

NEVADA

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2012

M A G A Z I N E

WINTER IN NEVADA

FIRE & ICE

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- ◆ ICE FISHING
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- ◆ BRUTAL WINTER OF 1889-90
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some classic Nevada movies.

NEVADA WILDFIRES

- 68** As large and devastating as some of the 2012 fire
season's blazes have been and as much media
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to believe that it's not far from Nevada's norm.
Associate Editor Charlie Johnston delves into the
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STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT & CIRCULATION

- (1) Date of filing: Oct. 1, 2012
- (2) Title of publication: Nevada Magazine ISSN 0199-1248
- (3) Frequency of issue: Bimonthly;
(3A) Number of annual issues: six
(3B) Annual subscription price: \$19.95
- (4) Office of publication: 401 N. Carson St., Ste. 100,
Carson City, NV 89701
- (5) Mailing address: Same
- (6) Name & address of editor: Matthew B. Brown,
401 N. Carson St., Ste. 100,
Carson City, NV 89701
- (7) Owner: State of Nevada, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV 89701
- (8) Bondholders: Not applicable
- (9) Non-profit status: Has not changed during preceding 12 months
- (10) Extent and nature of circulation:

	12-Month Average	Actual Nearest Filing Date
A. Total number of copies:	18,047	17,244
B. Paid Circulation:		
1. Dealers, carriers, vendors	5,457	5,394
2. Paid mail subscriptions	8,466	8,298
C. Total paid circulation	13,923	13,692
D. Total free distribution	3,519	3,139
E. Total distribution	17,442	16,831
F. Copies not distributed		
1. Office use, leftover, unaccounted, spoiled	949	800
G. Total	18,391	17,631
H. Percent Paid Circulation	80%	81%

NEVADA

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2012
VOLUME 72, NUMBER 6

401 N. Carson St.

Carson City, NV 89701-4291

775-687-5416 • 775-687-6159 (fax)

Subscriptions and Customer Service: 877-904-7953

E-mail: editor@nevadamagazine.com

Website: nevadamagazine.com

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For media kit, click on "Advertise" at nevadamagazine.com

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Magazine Advisory Committee: Joyce Hollister, Rick L'Esperance, Dave Moore, Rich Moreno, John Wilda

Nevada Magazine, a division of the Nevada Commission on Tourism, is self-funded and dependent on advertising and subscription revenue.

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Subscriptions/Customer Service: Write to Nevada Magazine Subscriptions, P.O. Box 11344, Saint Paul, MN 55111-0344, call 877-904-7953, DID # 651-251-9686, or visit nevadamagazine.com. Please allow at least six weeks for subscription fulfillment or change of address.

Nevada Magazine (ISSN 0199-1248) is published bimonthly by the State of Nevada at 401 N. Carson St., Carson City, NV 89701-4291. Copyright © 2012 State of Nevada. Subscriptions are \$19.95 per year (\$29.95 international). Periodicals postage paid at Carson City, NV, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Nevada Magazine Subscriptions, P.O. Box 11344, Saint Paul, MN 55111-0344.



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ASSOCIATION**

Printed by RR Donnelley

On NEVADAMAGAZINE.COM



SHANNON LITZ

WEB EXTRAS

- In this issue we cover Las Vegas and Reno coffee shops, but online we offer plenty more places in Nevada to get your caffeine fix—including Coffee on Main (above) in Gardnerville and Minden. **By Eric Cachinero**
- Visit nevadaeventsandshows.blogspot.com, and click on "A Bird's-Eye View of the Reno Air Races" for a high-flying recap of the 49th annual event, held in September. **By Eric Cachinero**
- Click on nevadamag.blogspot.com to read about the 2012 General Excellence award we received from the Nevada Press Association, as well as a number of other accolades.



EVENTS & SHOWS

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FEATURED VIDEO

"Chef Elvis" Toy Tomme, head chef at Benihana inside the Las Vegas Hotel & Casino, plays a classic Presley song and demonstrates how he got his super-cool nickname. Visit our YouTube page, and click on the image at right.



WORTH A CLICK

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Just in time for ski season, travelers can look forward to a new cache of South Lake Tahoe hotels this winter, including contemporary and fun-themed Basecamp Hotel and the casual elegance of the dog-friendly Avalon Lodge.

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Fire and Ice: *We Have it All*

One thing we love about the holidays is we get to spend more time with family—which is the very thing some of us detest about this time of year.

If you find yourself feeling the latter as November and December come to pass, think about Brad Mihelic, and you might appreciate your loved ones just a little bit more. Mihelic has been a firefighter/paramedic for eight years with the Carson City Fire Department. A typical work day for Mihelic consists of responding to city and highway emergencies, but occasionally he is called upon to help fight one of Nevada's many yearly wildfires.

This of course means time away from his wife, daughter, and the rest of his family. I live across the street from Mihelic and have noticed his truck gone from the driveway for extended periods of time, but until I talked to him recently, I had no idea. Eighteen days. That's the longest stint that he's been away from his Reno home battling blazes "from Gardnerville to Elko and everywhere in between," he says.

There are indeed major sacrifices made by men and women in this line of work, which is one message readers will take away from the feature story starting on page 68. With blistering thoughts of the Caughlin Fire, Holloway Fire, Washoe Drive Fire, and others in Nevada still fresh in our minds, we delve into the logistics of containing fires on a statewide level and reflect on a damaging 2012 fire season. "We haven't really seen a year like this since 2007," Mihelic says, "but Nevada always has the potential of an extreme fire season."

...

One of my favorite holiday films is National Lampoon's "Christmas Vacation" (by the way, boss, in lieu of a bonus I would appreciate even a one-month membership to the Jelly of the Month Club). If your family is anything like the Griswolds, perhaps it would be more to your liking to just hole up this winter—instead of fraternizing with cousins and uncles you see but once a year—and watch some movies with your closest friends.

Just make sure they're Nevada movies. Your guide to the "Silver State on the Silver Screen" starts on page 56. After reading the story, you'll even be able to impress your friends with your newfound knowledge of Nevada movie trivia.

Also in this issue we spotlight the Las Vegas hotel that made Elvis famous (again), ice fishing, coffee shops, Nevada-made gift ideas, holiday events and shows, and a whole lot more. And we guarantee that our Secretary of State Ross Miller can arm bar your secretary of state—see what we mean on page 32.

Happy holidays from all of us at *Nevada Magazine* and the Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs.



CHARLIE JOHNSTON

Here I am standing in front of "The Shootist" house in Carson City. Legendary actor John Wayne starred in the 1976 western, which used the home extensively for filming.

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

Below I'm taking a photo for *Nevada Magazine's* Instagram account—@nevada_magazine. Download the app on your mobile phone, and follow us there as we travel around the state. "The Shootist" house is also featured in our popular 2013 Nevada Historical Calendar (see page 48 to order).



Matthew B. Brown

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HENRY DJERLEV

MONTGOMERY LANE

My wife and I have been receiving *Nevada Magazine* for many years, and in your September/October 2012 issue your annual photo contest took me back exactly 40 years. We always look forward to the Great Nevada Picture Hunt issue and often recognize some of the photo locations. My wife grew up in Pioche, where I met her, when working as an exploration geologist from Minnesota.

In summer 1972, I was working on a project in the Bullfrog Mining District near Beatty, which involved the Montgomery Shoshone Mine. Above, you'll find a panoramic I took that summer.

This photograph fills in some of the time span from Mark Holloway's "Then & Now" photograph and the 1907 panorama that you published showing the mining and milling buildings.

If I remember correctly, my photograph was taken from "Black Peak" looking south toward "Montgomery Mountain" and the old mine workings. In 1972, there was still an open tunnel that ran more than 700 feet into the fault zone associated with the Montgomery Shoshone Mine ore zone. I crawled into the mining face of that tunnel to collect channel samples, which was quite exciting for a young geologist.

Thanks for providing me with a journey down memory lane!

Henry Djerlev, Hibbing, Minnesota

WE VALUE YOUR INPUT

Write to editor@nevadamagazine.com or via mail at 401 N. Carson St., Carson City, NV 89701. You can also comment on stories and read more letters at nevadamagazine.com. Letters and comments are subject to editing.

AUTUMN OMISSION

We have the most beautiful and underused National Park in the country at Great Basin National Park, and you left it off your list? My husband and I spent a week in late September one year at GBNP and were awestruck by the spectacular fall colors. Driving to the top of Wheeler Peak you pass scores and scores of trees that are just brimming with colors. When you get to the top? There are aspens as big around as a man, tall as any you have ever seen, and stunningly changing.

In addition, you can take the trail and hike to the only glacier in Nevada and see Bristlecone pines that have been around since the Bronze Age and since the Mayan calendar was started. When you go back down the mountain you can visit the Lehman Caves that are just as wonderful (in their smaller way) as the Carlsbad Caverns [in New Mexico].

At night, you can join the stargazing group organized by the park that will show you more stars than you can see anywhere outside the middle of the ocean at more than 10,000 feet elevation.

Beware! In September it can be very cold. But what we saw was beautiful.

Kimberly Rhodemyre, Reno

Kimberly is referring to the "Autumn in Nevada" article starting on page 16 of the September/October 2012 issue.

EDITOR

ALL ABOUT MIDTOWN

Thanks for the great article about Reno's Midtown District that included us. It is great exposure for Midtown and all the local businesses here.

Melanie Crane, Reno

Never Ender Boutique & Art Gallery

CONTRIBUTORS

CAROLINE HORWITZ



A freelance writer and web content editor, Caroline Horwitz moved to Las Vegas this past winter. Originally from Ohio, she has also lived in Spokane, Pittsburgh, and Alamogordo, New Mexico.

She recently earned her Master of Fine Arts in creative writing from Chatham University. In addition to hiking, cycling, and exploring the vast outdoor opportunities of Nevada, she also enjoys learning more about her new hometown. Her article on four of her favorite Las Vegas coffee joints can be found in this issue.

■ PG. 26

SAM DISALVO



Sam DiSalvo is a recent graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno with a degree in English Writing. Her fledgling writing career has led her to spend many hours contemplative and broke in her native city

of Reno. The little cash she comes by goes to keeping her caffeinated in order to keep the creativity brewing. It's appropriate, then, that she lends her expertise in an article pinpointing her top local coffee houses in *The Biggest Little City*. She and Horwitz team up in "A Perfect Blend."

■ PG. 28

RON SOODALTER



Ron Soodalter came by his love of the West from his grandfather, who was a Colorado cowboy in the early 1900s. Soodalter worked as a curator in a Colorado museum and is a collector of cowboy

memorabilia. In addition to his two current books, he has authored more than 100 articles for various publications, including *Wild West*, *American Cowboy*, *True West*, *Civil War Times*, *Military History*, and *America's Civil War*. "The Great Equalizer," about the devastating winter of 1889-90, reflects his lifelong fascination with the cattle industry on the early frontier.

■ PG. 36



The Polar Express Virginia & Truckee Railroad holiday train ride takes place on select dates from November 23 to December 23.

PHOTO: EMILY CLARK PHOTOGRAPHY



KNOW YOUR NEVADA

Anticipating Nevada's Festive Holiday Season

Dear Friends,

With the days getting shorter and temperatures dropping, we're reminded that winter will soon be upon us in the Silver State. And although winter means different things to different people depending on where you live in a state as diverse as ours, one thing it means to all is that the holidays are just around the corner.

This has always been my favorite time of year. As someone who celebrates his birthday during the winter months, as a child it meant extra presents. As I got older, it meant school vacations and, later, ski trips with friends. As an adult, I get to see the holidays through the eyes of my children, which is why I very much look forward to our festive family activities.



Lt. Gov. Brian K. Krolicki

For Reno families, the winter season kicks off with the official opening of the Rink on the River, the outdoor downtown ice-skating rink. You don't need to know how to skate—the rink welcomes everyone from beginners to those who can literally skate circles around you. It's a great family atmosphere, and skating under the stars next to the Truckee River is a magical way to spend the evening.

I am a big supporter of the Virginia & Truckee Railroad in Carson City and Virginia City, and every winter the V&T offers riders a chance to live a page from the children's classic, "The Polar Express." The V&T has created a ride that recreates the scenes you've read about (or seen in the movie), decorating the cars with festive touches and bringing Santa and some of the book's characters along for the ride. Revelers can sip hot

chocolate while they listen to a reading of a memorable holiday book.

Another great holiday event is Virginia City's month-long Christmas on the Comstock festival, starring the spectacular Parade of Lights. The parade has ornately decorated floats with dazzling lights and marching bands, with car clubs and other local groups well represented.

The festival has something for the whole family, including storefronts adorned with Victorian decorations, strolling carolers, a gingerbread house competition, and, of course, visits with Santa. Christmas on the Comstock takes you back to a simpler time and reminds you of the uniqueness of living in Nevada.

Starting in November, Southern Nevada candy maker Ethel M Chocolates in Henderson will host its 19th annual Holiday Cactus Garden. The attraction allows visitors to see 600,000 sparkling holiday lights twinkling over a three-acre cactus garden, take self-guided tours of the factory to see treats being made, and visit the sample room.

As a Lake Tahoe resident, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the wonderful tradition of sleigh rides. They're a great way to spend a day with family and friends, snuggled together under warm blankets as you dash across the snow with spectacular views of the Sierra Nevada and the lake.

With so many great things to do in Nevada this winter, I hope you'll come see us soon! ▀

Brian K. Krolicki

Lieutenant Governor

Chairman—Nevada Commission on Tourism

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- Boulder City (pg. 42)
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- Cave Lake State Park (pg. 24)
- Dayton (pg. 56)
- Gerlach (pg. 42)
- Henderson (pg. 6)
- Lake Tahoe (pgs. 6, 56)
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- Las Vegas (pgs. 11, 14, 15, 20, 26, 30, 46, 49, 56)
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- Red Rock Canyon (pg. 16)
- Reno (pgs. 6, 9, 11, 18, 28, 42, 56)
- Rhyolite (pg. 56)
- Spring Creek (pg. 16)
- Valley of Fire State Park (pg. 56)
- Virginia City (pgs. 6, 18)
- Yerington (pg. 10)





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COURTESY RENO ACES

The Reno Aces baseball team basks in the postgame glory after their big win on September 18 in Durham, North Carolina. Right: Pitcher Jensen Lewis, who threw a scoreless eighth inning in the Aces' Triple-A National Championship victory over the Pawtucket Red Sox, douses infielder Taylor Harbin with celebratory champagne as the players took the festivities from the field to the locker room.

Reno Aces Win 2012 Triple-A Championship

On September 18, the Aces baseball team made Reno proud when they scored the game's first eight runs and never trailed, knocking off International League champion Pawtucket, 10-3, at Durham Bulls Athletic Park in North Carolina to win the Triple-A National Championship.

The victory over the Rhode Island squad capped the most successful season in the franchise's short four-year history—a 2012 campaign that included a club-record 81 wins and the team's first Pacific Coast League title. The Arizona Diamondbacks affiliate also captured the championship in 2006 as the Tucson Sidewinders, before the franchise moved to Reno in 2009.

The Aces will begin their title defense in April 2013. Aces Ballpark in downtown Reno will also host the 2013 Triple-A All-Star Game on July 10, 2013. renoaces.com, 775-334-4700



AL DRAGO/BURLINGTON TIMES NEWS

Up Front



RICHARD MASSEY

Museum chairman Arnold Page stands in front of the restored Engine No. 6 from the Nevada Copper Belt Railroad.

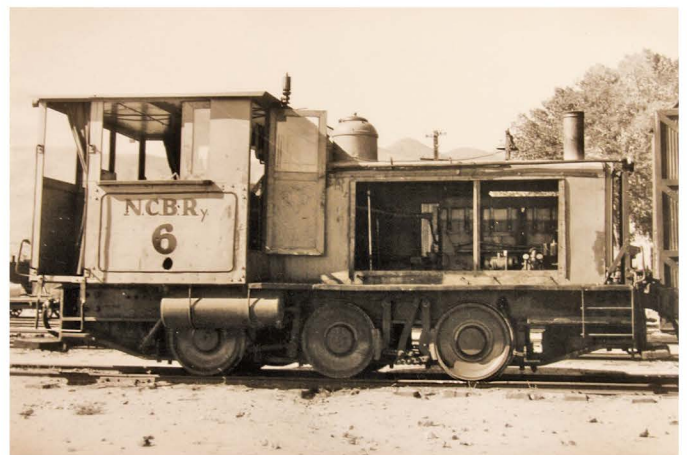
MUSEUM

Lyon County Flashback

Many museums occupy historic buildings that are of cultural significance to their communities, but it would be safe to wager that few occupy historically significant buildings that were moved from another location. Yerington's Lyon County Museum makes its home in a former church from the nearby town of Mason. Built in 1911, the church was moved two miles north to Yerington in 1930. The museum took up residence there in 1978.

The facility grew exponentially over the years and today includes an annex, three one-room schoolhouses, a general store, a blacksmith shop, a historic gas station, and a building constructed in 2002 to house exhibits on mining, railroads, and people of local historical significance. Many outdoor exhibits dot the sprawling campus as well.

The nonprofit museum includes a gift shop with books, locally made products, and Lyon County Sesquicentennial Medallions. It's open Thursday through Sunday, 1-4 p.m., and by appointment for groups. lyoncountymuseum.com, 775-463-6576



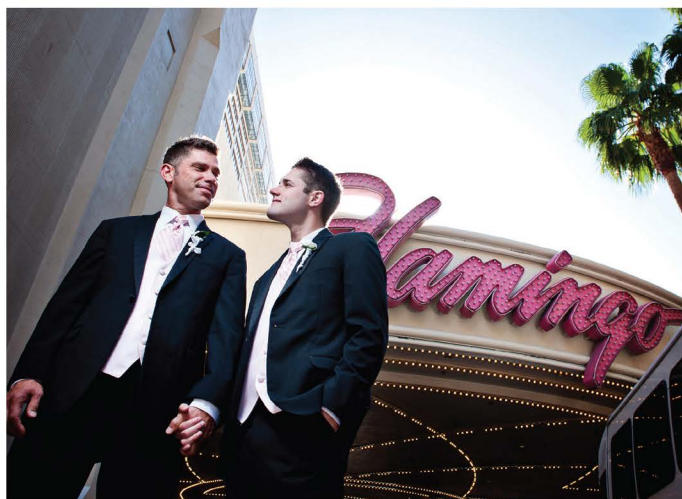
GAY-FRIENDLY NEVADA

Las Vegas Entities Stand Up for Equality

Many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans still await the day that their right to marriage equality is recognized. As the debate rages in Washington D.C. and among state legislators nationwide, Las Vegas resorts and organizations are doing their part to support the LGBT community.

The Quad (formerly Imperial Palace) and Flamingo Las Vegas recently debuted six same-sex-couple ceremony packages. Like the resorts' other wedding bundles, couples can choose from seven venues, including The Quad's new Silver Sky chapel. The "Take a Vow" package at Flamingo includes a wedding planner, personalized floral accents, a selection of aisle décor, cloth aisle runner, choice of dinner for two with a \$200 limit or a couples' massage, one hour with a professional photographer, video recording of the ceremony, champagne and toasting glasses, a ceremony music playlist, a commitment certificate, and two nights in one of the resort's mini suites. quadlv.com, 866-228-0918; flamingolasvegas.com, 800-933-7993

The Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada is expected to open its new facility in December. Renovations of the Robert L. Forbuss Building in downtown Las Vegas started in August to upgrade the space into an energy-efficient facility capable of housing the nonprofit and supporting the 30,000 annual visitors who use its health and wellness center and other services. On November 3, Palms' Rain Nightclub hosts the LGBTQ "Celebrate Community" event and fundraiser. Tickets are available at the Center's website. thecenterlv.com, 702-733-9800



LODGING

Grand Sierra Resort Gets Grandeur



Following the statewide trend to make casino-resort rooms more aesthetically pleasing and livable, Reno's Grand Sierra Resort is currently in the midst of a \$25-million renovation aimed at modernizing its Summit Suites, which occupy the property's top 11 floors. The suite upgrades include butler pantries with stainless steel appliances, spa-inspired bathrooms, custom Italian furniture, flat-screen TVs, pillow-top mattresses, high-end linens, and new color schemes. The new Concierge 25 VIP Lounge, another component of the remodel, sits on the resort's 25th floor and offers guests of the 25th, 26th, and 27th floors a business center, space to relax, complimentary continental breakfast, hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, and non-alcoholic beverages. grandsierraresort.com, 800-501-2651

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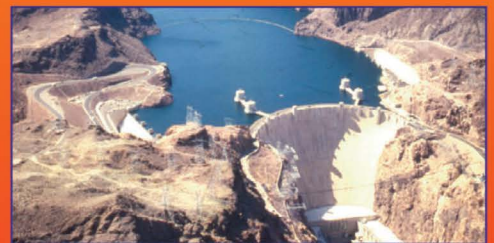
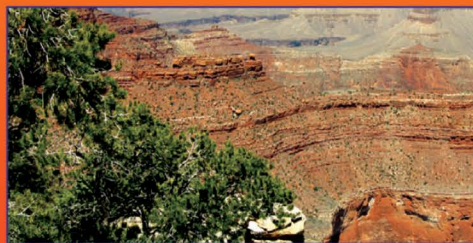
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- Learn the fascinating history and geology of the national park and its inhabitants from our experienced tour guide.

All Seats Window Seats
All pilots over 2000 hours

Lunch Included!

