am Mass at City Park, picnic, Winnemucca, 623-2225

Elko Mining Expo '86, 13-15, booths and outdoor exhibits, contests of strength and demonstrations ongoing, on Sat. performances by Dottie West, Convention Center, Elko, 738-4091

Cactus Pete's Air Race, 14, from Orland, CA. to Jackpot, 755-2321

Two-Man Best Ball, 14-15, Wells Golf Course, 752-3928

Lovelock High School Rodeo, 14-15, rodeo grounds, Lovelock, 273-2405

Fort McDermitt Powwow, 14-15, cultural dances and rites, 5 miles from McDermitt, 623-2225

Team Roping, 8, 14-15, and 22, Jackpot, 755-2321

Rye Patch Fishing Derby, 20-22, Rye Patch State Park, call Rye Patch No. 3

Mountain Trail Appaloosa Show, 20-22, fairgrounds, Elko, 738-5294

Cactus Pete's Air Race, 21 from Spokane, WA. to Jackpot, 755-2321

PRCA Rodeo and Barbecue, 27-29, 6pm barbecue Fri., 1pm rodeo Sat.-Sun., rodeo grounds, Wells, 752-3355

Adult Amateur Rodeo, 28-29, rodeo grounds, Jackpot, 755-2321

Lamoille Country Fair, 29, arts, crafts, food, and entertainment, Women's Clubhouse, Lamoille, 744-4322

July 4th

July 4th Barbecue, 4, fishing and fireworks, Wildhorse Ranch and Resort, call Northfork 6472

July 4th Parade, 4, parade from Wendover, Utah to Wendover, Nevada along Wendover Blvd., 664-2111

July 4th Fireworks, 4, Wells Golf Course, 752-3355

July 4th Picnic, 4, City Park, Winnemucca, 623-2225

July 4th Celebration, 4, kiddie parade, games, fireworks, Lovelock, 273-7144

McDermitt Twin States Stampede, 4-5, rodeo, McDermitt, 623-2225

Elko's National Basque Festival, 4-6, fairgrounds, City Park, and downtown 738-7135

RENO/TAHOE TERRITORY

May

Historic American Indian Photo Exhibit, thru 18, Lillie Corwin photos, Stewart Indian Museum, Carson City, 882-1808

Nevada History Exhibit, thru 30, territorial period, Nevada Historical Society Downtown Gallery, 789-0190

Art Show, thru 6/8, paintings by Minnie Dobbins, Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, 329-3333

Jack Gomez Roping, 1-4, fairgrounds, 785-4307

T · O · N · O · P · A · H



Come Help Us Celebrate Our 16th Annual *Jim Butler Days*

Memorial Day Weekend
May 23, 24, 25 and 26, 1986

Schedule of Events

Friday Evening

Street Dance and Kangaroo Court

Saturday

Parade • Horseshoe Pitching • Women's Mucking Contest • Double Jack Drilling • Central Nevada Historical Society • Open House and Movies • Chili Cookoff • Stock Car Races • Fire Dept. Competitions Miner's Ball and Teen Dance • Liars and Beard Contest

Arts and Crafts Show

Sunday

Summit Run • Senior Mucking Contest • Single Jack Drilling Contest • Bar-B-Que • Western and Teen Dances • Arm Wrestling Contest • Performing Arts in the Park for Kids Raffle—40 Spectacular Prizes Including 100 Oz. Bar of Silver • Central Nevada Historical Society Open House

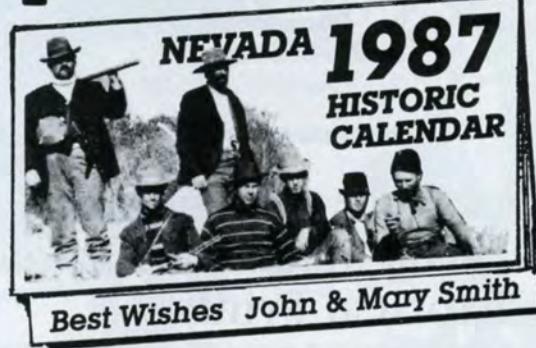
Monday

Memorial Day Services in Tonopah and Goldfield

For Information and Entry Blanks Contact
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4-H County Livestock Show, 1-4, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Sierra Nevada Chorale Concert, 2, 8pm, Pioneer Theater, 323-1324

Special Occasion Faire, 2-3, handcrafted items, 6-9pm Fri., 9am-6pm Sat., free, Community Center, Fallon, 867-3576