\$224.99* Per Person
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OUR NO. 14 TOUR*

INDIAN COUNTRY DELUXE AIR & GROUND TOUR

- Spectacular air tour over Hoover Dam, Lake Mead and the heart of the Grand Canyon
- Land at the West Rim and meet your hosts, the Hualapai Indians, for a BBQ luncheon overlooking the Grand Canyon and Colorado River
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GRAND CANYON SCENIC AIR TOUR

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- See Indian villages and extinct volcanoes

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DELUXE AIR & GROUND TOURS

See The Canyon from Above & Below
Lunch Included

Champagne Picnic & Indian Adventure \$299.99* Per Person REGULAR PRICE \$399.99	West Rim Ranch Adventure \$319.99* Per Person REGULAR PRICE \$399.99
---	--

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With Optional Helicopter Flight

- Deluxe motorcoach tour to Grand Canyon South Rim National Park
- Photo stops at Hoover Dam
- Ride through the rugged Black Canyon and Western Arizona, viewing extinct volcanoes.
- View the widest and deepest points of the Grand Canyon, spanning 21 miles across and over 1 mile deep
- Includes Continental breakfast and delicious luncheon
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- Photo stop at Hoover Dam
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- Visit the Two Spectacular Lookouts at Eagle and Guano Point
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- Return To Las Vegas In Plenty Of Time For Dinner And Evening Shows

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OUR NO. 16 TOUR*

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- Visit spectacular Guano Point
- Enjoy a Native American BBQ Luncheon
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NEVADA news

◆ MGM Resorts announced earlier this year that THEhotel at Mandalay Bay will be transformed into the all-suite **Delano Las Vegas**, with a projected completion date of late 2013. Resort officials say the redesign and name change will also affect the branding of some of the property's restaurants. mandalaybay.com, 877-632-7800

◆ Clothing purveyor and trend-setter **Urban Outfitters** recently opened its West Coast Internet Fulfillment Center north of Reno in Stead. The more-than-450,000-square-foot facility is the largest private industrial building built in Nevada since 2009 and is expected to nearly double in size. urbanoutfitters.com, 800-282-2200

◆ After 15 years of planning, Las Vegas' **Neon Museum** opened to the public this fall. The museum's collection of more than 150 neon signs dates to the 1930s and represents some of the resorts that gave Las Vegas its shining reputation. The rehabilitated, seashell-shaped La Concha Motel lobby, built in 1961, serves as the museum's visitors center. neonmuseum.org, 702-387-6366

◆ The **Macaroni Kid** website and weekly newsletter debuted in Elko and White Pine Counties this summer. The web-based resource aims to offer residents and tourists news of family-friendly goings-on—such as classes, events, museum exhibits, activities, and family vacation suggestions—in the rural counties. elko.macaronikids.com, 631-726-1412



DINING

A Smorgasbord Fit for Caesar

To get an idea of the scope of Caesars Palace's new Bacchanal Buffet (above), consider the numbers: 25,000 square feet, seating for 600, more than 500 dishes offered, \$17 million to construct, and nine open kitchens. In other words, it's big, Roman Empire big. In a city famous for its all-inclusive buffets, Bacchanal supports the boastful claim of having Las Vegas' most variety, offering everything from classic favorites (with a twist) such as made-to-order omelets and meticulously made cheeseburgers (below) to globally inspired dishes such as wood-fired Neapolitan pizzas, Chinese *dim sum*, and roasted South Carolina shrimp and grits. Nine distinct cuisine areas each feature at least one live cooking station, where chefs can be seen in action. "We are redefining the traditional buffet experience," says executive chef Scott Green. caesarspalace.com, 866-227-5938





RECREATION

Las Vegas Ski & Snowboard Resort Turns 50

Don't let Las Vegas Ski & Snowboard's youthful good looks and energetic demeanor fool you. Southern Nevada's only skiing destination celebrates its 50th anniversary this season. Instead of getting presents, the resort has some gifts in store for its visitors. The new, energy-efficient Rabbit Peak Quad replaces Chair 3, and 14 new trails offer faster access to more terrain. The remodeled Bighorn Grill features a new kitchen and dining area and revamped menu that offers more healthy options, made-to-order dishes, and a baked potato bar. The new appetizer menu at the Bristlecone Bar will surely augment après-ski relaxation at the resort. A new on-mountain restaurant and bar is planned to debut in late December at the junction of the Bimbo and Flying Home trails; it will be open weekends and holidays. skilasvegas.com, 702-645-2754



THREE NEVADA FILMS HAVE WON "BEST PICTURE" OSCARS:

"THE GODFATHER,"
"THE GODFATHER: PART II,
AND RAINMAN."

READ MORE ABOUT
MOVIES FILMED IN NEVADA
IN THE FEATURE STORY
STARTING ON

PAGE 56.



◆ The **Las Vegas Shakespeare Company** announced plans for a \$45-million renovation and expansion earlier this year. The improvements, which include expanding the historic Reed Whipple Cultural Center to include a new 499-seat theater and rehearsal space, are slated for completion by early 2014. lvshakes.com, 702-527-6800

◆ Reno's **Atlantis Casino Resort Spa** was recently awarded the American Auto Association's coveted Four Diamond designation. Fewer than five percent of the 31,000 hotels and resorts approved by AAA make the Four Diamond list, and Atlantis is one of only three in Northern Nevada to earn the honor. atlantiscasino.com, 800-723-6500

◆ In the debut of his new television show in September, Hollywood animal trainer and *Animal Planet* star Joel Silverman included animals from the Nevada Humane Society. ***Dog and Cat Training by Joel Silverman***, which premiered Saturday, September 15 on the CW Reno and My 21 TV, demonstrated how any animal can be successfully trained with the right motivation. companionsforlife.net, nevadahumanesociety.org

◆ In September, Caesars Entertainment announced plans to rename and renovate Imperial Palace Las Vegas. The revamped property, **The Quad Resort & Casino**, is scheduled to start taking shape as early as November, with renovations scheduled for completion late next year. quadlv.com





Winter in Nevada

Photo by Jodi Esplin

Inset Photos by Anders Sorensen (above)
& Daniel Ford

Esplin captured the leading image of the Ruby Mountains last November at dusk in her hometown of Spring Creek, southeast of Elko. "The snow often causes the mule deer in our area to become quite active," she says. "I had been following a group of does and fawns down the draw and was hiking home as the sun was setting. When I reached the top of the hillside, the cold splash of pink spilling across the sky and mountains was there to greet me."

Sorensen made sure he and his camera were there to document an infrequent plentiful snowfall at Southern Nevada's Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area in 2008, and Ford calls his photo taken at Davis Creek Park in Washoe Valley "Ray of Snowshine."



Historic Churches of Nevada

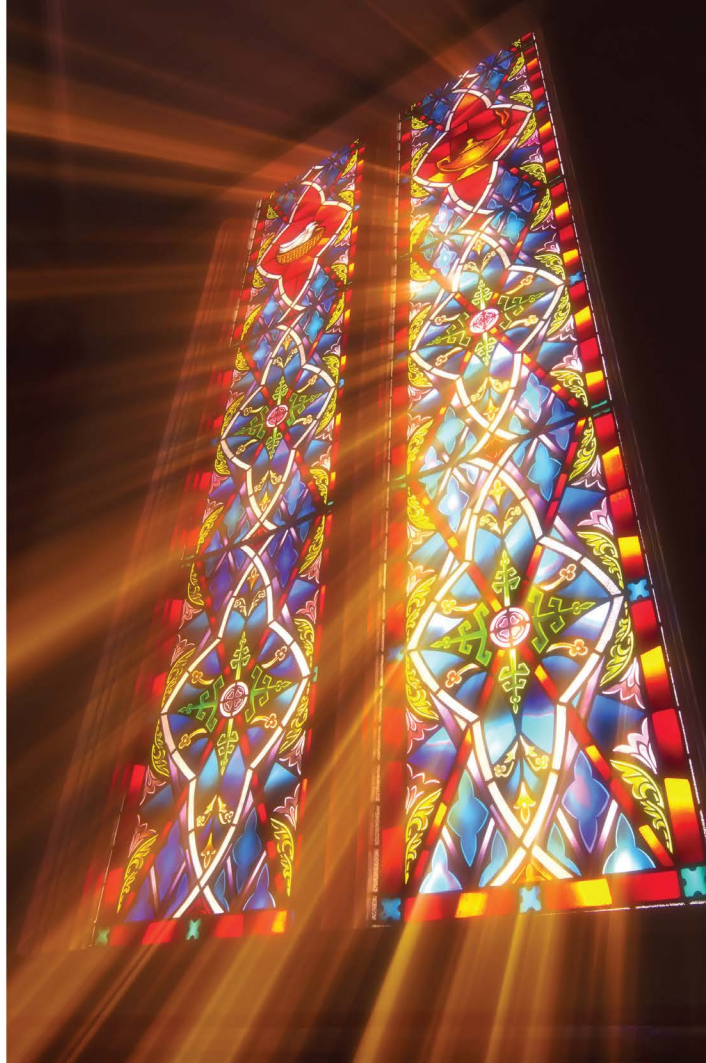


Photo captions are clockwise from upper left.

The original 1874 Belmont Catholic Church was moved to Manhattan in 1908. Also in the photo is a conjunction of the moon, Jupiter, and Venus. PHOTO BY JEANNE HOWERTON

Saint Mary's in the Mountains in Virginia City celebrated its 150th anniversary in September. Its stained glass windows are divine. PHOTO BY NEIL LOCKHART

The First United Methodist Church projects Easter vibes in downtown Reno in April 2011. The Gothic Revival-style church was built in 1925. PHOTO BY BILL KOSITZKY

Dedicated in November 1905, The Little Church of the Cross-roads is an active Presbyterian Church and a popular photo stop in Lamoille. PHOTO BY DAVE QUANDT



Union Pacific Railroad Turns 150

As part of the Union Pacific Railroad's sesquicentennial celebration, the legendary locomotive 844 plied a number of Nevada's tracks—which had many of our Nevada photographers seizing the opportunity. Homen witnessed this awesome piece of machinery pass over the Truckee River on September 27 just west of Reno in the Verdi area.

PHOTO BY DAVID HOMEN

See more of Homen's work at facebook.com/pages/david-homen-photography/148168678658001.

ART DIRECTOR'S CHOICE

Each issue, Art Director Tony deRonnebeck will choose a photo from our Nevada Photographers Facebook group to be showcased on this page.

Tahoe View

This photo was taken on the morning of September 7 in North Lake Tahoe, just above Mount Rose Highway (State Route 431). "I saw a photograph of a woman seated on a log near this point," Gollery says, "and could not figure out where it had been taken. I searched for the log, and it led me to this ridge!"

PHOTO BY MARTIN GOLLERY

See more of Gollery's work at modelmayhem.com/gollery.



GROUP CHOICE

Each issue, our Nevada Photographers Facebook group votes for their favorite photo out of three selected by the Nevada Magazine production staff.





Elvis Slept Here

Rebranded and redefined, the Las Vegas Hotel & Casino bridges nostalgia and new.

BY MATTHEW B. BROWN

Words such as “luxurious” and “world-class” get thrown around a lot in Las Vegas, especially in casino marketing. And the Las Vegas Hotel & Casino, or LVH—as it was renamed earlier this year—is definitely both, as I discovered during a stay there this summer.

But before you roll your eyes and think this is a story about another swanky Las Vegas hotel lacking history and tradition, think again. This unique property, which stands tall between the Strip and old downtown Las Vegas, has a fascinating story to tell.

The hotel burst on the scene on July 2, 1969 as the International, boasting 1,568 rooms and a 30,000-square-foot casino (both the world’s largest at the time). The property’s oceanic pool was enthusiastically promoted as the largest body of water in Southern Nevada next to Lake Mead.

Barbra Streisand christened the International showroom stage, but her musical-inspired act was not well received. That paved the way for a reenergized Elvis Presley, looking to resurrect his career, who

made his highly anticipated debut on July 31, 1969. “The Elvis who strode onstage at the International...was an all-around entertainer fronting a rock band polished and magnified by horns and strings...,” wrote Mike Weatherford in the January/February 1995 *Nevada Magazine* feature story. “The show was galvanizing.” The 2,000-seat showroom was the largest ever built in Las Vegas, and Elvis would go on to perform 826 sold-out shows there until his last on December 12, 1976.

During our July media familiarization

tour, we were escorted backstage to the dressing rooms where the likes of Alabama, Brooks & Dunn, and Kenny Chesney still have nameplates marking the generations of performances there over the years. The walls are also adorned with band posters and autographed pictures of hundreds of stars who have graced the casino-resort’s stage.

At the height of Elvis’ reign, in 1972, the property became the Las Vegas Hilton, which it remained for the next four decades. The hotel’s 30th-floor Imperial Suite—meant to be a retreat for all of its performers—became known as The Elvis Suite. The famous suite has been restored and resurrected as The Tuscany Sky Villa, which opened along with The Conrad Sky Villa and The Verona in the mid-1990s.

“Elvis slept here,” remarks tour leader and LVH Vice President of Hotel Operations Cami Christensen, pointing to The Tuscany Sky Villa fireplace, roughly the spot where The King of Rock ‘n’ Roll kept his bed. “Elvis was constantly surrounded by his entourage, and life in the Hilton penthouse was a strange mixture of hedonism and hominess,” Weatherford writes. Singer Barry Manilow called the Conrad home during his Hilton show residency from 2005-09.

For a cool \$15,000 a night, any of the three grandiose villas can be yours. Also on the 30th floor are 43 more reasonably priced rooms that complete the *Classic Suites Collection*, if you’re looking to splurge. Otherwise, you’ll have to make



Benihana

MATTHEW B. BROWN

Its proximity to the Las Vegas Convention Center and its designation as a Las Vegas Monorail station appeal to convention-goers as well as tourists.



The Verona Sky Villa

friends with well-to-do groups such as “the rancheros,” who reportedly occupy all three rooms each year during December’s National Finals Rodeo. If these LVH walls could talk...

Fortunately, at the property’s Benihana restaurant, “Chef Elvis” does the talking—and singing—for you. A chef at the restaurant for 37 years, going back to the Hilton’s early days, Toy Tomme has served Elvis, Paris Hilton, and Michael Jackson to name a few. After our appetites were sated by the Benihana Special—Hibachi Steak with Cold Water Lobster Tail—the energetic and exuberant Tomme, now head chef, told us members of the media how he once spilled food on a young

Hilton, and how Hilton still talks about it as if it was one of the more traumatic events of her life. He told more humorous stories—for instance, calling the King of Pop’s longhaired son “she”—in between strumming his acoustic guitar and belting out classic Elvis tunes such as “Blue Suede Shoes” and “His Latest Flame.”

After enjoying our meal and the entertainment at Benihana, we were treated to live music and a private cabana at the “Old School by the Pool” party, held every Friday from 7 to 10 p.m. on the third-floor pool deck during the summer months.

These are a few of the highlights of my stay, but LVH can satisfy a broad range of travelers’ interests. Its proximity to the Las

Vegas Convention Center and its designation as a Las Vegas Monorail station appeal to convention-goers as well as tourists. The Race and Sports Superbook, the largest in the world with a seating capacity of almost 400, is nearly as spacious as the main casino. The property also features a pool and spa, tennis courts, two shopping promenades, a hair salon, and a car rental and business center. ▀

LAS VEGAS HOTEL & CASINO

Through the Years

- July 2, 1969 — Property opens as the International
- July 31, 1969 — Elvis Presley’s debut show
- 1972 — International becomes Las Vegas Hilton
- Dec. 12, 1976 — Elvis’ final show
- Summer 1978 — North Tower opens
- 1981 — North Tower expansion (400 rooms)
- Fall 1986 — Race & Sports Superbook opens
- Sept. 1993 — “Starlight Express” opens in Showroom
- 1995 — Sky Villas on 30th floor open to public
- 1997 — “Starlight Express” closes
- Jan. 4, 1998 — Star Trek: The Experience opens
- July 15, 2004 — Las Vegas Monorail opens
- Feb. 23, 2005 — Barry Manilow begins four-year residency
- Sept. 2008 — Star Trek theme park closes
- Jan. 3, 2012 — Hotel is renamed LVH

FOR MORE INFORMATION

LVH - Las Vegas Hotel & Casino

3000 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89109

thelvh.com

888-732-7117

Spa: 800-880-3703



ELVIS HASN'T LEFT THE BUILDING

Impersonator Trent Carlini (left) stars as The King nightly (dark Tuesday) at LVH in a show that takes a retrospective look at the famous musician’s career.

COMING SOON TO LVH

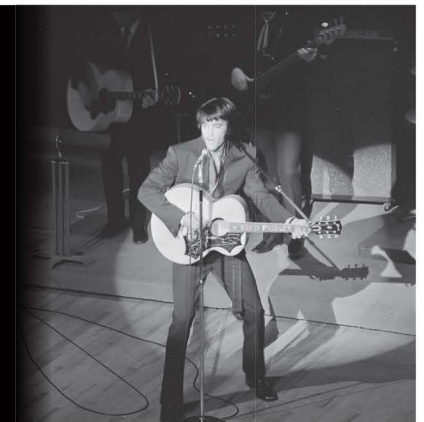
The Doobie Brothers, Nov. 9-10

Rodeo Central, Dec. 6-15

LeAnn Rimes, Dec. 13-15

New Year’s Eve Celebration, Dec. 31

Elvis Presley (right) performs opening night at the International, July 31, 1969.



LAS VEGAS NEWS BUREAU



NEIL LOCKHART



CHARLIE JOHNSTON

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Peppermill Resort Spa Casino
2707 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV 89502
peppermillreno.com
866-821-9996

These particular natural gas boilers (right) at Reno's Peppermill Resort Spa Casino (left) sit idle thanks to the property's geothermal operation.

Reno Resort in Hot Water

The Peppermill Resort Spa Casino's geothermal operation helps save utility costs and the environment.

BY CHARLIE JOHNSTON

Nevada locals and visitors alike may be surprised to learn that the hot water used at the Peppermill Resort Spa Casino is not provided by the city; rather, it comes from the Reno property's on-site geothermal facility, an inauspicious rectangular building tucked into the corner of the resort's north parking lots.

The Peppermill first drilled under its Virginia Street-adjacent property for hot water in the early 1980s, an effort that produced several shallow geothermal wells of less than 1,000 feet each and tempered excitement for the resort's geothermal potential. In 2010, they drilled deeper (3,900 feet) and in the process found hotter water and a viable way to offset the resort's energy costs. By 2011, the \$7.5-million geothermal operation was up and running and promised to pay for itself in about three years. According to the resort's geothermal consultant Dr. Jim Combs, the Peppermill is the only resort in America to use the technology.

Director of Facilities Dean Parker says the system offsets 85 percent of the resort's would-be natural gas needs, and, unlike natural gas, the earth-heated water is exceptionally clean. "This is the cleanest energy you'll find," he says. By relying on hot groundwater instead of heating water in boilers, the Peppermill's geothermal operation keeps 15 tons of carbon monoxide out of the atmosphere annually.

The process works by heat exchange—underground water

flows through rocks that have been heated by lava deep underground. The hot water is then pumped up through wells and into a heat exchanger, warming the resort's water before being pumped back into the earth as clean and unaltered as when it emerged.

At peak demand, the system operates at about 30 million BTUs—a British thermal unit (BTU) is the amount of heat energy needed to raise the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit—and, according to Parker, isn't even using the full potential of the system.

Not completely independent from traditional energy sources—a virtual impossibility for such a massive property—the resort still uses natural gas in its kitchens and laundry, among other daily operations, and keeps two natural gas boilers at the ready for emergencies.

Reluctant to rest on his or the resort's eco-friendly laurels, Parker also suggests that he'd like to eventually produce biofuels with used cooking oil from the property's restaurants. And while energy cost savings and environmental responsibility play heavily into the Peppermill's unique approach to green energy, Parker is quick to point out that it also bodes well in the public relations arena. "Conventions and visitors are often interested in how 'green' a resort is," he says. "The geothermal [operation] helps draw visitors who want to support environmentally responsible businesses." ▀

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 Both Weekends.....\$745

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Caboose Overnight & Train Ride.....\$165

Member: \$139

Bunkhouse Overnight.....\$135

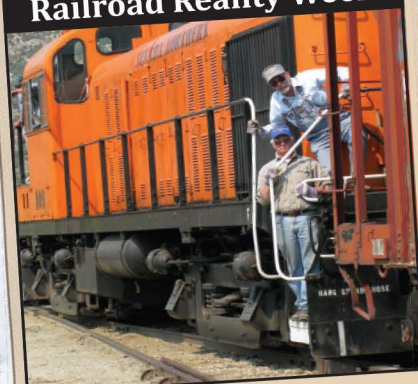
Members: \$95

Bunkhouse Overnight & Train Ride..\$185

Members: \$150

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DINI ESPLIN

Ice Fishing

A six-pack of Nevada waterways that make winter anglers work a bit harder for their catch.

BY CHARLIE JOHNSTON

News anchor Tom Brokaw once said, “If fishing is a religion, fly-fishing is high church.” If that’s the case, then ice fishermen—the most devoted and patient of all anglers—are surely monks. Luckily for those monastic men and women, Nevada is home to a hallowed few frozen temples of the tackle box.

Despite the state’s desert reputation, the ice at Cave Lake, Comins Lake, Eagle Valley Reservoir, South Fork Reservoir, Wild Horse Reservoir, and Wilson Reservoir is generally safe through much of the winter, and the water below it produces fish that make the long, cold hours worth every numb finger and toe.

CAVE LAKE

Perhaps the most popular ice-fishing destination in Nevada, Cave Lake sits 15 miles southeast of Ely via U.S. Highway 93 and State Route 486. The main attraction of Cave Lake State Park, the reservoir is a favorite fishery in all seasons and produces wild brown trout and stocked rainbow trout.

The angler-centric organization Take Me Fishing recently named Cave Lake State Park to its list of the top eight state parks in the country, due in no small part to the lake’s reputation as a stalwart location to drop a line.

The lake’s winter ice can reach up to two feet thick during the coldest part of winter thanks to its high altitude (7,300 feet) and

abundant shade provided by the imposing ridges of the Schell Creek Range. During Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend in mid-January, Cave Lake hosts the White Pine Fire & Ice Show. The event features an ice- and snow-sculpting competition on the lake’s frozen surface followed by an exceptional fireworks display. Fishermen take the lake back in force the following weekend during the Ely Rotary Club’s annual Cave Lake Ice Fishing Derby.

COMINS LAKE

Just off Highway 93, a few miles south of Ely, Comins Lake was created in 1953 to facilitate a highway realignment. Today, the shallow 410-acre reservoir is a frequently visited eastern Nevada fishing hole that produces brown and rainbow trout, and invasive Northern Pike. Cold winters produce ice of a safe thickness to fish, but warm afternoons can make the shoreline ice very soft.

EAGLE VALLEY RESERVOIR

The southernmost of Nevada’s ice-fishing destinations, Eagle Valley Reservoir in Spring Valley State Park owes its occasional winter ice to its diminutive size (65 acres at capacity), relatively high altitude (5,836 feet), and the deep, shaded canyon it occupies. Though challenging to reach when winter snow blocks S.R. 322 from Pioche, the lake produces sizeable rainbow trout to make up for the added effort of accessing it.



Opposite page: Todd Esplin (front) and his son, Rorke, get an early start on the ice at South Fork Reservoir. This page, left to right: Madi Murray and Bryce Vorwaller proudly display their catch at Wild Horse Reservoir. Murray and Gracie MacGregor try to spot fish under the ice at Wild Horse.

SOUTH FORK RESERVOIR

Nevada Magazine blog contributor and ice-fishing skeptic Jay Dudley was won over by the fishing at South Fork State Recreation Area (read his story by searching “ice fishing” at nevadamag.blogspot.com) when friends convinced him to give it a try in March 2010. Perhaps Dudley was impressed by the lake’s ease of access from Elko and Spring Creek (16 and nine miles, respectively, via S.R. 228, S.R. 227, and Lower South Fork Road) and by the plump two-pound brown, cutbow, and rainbow trout that anglers reportedly pull from beneath the ice. Typically slower to freeze and faster to thaw than neighboring ice-fishing destinations such as Wild Horse and Wilson Reservoirs, South Fork’s ice-fishing season usually spans January to February.

WILD HORSE RESERVOIR

The centerpiece of Wild Horse State Recreation Area, 67 miles north of Elko via S.R. 225, is Wild Horse Reservoir. A popular year-round fishing destination, the lake’s high altitude (6,205 feet) and latitude make it one of the state’s beloved ice-fishing destinations. Most anglers at Wild Horse pursue rainbow trout, but the lake also holds German brown trout and yellow perch.

Winters at Wild Horse are among the coldest in Nevada, and though the ice varies from year to year, it is generally safe to fish from December through March. The annual Wild Horse Ice Fishing Tournament is held in February—weather and ice conditions permitting.

WILSON RESERVOIR

Perhaps the hardest to reach of all of Nevada’s ice-fishing destinations, Wilson Reservoir’s unpaved access road is occasionally rendered impassible by winter storms. Anglers who endure the 90-mile one-way trek from Elko by way of S.R. 225, S.R. 226, and various dirt roads are rewarded with what the Elko Convention and Visitors Authority calls “great trout fishing” and all the solitude their hearts desire. Fishermen are encouraged to call the Bureau of Land Management’s Elko District Office for road conditions before trekking to Wilson. ▀

EDITOR’S NOTE

Though the ice at all of these lakes is generally thick enough to fish starting in December or January, conditions can vary greatly, so much so that Cave Lake State Park had to cancel the White Pine Fire & Ice Show and the Ely Rotary Club’s annual fishing derby this year. Inquire locally for up-to-date ice conditions, and be prepared to change ice-fishing plans on short notice.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Cave Lake State Park

PO Box 151761
Ely, NV 89315
parks.nv.gov
e-mail: cavelake@mwpower.net

Eagle Valley Reservoir

Spring Valley State Park
HC 74 Box 201
Pioche, NV 89043
parks.nv.gov
775-962-5102

South Fork State Recreation Area

353 Lower South Fork #8
Spring Creek, NV 89815
parks.nv.gov
775-744-4346

Wild Horse State Recreation Area

HC 31 Box 265
Elko, NV 89801
parks.nv.gov
775-385-5939

Wilson Reservoir

Bureau of Land Management,
Elko District
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A Perfect Blend

CHARLIE JOHNSTON

Las Vegas and Reno offer an eclectic mix of coffee hangouts.

New York City might be the *city* that never sleeps, but the 24-hour culture that permeates Nevada makes it the *state* that never sleeps. If buzzing neon and casino action aren't enough to keep you wide-eyed during your next Nevada adventure, an array of energetic espresso enclaves offers a cup—or two—for you.

Lattes in Las Vegas

BY CAROLINE HORWITZ

THE BEAT COFFEEHOUSE AND RECORDS

What happens when you combine a coffeehouse with a record store, art gallery, and bar? You get The Beat, a downtown Las Vegas hangout that sells vinyl albums, coffee, food, beer, and cocktails.

Attached to the Emergency Arts gallery, The Beat invites customers to peruse works by local artists, shop for records, and attend open mic and trivia nights. At 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday, The Beat becomes a bar. The beer taps face the espresso machines, and the turntable next to the cash register adds to the eclectic atmosphere. "We don't do a lot of super-fancy coffees, just good coffee and real food made with real ingredients, not frozen and pre-made," managing partner Jennifer Cornthwaite says.

The interior is downtown chic, with concrete floors, wooden furniture, old couches, and groups of 20-somethings hovering over their drinks and chatting animatedly. "The Beat is really a hub," Cornthwaite adds. "It's a place people meet and hang out. The people are what make it; we just try and provide the best neighborhood feel that we can."

COFFEE PUB

The old-fashioned-looking exterior at Coffee Pub conceals some of the best coffee and friendliest servers in Las Vegas. More of a restaurant than a coffee shop, the Pub is close to the Strip and has been serving patrons since 1984.

It's only open until 3 p.m. (2 p.m. on weekends) but offers full breakfast and lunch menus and a smoothie bar with a variety of coffee options, including frozen drinks made with blended espresso, non-dairy gelato, and numerous flavor options. Their spin on a caramel macchiato is frothy and satisfying, and the house blend is a rich and savory way to caffeinate as well.

The generous sizes and reasonable prices are welcome perks. Better still are the conversational and kind staff members, who are attentive and know regulars by name. One waitress even engaged me in a discussion about the book I was reading: *Consider the Lobster* by David Foster Wallace. Coincidentally, she had read another book penned by Wallace.

Those who live or work close by don't even have to stop in—Coffee Pub delivers within a two-mile radius.

THE MADHOUSE COFFEE

Part of the allure of The MadHouse is that it's open 24 hours—a serious plus in a city that never sleeps. "If you come here at night, you'll really see it busy," says owner Marco Prestia.



CAROLINE HORWITZ

The best word to describe this Summerlin night owl is funky, from its colorful décor and seating to a sign at the door that reads: "Please no outside food, drinks, drugs, or nuclear weapons."

Coffee items that stand out include blended drinks, such as the Red Velvet Mocha, which combines the flavors of coffee and red velvet cake without being overly sugary. Its bright red color is a bit startling to see in a coffee cup, but it just adds to the personality of the shop.

Coffee purists needn't worry—the menu is full of traditional caffeinated beverages, too. The MadHouse has a convenient drive-thru and also serves sandwiches and a variety of desserts and pastries that are baked and prepared in-house. Peppy music, paintings, and modern art splash the place with a little extra funk.

In addition to the original MadHouse on Desert Inn Road, a second location on Eastern Avenue ensures coffee crusaders all over the Las Vegas Valley can get their fix.

SAMBALATTE TORREFAZIONE

It's not uncommon to find every table at Sambalatte Torrefazione—and there are many—occupied, even on a weekday afternoon. In business for two-plus years, it's become a hot spot to caffeinate. Owner Luiz Oliveira attributes the success to several

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Beat Coffeehouse and Records

520 Fremont St., Las Vegas, NV 89101
thebeatlv.com
702-385-2328

Coffee Pub

2800 W. Sahara Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89102
coffeepublv.com
702-367-1913

The MadHouse Coffee (two locations)

8470 W. Desert Inn Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89117
702-360-4232
8899 S. Eastern Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89123
702-260-0430
madhousecoffeelasvegas.com

Sambalatte Torrefazione

750 S. Rampart Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89145
sambalatte.com
702-272-2333



NEIL LOCKHART

Opposite page: Barista Ally Sewell prepares a latte at Walden's Coffeehouse in Reno.

factors, including high-quality products from local vendors. Its central location in the trendy Boca Park shopping area doesn't hurt either, he says.

Sambalatte prepares coffee in a variety of ways, such as coffee extraction, which is used to make iced coffee through a cold drip that takes 12 hours. "It's time-consuming, but the process removes all of the acidity and bitterness in the coffee and leaves a completely smooth drink," Oliveira says.

The shop's Nutella latte is one of its most popular drinks. Oliveira got the idea from his home country of Brazil, where Nutella is a prominent food item. The latte version is creamy and has just the right amount of chocolate and peanut butter flavors.

Aside from the delicious coffee, there are ample reasons for patrons to linger. Sambalatte offers couches, café tables, a long wooden table with electrical outlets for laptops and chargers, a balcony with a flat-screen TV and bookcases, and an outside patio that even has water bowls for canine companions.

Roasts of Reno

BY SAM DISALVO

DREAMER'S COFFEE HOUSE & DELI

After Dreamer's closed in 2009, many Renoites feared they'd lost their all-encompassing, homey coffee shop. Fortunately, the place has recently kicked back into gear in the MidTown District. Perhaps in homage to MidTown's hip attitude, the new Dreamer's Coffee House & Deli is pointedly more chic than its predecessor, with a bright red ceiling and bold color scheme, modern art, and subtle industrial touches.

Besides traditional coffee fare made from beans of local roasters, Dreamer's has always catered to folks with a sweet tooth, providing options such as the Milky Way Mocha—with caramel flavoring—and the tried-and-true combination of the creamy peanut butter mocha.

Dreamer's also offers an entire menu devoted to milkshakes, featuring the mocha milkshake that's just the right mix of chocolate and espresso. It's thick enough to satisfy, but thin enough to not put up a fight when sipped through a straw.

In addition to coffee, guests can choose from a wide variety of breakfast-bagel combinations, which include everything from standard eggs, ham, and cheese to nostalgic Nutella and peanut butter. The bookshelf in the den, located in the back of the shop, holds another element of home, with volumes of *National Geographic* and a collection of worn novels from Grisham to Bronte.

JAVA JUNGLE

A haven for local artists, Java Jungle and its next-door addition, Jungle Vino, serve as environments for creators to work and perform and provide beverages to get the creative juices flowing. The décor confirms Java Jungle's artist-hangout image with whimsical



PHOTOS: CHARLIE JOHNSTON

wall murals that blend into the animal-print menus, a brightly colored mosaic tile floor, and an ostentatious neon "cappuccino" sign above the counter.

Java offers concoctions like the Eye Opener—best experienced iced—made with two shots of espresso and coffee and sure to inspire even the philistine to create something of worth. The shop also offers a wide variety of sandwiches and pizzas.

Besides monthly art shows at both locations, Java Jungle holds an open mic night on Mondays. Vino holds weekly tastings, but the selection isn't limited to wine. The bar offers beer and unique cocktails crafted from high-quality liquors.

Keeping the artist's salary in mind, Vino offers a great value on fresh-baked pizza with up to three toppings and two glasses of sangria: \$15 from 6-10 p.m. nightly. Both Jungles are open late to match the artist's working hours and serve cups of inspiration when yours might have run dry.

SWILL COFFEE & WINE

A newcomer to the Reno coffee scene, Swill Coffee & Wine is making a splash with its unique coffee concoctions and wine tastings. Swill baristas are put through rigorous training to make sure they can turn anything from a French Press order to a soy and honey Sunny Latte. The Swill Chill is a refresher that's made from espresso, chocolate, condensed milk, and various secret ingredients that the baristas would surely be punished for leaking.

Swill's impressive collection of bottled beers features everything from pale ales to stouts, and nightly specials—such as \$15 wine tastings and food pairings every Saturday—showcase Swill's extensive wine ensemble. The coffee shop includes a casual lounge with intimate seating and a community table that's perfect for making



Read about more Nevada coffeehouses at nevadamagazine.com.



new friends. Local art adorns the lounge's walls and local musical acts make occasional appearances.

Plastered next to the menu, the definitions of the word "swill" (such as: "2. to drink greedily or in large quantity") are a tongue-in-cheek effort to redefine coffee culture.

WALDEN'S COFFEEHOUSE

There is something familiar about being in Walden's Coffeehouse, even if you've never been there before. An emphasis on comfort and friendliness are present in everything from the invitingly large armchairs to the handwritten daily specials. Perhaps this soothing feeling comes from the vast tea

selection, as there has always been an aspect to tea that is more pacifying than commerce-paced coffee. Walden's offers classic Earl Grey black tea, gunpowder green tea, white spiced peach tea, and plenty more worth sipping.

When it comes to coffee, Walden's offers plenty of flavoring options that will add a kick to any morning routine, and patrons can choose from more than 300 flavors, including cheesecake and toasted marshmallow.

The lunch menu has almost as many choices as the drink menu. There is an unmatched generosity in the atmosphere at Walden's, giving the impression that you could stay all day and no one would mind. ▀

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Dreamer's Coffee House & Deli
701 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV 89501
775-322-8040

Java Jungle
246 W. 1st St., Reno, NV 89501
javajunglevino.com
775-329-4484

Swill Coffee & Wine
3366 Lakeside Ct., Reno, NV 89509
swillreno.com
775-823-9876

Walden's Coffeehouse
3940 Mayberry Dr., Reno, NV 89519
waldenscoffeehouse.net
775-787-3307



CHARLIE JOHNSTON

Opposite page: Swill Coffee & Wine, one of Reno's newest places to relax over a cup of coffee, offers comfortable seats, an unhurried vibe, and logo-laden cups. Java Jungle in downtown Reno (above) has an eclectic mishmash of design features, including a mosaic tile floor, animal-print-framed menu boards, local art, and even glowing neon.



A view of the Fremont Street Experience (above) from my table inside the Oscar's dome (left).

Beef, Booze, and Broads

Welcome to Oscar Goodman's "Happiest Steakhouse in the Universe."

STORY & PHOTOS BY MATTHEW B. BROWN

Before he served three terms as the "Happiest Mayor in the Universe"—hence the slogan of his downtown Las Vegas restaurant—Oscar Goodman was a defense attorney for some of the city's most notorious mobsters.

Goodman told me about this period of his life during an interview that occurred before his steakhouse's December 2011 opening. One anecdote he shared was about the "booze and broads" case, coined by a judge who presided over a case concerning a few Caesars Palace senior executives who had been indicted for illegal bookmaking. Supposedly, the men were a bit overzealous about sharing their love for ladies and liquor during a series of FBI wiretaps.

It was with that judge's words in mind, Goodman says, that he named Oscar's Beef • Booze • Broads, located inside the iconic dome of the Plaza Hotel and Casino. Goodman likes to think of the stylish joint as a modern speakeasy, and it emphatically delivers on the three "B's" mentioned in the title.

First, the beef. When I visited the restaurant in July, I ordered Sally's New York Strip, the restaurant's prime steak cooked to perfection over a 600-degree grill. The over-the-top Oscar sauce—a delicious blend of lump crab, asparagus, and Béarnaise sauce—complemented the tender 14-ounce cut of meat exquisitely.

My wife chose the Cedar Plank Blackened Salmon. The woody

aroma of the plank was to die for, not to mention the flaky, crust-ed salmon with pineapple and tomato served atop it. As good as our entrees were, we both agreed the Johnny Quinn's Crab Cakes appetizer was the culinary highlight. The cakes feature very little breading and a heaping helping of fresh lump crabmeat topped with stone ground mustard and pepper remoulade.

The booze? You can have your fill at Oscar's, whether it's a martini (Goodman's signature drink) at the adjacent bar and lounge or a glass of wine (the sommelier's suggestions will not disappoint) with dinner.

On this particular evening I was lucky enough to enjoy the company of my lovely wife, but Oscar's will not allow less fortunate customers to dine alone. Fulfilling the "broads" aspect of the eatery, women resembling the iconic showgirls who accompanied Goodman to events during his mayorship roam the restaurant and are available and willing to sit with customers to discuss topics such as politics, sports, wine, and Las Vegas history, or to suggest things to do downtown or on the Strip. ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Oscar's Beef • Booze • Broads

1 S. Main St., Las Vegas, NV 89101
plazahotelcasino.com/dining/oscars
 702-386-7227

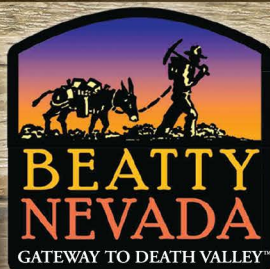
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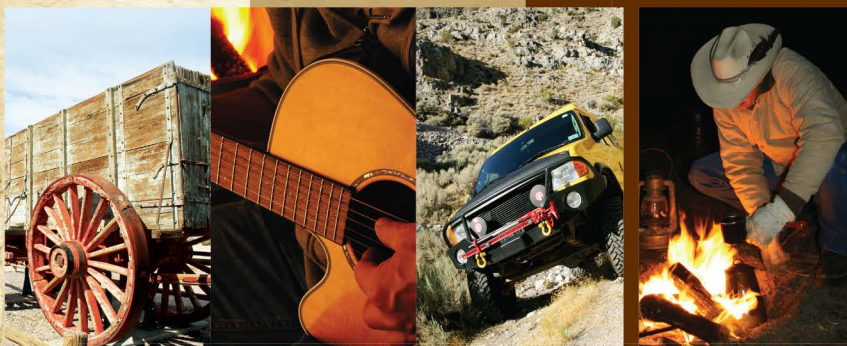
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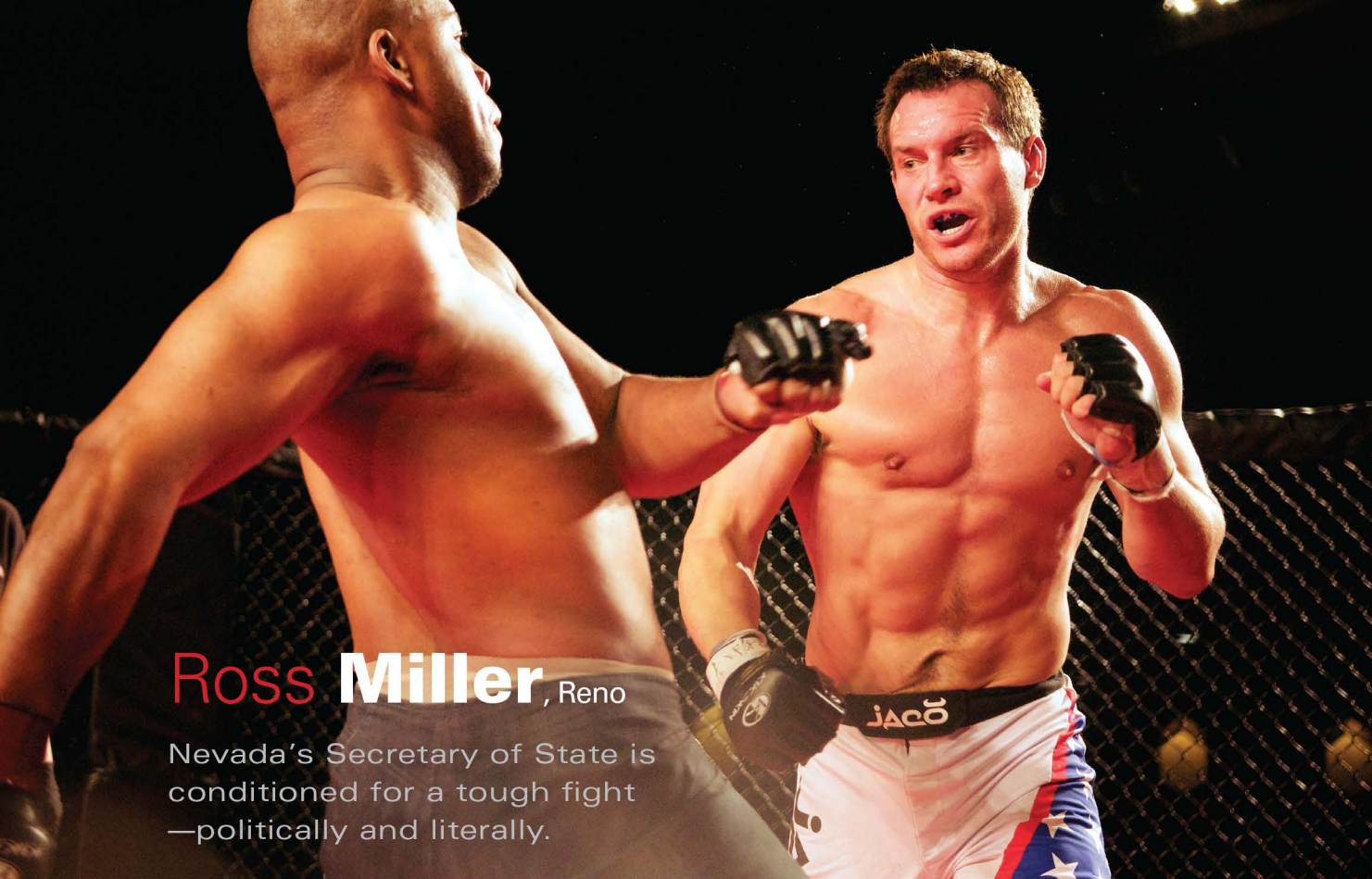
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Ross Miller, Reno

Nevada's Secretary of State is conditioned for a tough fight—politically and literally.

Nevada Secretary of State Ross Miller (white shorts with American flag motif) kept his August 18 World Fighting Championship bout at Stateline's MontBleu Resort mostly quiet before the fact—he didn't even tell his father, former Nevada Governor Bob Miller. But following his defeat of Jamal Williams after two and a half minutes in the octagon, there was no avoiding the media attention that followed.

BY CHARLIE JOHNSTON

Secretary of State Ross Miller won the 2010 election with more than 53 percent of the popular vote; his closest competition came in at 37 percent. But even that convincing of a win pales in comparison to the victory over his latest opponent.

In addition to being the State of Nevada's third-highest ranking official, Miller is a mixed martial arts fighter, and in his first—and he says only—bout on August 18, the 6-foot-4, 203-pound politician won a mere 30 seconds into the fight's second round.

We caught up with Miller in September during a workout at Reno's dual Charles Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy and Nevada Muay Thai to find out how he rolls with the punches—and arm bars, guillotine chokes, and elbow uppercuts—at work and in the ring.

Q: It's unique that a politician would also be an MMA fighter. How did you get started in this sport?

A: I got into it about three or four years ago. I used to play basketball for exercise, but six knee surgeries limited my ability to play. I was on the elliptical at the South Reno Athletic Club one day, completely bored with my workout, and I saw

these [fighters] training and asked them about the sport and tried to find out how I could take a class. I took one class, and it became my passion.

Q: Why were you so drawn to MMA?

A: The sport is very challenging physically, but more than anything it's the mental challenge that continues to draw me in. It's like a chess match; there's a tremendous amount of strategy and mental resilience involved. Your mind will give you a million reasons to quit, but you've got to have the strength to fight through it and continue to get up and keep at it on a daily basis and continue training.

Q: Your job and your hobby each take a lot of time. How do you balance them?

A: I just fit [the training] in wherever I can during my schedule. I try to do strength and conditioning workouts in the morning, find a class or two or three throughout the week, and add some private lessons, too. When I'm in Las Vegas, about once a week, I usually try to go to the UFC [Ultimate Fighting Championship] headquarters and train with some fighters there.

Q: It's a big election year. Does that make it harder to stick to your training regimen?

A: I just always try to make it a priority and make time for it—before work, for an hour or two if I get a break in my schedule during the day...I'll call some other fighters to see when they can fit in a workout.

Q: Do you find that there are parallels between being an MMA fighter and Nevada's chief election officer?

A: The fighting has helped me build a level of mental toughness that I didn't have before. In training, you're going to get beat up, and there are some similarities to politics. In politics you get punched in the nose, too. The biggest difference is that with actual fighting, the battle marks occasionally show on your face.

Q: You've gotten a lot of attention since your first fight. How have you been dealing with that?

A: Obviously, it's just a novelty. I don't think there are too many political officials out there actively training in mixed martial arts. But it's a young sport, so I don't think that novelty will exist for long. I anticipate that soon it won't be all that uncommon to see people of all walks of life training [in mixed martial arts]. I train with attorneys, surgeons, doctors...all kinds of working professionals who use this as a hobby. I regularly train with Reno Police Chief Steve Pitts. He's a black belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Judo and trains in Muay Thai.

Q: Do you get any special treatment at the gym as a politician?

A: They definitely give me grief about politics when they can. But I think that just comes with training in any gym. To them I'm just another guy on the mat. There's a lot of camaraderie.

Q: With your victory, do you think you might have won a couple of votes at the gym that maybe you wouldn't have received before?

A: I hope so! I gave out plenty of T-shirts that read: "My secretary of state can arm bar your secretary of state."

Q: You've been very clear to point out that the August 18 fight would be your first and last. It's been about a month...is that still the case?

A: Still one-and-done. You can get away with it once and label it a bucket-list item, but if you do it a second time—as an

elected official—people start to wonder whether or not you're all there and worry about whether or not you're giving enough attention to the job they've entrusted you with.

Q: When you're not training, we understand that you and your family travel around the state quite a bit. What are your favorite places in Nevada to visit?