Silver State Square and Round Dance Festival, 2-4, dancing and workshops, Reno-Sparks Convention Center, 322-0027

Art Show, 2-6/1 drawings by Maynard Dixon, Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, 329-3333

Art Exhibit, 2-6/8, the Chichester Collection of Washoe Indian baskets, Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, 329-3333

Cinco De Mayo Celebration, 3, 10am parade on C St., 9am chili cook-off, dinner, dance, Virginia City, 847-0500

Cinco De Mayo Celebration, 3, food, prizes, music, auction, noon-8pm, South Lake Tahoe, 916-542-0454

Museum Exhibits, 3-10/31, equipment, engines, photographs, and memorabilia of the Nevada fire service from 1861 to present, Comstock Firemen's Museum, Virginia City, 847-0717

Concert, 4, featuring soprano Evelyn de la Rosa, Reno Chamber Orchestra, Trinity Episcopal Church, 747-4101

Carson City Chamber Orchestra Concert, 4, Brewery Arts Center, Carson City, 883-1976

Concert, 4, UNR Music Dept. and UNR Orchestra, 8pm, Pioneer Theater, 786-5105

Reno Padres v. Bakersfield Dodgers, 5-7, class-A pro baseball, 7pm, Moana Stadium, 825-0678

Exhibit/Lecture, 6, lecture by Bill Willard accom-

panies exhibit on the gaming industry, 7pm, Nevada Historical Society, 789-0190

Concert, 6-7, UNR bands, 8pm, Pioneer Theater, 786-5105

Golden West Grand Trap Shoot, 6-11, The Gun Club, 8000 Pyramid Lake Hwy., Sparks, 826-2121

Junior Livestock State Livestock Show, 7-11, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Voices Unlimited Concert, 9, 8pm, Pioneer Theater, 825-2592

UNR v. Loyola-Marymount, 9-10, baseball, UNR, 784-4180

Reno Padres v. Stockton Ports, 9-11, class-A pro baseball, 7pm Fri., 1:30pm Sat.-Sun., Moana Stadium, 825-0678

Spring Arts Festival, 10, concert featuring contemporary and traditional music, song, dance, and drama of the Native American culture, in addition to artshow, powwow, arts and crafts, Hug High School, 329-2573

Concert, 10, UNR Music Dept., Pioneer Theater, 786-5105

Virginia City Grand Prix, 10-11, 16th annual dirt bike race with 400 entries, race follows 20-mile course in mountains around Virginia City, starting line at old V&T Freight Depot, 789-4892

Concert, 11, violinist Marilyn Sevilla, Trinity Episcopal Church, 747-4101

Mexican Dance, 12, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Imperials Concert, 12, 8pm, Pioneer Theater, 786-5105

UNR v. UNLV, 13-14, baseball, UNR, 784-4180

Comstock Arabian Class A Horse Show, 15-18, state fairgrounds, 785-4307

Nevada 86, 15-6/12, photo show, Washoe County Library, 785-4190

Sierra Nevada Rabbit Club Show, 16-19, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Genoa Firemen's Benefit Dinner, 17, steak dinner, auction, and raffle, no host bar 5pm, dinner 6pm, Town Hall, Genoa, 782-5220

Ramblin' Wheels Poker Run, 18, organized motorcycle ride in Reno-Tahoe area, call 972-0132 for map

Color It Mellow

It will be a day of classic cars and classic pleasures; of parades, melodramas, arts, crafts, hot dogs, and even hotter dancing; a slice of small-town Nevada life served a la carte at the Sixth Annual Hazen Days celebration on June 8. The community is located between Fallon and Fernley on U.S. 50-A.

Reno Padres v. San Jose Bees, 20-21, class-A pro baseball, 7pm Tues., 6pm doubleheader Wed., Moana Stadium, 825-0678

13th Birthday Celebration, 20-22, Eldorado Hotel, 786-5700

Reno Padres v. Salinas Spurs, 23-25, class-A pro baseball, 7pm Fri., 1:30pm Sat., 1pm doubleheader Sun., Moana Stadium, 825-0678

Tahoe/Carson City Turn-About, 23-25, fund-raising motorcycle rally, on Fri. 6-8pm live Western music concert; Sat.-Sun. mini motorcycle tours; on Sun. 6pm parade, barbecue, dance, poker run, AMA sanctioned event, meet at Carson City Community Center, 883-7442

Super Run II: America's Race, 24, the male and female winners from each state compete for \$1 million total prize money in 10km race through South Lake Tahoe, 588-7174

Memorial Weekend Arts and Crafts Fair, 24-



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25, jugglers, mimes, and music, Kings Beach State Rec. Area, N. Lake Tahoe, 916-583-9048
"Cinderella," 24-25, 2:15pm, Nevada Festival Ballet, Pioneer Theater, 786-4046

Spring Rendezvous and Black Powder Shoot, 24-26, contests of skill in the use of muzzle-loading, black powder firearms, and activities related to the lives of the American mountain men, free, Patrick, 15 miles east of Reno, 826-0700

Silver State Quarter Horse Show, 24-26, fairgrounds, 785-4307

PASCO Region II Contest, 24-26 and 31-6/1 four classes of contest soaring with about 60 sailplanes participating, Pacific Soaring Council, Minden Airport, 782-7627

Annual Great Lake Tahoe Sternwheeler Race, 26, grudge match between the lake's two sternwheeler cruise boats, the *Tahoe Queen* and *M.S. Dixie*; 11am starting time from Ski Run Marina near Nevada state line, to Tahoe Keys, and back; 916-541-3364

Mexican Dance, 26, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Reno Padres v. Fresno Giants, 26-27 class-A pro baseball, 7pm, Moana Stadium, 825-0678

Reno Firefighters Circus, 27, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Antique Auction, 30-31 fairgrounds, 785-4307

Wellness Day, 31, YWCA's discussion on wellness lifestyles, use of hot springs and pool, Walley's Hot Springs, Genoa, 322-4531

Nugget All-American Suffolk Sheep Show and Sale, 31, auction of Suffolk rams, ewes, and lambs, John Ascuaga's Nugget, Sparks, 356-3438

Northern Nevada ATV Club Race, 31-6/1 fairgrounds, 785-4307

Comstock Chapter GPAA Gold Show, 31-6/1 fairgrounds, 785-4307

Ladies Hats Exhibit, 31-6/30, 1890s to 1930s, Courthouse Museum, Genoa, 782-8487

June

Virginia City Tour, 1 also tour Gold Hill and Silver City, leave from Nevada Historical Society at 9am and return at 5pm, 789-0190

Reno Padres v. Modesto Athletics, 2-5, class-A pro baseball, 7pm, Moana Stadium, 825-0678

Pony Express Commemorative Re-Run, 5-7 ride starts in Sacramento, CA, and ends at St. Joseph, MO, riders pass through Northern Nevada on the Pony Express Trail 6/5-7: the relays will be approximately five miles each, with rider and horse covering that distance in 30 minutes carrying commemorative letters, 241-7602

Incline Follies, 5-7, annual fundraiser, pre-sold tickets \$10, at door \$12.50, showtime 8pm, Chateau, Incline Village, 831-0781

Carson Valley Days, 6-8, arts and crafts show, softball tournament, parade, barbecue, Minden-Gardnerville, 782-8144

Reno Padres v. Stockton Ports, 6-8, class-A pro baseball, 7pm Fri., 1:30pm Sat-Sun., Moana Stadium, 825-0678

Paint Horse Show, 6-12, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Annual Windjammers Southern Crossing, 7 open to all comers, off South Lake Tahoe, 916-544-4226

Carson Valley Rally, 7-8, off-road race, meet at Carson Valley Inn, Minden, 882-8181

Concert, 8, violinist Roy Malan, Trinity Episcopal Church, 747-4101

Mexican Dance, 9, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Fourth Annual West Coast Wine Competition, 12-14, wine education seminars, food demonstrations, gourmet dining experience, and gala wine

(Continued on page 90)

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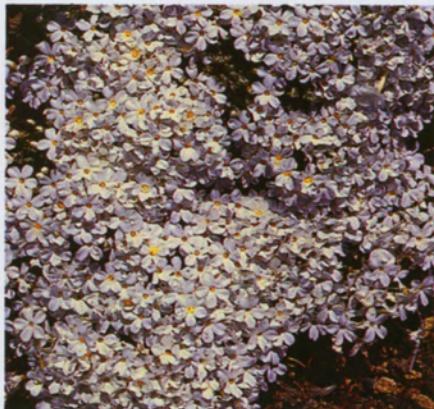


Like other members of the sunflower family, the aster has cup-shaped blooms, so they often are showiest in their last days, when the petals spread into a colorful mass. The aster decorates roadsides, sandy hills, and washes through May.

Nevada Bloomers

When wildflowers show their petaled petticoats,
the landscape blushes.