A: We live in Reno, and when the weather is nice, we make the 30-minute drive from our house up to Lake Tahoe as often as possible. My parents live in Las Vegas, so we also shuttle their grandkids down to Las Vegas about once a month or so where [my wife] Lesley and I still have a great group of friends and love trying out the newest restaurants in town. Then, we try to keep an eye out for events around the state for weekend getaways. We love The Great Reno Balloon Race, the Nevada Day Parade in Carson City, the Boulder City 4th of July Damboree Parade, the White Pine County Fair and Horse Races, and the Labor Day parades in Winnemucca, Elko, Fallon, and Fernley. ▀

WORTH A VISIT

Charles Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy
1335 Airmotive Dr., Reno, NV 89502
bjjreno.com
775-830-4279

Nevada Muay Thai
1335 Airmotive Dr., Reno, NV 89502
nevadamuaythai.com
775-560-0059



CHARLIE JOHNSTON

Ross Miller (white shorts) spars with black belt instructor Gary Grate at Reno's Charles Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy.



American Pika

“The animals are very sensitive to increasing temperatures and are considered one of the best warning systems for detecting an increase in temperature within pika habitat.”

◆ Native to Nevada, the American pika (*Ochotona princeps*) is a small, diurnal mammal that has adapted to the cold climate in high-elevation boulder fields and alpine meadows in the mountains of the American West. It belongs to the lagomorph family of hares and rabbits and is exclusively found in alpine terrain, above the tree line. It occupies rock faces, talus, and cliffs near mountain meadows.

◆ The American pika has a small, round body and peppery brown fur. It is between six and eight inches long and weighs about six ounces. It is an herbivore that stores its food for the long winters in small piles called “haystacks.”

◆ The pika is a very vocal animal, using calls and songs to communicate with its colony. Warning calls signal potential predators as well as alert the colony of challenging males. Males use song to attract females during mating season, and females will occasionally mimic the males’ song.

◆ In early to mid spring, American pikas begin to breed. Many will breed twice annually, once in spring and once in early summer. The female’s gestation period is 30 days, with an average litter of two to six young. The young are weaned in a month, full grown in three months, and of breeding age in one year.

◆ Global warming may have contributed to numerous local and regional extirpations of pika populations. The animals are very sensitive to increasing temperatures and are considered one of the best warning systems for detecting an increase in temperature within pika habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife considered the pika for protection under the Endangered Species Act due to documented extirpations, but protection was found not warranted due to information indicating that pika could withstand increased temperatures within their occupied regions. ▀

This information is provided by the Nevada Department of Wildlife. ndow.org, 775-688-1500



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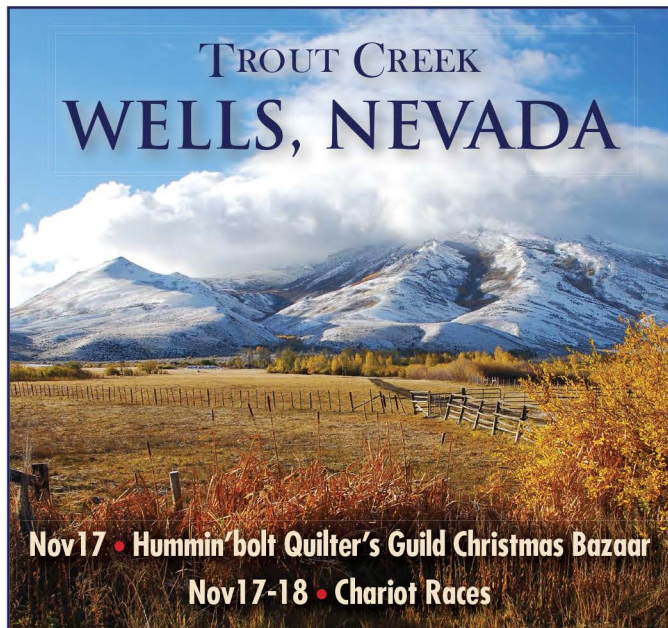


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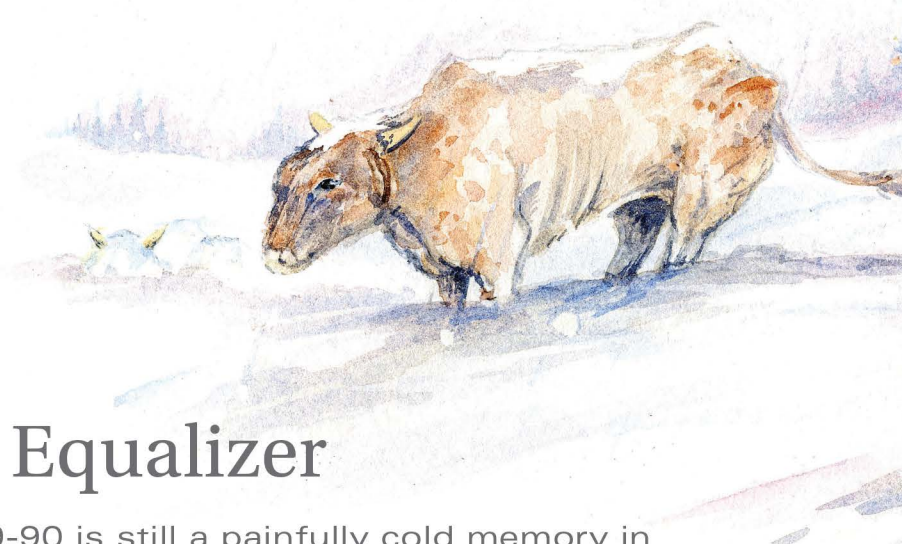
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The Great Equalizer

The winter of 1889-90 is still a painfully cold memory in the heart and soul of the Nevada ranching industry.

BY RON SOODALTER

If the Hollywood westerns and pulp fictions are to be believed, the old-time cattle ranchers' biggest headache was rustlers. While cow thieves were an ever-present problem and called forth such extreme measures as group lynchings and the employment of professional man-hunters, a much more primal challenge faced the stock-growers of the late 19th-century West: extreme weather.

It was a force that could be neither predicted nor prevented, and its effect on the cattle and sheep industry rendered the damage inflicted by rustlers and other predators a mere nuisance. And when the winters of the 1880s had finished with the Western states and territories, including Nevada, the stock industry had been forever changed.

It hit first across the Great Plains and up into the Wyoming and Montana territories. After severe drought conditions in the summers of 1884 and 1885 dried up the creeks and burned off the grass, the ranchers were clobbered by the winter of 1886-87. It saw the ruin of such an astounding number of ranching outfits that it has been known ever since as the "Big Die-Up." The dream of endless grass and water and trouble-free, fat-profit stock growing that had inspired these entrepreneurs in the 1870s was dead, and the cattle business was fundamentally altered.

Nevada's Own Big Die-Up

For reasons largely relating to a difference in weather systems, Nevada's cattle and sheep ranchers were spared the effects of the Big Die-Up—for the

moment. But after three years of drought, a devastating winter hit the state's northern ranges beginning on December 5, 1889, rivaling the one that had so ravaged Montana and Wyoming just a few years before.

Northern Nevada's stockmen had survived rough winters in the past, but those winters didn't compare to this one. It buried the Sierra Nevada under 66 feet of snow, and temperatures plummeted to negative-60 degrees Fahrenheit. Thus, the winter of 1889-90 has come down in Nevada history as the "Great Equalizer."

Edna B. Patterson's invaluable history, *Nevada's Northeast Frontier* (1969), chronicles the damage done and the names and brands of those hardest hit. One sheep and cattle rancher, J.J. Hylton, was new to the business of stock growing. He had come to Mound Valley—the future site of Jiggs—in 1874 as a general store proprietor and had only recently begun to run livestock. When the winter storms hit, he led his hired men and dogs south into the Pancake Range in a desperate and fruitless attempt to find and rescue his sheep.

The critters had sheltered alongside an earthen



mound, but “a strong wind, from out of the south, whipped thickly fallen snow over the hill and began drifting and burying the band,” Patterson writes.

As the snow continued to accumulate, the panicked animals climbed ever higher on the bodies of the sheep that had been smothered. After the storm abated, “dead sheep were piled like haystacks.” In order to make the best of a dismal situation, Hylton and his men skinned the animals and sold the pelts. The site where the sheep perished has since been known as Calamity Hill.

Counting Their Losses

A few outfits managed to salvage a fair portion of their herds. One ranch headquartered in Deeth had been running some 12,000 head in the Marys River country in northeastern Nevada and managed to save nearly half of its cattle—as historian Patterson cryptically writes, “with ingenuity and the use of money.”

For most cattle- and sheep-raisers, however, the percentages of lost stock equaled or exceeded that of the earlier Midwest disaster. The Nevada Land and Cattle Company, one of the state’s largest outfits, estimated its livestock losses at 98 percent. Another large operation in the northeastern corner of Elko County owned by John Tinnin and future Nevada Governor John Sparks lost 90 percent of its cows.

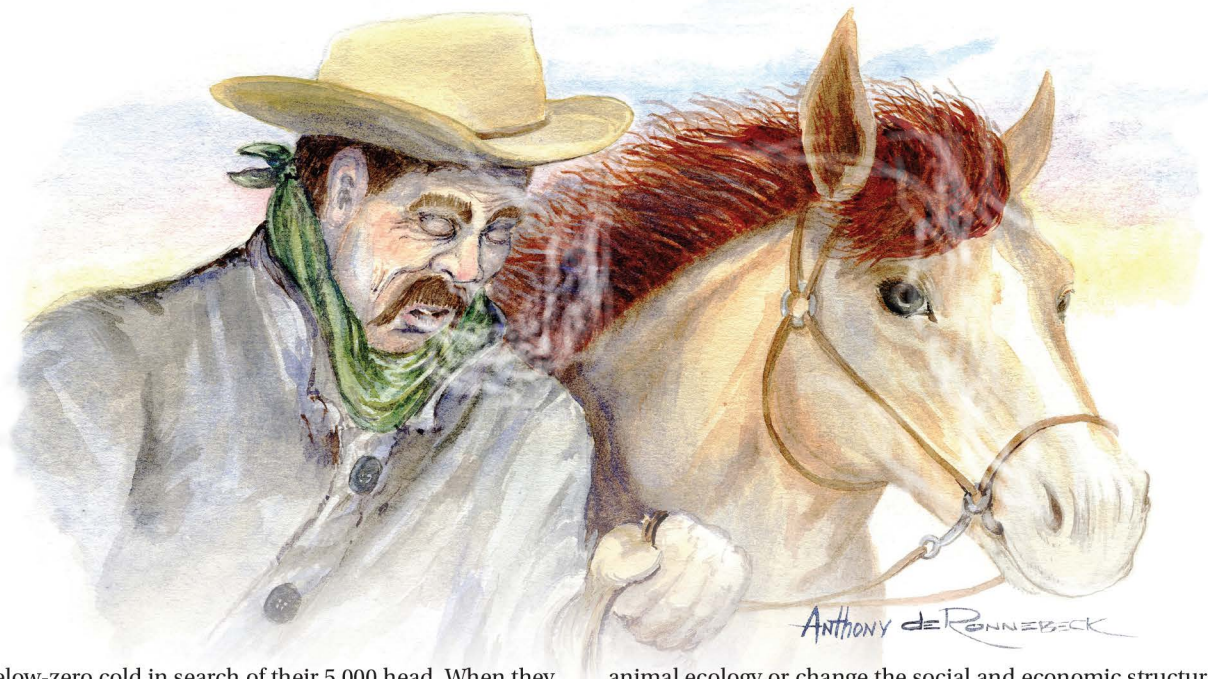
Sparks—a former Texas Ranger, Indian fighter, cowboy, and trail driver—owned herds in Wyoming and Idaho as well as Nevada and had long been credited as one of the most knowledgeable cowmen

in the West; still, he was powerless to lessen the impact of the Great Equalizer. During the roundup of 1885, Sparks and his partner had branded some 38,000 head of cattle; the year following the winter of 1889-90, they branded only 68 calves. Sparks later told a *Harpers Weekly* reporter, “Mr. John Tinnin and myself...lost that winter...35,000 head of cattle.”

Sparks was not the only big cowman to witness the near-extirmination of his calf crop. Colonel E.P. Hardesty was a Texas cattleman who had driven longhorns north and settled in Nevada, establishing the U7 Ranch northwest of Wells and becoming one of the region’s undisputed cattle kings. In 1889, he was running about 20,000 head, and at the spring roundup that year, he branded around 5,000 calves. On the winter range the following year, he branded just 25.

Many ranchers besides Sparks and Hardesty lost at least 90 percent of their cattle, including the Garat family, owners of the vast YP Ranch. According to Patterson, Garat *vaqueros* long recalled a chilling sight: “In sheltered places on the winter range between the Tuscarora and Duck Valley forks of the Owyhee River, a hand could throw an average-sized loop and cover frozen bodies of 15 to 20 head of cattle, huddled together seeking warmth and piled on top of one another.”

Even when the cowboys were able to reach the cattle before the animals froze to death, it was often too late. The owners of 71 Ranch—doing business as the Halleck Cattle Company—mustered their men, who “put on all clothing possible” and ventured into



the 60-below-zero cold in search of their 5,000 head. When they found the half-frozen beasts, the men tried everything, including physically pushing them, to drive them to better feed. The weakened cattle, however, simply gave up and died where they stood.

Some ranchers had actually put up a store of hay in anticipation of a hard winter; it did little good. William Dunphy, founder of the T Lazy S Ranch, hayed, irrigated, and fenced more than 20,000 acres in an effort to protect his sizable herd. During the winter of 1889-90, he cut and put up his hay in stacks and hauled it to the cattle behind teams of draft horses. He still lost 10,000 head, a significant loss considering he had run as many as 40,000 head 15 years earlier.

In mid-March 1890, the snow turned to rain and sleet, soaking the winter coats of the cows and sheep. Then the temperature dropped like a stone, and—unable to shake the ice from their coats—the already-weakened animals perished. In some places, it got so cold that even sheltered stock froze.

The Aftermath

When spring finally came, the stench of rotting meat gagged the range. According to one historian, “It was said that a man could walk on dead cattle for 100 miles along the Marys River fork of the Humboldt.” After the snows had melted, the streams and water holes thawed, and the carcasses were counted. Those stock growers who had not been irrevocably broken faced two choices: quit or tighten their cinches and start anew.

The Altube brothers—Bernardo and Pedro—owners of the vast Spanish Ranch, saw their massive holdings all but wiped out. When Bernardo confessed his desire to throw in the towel, Pedro reputedly said, “God took it away from us; God will give it back to us. We will do better the second time, and in a few years we will be worth a million pesos.” And so they were. The ranch continues to prosper today.

By spring 1890, it was clear that the ranching industry in the West was facing major changes. In describing the impact of the Great Equalizer in their classic volume, *Cattle in the Cold Desert* (1986), authors James A. Young and B. Abbott Sparks wrote, “Rarely does a single climatological event alter the plant and

animal ecology or change the social and economic structure of a wide geographical area. However, such a far-reaching and dynamic event was the devastating winter of 1889-90 in the sagebrush/grasslands of western North America.”

The standard practice of open-range wintering had proven disastrous. Claudia Wines, director of the Northeastern Nevada Museum in Elko and member of a venerable Nevada ranching family, summarized a long-term effect: “From that winter on, every rancher in Northern Nevada was forced to grow and put up enough hay to winter their stock, regardless of the severity of the coming winter.”



“FROZEN ASSETS” BY NEVADA ARTIST LARRY BUTE

Special thanks to Claudia Wines, director of the Northeastern Nevada Museum in Elko and wife and mother of buckaroo bosses at some of the state’s largest ranches.

WORTH A READ

Edna B. Patterson, *Nevada’s Northeast Frontier*

James A. Young & B. Abbott Sparks, *Cattle in the Cold Desert*

LOOKING BACK

Let it snow. Contrary to popular belief, we get a ton of the white stuff here in Nevada—the very name means “snow-covered” in Spanish. Below, we review some of the state’s most legendary snowstorms.



MATTHEW B. BROWN

The above photo was taken on December 7, 2009 in front of the Paul Laxalt State Building, home to *Nevada Magazine* and the Nevada Commission on Tourism. A record 14 inches of snow fell overnight in Carson City.

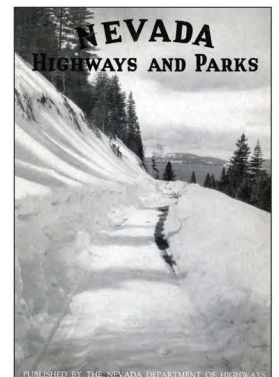
- **Winter of 1889-90** — Beginning on December 5, 1889, snow begins to pound Nevada and the West. Temperatures plummet to negative-60 degrees Fahrenheit in some places, thus leading to what has become known as the “Great Equalizer” to Nevada’s ranching industry. Read more about this devastating winter starting on page 36.
- **January 1937** — Two separate cold waves keep the Silver State in a deep freeze and set many record low temperatures for Nevada and California that still stand. It is the coldest month for the state as a whole since records were kept, according to the U.S. Climatological Data report.
- **Winter of 1948-49** — This is the worst winter in the Western U.S. since the aforementioned 1889-90 calamity. The Air Force deploys its C82 “Flying Boxcars” for a project called Operation Haylift, which feeds more than 1 million beleaguered cattle on the Northern Nevada and Utah ranges.
- **March 27 through April 8, 1982** — More than 15 feet of snow slams the central Sierra Nevada, according to USFS Central Sierra Snow Laboratory records.
- **New Year’s 2004-05** — The Lake Tahoe and Reno region are socked in by a snowstorm of epic proportions that lasts multiple days. The north hills of Reno receive nearly seven feet of snow between December 28 and January 11, according to the National Climatic Data Center.
- **December 18, 2008** — Las Vegas receives its heaviest snowfall in nearly three decades as several inches carpet the city, forcing flight cancellations and highway closures. “We haven’t had this amount of snow since 1979,” local meteorologist Jerome Jacques said at the time.



HOT FLASHBACK

The World Meteorological Organization announced in September that the official highest recorded surface temperature of 56.7 degrees Celsius (134 degrees Fahrenheit) was measured on July 10, 1913 at Greenland Ranch—now known as Furnace Creek Ranch—in Death Valley, California. Nevada shares Death Valley National Park with its western neighbor.

FROM OUR ARCHIVE



January 1937

“High up in the western Nevada forests of the Sierra Nevada mountains, near Glenbrook, king winter deftly piled flake on flake to cover the whole region with a deep snow mantle,” reads the original caption.

View all our cover images at flickr.com/photos/nevada_magazine.



Print is Not Dead

Douglas County authors event proves that the written word is still in demand.

STORY & PHOTO BY CHARLIE JOHNSTON

William Hill (shown above) lights up when a young reader approaches him to ask for an autograph. The shy girl warms immediately as Hill holds up an array of colored pens and asks her which she would like him to use.

Hill writes fantasy novels—titles such as *Chasing Time*, *The Magic Bicycle*, and *Wizard Sword* give a good idea of the nature of his work—catered to children and young adults. His passion for writing those stories is rivaled only by his passion for teaching his young audience about the art of writing itself.

Elizabeth Leiknes is a seventh-grade English teacher at Carson Valley Middle School and author of *The Sinful Life of Lucy Burns* and *The Understory*. While she says her students should probably be a few years older before reading her novels, that doesn't stop her from fervently trying to instill her love of books in them. "Whenever we start a new book in class," she says with a chuckle, "we smell it first. There is nothing like the smell of a new book."

Hill and Leiknes were just two of more than 20 Nevada authors in attendance at the Douglas County Public Library's "An Evening with Local Authors" event in Minden on October 3. In a time when books and printed words seem to be increasingly fading from public interest, the event, and the authors and library employees who make it possible, are breaths of fresh air. What's more, the event is a hit. Dozens of people cluster around the authors and the tables displaying their books, and few people leave without purchasing a stack of titles.

Some people even inquire ahead of the event to ensure that their favorite Nevada authors will be in attendance. "Quite a few people called to ask if Todd Borg would be here," collection development librarian Luise Davis says. Borg's work, like Hill's and Leiknes', is fiction. Probably the most well known of the authors at the event, Borg's 10-volume Owen McKenna Mystery Series

is very popular, so much so that his on-hand stock of the series' most recent installment, *Tahoe Trap*, sold out.

Novelists aren't the only Nevada authors on hand, either. George E. Gruell says he and Sherman Swanson spent decades researching *Nevada's Changing Wildlife Habitat: An Ecological History*, which was released this year by the University of Nevada Press. Maggie Anthony's works, such as the latest book in her Hank Faro Mystery Series, *Death is a Crapshoot*, weave her storytelling into historical fact.

Sandie La Nae and Janice Oberding have a penchant for the paranormal and have each authored books about ghost tours and ghost hunting in the Silver State. La Nae says she is also a psychic and wrote a book about the power and uses of psychic stones, her medium of choice. Oberding is also a historian and has written about Nevada's often-obscure past, such as *Under a Cruel Moon: Floyd Loveless' Story*, an account of the 1944 execution of 17-year-old Floyd Loveless, the youngest man to ever be put to death at the Nevada State Prison in Carson City. ▀

UPCOMING EVENTS

Vegas Valley Book Festival

Nov. 1-3

Most events free & open to public

vegasvalleybookfestival.org

702-229-5431

Lecture—Virginia City & its Archaeology: A Thirty-Year Overview

Nov. 15 at Nevada State Museum, Carson City

Includes book signing of Ron James'

Virginia City: Secrets of a Western Past

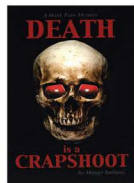
nevadaculture.org

775-687-4810 x. 237

NEVADA BOOKS

DEATH IS A CRAPSHOOT

By Maggie Anthony, self published, maggieanthony.com, 775-830-8212, 202 pages



Reno in 1949 is a hot town; legal gambling, quickie divorces, and legal prostitution just up the road. There are gangsters, but they keep a low profile, until, from

the past, from Detroit, come some guys to stir up the pot. It takes all Hank Faro's resources as a small town P.I. to unravel the unholy mess created as the pot boils over in murder.

THE FLAMER

By Ben Rogers, Aqueous Books, aqueousbooks.com, 257 pages



All boys tinker with fire. Reno's Oby Brooks holes up in a backyard shed to experiment with napalm recipes. He has a hand in burning down his own

house, twice. He can't help it: His very DNA seems made of TNT. Meanwhile, amidst the detonations, Oby's sexuality is up for grabs. Parents, mountain men, chemistry teachers, neighbors, and arson inspectors all try their own quirky ways to usher Oby into adulthood with his fingers and eyelashes intact. In the end, the question is whether Oby's nature will be nurtured, or neutered. Oh, and will he land a Nobel Prize?

NEVADA'S CHANGING WILDLIFE HABITAT: AN ECOLOGICAL HISTORY

By George E. Gruell with Sherman Swanson, University of Nevada Press, unpress.nevada.edu, 800-621-2736, 192 pages



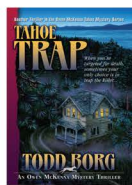
For millennia the ecology of the Great Basin has evolved because of climate change and the impacts of human presence. *Nevada's Changing Wildlife Habitat*

is the first book to explain the transformations in the plants and animals of this region over time and how they came

about. Using data gleaned from archaeological and anthropological studies, historical documents, photography, and natural sciences the authors examine changes in vegetation and their impact on wildlife species and the general health of the environment.