Photographs by Alan Bittler



Phlox makes a bright spot on gravelly slopes and washes from April to July.



As the snow melts, the snow plant pokes out of the forest floor.



Its delicate flowers make you want to touch the prickly poppy, but its thorny stems and leaves make you sorry if you do. Doves, however, love the seeds.

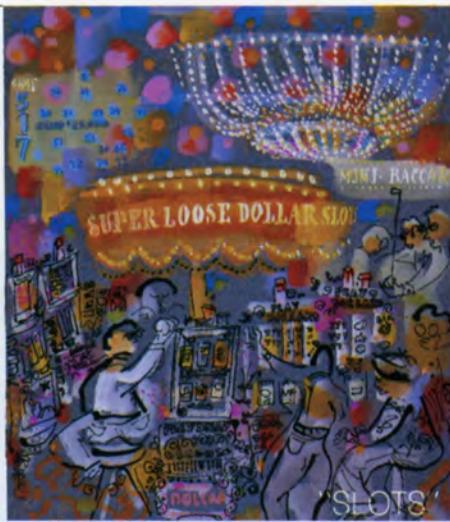
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CALENDAR (Continued from page 87)

and cheese tasting where visitors can taste the medal winners from the 5/14-16 competition, Eldorado Hotel, 786-5700

High Sierra Stunt Corp. Show, 13-15, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Lake Tahoe Sailboard Crossing, 14, 18-mile crossing from Tahoe City to South Shore's Tahoe Beach & Ski Club, 916-541-6220 or 588-2623

Greek Night, 14, fairgrounds, 785-4307

Kit Carson Rendezvous/Wagon Train Days, 14-15, cowboys, Indians, mountain men, donkey polo games, train rides, arm wrestling, Nevada amateur boxing championship, horseshoe tourney, Indian ceremonial dances, live music jamboree, arts and crafts, games, food, and drinks, Mills Park, Carson City, 883-7442

Crystal Bay Invitational Sailboat Race, 14-15, all classes and sizes of sailboats, leaves from the Hyatt Lake Tahoe pier, goes to Cal Neva, then to Sand Harbor, and back to Hyatt, 831-4440

Annual Hwy. 50 Wagon Train, 14-22, on 14-15 begins at Zephyr Cove; then goes to Meyers, CA, on 16th, Strawberry on 17th, Kyburz on 19th, Pollock Pines on 20th, El Dorado County Fairgrounds in Placerville on 21st, participate in Pioneer Days on 22nd, call 916-723-3545 or 916-442-3030

Carson City Chamber Orchestra Concert, 15, Brewery Arts Center, Carson City, 883-4154

Annual Emerald Bay Classic, 15, sailboard race, South Lake Tahoe, 588-2623

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

Nevada 86, 17-7/2, photo show, Nevada Historical Society Downtown Gallery, 789-0190

Virginia City Marathon, 18, motorcycle ride on back roads from Tonopah to Virginia City, dinner and auction in evening, 847-0322

Carson Valley Art Show, 18-7/15, local artists, Courthouse Museum, Genoa, 782-8487

VORRA Virginia City 200, 20-21 Valley Off-Road Racing Assn. race on designated course near Virginia City, 916-925-1702 or 847-0311

Reno Padres v. San Jose Bees, 20-22, class-A pro baseball, 7pm Fri., 1:40 pm Sat., 1pm double-header Sun., Moana Stadium, 825-0678

Reno Rodeo, 20-29, opens on 6/20 with wagon train from Virginia City to State Fairgrounds, opening carnival, Frontier Village, food fair, arts and crafts festival, and art show and sale; on 6/20-22 truck and tractor pull; on 6/21-22 team penning competition; on 6/21 Buckaroo Breakfast, chili cook-off; on 6/23 Bob Feist Invitational Team Roping Classic; rodeo competition is at 7:30pm on 6/24-28 and 1:30pm on 6/28-29; on 6/28 special mail delivery by the Pony Express Assn., 329-3877

Art Show, 20-8/3, bronze sculptures by 35 contemporary artists, Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, 329-3333

Ramblin' Wheels Hoot Owl Run, 21 motorcycle and car run followed by live music and dancing, Reno area, call for map 972-0132

Stewart Indian Museum Arts and Crafts Fair, 21-22, Indian arts and crafts, barbecue, competitive dancing, Indian handgames, Western dance, exhibits, authentically prepared foods, Carson City, 882-1808 or 883-4593

Concert, 22, Bettine Clemen Ware, 2pm, Chateau, Incline Village, 831-0781

U.S. Open Class National Soaring Contest, 22-7/3, includes sailplaines with up to an 80-foot wingspan, Minden Airport, 782-7627

(Continued on page 92)



Nevada Magazine

Classified

BOOKS

BOOKS WANTED: Issues of Nevada Highways & Parks, 1935-1964. Write: Carl Harley, 1520 Lava Circle, Las Vegas, NV. 89101. State price on first reply.