TAHOE TRAP

By Todd Borg, Thriller Press, thrillerpress.com, 530-573-1314, 351 pages



When Lake Tahoe Detective Owen McKenna answers his phone early one morning, a young boy named Paco cries out, "Help me!" The detective discovers

that the boy is trapped in the back of a speeding pickup somewhere in the Lake Tahoe area. In the front of the truck are two men who have just murdered Paco's foster mother. The men want the boy, but they don't yet know that he witnessed the murder and that he hid in their truck. Desperate to save the boy from the men, McKenna decides to set a trap using Paco as bait. McKenna's plan carries a huge risk. If it goes wrong, he will be handing the boy to the killers...

THE UNDERSTORY

By Elizabeth Leiknes, Bancroft Press, bancroftpress.com, 800-637-7377, 254 pages



"There once was a woman named Story Easton who couldn't decide if she should kill herself or eat a double cheeseburger." So begins *The Understory*, the second novel from critically acclaimed author Elizabeth Leiknes. The book tells the tale of Easton, an admitted failure who finds herself compelled to help a nine-year-old boy named Cooper achieve the dream that seemed to have died with his father—visiting the Amazon rainforest.

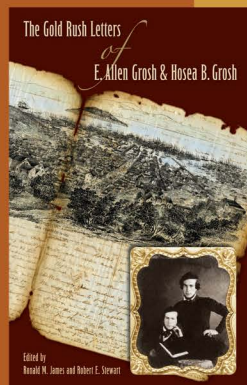


NEVADA ONLINE

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nevada

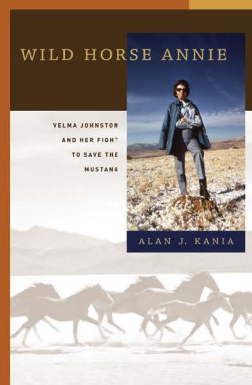
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA PRESS



CLOTH | \$29.95

The Gold Rush Letters of E. Allen Grosh and Hosea B. Grosh

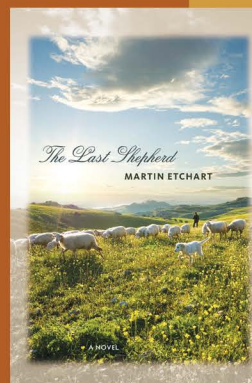
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RONALD M. JAMES
AND
ROBERT E. STEWART



CLOTH | \$26.95

Wild Horse Annie

VELMA JOHNSTON AND
HER FIGHT TO SAVE THE
MUSTANG
ALAN J. KANIA



PAPER | \$22.00

The Last Shepherd

A NOVEL
MARTIN ETCHART

800.621.2736
WWW.UNPRESS.NEVADA.EDU



Black Rock Mud

Give the Gift of Nevada

These Silver State businesses will make your friends and family gush this holiday season.

BY ERIC CACHINERO & AMY VIGEN



Whether you're shopping for a picky spouse, hard-to-impress boss, or friend that seems to already have everything, Nevada's assortment of unique, locally made products is sure to please.

Your hard-to-buy-for husband will swoon over his own homebrew kit from Just Brew It, an assortment of teas from Davidson's Organics will remind your boss on stressful days of what a thoughtful—and valuable—employee you are, and that friend with everything almost certainly doesn't have an original piece from Windzart or Jan Rollenhagen.

BLACK ROCK MUD

"People say, 'When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.' Well, life gave us mud so we're selling cosmetic mud." That's Shelly Egbert's motto. She and Summer Powelson created Black Rock Mud Company two years ago. The mud comes from Egbert's property in Gerlach, on the edge of the Black Rock Desert in northwestern Nevada. Her father, a falconer, originally purchased the property 12 years ago as a place to teach baby falcons to fly.

While relaxing in the property's hot springs, the family discovered a buttery, green, odorless mud that they smeared over their skin. They found that the mud helped clear acne and eczema and made their skin smooth. Egbert and Powelson decided to make a business of it. With the determination to be green, organic, recyclable, and made-in-America, Egbert set out to find packaging companies that met these standards. And after a middle-of-the-night inspirational idea, Egbert decided to package the mudpots in innovative wildflower paper boxes that customers can plant and watch grow.

In order to sustain a prolonged supply of mud and protect the environment, the mud is only harvested twice a year—in spring and fall. The mudpots, \$59 per four-ounce jar, can be purchased online and in several Northern Nevada spas, such as Spa Toscana at Reno's Peppermill Resort Spa Casino.—*Amy Vigen*

DAVIDSON'S ORGANICS

"You'd be amazed at all you can do with tea," says Promilla Mohan, co-owner of Davidson's Organics. With more than 200 blends, Davidson's prides itself on flavorful teas imported from India, South Africa, China, and Egypt—but blended and packaged in Nevada. Mohan, a third-generation tea farmer from India, grew up watching her father and grandfather work on tea farms.

After moving to Reno, Mohan and her husband, Kunall Patel, were determined to create their own business. They formed a strategic alliance in 2007 between some of the oldest organic tea farms in India and the Davidson family, who were organic tea manufacturers in Reno. With tea blends ranging from Vanilla Cream Spice and Mandarin Chai to Caramel Peach with Coconut, Davidson's teas are sure to please tea connoisseurs. Prices range from \$2.95 for an eight-pack of tea bags, \$5.50 for a 25-pack, and \$14 for 100 bags. Tea is also sold loose, and both types can be found at Davidson's Organics outlet store, Whole Foods, and local cafés and restaurants.

—*Amy Vigen*



Davidson's Organics tea

ECLIPSE TECHNOLOGIES INC. (VALLEY DOOR WORKS)

From blocking the scorching sun on a blistering summer day to keeping insects and other pests out of your home, Carson City's Eclipse Technologies' retractable awnings and screens, custom built by Minden's Valley Door Works, offer a stylish and sensible addition to your home. Founded in 1999, Eclipse Technologies aims to provide customers with exceptional retractable door and window screens and motorized screens that appeal to the eye and are simple to use.

The company's motorized retractable awnings are not only elegant and effortless to operate, they also block 100 percent of the sun's ultraviolet rays and are available in 16 designer fabric options. Conventional screen doors are often noisy and unsightly; however, the retractable screen offers a comfortable alternative that is fashionable and virtually silent while opening and closing. Eclipse Technologies' screens can fit practically any opening, including options for boats and RVs.—*Eric Cachinero*

FISHER SPACE PEN

Gaining its esteem during its use on the Apollo 7 mission in 1968, the Fisher Space Pen has withstood the test of time. Selected by NASA as the first trusted pen in space, the original AG-7 Space Pen has since evolved to include many new designs and styles. Since moving its manufacturing facility to Boulder City in 1976, the Fisher Space Pen has been used by President Ronald Reagan and



Fisher
Space
Pen



Jan Rollenhagen's gourds

CHARLIE JOHNSTON

taken on a Mount Everest ski expedition. Using nitrogen-filled ink cartridges, the pen can write in the harshest conditions, including zero gravity, underwater, over wet and greasy paper, and at any angle. The Space Pen can also withstand extreme temperatures from minus-30 to 250 degrees Fahrenheit.—*Eric Cachinero*

FIRE PUCK

Fire Puck matchless fire starter's revolutionary design allows users to harness the power of fire in their hands anytime and anywhere. Whether quickly igniting a campfire or lighting barbecue coals, the Fire Puck's blend of eight materials creates the perfect fire every time with its easy-to-use design. To ignite, simply remove the tamperproof label, lift off the cap, and strike the cap on the starter button of the Fire Puck. Using 65 percent organic materials, the Fire Puck will burn for about two to three minutes at 1,400 degrees Fahrenheit and is able to withstand winds up to 35 mph. It can also ignite in rainy and freezing conditions. Weighing in at 60 grams, the Fire Puck is perfect for hunting, fishing, camping, and in a survival kit.—*Eric Cachinero*

JAN ROLLENHAGEN

To some, gourds are just plants. To Jan Rollenhagen, they are canvases for her unique artwork. For more than 15 years, Rollenhagen has been designing gourds in a time-consuming process that includes allowing them to dry—which makes them wood-like—and sometimes wood-burning them, which allows her to give the gourds a patterned design. Previously a fashion designer and artist, Rollenhagen decided to transition from making cast paper sculptures to designing a cheaper-to-ship product.

While western-themed gourds are her biggest sellers in Nevada, she also makes gourds with coastal and whimsical designs and Christmas ornament gourds (pictured at left). Designs range from those clad in 22-karat gold to baubles adorned with pinecones and pine needles. Rollenhagen's gourds vary in size from the four-inch ornament to 30 inches high, and prices range from \$35 to \$250. The gourds can be purchased online or at the Nevada State Museum in Las Vegas and Lone Tree Gallery in Minden. Rollenhagen also takes special orders.—*Amy Vigen*

JUST BREW IT

Located in the heart of Carson City, Just Brew It is a family-owned business that is sure to have you sipping your own delicious bottle of beer in no time. Catering to the curiosity of beer-loving beginners and the tried-and-true recipes perfected by seasoned brew masters, Just Brew It has all the supplies, ingredients, and advice to ensure that your homebrewing experience is a pleasurable one. From unique beers such as Blackberry Porter to standard American Pale Ale, its selection of more than 30 beer recipes is guaranteed to spark interest in a wide range of beer lovers. Just Brew It also offers winemaking kits and equipment and ingredients to make cheese and soda.—*Eric Cachinero*

KIMMIE CANDY COMPANY

Kimmie Candy Company is not your average candy store; from chocolate-covered sunflower kernels to edible chocolate "rocks," it's sure to surprise and satisfy one's sweet tooth with its unique products. Joe Dutra, president of Kimmie Candy, brought the Sacramento-based company to The Biggest Little City in 2004, and it has been a hit ever since. Dutra calls it "the biggest little candy factory in the world."

The company prides itself on its Nevada-made products and also offers candies that are gluten-free, peanut-free, and kosher. Along with Choco Rocks and Boulders, Kimmie Candy offers Choco Almonds, Kettle Corn Nuggets, and their newest product, DateMe's: candy-coated and chocolate-covered date pieces. If you have a taste for something new and out of the ordinary, try the Habañero Kettle Corn Nuggets: a unique sweet and spicy combination. Kimmie Candy products can be purchased at its



CHARLIE JOHNSTON

factory in Reno, Winco stores, Sweet Factory inside Reno's Meadowood Mall, and at the ASUN Bookstore Pack Pit Stop on the University of Nevada, Reno campus.—*Amy Vigen*

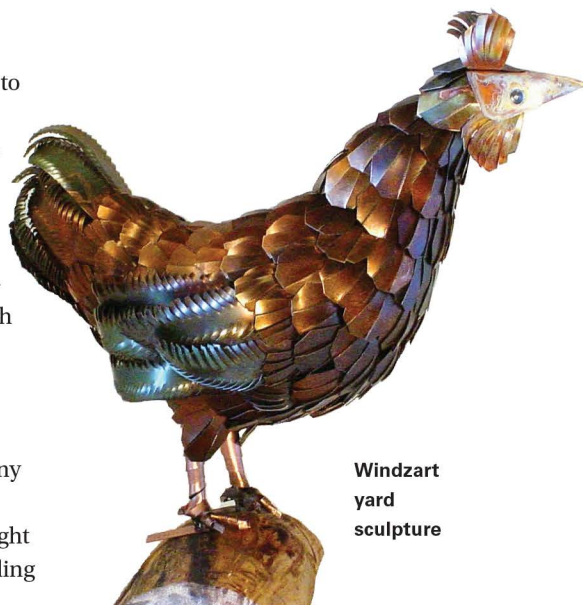
RENO ENVY

The Reno eNVy trailer has become the iconic symbol for the Reno/Tahoe clothing company that locals have come to know and love. The company made a splash in spring 2005 while testing its product at the Reno River Festival. After sales of the company's original shirt were a great success, owner Scott Dunseath decided to start selling clothing fulltime. He has since expanded the product line to include Reno eNVy sweatshirts, tank tops, glassware, and even toddler and infant clothing. In addition to a website, Reno eNVy clothing can be purchased at three retail locations, including the Reno eNVy Store in downtown Reno (which doubles as a visitors center). The company also offers any three Reno eNVy shirts for \$50 during the Riverwalk Merchants Association's Wine Walk on the third Saturday of each month.—*Eric Cachinero*

WINDZART

Roger Bracco started his Windzart Company in 2003, making stainless steel kinetic figures that spin and twirl in the wind. As his art caught the attention of neighbors, Bracco started selling his pieces and creating new designs. He uses

new stainless steel sheets for his pieces and shapes them in a backyard shop, focusing on creating unique, attention-grabbing pieces. In addition to adding some excitement to backyards, Bracco's art also shows the direction and speed of the wind similar to a weather vane. Bracco is currently working on lifelike sculptures for the yard: metal chickens with feathers of purple, green, and blue hues that are baked on in a convection oven. He plans to expand his stationary art with different animal designs to accompany the chickens. His art can be seen and purchased at Greenhouse Garden Center in Carson City.—*Amy Vigen* ▾



Windzart
yard
sculpture

WORTH A CLICK

Made in Nevada
madeinnevada.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Black Rock Mud Company

500 State Route 34
Gerlach, NV 89412
blackrockmud.com
775-302-3599

Davidson's Organics

700 E. Glendale Ave.
Sparks, NV 89431
davidsonstea.com
800-882-5888

Eclipse Technologies Inc. (Valley Door Works)

1180 Angel Crescent, Ste. 105
Minden, NV 89423
eclipsetechnologies.com
775-782-2850

Fisher Space Pen

711 Yucca St.
Boulder City, NV 89005
spacepen.com
702-293-3011

Fire Puck

2248 Meridian Blvd., Ste. H
Minden, NV 89423
firepuck.com
866-431-1222

Jan Rollenhagen

janrollenhagen.com
e-mail: rollenhagen@charter.net
775-267-4347

Just Brew It

1210 N. Carson St.
Carson City, NV 89701
justbrewitcarsoncity.com
775-461-0641

Kimmie Candy Company

525 Reactor Way
Reno, NV 89502
kimmiecandy.com
775-284-9200

Reno eNVy

135 N. Sierra St.
Reno, NV 89501
renoenvy.com
775-682-3800

Windzart

windzarts.com
e-mail: roger@windzarts.com
775-972-3903

TIM MCGRAW
AND FAITH HILL
BRING "SOUL2SOUL"
TO THE VENETIAN

VEGAS GOES COUNTRY

Collectively, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill have sold 70 million albums and won eight Grammy Awards. Starting in December, country music's most famous couple will bring its Soul2Soul act to The Venetian Las Vegas for a limited engagement through April 2013.

The show—what The Venetian has called the biggest musical event in its history—officially opens December 7 in the 1,815-seat Venetian Theater. The event will mark the first time in six years that McGraw and Hill have performed together in the United States, promising country-music fans a whole new concert experience.

"We are creating a show that will be completely different from what we've done before—and might ever do again," McGraw and Hill said in August. "In arenas and stadiums, you're always faced with the challenge of finding ways to make people feel closer to the action... Now everyone will be close, so it opens up all kinds of creative possibilities, and we're looking forward to exploring those so that we can really give our fans something truly special."

McGraw and Hill have been dominating the music charts since the early '90s and began performing together in 2000 in their record-breaking original Soul2Soul tour, becoming that year's top-grossing U.S. tour. Their success continued in 2006 when Soul2Soul II became the highest-grossing country music tour of all time.

WHERE

The Venetian

WHEN

Dec. 7-8, 14-15
Jan. 18-19, 25-26
Feb. 1-2, 15-16, 22-23
Mar. 1-2
Apr. 12-13, 26-27
Showtime: 8 & 10:30 p.m.

TICKETS

ticketmaster.com, 888-TAF-SOUL
Starting at \$95.50

WORTH A CLICK

timmcgraw.com
faithhill.com

ALSO NEW AT THE VENETIAN

"Rock of Ages"

Dark Mon. starting Dec. 18
venetian.com, 866-641-7469





DON'T MISS

SHANIA TWAIN

Caesars Palace

Dec. 1-2, 5-6, 8-9, 11-12, 14-15
Mar. 19, 20, 23-24, 26-27, 29-30
Apr. 2-3, 5-6, 9-10

Tickets: thecolosseum.com, 866-574-3851; starting at \$55

Not to be outdone by Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, Twain makes her much-anticipated return (the show was announced in summer 2011) to the stage at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace on December 1. "SHANIA: STILL THE ONE" will feature the hits that have made Twain the top-selling female country artist of all time, with more than 57 million albums sold in the U.S. and Canada. Twain joins mega-stars Celine Dion, Elton John, and Rod Stewart, who also have ongoing shows at The Colosseum.

Showtime: 7:30 p.m.



COUNTRY EVENTS & SHOWS

Garth Brooks | Wynn Las Vegas

Nov. 16-17 (final shows)

Tickets: wynnlasvegas.com,
877-654-2784

Miss Willie Brown | The Mirage

Dec. 6

Tickets: mirage.com/rodeovegas

National Finals Rodeo, Cowboy Christmas Gift Show, & Cowboy FanFest

Citywide

Dec. 6-15

Tickets: nfrexperience.com,
702-260-8605

Josh Thompson | The Mirage

Dec. 7

Tickets: mirage.com/rodeovegas

Lonestar | The Orleans

Dec. 7-8

Tickets: orleanscasino.com,
888-365-7111

Merle Haggard

Golden Nugget Las Vegas

Dec. 7-8

Tickets: goldennugget.com,
866-946-5336

Charlie Daniels Band

Golden Nugget Las Vegas

Dec. 8-9

Tickets: goldennugget.com,
866-946-5336

Craig Morgan | The Mirage

Dec. 8

Tickets: mirage.com/rodeovegas

Sam Riddle | The Mirage

Dec. 9-12

Tickets: mirage.com/rodeovegas

Oak Ridge Boys

Golden Nugget Las Vegas

Dec. 11-12

Tickets: goldennugget.com,
866-946-5336

Daryle Singletary & Justin McBride | The Mirage

Dec. 13-14

Tickets: mirage.com/rodeovegas

Randy Travis

Golden Nugget Las Vegas

Dec. 13-14

Tickets: goldennugget.com,
866-946-5336

LeAnn Rimes | LVH

Dec. 13-15

Tickets: thelvh.com, 800-222-5361

Jamey Johnson | Riviera

Dec. 14

Tickets: rivierahotel.com,
855-468-6748

Chris Cagle | The Mirage

Dec. 15

Tickets: mirage.com/rodeovegas

Trace Adkins | Riviera

Dec. 15

Tickets: rivierahotel.com,
855-468-6748

"Country Superstars"

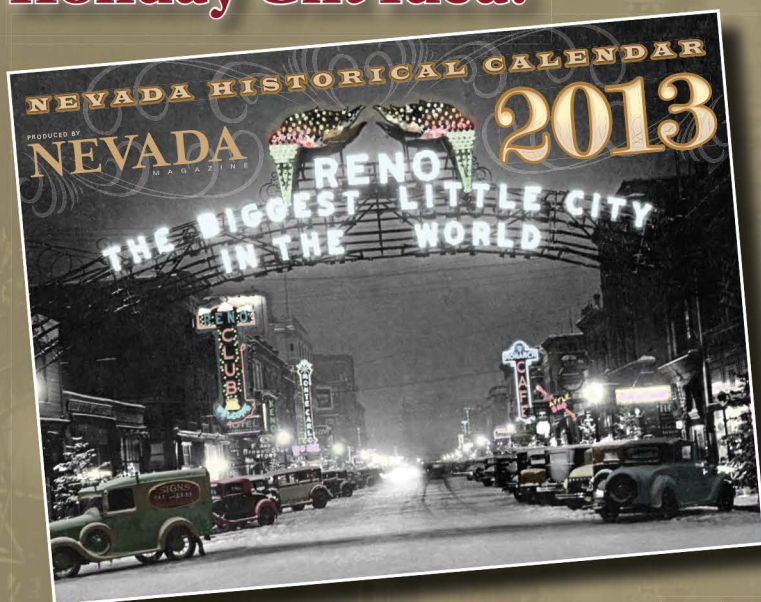
Golden Nugget Las Vegas

Ongoing: Dark Sun. & Mon.

Tickets: goldennugget.com,
866-946-5336

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- 1403 The Vegas Voice

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- 1606 Amtrak

OTHER CIRQUE SHOWS

The Beatles LOVE | Mirage
Dark Tues. & Wed.
Tickets: mirage.com, 800-963-9634

CRISS ANGEL Believe | Luxor
Dark Sun. & Mon.
Tickets: luxor.com, 800-557-7428

KÀ | MGM Grand
Dark Sun. & Mon.
Tickets: mgmgrand.com, 800-929-1111

Mystère | Treasure Island
Dark Thurs. & Fri.
Tickets: treasureisland.com, 866-712-9308

O | Bellagio
Dark Mon. & Tues.
Tickets: bellagio.com, 888-488-7111

ZUMANITY, the Sensual Side of Cirque du Soleil | New York-New York
Dark Wed. & Thurs.
Tickets: newyorknewyork.com, 866-606-7111

SIMILAR

Bite | Plaza Hotel & Casino
Dark Tues.
Tickets: 800-793-9332

Le Rêve—The Dream | Wynn Las Vegas
Dark Wed. & Thurs.
Tickets: wynnlasvegas.com, 702-770-9966

ZARKANA DEBUTS ARIA WELCOMES NEWEST CIRQUE PRODUCTION

Move over Elvis. There's a new Cirque du Soleil show in town. Replacing "Viva Elvis" at the Aria at CityCenter in Las Vegas is "Zarkana." Scheduled to premier Thursday, November 1, "Zarkana" is an acrobatic rock experience blending circus arts with the surreal to create a world where physical virtuosity rubs shoulders with the strange. Described as a visual vortex, the show is set in a twisted musical and acrobatic fantasy universe where, little by little, chaos and craziness give way to a true celebration.

The diverse cast of more than 75 international artists transports the audience into a fantastical and suspenseful world, blurring the boundaries between the real and imaginary.

WHERE

Aria Las Vegas

SHOWTIME

Dark Wed. & Thurs.
& Nov. 5-6, 9-10
7 & 9:30 p.m.

TICKETS

arialasvegas.com
855-927-5262

DON'T MISS

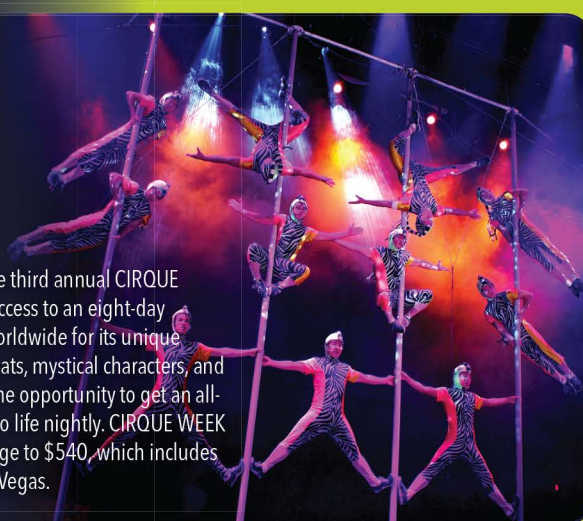
CIRQUE WEEK

Various locations

Dec. 1-8

Tickets: cirquedusoleil.com/cirqueweek

Back by popular demand, Cirque du Soleil presents the third annual CIRQUE WEEK, offering fans the experience of a lifetime with access to an eight-day series of exclusive events. Cirque du Soleil is known worldwide for its unique entertainment experiences featuring high-flying acrobats, mystical characters, and state-of-the-art technology. CIRQUE WEEK offers fans the opportunity to get an all-access look into how these extraordinary shows come to life nightly. CIRQUE WEEK packages range from \$150 for a two-show ticket package to \$540, which includes tickets to all seven Cirque du Soleil productions in Las Vegas.



HOLIDAY EVENTS & SHOWS

Ethel M Chocolates Holiday

Cactus Garden | Henderson

Nov. 14-Jan. 1

Info: ethelm.com

Holiday Craft Bazaar | Eureka Opera House

Nov. 16-17

Info: eurekacounty.com, 775-237-6006

Hummin'bolt Quilter's Guild

Christmas Bazaar | Wells

Nov. 17

Info: wellsnevada.com, 775-752-3540

Polar Express | Nevada Northern Railway, Ely

Starts Nov. 17

Tickets: nnry.com, 866-407-8326

Christmas Tree Lighting

Ceremony | Downtown Reno

Nov. 20

Info: reno.gov, 775-333-7741

Mannheim Steamroller Christmas—

Vegas by Chip Davis | The Palazzo, Las Vegas

Nov. 20-Dec. 30

Tickets: palazzo.com, 866-641-7469

Magical Forest | Opportunity Village, Las Vegas

Nov. 21-Jan. 6

Tickets: opportunityvillage.org, 702-259-3741

The Nutcracker Ballet | Carson City

Nov. 23-25

Tickets: visitcarsoncity.com, 800-NEVADA-1

Polar Express | Virginia & Truckee Railroad

Nov. 23-Dec. 23, Fri.-Sun.

Tickets: visitcarsoncity.com, 800-NEVADA-1

The Great Santa Run | Town Square Las Vegas

Dec. 1

Tickets: opportunityvillage.org, 702-259-3741

Zappos.com Rock 'n' Roll Marathon

& Half Marathon | Las Vegas Strip

Dec. 2

Tickets: stripatnight.com, 310-854-4800

Santa Train | Nevada Southern Railway, Boulder City

Dec. 8-9, 15-16, 22-23

Tickets: nevadasouthern.com, 702-486-5933

Live Nativity | Austin

Dec. 11

Info: austinnevada.com, 775-964-2200

Reno Santa Crawl | Downtown Reno

Dec. 15

Tickets: renosantacrawl.com

GLITTERING LIGHTS

LAS VEGAS MOTOR SPEEDWAY CONTINUES SPECTACULAR HOLIDAY TRADITION

Glittering Lights, the holiday drive-through spectacular, brightens Las Vegas Motor Speedway with the world's largest light tunnel and more than 450 animated light displays along a 2.5-mile racetrack.

This season, Glittering Lights is expanding with more displays that include a NASCAR scene and Avenue of Trees. The largest regional holiday light show is all LED, a more energy-efficient way to entertain Las Vegas nightly from November 16 through Jan. 6, 2013. "Visitors will be able to enjoy the festivities from the warmth and comfort of their vehicles," says Shannon Bentham, co-founder of Ivory Star Productions, which oversees the event.

The Avenue of Trees showcases more than 55 charities with custom dedication signs and trees decorated by each charity. Speedway Children's Charities receives a portion of ticket sales and provides funding for hundreds of children's charities throughout Southern Nevada. Goodwill of Southern Nevada will provide \$2 off admission with a donation of gently used items at any of the 30-plus sites in Southern Nevada or at the gates of Glittering Lights.



**WHERE**

Las Vegas Motor Speedway

WHEN

Nov. 16-Jan. 6, 2013
 5:30-9 p.m., Mon.-Thurs.;
 5:30-10 p.m., Fri.-Sun.

TICKETS

glitteringlightslasvegas.com
 \$15/vehicle Mon.-Thurs.;
 \$20 Fri.-Sun

WORTH A CLICK

ivorystar.com



HOLIDAY RIDE

DON'T MISS RSCVA'S WASHOE WILLYS VEHICLE

This summer, the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority rolled out its customized 1951 Willys Jeep four-wheel drive Station Wagon, which it calls "Washoe Willys." The Jeep's mission will be to represent the Reno/Lake Tahoe region by promoting the wide variety of attractions, festivals, and activities available in the area to crowds at conventions, tradeshow, and high-profile events in Northern Nevada, California, and farther afield.

It's slated to make an appearance at the Sparks Hometowne Christmas celebration, November 30-December 1.

WHERE

Sparks

WHEN

Nov. 30: Tree-Lighting Ceremony, 6:30 p.m.
 Dec. 1: Hometowne Christmas Parade, noon-4 p.m.
 Dec. 1: Book Drive & Craft Faire, noon-4 p.m.

INFO

cityofsparks.us/christmasparade
 775-353-5555



JILL HARPER

MUSEUM EVENTS & EXHIBITS

El Dia de Los Muertos

Nevada State Museum, Carson City
Nov. 10
Info: nevadaculture.org,
775-687-4810 x.237

"BEYOND WILD"

Wilbur D. May Museum, Reno
Thru Nov. 15
Main event: Nov. 16-18
Info: wildwomenartists.com

What Continues the Dream: Contemporary Arts & Crafts from the Powwow Tradition

Pershing County Library, Lovelock
Thru Nov. 16
Info: nac.nevadaculture.org, 775-273-2216

"A Salute to the Military"

Sparks Museum & Cultural Center
Thru Nov. 17
Info: sparksmuseum.org, 775-355-1144

Namaste: Faces of India & Nepal

Southern Nevada Museum of Fine Art, Las Vegas
Thru Jan. 5, 2013
Info: snmfa.com

Dr. Entomo's Palace of Exotic

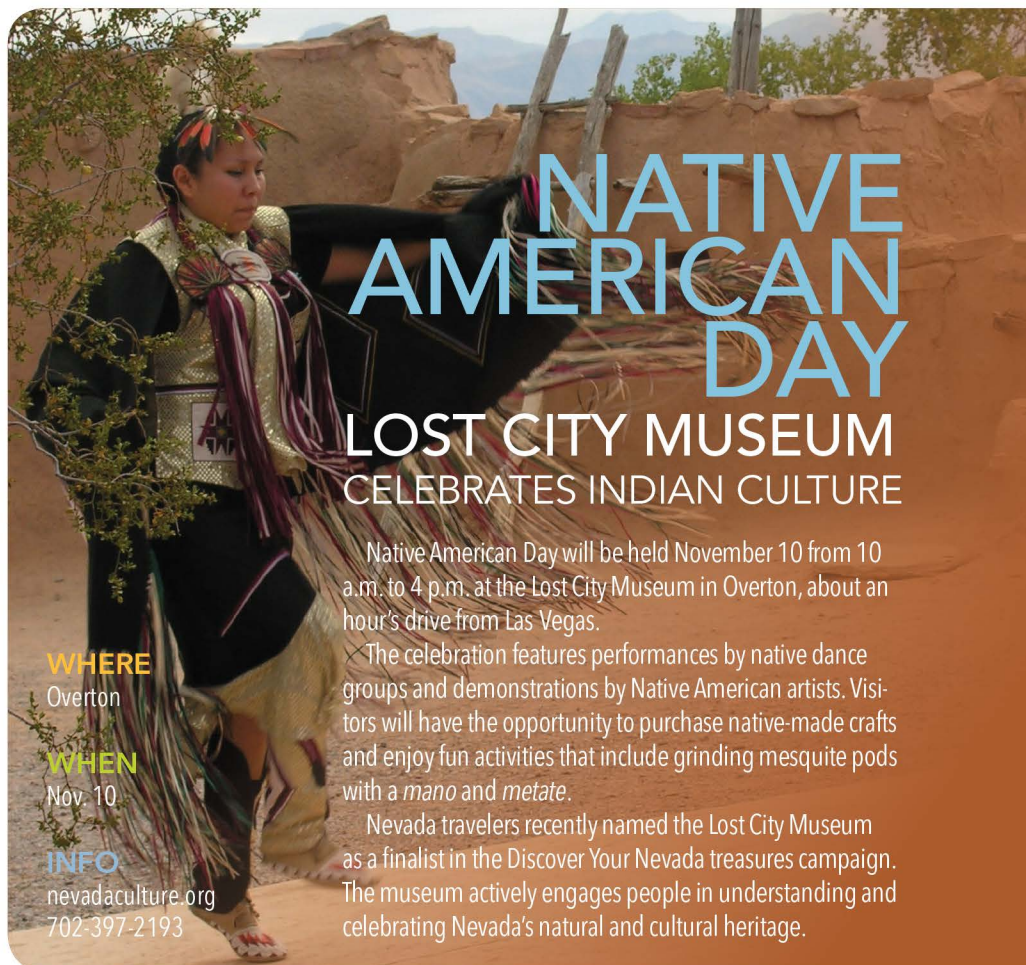
Wonders! | Origen Museum at Springs Preserve,
Las Vegas
Thru Jan. 13, 2013
Info: springspreserve.org, 702-822-7700

Da Vinci—The Genius | The Venetian, Las Vegas

Thru Jan. 2013
Info: venetian.com

The Light Circus: Art of Nevada

Neon Signs | Nevada Museum of Art, Reno
Thru Feb. 10, 2013
*Michael Crow lecture on Nov. 16
Info: nevadaart.org, 775-329-3333



WHERE

Overton

WHEN

Nov. 10

INFO

nevadaculture.org
702-397-2193

Native American Day will be held November 10 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Lost City Museum in Overton, about an hour's drive from Las Vegas.

The celebration features performances by native dance groups and demonstrations by Native American artists. Visitors will have the opportunity to purchase native-made crafts and enjoy fun activities that include grinding mesquite pods with a *mano* and *metate*.

Nevada travelers recently named the Lost City Museum as a finalist in the Discover Your Nevada treasures campaign. The museum actively engages people in understanding and celebrating Nevada's natural and cultural heritage.

COURTESY LOST CITY MUSEUM

DON'T MISS

Nevada Museums Association
conference: *Museums in a Time
of Change* | Fourth Ward School,
Virginia City

Nov. 8-9

Tickets: nevadamuseums.org

The annual conference includes a workshop titled *Keys to a Successful Museum Store* that will be presented by Andrew Andoniadis, a nationally recognized museum consultant. The focus of this half-day workshop is on giving store management—and a broad range of museum administrators—a practical outline of components to be monitored and evaluated to assure the maximization of visitor satisfaction and revenue.



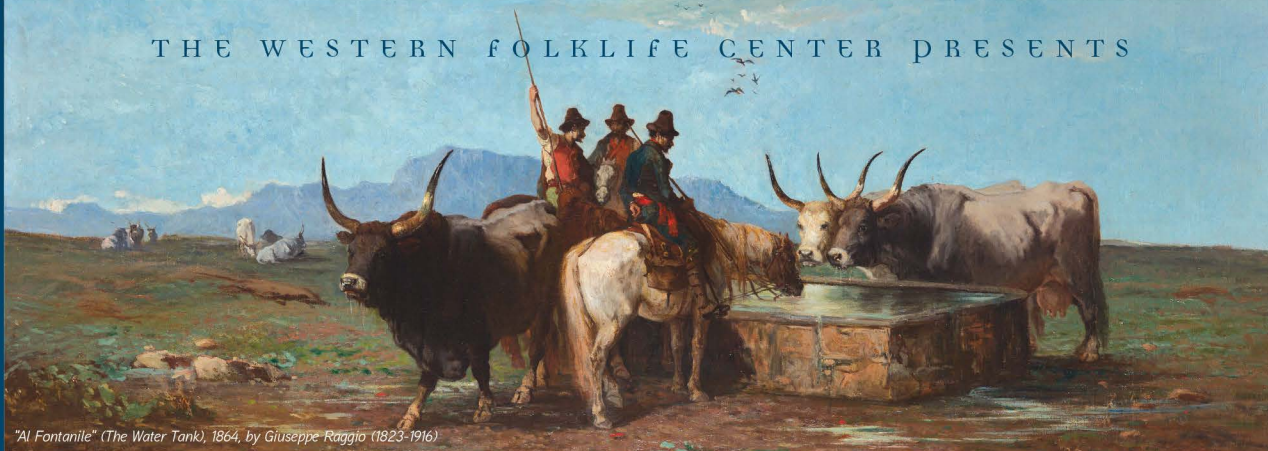
Fourth Ward School, Virginia City

NEVADA POETRY OUT LOUD

Registrations for high school competition are due December 1.

High school teachers and students are invited to get involved in Nevada Poetry Out Loud, the dynamic poetry program focused on literary heritage through memorization and performance of classic and contemporary poetry. Registration for the competition is open to all Nevada public, private, charter, parochial, and alternative schools and home school associations. nac.nevadaculture.org, 702-486-3738

THE WESTERN FOLKLIFE CENTER PRESENTS



"Al Fontanille" (The Water Tank), 1864, by Giuseppe Raggio (1823-1916)

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www.westernfolklife.org or 888.880.5885

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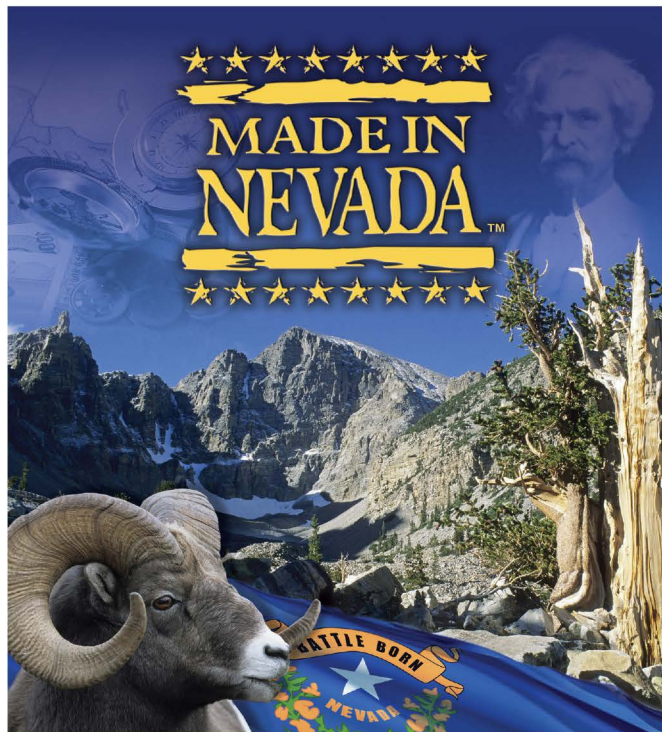
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- High-resolution photo (at least 300 dpi)
- Bio information

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Looking for more Nevada events & shows?

We invite you to visit our Nevada tourism partners.

Refer to the full-page map on page 7 for city and town locations.

LAKE TAHOE

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority
tahoesouth.com, 530-544-5050

North Lake Tahoe Visitors Bureau
gotahoenorth.com, 888-434-1262

NORTHERN NEVADA

City of Reno
reno.gov, 775-334-INFO

**Reno-Sparks Convention
& Visitors Authority**
visitrenotahoe.com, 800-FOR-RENO

**Battle Mountain (Lander County
Convention & Tourism Authority)**
battlemountaintourism.com,
775-635-1112

**Black Rock Desert
(Friends of Black Rock High Rock)**
blackrockdesert.org, 775-557-2900

Carlin (City of)
explorecarlinnv.com, 775-754-6354

**Carson City Convention
& Visitors Bureau**
visitcarsoncity.com, 800-NEVADA-1

Carson Valley Visitors Authority
visitcarsonvalley.org, 800-727-7677

Elko Convention & Visitors Authority
exploreelko.com, 800-248-3556

**Eureka County Economic
Development Program**
eurekacounty.com, 775-237-5484

Fallon Convention & Tourism Authority
visitfallonnevada.com, 866-432-5566

Fernley (City of)
cityoffernley.org, 775-784-9800

Gardnerville (Town of)
gardnerville-nv.gov, 775-782-7134

Genoa (Town of)
genoanevada.org, 775-782-8696

**The Greater Austin
Chamber of Commerce**
austinnevada.com, 775-964-2200



Lake Las Vegas, Henderson

Hawthorne Convention Center
visitmineralcounty.com,
775-945-5854

Jackpot (Cactus Petes)
jackpotnevada.com, 800-821-1103

Jarbidge
jarbidge.org

Lovelock
loverslock.com, 775-273-7213

Minden (Town of)
townofminden.com, 775-782-5976

Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation
pyramidlake.us, 775-574-1000

Sparks (City of)
cityofsparks.us, 775-353-5555

Spring Creek (Association)
springcreeknv.net, 775-753-6295

Virginia City Tourism Commission
visitvirginiacitynv.com, 800-718-7587

Wells Chamber of Commerce
wellsnevada.com, 775-752-3540



Diamond Peak Ski Resort, Lake Tahoe

MATTHEW B. BROWN



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**VISIT
VEGASANYWHERE.MOBI**

West Wendover (City of)
westwendovercity.com, 866-299-2489

**White Pine County Tourism
and Recreation Board (Ely)**
elynevada.net, 800-496-9350

**Winnemucca Convention
& Visitors Authority**
winnemucca.nv.us, 800-962-2638

SOUTHERN NEVADA

City of Las Vegas
lasvegasnevada.gov, 702-229-6011

**Las Vegas Convention
& Visitors Authority**
visitlasvegas.com, 702-892-0711

Beatty Chamber of Commerce
beattynevada.org, 866-736-3716

Boulder City Chamber of Commerce
bouldercitychamber.com, 702-293-2034

Goldfield Chamber of Commerce
goldfieldnevada.org, 775-485-3560

More Nevada events and shows: travelnevada.com/events-shows

Henderson (City of)
hendersonlive.com, 702-267-2171

Laughlin
visitlaughlin.com, 800-452-8445

Lincoln County
lincolncountynevada.com, 877-870-3003

Mesquite (City of)
mesquitenv.gov, 702-346-5295

Moapa Valley Chamber of Commerce
moapavalleychamber.com, 702-398-7160

Pahrump
visitpahump.com, 866-722-5800

Primm (Valley Resorts)
primmvalleyresorts.com, 888-386-7867

Rachel
rachel-nevada.com, 775-729-2515

Tonopah (Town of)
tonopahnevada.com, 775-482-6336

TERRITORIES

Cowboy Country
cowboycountry.com

Indian Territory
nevadaindianterritory.com, 775-687-8333

Las Vegas Territory
lvterritory.com, 702 348-4708

Nevada Silver Trails
nevadasilvertrails.com

Pony Express Territory
ponyexpressnevada.com, 888-359-9449

Reno-Tahoe Territory
renotahoe.com, 775-687-7410

ART/PERFORMING ARTS

Arts Las Vegas
artslasvegas.org, 702-229-6511

Brüka Theatre, Reno
bruka.org, 775-323-3221

Eureka Opera House
eurekacounty.com, 775-237-6006

Misfits Theater Group, Dayton
misfitstheatergroup.org

Oats Park Art Center, Fallon
churchillarts.org, 775-423-1440

Pioneer Center, Reno
pioneercenter.com, 775-686-6600

Piper's Opera House, Virginia City
piperslive.com, 775-847-0433

Western Folklife Center, Elko
westernfolklife.org, 775-738-7508



Yerington Theatre for the Arts
yeringtonarts.com, 775-463-1783

For more arts events in the state:



NATIONAL PARKS

Great Basin National Park
nps.gov/grba, 775-234-7517

Death Valley National Park
nps.gov/deva, 760-786-3200

STATE PARKS

Nevada State Parks
parks.nv.gov, 775-684-2770



SILVER STATE ON THE SILVER SCREEN

Nevada—and not just Las Vegas—has made its mark on the motion picture industry.

BY MATTHEW B. BROWN
PHOTO BY NEIL LOCKHART

Early in 2011, Carson City and neighboring Douglas County were abuzz with Dakota Fanning sightings. The famous 18-year-old actress (then 17) was in the Carson City area for the filming of “The Motel Life,” based on a book of the same name by author-musician Willy Vlautin.

“I just saw her and Emile [Hirsch] filming in Carson City at the Back on Track Inn,” wrote Frank Norton in a comment on the website onlocationvacations.com on March 4, 2011. “I yelled ‘I love you’ to her, and she stopped, looked at me, and started walking again.”

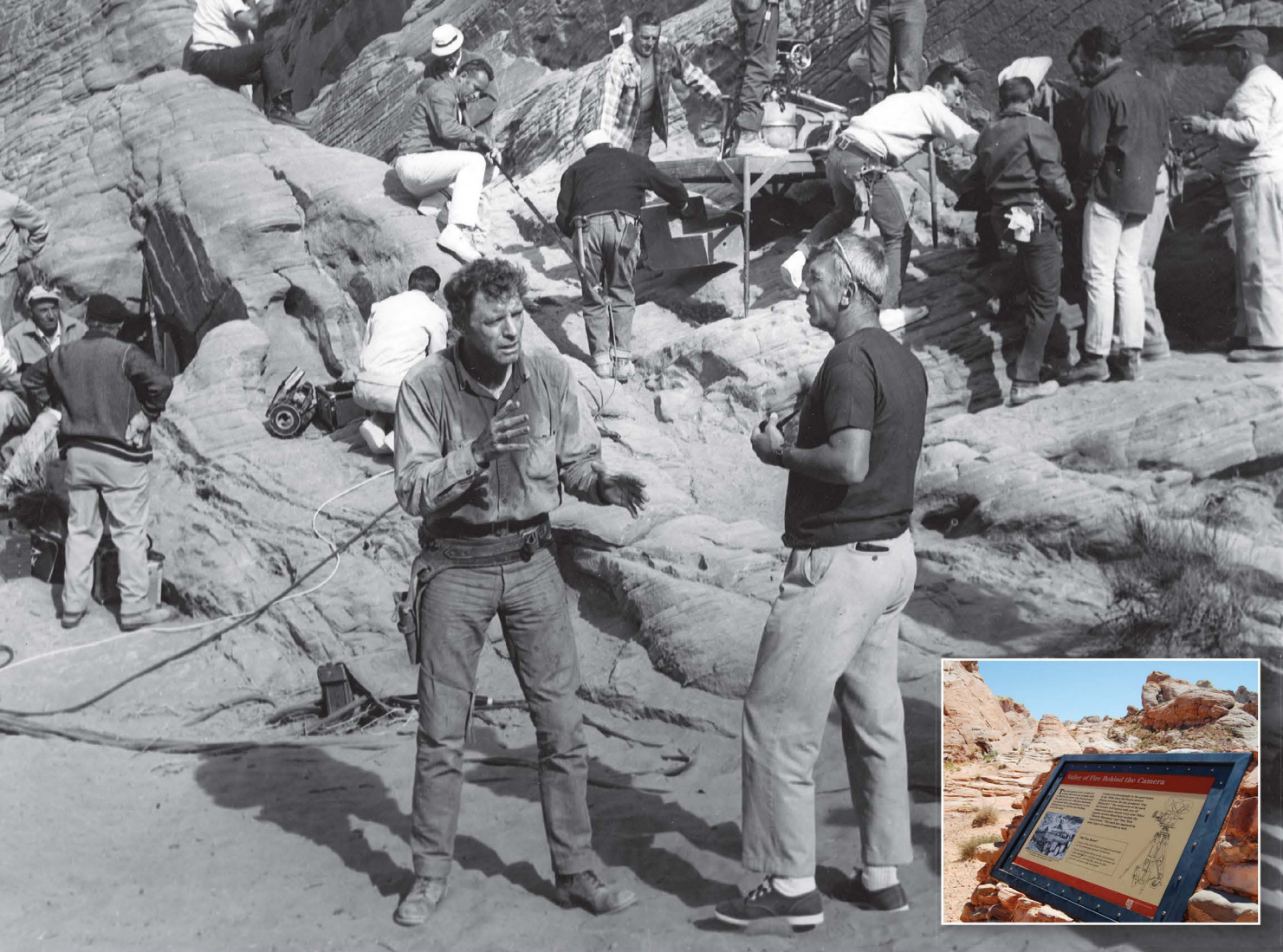
Norton represents that crazed movie lover in all of us; we become obsessed with the characters, quotes, and places from our favorite films. While a release date has not been announced for “The Motel Life”—also reportedly shot in Gardnerville, Genoa, Minden, Reno,

and Virginia City—it’s just one of many in a long line of recognizable movies that take advantage of Nevada’s unique cities, towns, and landscapes.