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CALENDAR (Continued from page 90)

Outdoor Jazz Series, 25-8/26, every Wed. afternoon on the grounds of the museum, free, Sierra Nevada Museum of Art, 329-3333

Bluegrass Festival, 27-28, evening music under the stars, Sand Harbor State Park, 916-583-9048

Harrah's Automobile Collection Auction, 27-29, Auto Museum Complex, Sparks, 355-3505

Shoot Out at the Mill, 28-29, craps tournament, Peppermill, 826-2121

Tombola, 28-29, fair with arts and crafts, barbecue, children's games, on Sun. drawing for trip, Pickett Park, 785-4166

Lake Tahoe Sail Week, 28-7/5, 916-544-4226

Concert, 29, Orville Fleming, 2pm, Chateau, Incline Village, 831-0781

Reno Padres v. Stockton Ports, 30-7/2, class-A pro baseball, 7:30pm, Moana Stadium, 825-0678

July 4th

July 4th Celebration, 4, parade, fireworks, Virginia City, 847-0311

July 4th Holiday Steam-Up Grand Re-Opening, 4-6, restored Virginia & Truckee Railroad locomotives No. 22 and No. 24 will operate for visitors, train rides available, Nevada State Railroad Museum, Carson City, 885-4810

Fourth Annual Dixieland Jazz Festival, 4-6, 10 Dixieland groups play each day, John Ascuaga's Nugget, Sparks, 356-3300

July 4th Arts and Crafts Fair, 4-6, mimes, jugglers, and music, Kings Beach Rec. Area, N. Lake Tahoe, 916-583-9048

COMING ATTRACTIONS

July

National Basque Festival, 4-6, Elko, 738-7135

Annual Walker 100 and Jack Roark Memorial Boat Races, 13-14, 945-5896

Carson Valley Heritage Days, 18-20, Minden and Gardnerville, 782-9711

Las Vegas Square Dance Jubilee, 18-20, 368-2273

Ely Basque Festival, 19, 289-8680

R.S.V.P. Capital City Fair, 24-27 Carson City, 885-4680

Douglas County Fair, 31-8/3, Gardnerville, 782-5944

August

Reno Basque Festival, 9, 322-5517

Nevada State Fair, 12-17 Reno, 785-4280

Pony Bob Jr. Rodeo, 22-24, Sparks, 852-3291

Elko County Fair, 26-9/1 738-7135

Pony Express Days, 16-17 and 23-24, Ely, 289-8877

White Pine County Fair, 23-24, Ely, 289-8877

September

Frontier 500 Off-Road Race, 5-7 Las Vegas, 734-0385

Basque Festival, 6, Las Vegas, 385-2662

Virginia City Camel Races, 6-7 847-0311

Reno National Championship Air Races, 11-14, 826-7500

A Reminder: To confirm dates and times, use the phone numbers listed with each event. For out-of-state callers, the area code is 702 throughout Nevada. Call 800-555-1212 for toll-free numbers. □

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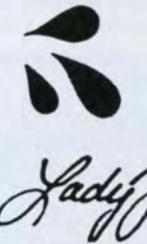


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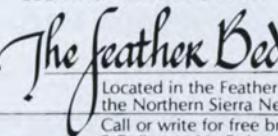
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RALLY 'ROUND THE CARS

Let's set the record straight:
There were a lot of
big wheels in the race to
save Bill Harrah's auto
collection, and we all won.

By Leon Mandel

I lost a friend the other day. So did he. Mutual alienation. My former friend, an automotive journalist, was whining about the dismantling of the Harrah's Automobile Collection in Reno. He declared that Holiday Inns' disposal of all those cars was a cultural disgrace equaled only by Hitler's book burning.

When I told my friend that "all those cars" weren't going away at all, he wouldn't believe me. When I said that the donation of 100 cars with 200 to come, the nation's most impressive automotive library, and assorted oddments was an act of corporate social conscience unparalleled in my experience, he accused me of silver-crossed palms.