With the help of the Nevada Film Office, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, we chose a diverse group of films to spotlight in this story. Some of them you can even revisit—literally—today, simply by planning a trip to or within Nevada.

Or, as the days get shorter and the weather grows cooler, it’s also a great time of year to rent some movies, gather around the television with family and friends, and enjoy some Nevada classics.





The cast and crew of “The Professionals,” released in 1966, is shown during filming at Southern Nevada’s Valley of Fire State Park. Actor Burt Lancaster and director Richard Brooks (right) conceptualize in the foreground. Today, there is a commemorative plaque (inset) at the state park. Stars of “The Misfits,” including Marilyn Monroe, landed on the cover (shown below) of the December 1986 issue of *Nevada Magazine*.

Plot descriptions are from International Movie Database—imdb.com.



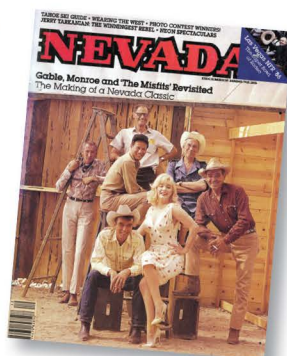
“THE MISFITS” 1961 — Dayton & Reno

Plot: A sexy divorcée falls for an over-the-hill cowboy who is struggling to maintain his romantically independent lifestyle in early-’60s Nevada.

Genre: Drama | Romance | Western

Director: John Huston

Stars: Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, & Montgomery Clift



Misfits Flat has quite a ring to it. Unfortunately for tourists, it’s on private property. Fortunately, Lester Robertson—owner of the land and the company Complete Millwork Service—is open to playing tour guide. Robinson says motorized vehicles are off limits, but he’s invited hikers, landsailers, and model airplane flyers and rocketeers to his acreage just south of Stagecoach off U.S.

Highway 50. “Then there’s the occasional school film shoot,” he adds. “Schools from the Bay Area shoot shorts. It’s really the only dry lakebed that’s privately held. They’re looking for that desert scenery; that cloud of dust. I have all those vistas.”

As for “The Misfits,” Robinson says he knows precisely where the movie was shot and where the action took place. “The only people who have been interested are Europeans,” he says. “The French and Germans have an affinity for westerns.” Call Robinson at 775-246-0485 to inquire about the property.

Dayton’s Odeon Hall & Saloon, now home to the aptly named Misfits Theater Group (misfitstheatergroup.org), is where the movie’s lively bar scenes were filmed. Interestingly, director Huston was the winner of Virginia City’s inaugural Camel Races in 1960. The event is still held annually in Virginia City.

Widely known for being both Monroe and Gable’s last completed films, “Misfits” scenes were also filmed in Stagecoach and at Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation. Both actors were at the twilight of their careers. A doctor was on call 24 hours a day during filming, as both were battling health problems. Gable died shortly after filming, and Monroe passed away more than a year later.



"THE PROFESSIONALS"

1966 — Valley of Fire State Park

Plot: An arrogant Texas millionaire hires four adventurers to rescue his kidnapped wife from a notorious Mexican bandit.

Genre: Action | Adventure | Western

Director: Richard Brooks

Stars: Burt Lancaster, Lee Marvin, & Robert Ryan

Today, a plaque marks the spot where "The Professionals" set once stood, accessible via the White Domes Trail in Valley of Fire, Nevada's oldest and largest state park. "The main movie set, a Mexican hacienda, was located where the parking lot is now. Railroad ties can still be seen sticking out of the rocks," reads the plaque. Parts of the movie were also filmed in Las Vegas and at Lake Mead, both nearby.

Hal Roach began the tradition of filming westerns among the red sandstone vistas in the 1920s before the area was officially recognized as a state park in 1935. Other well-known films to feature Valley of Fire State Park include "Electric Horseman" and "Star Trek Generations."



"THE GODFATHER: PART II"

1974 — Lake Tahoe

Plot: The early life and career of Vito Corleone in 1920s New York is portrayed while his son, Michael, expands and tightens his grip on his crime syndicate stretching from Lake Tahoe to pre-revolution 1958 Cuba.

Genre: Crime | Drama

Director: Francis Ford Coppola

Stars: Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, & Robert Duvall

In true mob fashion, the Lake Tahoe location used in the second "Godfather" is shrouded in secrecy. "It's long been rumored that a scene was filmed at the Thunderbird Lodge, but the property manager there has no recollection," says Robin Holabird, former deputy director of the Nevada Film Office before she retired in 2008. "The production designer, Dean Tavoularis, told me he could only remember shooting near Homewood. That was the old Kaiser Estate, which is now the Fleur du Lac condos. Only the boathouse remains standing." The original "Godfather" used the Riviera in Las Vegas for filming.

Some films that feature Lake Tahoe as a backdrop are more obvious. The 2006 film "Smokin' Aces" used the iconic Cave Rock, which drivers pass through on U.S. Highway 50. "The Deep End" used Sand Harbor for Tilda Swinton's character to dump a body; ironic because Sand Harbor is probably the most shallow end of Lake Tahoe," Holabird adds.



"THE SHOOTIST"

1976 — Carson City

Plot: A dying gunfighter spends his last days looking for a way to die with a minimum of pain and a maximum of dignity.

Genre: Drama | Western

Director: Don Siegel

Stars: John Wayne, Lauren Bacall, & Ron Howard

The 1914 Krebs-Peterson house at 500 Mountain Street in Carson City (near the Governor's Mansion) has a sidewalk plaque commemorating western icon John Wayne's final film. "Wayne was great to Carson City locals while he was staying at the Ormsby House Hotel during the filming," reads imdb.com. "He signed autographs for young people readily."

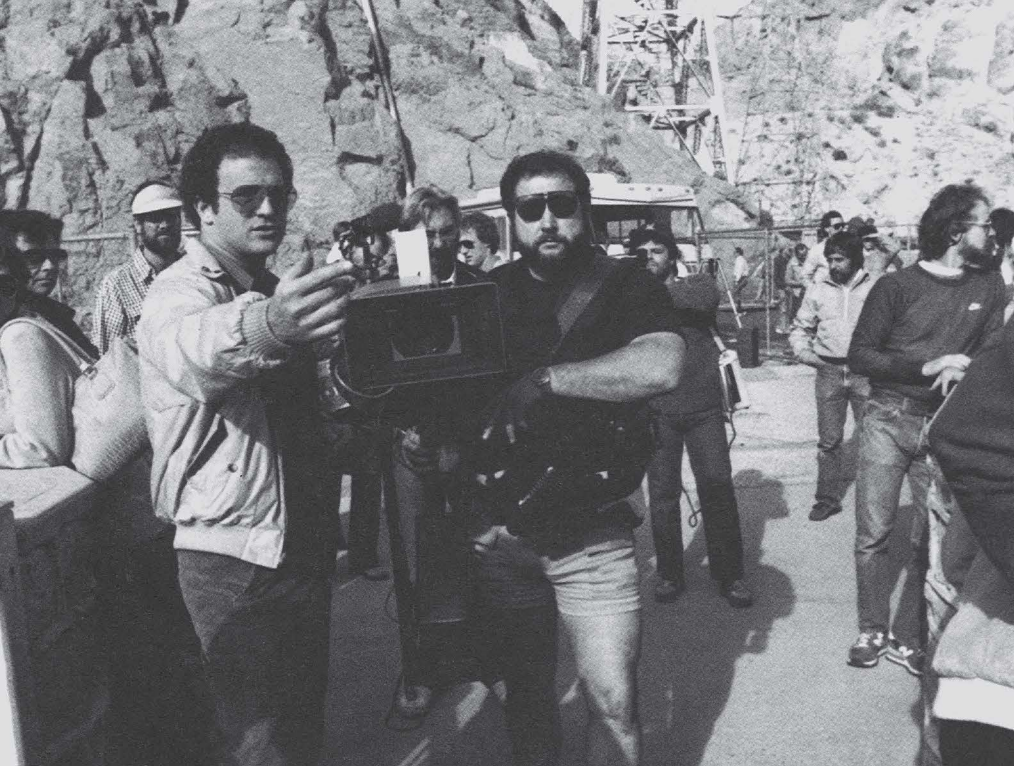
Nevada Magazine art director Tony deRonnebeck grew up with a similar story. Tony's grandfather, Otto, worked as a truck driver for Salvage Construction Company in Carson City. "He was delivering sand to cover the asphalt streets for the set. On one of the trips John Wayne jumped up in the cab of his truck, shared a Camel straight, and talked about the old days," Tony told me.

The movie was also filmed in nearby Washoe Lake State Park. Ironical that he played a dying gunfighter, Wayne's acting career faded quietly. He never made it back to the big screen despite dying of stomach cancer a whole three years after filming for "The Shootist" began.



NEVADA STATE MUSEUM, CARSON CITY

John Wayne (center, wearing cowboy hat), Lauren Bacall (next to Wayne), and Ron Howard (next to horse) star in "The Shootist." The house still stands at 500 Mountain Street in Carson City, where a public monument honors Wayne's final film. See more photos on page 4.



Director Albert Brooks (left of camera, pointing) is shown on location at Hoover Dam during the filming of the comedy "Lost in America."

The Las Vegas locations used in this classic mob film are too vast to list, but some notable ones are Bally's and former Las Vegas mayor Oscar Goodman's actual Fourth Street office. The driving scene in the beginning of the movie was filmed on Fremont Street in downtown, which is no longer open to automobile traffic.

The Tangiers casino mentioned in the movie is fictional; the story is actually based upon the history of the Stardust casino and the life of mobster Franky "Lefty" Rosenthal.

Las Vegas residents and tourists can get a great overview of the city's mob history



"LOST IN AMERICA"

1985 — Hoover Dam & Las Vegas

Plot: A husband and wife in their 30s decide to quit their jobs, live as free spirits, and cruise America in a Winnebago.

Genre: Comedy

Director: Albert Brooks

Stars: Albert Brooks, Julie Hagerty, & Sylvia Farrel

This story ranges from the work-a-day world of Los Angeles to the razzle-dazzle of Las Vegas to the high energy of New York City; from the stunning beauty of Hoover Dam to the quaint life of roadside trailer camps.

In Las Vegas, the picture company worked and lodged at the Desert Inn Hotel, filming in the casino, lobby, and coffee shop. In the casino, usually seen in films as a distant backdrop, special arrangements were made to enable filming at the gaming tables amid customers and employees.

In striking contrast to Vegas' neon shimmer was the majesty of the Hoover Dam. For the filmmakers, as well as for the main characters David and Linda, the journey proved to be an exercise in rediscovering America.—*From albertbrooks.com*



"CASINO"

1995 — Las Vegas

Plot: Greed, deception, money, power, and murder occur between two mobster best friends and a trophy wife over a gambling empire.

Genre: Biography | Crime | Drama

Director: Martin Scorsese

Stars: Robert De Niro, Sharon Stone, & Joe Pesci



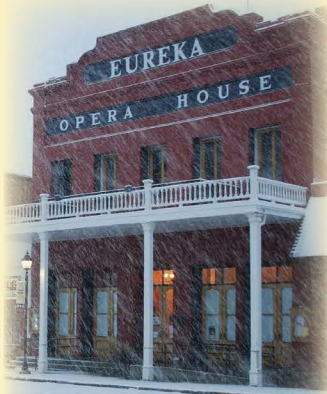
TOP 10 NEVADA MOVIES

According to Forrest Hartman

1. The Godfather: Part II (1974)
2. Leaving Las Vegas (1995)
3. Casino (1995)
4. Diamonds Are Forever (1971)
5. The Misfits (1961)
6. The Cooler (2003)
7. Hard Eight (also known as Sydney) (1996)
8. The Hangover (2009)
9. Ocean's Eleven (2001)
10. Misery (1990)

Forrest Hartman is a Reno-based film critic. Visit his website at forresthartman.com.

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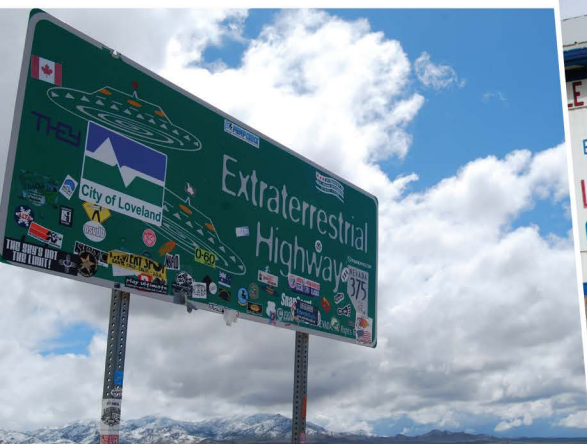
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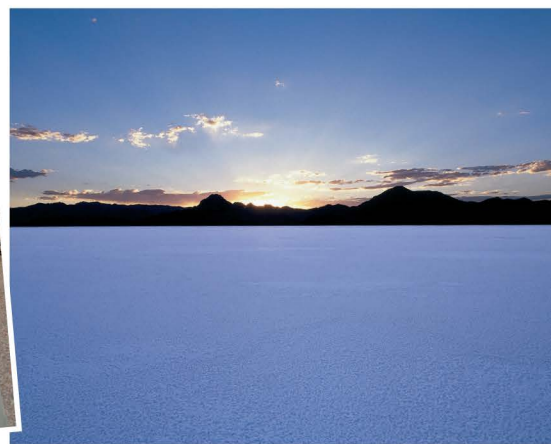


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MATTHEW B. BROWN



on the Vegas Mob Tour (vegasmobtour.com, 866-218-4935), Wednesday through Saturday in the winter months and daily in the spring and summer months. The two-and-a-half hour bus tour covers fedoras and pinstriped suits from Bugsy Siegel in the '40s to Rosenthal in the '70s. Former mobster Frank Cullotta served as a technical adviser on the "Casino" set and has provided his insights to the tour.

Be sure to tuck the kids into bed before pushing "play"—"Casino" holds the Guinness world record for the most swearing in a film, according to imdb.com, not to mention the intense violence.

"INDEPENDENCE DAY" 1996 — Rachel & West Wendover

Plot: The aliens are coming, and their goal is to invade and destroy. Fighting superior technology, man's best weapon is the will to survive.

Genre: Action | Adventure | Sci-Fi

Director: Roland Emmerich

Stars: Will Smith, Bill Pullman, & Jeff Goldblum

Perhaps Nevada's most obscure monument to the motion-picture industry lies in the small town of Rachel on the Extraterrestrial Highway—or State Route 375. "The 'ID4' monument in front of the Little A'Le Inn was placed here by the producers of the movie 'Independence Day,'" reads rachel-nevada.com. "It contains a time capsule, to be opened in the year 2050."

Imdb.com lists the "trailer park scene" as having been filmed in Rachel. Holabird, also a film reviewer for KUNR, says Pullman and Goldblum traveled to Rachel the year the movie was released in theaters—1996—to dedicate the official opening of the Extraterrestrial Highway. "The Area 51 shots were done at the Wendover Air Base, which meant the cast and crew, even Will Smith, stayed in West Wendover," she says. The movie also used Utah's famously spacious and white Bonneville Salt Flats, just east of West Wendover, for filming.

The 1997 action movie "Con Air," starring Nicolas Cage, also used the Air Base and Salt Flats, and the crew stayed in Nevada, according to Holabird.



"3000 MILES TO GRACELAND" 2001 — Las Vegas & Nelson

Plot: A gang of ex-cons robs a casino during Elvis convention week.

Genre: Action | Comedy | Crime

Director: Demian Lichtenstein

Stars: Kurt Russell, Kevin Costner, & Courteney Cox

Nelson is best known as one of Southern Nevada's most intriguing "living ghost towns," but it's also home to a piece—a big piece—of movie memorabilia. The remnants of a plane blown up by Costner's character sit adjacent to the Techatticup Mine, available for tours most days via Eldorado Canyon Mine Tours (eldoradocanyonminetours.com, 702-291-0026).

The set was not new to Russell. Another film he stars in, 1997's "Breakdown," also used the Nelson area as a backdrop. "[Producer] Martha De Laurentiis told me at a Cineposium that production went great there," Holabird says.



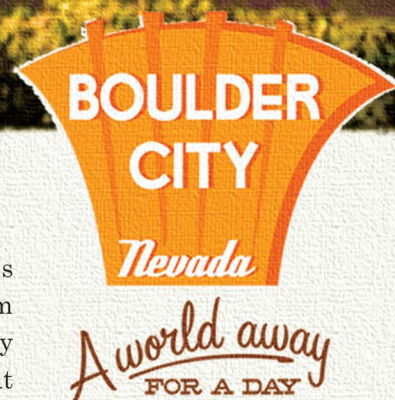
SUSAN GIBBS

Wreckage from "3000 Miles to Graceland" (above) rests in pieces at Nelson, located in Southern Nevada. Top of page, left to right: The Extraterrestrial Highway leads to Rachel, home to a time capsule left by the cast and crew of "Independence Day," who also stayed in West Wendover and filmed at the Bonneville Salt Flats.

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"WAKING UP IN RENO"

2002

Plot: A romantic comedy about two trashy couples traveling to Reno to see a monster truck show.

Genre: Comedy | Romance

Director: Jordan Brady

Stars: Billy Bob Thornton, Charlize Theron, & Patrick Swayze

The Biggest Little City has provided the backdrop for countless films, as is the case with this under-the-radar movie. Perhaps it wouldn't have flown quite so far under had Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston not dropped out prior to filming. Casino scenes were filmed in the former Fitzgeralds (now CommRow), also seen in the 2010 film "Love Ranch" starring Joe Pesci which is based on the real-life story of Joe Conforte opening the first legal brothel in the state.

"Kingpin" used downtown Reno's National Bowling Stadium extensively, and who could forget the scene of Whoopi Goldberg and a group of fellow nuns running under the famous downtown "Biggest Little City in the World" arch in "Sister Act"?



"THE ISLAND"

2005 — Rhyolite

Plot: A man goes on the run after he discovers that he is actually a "harvestable being," kept as a source of replacement parts, along with others, in a Utopian facility.

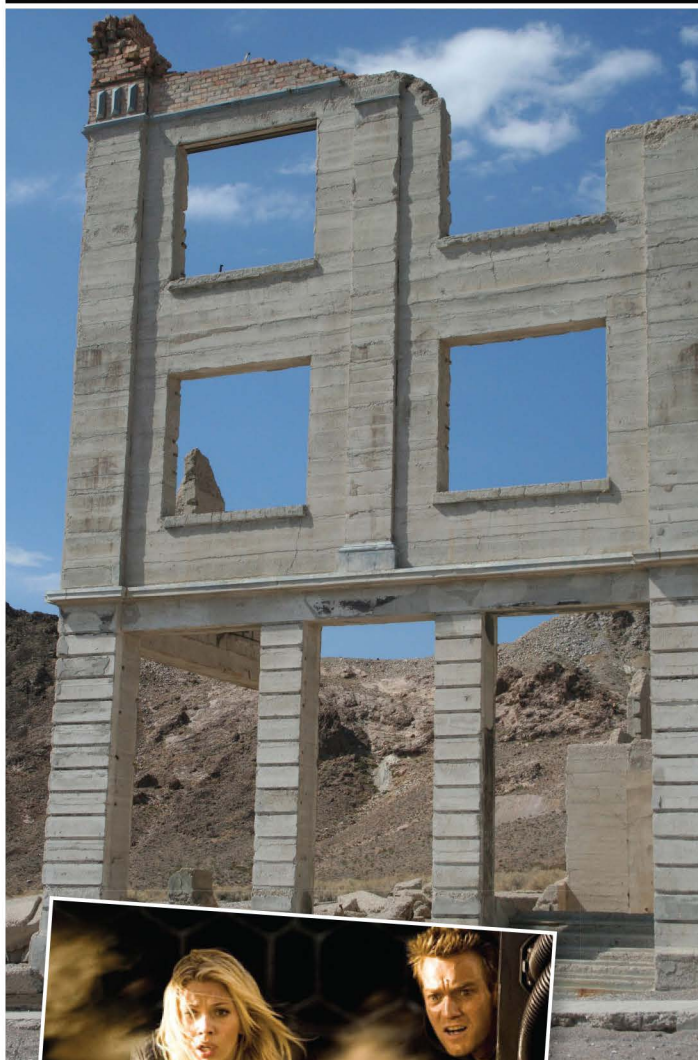
Genre: Action | Sci-Fi | Thriller

Director: Michael Bay

Stars: Scarlett Johansson, Ewan McGregor, & Djimon Hounsou

Forget its role in popular films. If you haven't been to Rhyolite, a popular ghost town just west of Beatty, you're missing a real Nevada treasure. The barely standing buildings and ruins remain from the early 1900s when the Bullfrog Mining District boomed. By the 1920s, the town was by all means abandoned. Structures such as the three-story Cook Bank Building fit Bay's vision of a desolate world in which Johansson and McGregor's characters are thrust.