Only after my rage cooled (weeks later) did it occur to me that if this reputedly informed journalist (is that an oxymoron?) didn't know what was going on, many others wouldn't either. That made me even angrier. Too many people have done too much to preserve the core of Bill Harrah's collection for their work to be ignored or misunderstood.

Bill Harrah, by the way, was not one of those people. He collected the cars—more than a thousand of them. Having done so, he neither made provision for their future maintenance nor did he care much where they went.

When, after Harrah's death in 1978, Holiday Inns decided to sell the cars, an enormous cry went up in Northern Nevada. It would have died down and the cars would have gone away except for the persistence of a few people who

made themselves so bothersome that the company decided to take a second look at the decision to sell.

Reno consultant George Charchalis, fifth-generation Nevadan and wise in the ways of the bureaucracy, was the first to wave the lantern in the tower. He then carried the light to Carson City and the office of then-Governor Bob List's assistant, Greg Lambert. It was not a friendly meeting. Charchalis, who was accompanied by a friend with a short temper and a love for cars, told Lambert that if the state stood aloof and let all the cars go, neither he nor his boss would ever escape the stigma. To their credit, Lambert and List called a meeting of influential citizens who cared about the collection.

So began the Friends of the Cars. So also, and more importantly, began the William F. Harrah Automobile Foundation. Harrah's executives Mead Dixon and Richard Goeglein set their legal staff to creating a nonprofit legal shell to receive what they had not yet persuaded the Holiday Inns hierarchy to donate: a representative selection of the collection. It was not pleasant for them to nag at their new bosses, and there wasn't a hell of a lot of reason to do so beyond a

“

**When, after Harrah's death,
the company decided to
sell the cars, an enormous
cry went up in Northern
Nevada, and it would
have died down except
for the persistence
of a few people.**

”

commitment to the cars' cultural worth. Likewise, the prospect of giving away \$30 or \$40 million in assets was not immediately appealing.

For the foundation people involved in the negotiations, days of elation were followed by days of desperation. Through it all, a tall, quiet insurance executive named Ben Dasher, who was to become chairman of the foundation, was its rod and staff. Dasher was both mover and immovable. He wanted those cars to stay, and his tenacity was superhuman.

Holiday Inns finally agreed to contribute, but the company wanted a quid pro quo. Perfectly fair, by the way. It wanted tangible evidence that the Reno community would make a contribution of its own to show good faith in its wish to keep the cars.

These days the news is good. To buy the land for a new museum, \$9 million

has been guaranteed by banker Bob Sullivan; investor Don Wilkerson; Bill Harrah's widow, Verna; Bill's two sons, John Adam and Tony; and the Club Cal Neva. The proposed location is an 11-acre downtown site on the Truckee River at Lake Street, an easy walk from major casinos. A study is optimistic about the museum's ability to pay for itself and also put money in the city's treasury. Car collectors are in general agreement that the cars to be shown in the new museum are of the first quality. The Friends have come a long way since the day George Charchalis went to the Capitol with fire in his eyes.

The last 200 cars not to be donated will be auctioned by Harrah's in late June. The announcement of that auction is what set my former friend off on his ill-informed diatribe. "They're trashing the collection," he said.

"Did you ever see it?" I asked him. "No, but I know it was the biggest collection in the world and it's gone."

Typical. The man could never be bothered to see all 1,100 cars (there were more but no room to show them) sitting cheek by jowl in monstrous quonset hut-like buildings. Hell, yes, it was impressive. But it was also real work to truly look at any one or two or three cars, to appreciate the whole and not just the grilles and front fenders.

Scholars could take the trouble, but even they needed 20 visits to begin to appreciate what was there. It was perfect for scholars and fanatics and not many others. That won't be true in the new museum. The best of the old collection will be on proud and accessible display.

Bill Harrah said it himself when he was once asked how he wanted to preserve the collection: "I don't care. It's my hobby. What happens after I'm gone is somebody else's problem. If it is owned by a corporation, they should do what they want with it."

The citizens of Nevada have been more appreciative of Harrah's monument than Harrah himself was, in the sense of its being a community treasure. They worked hard to see that its spirit and its flesh remained where it belonged. They succeeded.

My former friend, like so many journalists, had half the facts and all the wrong conclusions. All of those who have worked so hard to bring the William F. Harrah Auto Museum to fruition deserve more. □

*Leon Mandel is editor in chief of *Auto-week* and Nevada's editor in *Grosse Pointe*. The former Reno resident (and Friends of the Cars member) is the author of six books, including *William F. Harrah: The Life and Times of a Gambling Magnate* (Doubleday, 1982).*

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