Filming of "The Island" also commenced in Tonopah, according to imdb.com. 1987's "Cherry 2000," a sci-fi action number starring Melanie Griffith, was filmed almost exclusively in Nevada, utilizing the aforementioned Rhyolite, as well as Goldfield and the Hollywood-popular Valley of Fire State Park. ▀



BOBBIE GREEN



Stars of "Waking Up in Reno" (top, left to right): Billy Bob Thornton, Natasha Richardson, Charlize Theron, and the late Patrick Swayze. The ghost town of Rhyolite (above middle) has figured prominently in movies such as "Cherry 2000" and "The Island" (above).



MOVIE TRIVIA

Do you know your Nevada movies? Take this quiz to find out. (answers below)

1. What "unlucky" number played a role in "The Hangover" and is the title of a Danzig song that's featured on the movie's soundtrack?
2. What Cirque du Soleil show stars in the film "Knocked Up"?
3. What famous Nevada landmark is said to house aliens in the original "Transformers"?
4. What popular Reno event did Sean Penn visit when he directed "Into the Wild"?
5. "The Shootist" marked the final performance of what iconic actor?
6. What under-the-radar Nevada city is actually rural Nevada's premier location for hosting film and television crews?
7. Charlie Chaplin's frequent leading lady Edna Purviance was born in what rural Nevada community? Bonus point: What Nevada town did she grow up in?
8. "Things Change" and "Cobb" include scenes shot at what formerly Frank Sinatra-owned casino in Crystal Bay?
9. Name the 1980 movie that was partly filmed in Gabbs.
10. Much of the film "Leaving Las Vegas" was actually shot in what smaller Southern Nevada city?



Joe Pesci in "Casino"

Trivia Answers: 1. 13. 2. Mystère. 3. Hoover Dam. 4. Street Vibrations. 5. John Wayne. 6. West Wendover. 7. Paradise Valley & Lovelock. 8. Cal-Neva. 9. Melvin and Howard. 10. Laughlin.

NEVADA FILM OFFICE TURNS 30

BY ED HARRAN

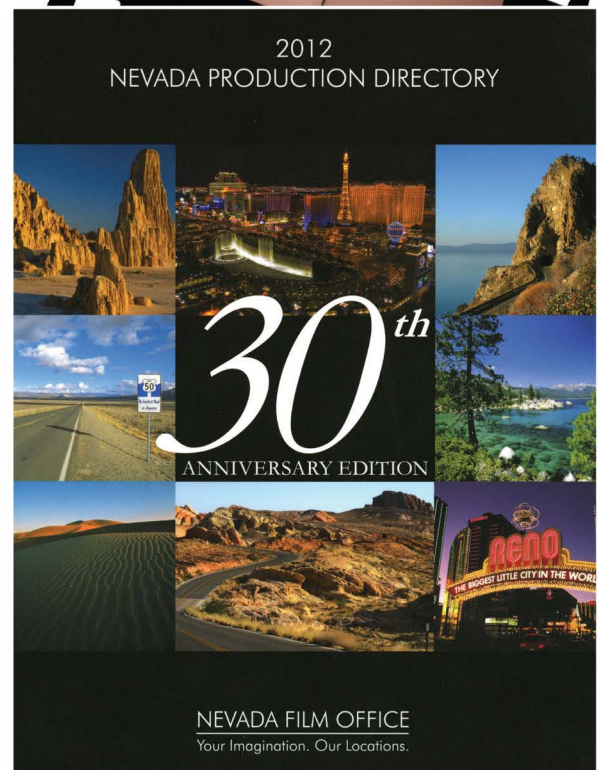
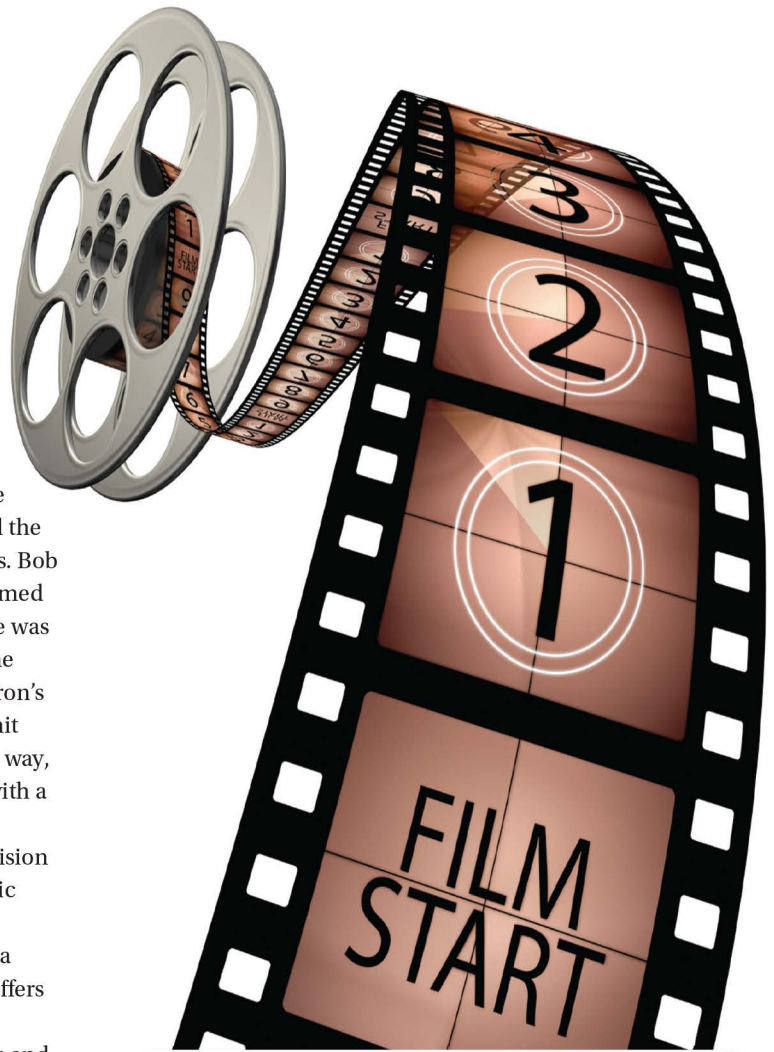
Did you know that Nevada was the site of one of the world's first big blockbuster movies? You have to go all the way back to March 17, 1897 when the James Corbett vs. Bob Fitzsimmons world championship boxing bout was filmed in Carson City using three cameras—which at the time was considered an enormous production. And although the box office numbers never quite matched James Cameron's "Titanic" or "Avatar," for its day the fight was a smash hit and played in nickelodeons across the country. By the way, Fitzsimmons knocked out Corbett in the 14th round with a left hook to the gut, and a new champ was crowned.

Since that day in 1897, countless feature films, television programs (including series, specials, and reality), music videos, commercials, documentaries, sporting events, still photography, student films, and other multi-media projects have been drawn to the Silver State. Nevada offers a production-friendly atmosphere with little red tape, intergovernmental cooperation, industry professionals and award-winning crewmembers, state-of-the-art production facilities and equipment, a favorable tax climate, 300-plus days of sunshine a year, world-class accommodations, restaurants, entertainment, and more. In fact, Nevada is recognized by filmmakers and producers worldwide as a premier production destination with locations so distinct they act as ready-made sets for their productions.

From its inception in 1982, the Nevada Film Office has facilitated numerous productions and has generated more than \$2 billion in revenue for the state. The Film Office assists productions with location scouting, area logistics, script breakdowns, permitting regulations, insurance requirements, technical support, and everything in between to help assure that a production runs smoothly, remains on-time and on-budget, and has a good experience so they will come back to Nevada for future productions.

The Film Office also administers an annual screenplay competition where the winning script must contain 75 percent of locations filmable in Nevada. ▀

Read the rest of Harran's story in the **2012 Nevada Production Directory**, which can be viewed online at nevadafilm.com along with a searchable photo image library. ➤



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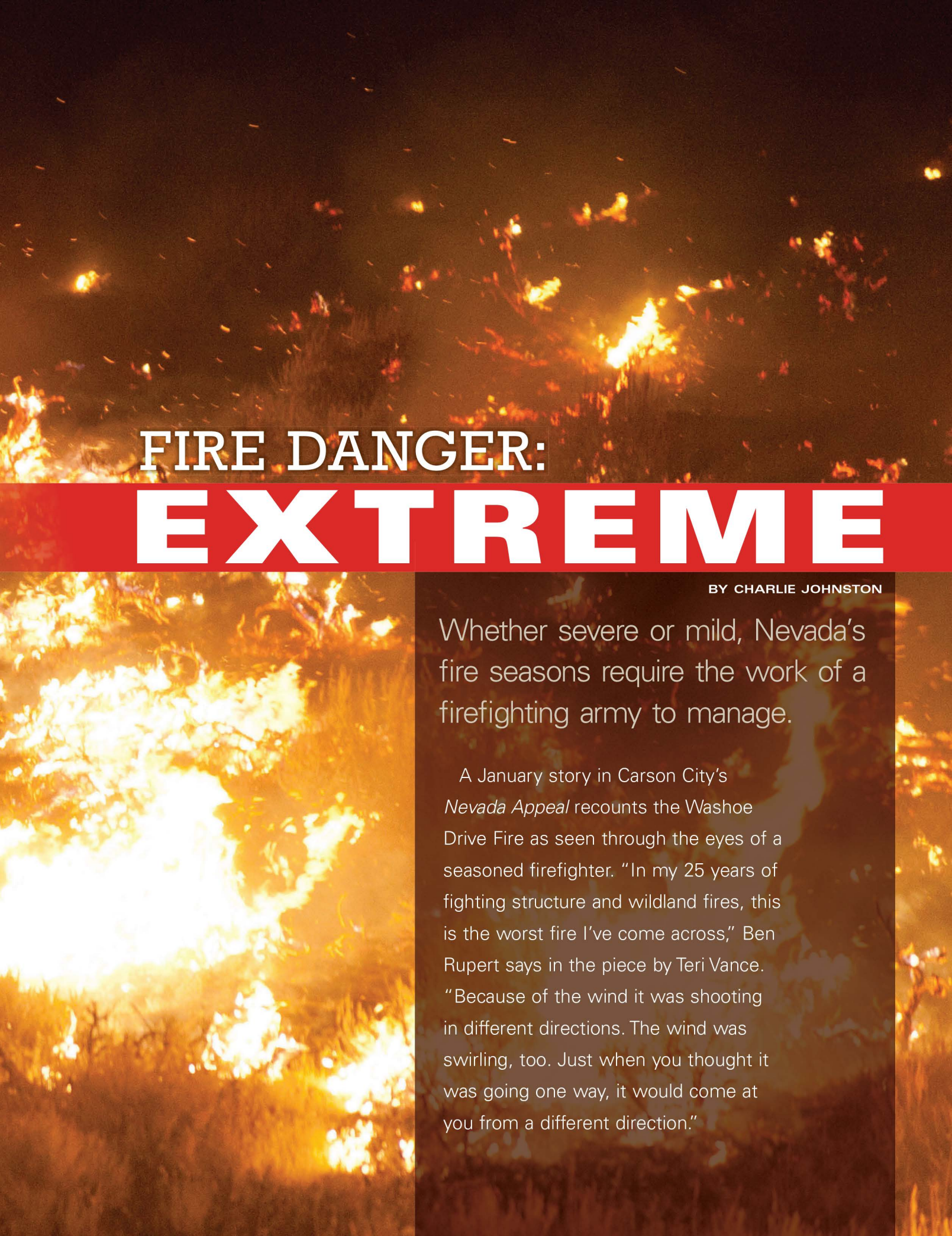
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An undercautious man's improper disposal of fireplace ashes caused the January 19 Washoe Drive Fire. Driven by high winds and severely dry conditions, the erratic blaze spread quickly and consumed more than 3,000 acres before firefighters were able to contain it.

JAMES GLOVER II/REUTERS



FIRE DANGER:

EXTREME

BY CHARLIE JOHNSTON

Whether severe or mild, Nevada's fire seasons require the work of a firefighting army to manage.

A January story in Carson City's *Nevada Appeal* recounts the Washoe Drive Fire as seen through the eyes of a seasoned firefighter. "In my 25 years of fighting structure and wildland fires, this is the worst fire I've come across," Ben Rupert says in the piece by Teri Vance. "Because of the wind it was shooting in different directions. The wind was swirling, too. Just when you thought it was going one way, it would come at you from a different direction."



RYAN JERZ

An arcing power line sparked the Caughlin Fire (above) the morning of November 18, 2011 in the foothills of southwest Reno. High winds pushed the fire toward the city, preventing aircraft from dousing the flames and causing a state of emergency to be issued in The Biggest Little City. August's Holloway Fire (opposite page) charred more than 460,000 acres of northwestern Nevada and southeastern Oregon. It took 600 firefighters and incident command staff more than two weeks to extinguish.

Vance goes on to write that Rupert's crew was the first to arrive at the fire and was met by a blaze unlike any Rupert had ever seen. "The smoke was so dark; you couldn't see an arm's length in front of you." Rupert's comments and the story conclude with a lament of the severely dry winter conditions that exacerbated the January blaze: "It's like having a fire start in the middle of August."

A press release sent to *Nevada Magazine* in mid-August stated that "during the past week in Nevada, lightning has produced 186 fires and burned about 252,000 acres." The release goes on to include comments from Governor Brian Sandoval. "I am closely monitoring developments on all of the fires and working closely with our lead agencies to make certain all of our available resources have been deployed," he says. "I would ask for the help of all residents and tourists alike...everyone must remain as vigilant as possible to ensure they do not inadvertently contribute to the problem through activities that could ignite a fire."

As large and devastating as some of the 2012 fire season's blazes have been, as frightening as firsthand accounts like Rupert's are, and as much media attention as the fire season has garnered, it's hard to believe that it's not far from Nevada's norm. Paul Petersen, Deputy State Fire Management Officer for

the Bureau of Land Management, says that the nearly 1,000-fire count as of September is close to average, and that the total acreage burned this year is roughly only a third higher than usual—and remarkably less than the particularly damaging fire seasons of 2005, 2006, and 2007.

"FIRE IS A YEAR-ROUND EVENT"

There is no denying that Nevada is a dry and wildfire-prone state. In the characteristically arid Great Basin and Inner Mountain West region, the Silver State stands out as a particularly parched place. The 2012 fire season saw record summertime heat, well-below-average precipitation, dismal snowpack in the mountains, and an abundance of tinder-dry fuel contribute to nearly 1,000 fires that had already charred roughly 650,000 acres by mid-September.

Actually, the term "fire season" is something of a misnomer. According to Petersen and Rich Harvey, Deputy State Forester for the Nevada Division of Forestry, the 2012 fire season was, for all intents and purposes, a continuation of a 2011 fire season that carried on well past the typical fire danger peak of late summer. "Fire is a year-round event," Harvey says. "Fire seasons are getting longer, and fires are getting bigger."

Such an assertion is given credence by current



KENT ELLIOTT/BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

events, such as the pair of uncommonly devastating blazes that stunned southwest Reno and nearby Washoe and Pleasant Valleys last fall and winter. Both the November 2011 Caughlin Fire and January 2012 Washoe Drive Fire were fueled by extremely dry conditions and pushed by winds nearing 80 mph, and both occurred during months that generally see relatively low fire danger in the region. Combined, the two fires burned more than 5,000 acres, damaged or completely destroyed 74 homes and structures, caused in excess of \$20 million in property damage, cost state and federal firefighting agencies nearly \$3 million to suppress, and took two lives.

While the Caughlin and Washoe Drive Fires' unusual timing and proximity to the state's second-largest metropolitan area resulted in widespread panic and brought the blazes enormous attention, their sizes pale in comparison to other wildfires that have afflicted the state this year. The Holloway Fire, for example, burned more than 460,000 acres in northwestern Nevada and southeastern Oregon between August 5 and 21; that's a piece of land roughly the same size as Douglas County.

Despite the severity and size of recent blazes such as the Caughlin, Holloway, and Washoe Drive Fires, when compared to some fire seasons just in the last decade, 2012 hasn't even been all that bad.

The Western Great Basin Coordination Center is the interagency focal point for coordinating resource mobilization for wildland fires in the Great Basin—basically, it's where all of Nevada's firefighting agencies come together to share information and efforts. According to the center, 1.7 million acres of the Silver State—an area about 20 times larger than the City of Las Vegas—went up in flames in 2005. About 1.3 million acres burned in 2006, and 2007 saw just shy of 900,000 acres burn.

As immense as all this devastation sounds, it would be a lot worse if not for the focused and concerted firefighting efforts of local, state, and federal agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and Nevada Division of Forestry. "Firefighters are the only people on earth that are trying to actually stop natural disasters," Petersen says. "And we love doing it."

NEVADA'S FIRE LEGACY

From long using it as an ally and a tool to the never-ending struggle against it as an adversary, fire has been intertwined in human history longer than human history has been recorded. Fire has played a substantial—and often devastating—role in Nevada's history, too. Towns that sprang up overnight during the state's early gold and silver booms were cramped jumbles of mostly wood buildings that were almost

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STEVE B. SULLIVAN

The Ironwood Fire—July 2-4 in Palomino Valley north of Sparks—consumed 640 acres and was contained within 36 hours. The cause was cited as “accidental... [perhaps from] a wheel bearing lost from a passing vehicle,” in a KRNV Reno News 4 story.

always heated with wood-burning stoves and fireplaces and lit by oil lanterns. It comes as little surprise that many such towns were frequently afflicted with fire.

An October 1875 fire destroyed two thirds of Virginia City along with the city’s fledgling fire department, which lost all of its equipment and most of its firehouses. While the city rebuilt thanks to the mineral wealth of the still-productive Comstock Lode, it never fully recovered. Genoanevada.org, the tourism website for one of Nevada’s oldest and most storied towns, mentions a fire that occurred in June 1910 as “the most significant event in the history of Genoa.” The blaze destroyed many of the town’s businesses and the courthouse and is considered the catalyst for Genoa losing the county seat six years later after failing to fully recover from the damages. Verdi, a few miles west of Reno on the Truckee River, has been plagued by more than 20 substantial blazes in its 150-year history, including a 1926 fire that effectively crippled the town and brought an end to its days as an active railroad stop.

Outside of its history of tinderbox boomtowns, Nevada’s open land is highly prone to fire as well. A wide variety of fuel sources, from fast-burning grasses and shrubs in the valleys to forested mountainsides, combine to make fires in the state especially unpredictable and dangerous, according to Harvey. “Cheatgrass and other invasive species make it even worse,” he says. “Cheatgrass is uniquely adapted to be a really good fuel.” Harvey says that the abundance and dryness of those fuel sources are good indicators of the potential severity of a given fire season. Petersen

adds that frequently high winds and fast-burning fuel types mean that Nevada fires are especially inclined to rapid spreading and “phenomenal” growth.

As unlikely as it sounds, Nevada’s predisposition to large and dangerous fires has actually resulted in some good, too. According to Petersen, a massive fire that originated near Beowawe in Eureka County in the 1960s and eventually spread north to the Idaho border (about 100 miles in a straight line) changed the way that firefighting agencies around the country approached battling wildland fires. As Petersen tells the story, there wasn’t much coordination between national agencies when the Beowawe fire struck, and procuring the resources and manpower to fight it as it crossed the border into Idaho proved problematic.

As a result, nationwide coordination was established and, today, firefighting agencies around the country share information and resources readily and with unparalleled efficiency. That coordination means Nevada fire engine crews often fight fires as far away as Louisiana, and crews from Maine were able to give a helping hand at the Holloway Fire in Nevada and Oregon in August, according to Petersen. So efficient is the nationwide coordination system, in fact, that Petersen says a fire crew from across the country could be mobilized within 30 minutes of an initial request.

LIKE FIGHTING A WAR

Harvey was the incident commander at last summer’s Waldo Canyon Fire in Colorado, a blaze that raged out of control for

Winnemucca

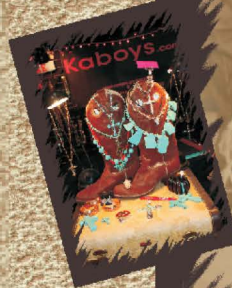
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Lightning was the culprit behind the July 23 Chimney Fire near South Fork State Recreation Area south of Elko. The blaze charred nearly 4,600 acres by the time it was contained on July 28.

DINI ESPLIN

more than two weeks, drew forces from all around the country (including Nevada), and destroyed hundreds of homes in Colorado Springs. While Harvey is reluctant to draw parallels between fires and wars because he has never fought a war himself, the brass at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs weren't so hesitant to make such comparisons when lauding the efforts of Harvey and the other firefighters who saved their city and base.

Comparing the efforts involved in fighting fires to those of fighting wars is an increasingly common and apt refrain. The enemy is surely different, but many of the strategies share common ground: containing a fire by preemptively destroying fuel in its path is akin to cutting off an enemy's line of supply. Building a containment line around the perimeter of a fire to work it back on itself and stamp out hotspots is the firefighting equivalent of flanking an opposing force, and understanding and using topography and geographical features is as vital to firefighters as to soldiers. Beyond these and other literal tactical parallels, the two share logistical similarities as well.

Effective and prompt containment of a fire requires more than engine and hand crews battling flames. Like a military operation, firefighters on the ground (the total number of which can vary from a couple hundred to several thousand depending on the size and severity of a given fire) are just one part of an operation that includes 10 to 50 incident command staff who will probably not so much as see

flames while fighting a fire. "A lot of logistics and coordination go into building a fire camp [incident command center]," Petersen says. "Basically we build a small city in 24 hours. This city has all the functions of a normal city: food, sanitation, supplies, fuel, news...it serves as a firefighter's home away from home until the incident is complete and disappears as quickly as it was born after the fire is controlled." Rich Machado is a Bureau of Land Management Seasonal Engine Operator with three seasons of experience; he points to concise and accurate radio communication between firefighters on the ground, firefighting aircraft, and incident command radio operators as a key component to safely and successfully extinguishing a fire.

Petersen agrees that such communication is vital, not only for effectiveness and safety, but also because firefighting—especially when it involves aircraft—is very expensive. "The BLM has spent \$41 million fighting fires so far in 2012," Petersen says in a September interview. "We'll spend \$60-80 million fighting fires in an average year." He walks through a few simple calculations to show just how quickly the costs add up.

The aforementioned Holloway Fire in August took about 600 incident command staff and firefighters 12 days to contain. Six hundred people working 16-hour shifts for 12 days comes to 115,200 hours. At \$27.80 an hour (the hourly mean wage for a firefighter in Nevada as of May 2011 according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), the bill just



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"Firefighters are the only people on earth
that are trying to actually stop natural disasters.
And we love doing it."

—**Paul Petersen**, *Bureau of Land Management*
Deputy State Fire Management Officer





PHOTOS: BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Opposite page: The Springs Fire burned about 1,200 acres of the Pine Nut Mountains southeast of Carson City before it was contained on July 26. The lightning-caused blaze started four days earlier. The Type-3 Fire Engine is a common sight at Nevada fires. A capacity of 500 gallons of water and the capability to pump that much per minute make it well worth the roughly \$300,000 price tag.

for compensating employees comes to more than \$3.2 million, which doesn't even account for the enormous amount of overtime accrued. Start adding all the other associated costs—fuel, equipment, supplies, an aircraft or two at \$10,000-\$40,000 a day, \$8,000-\$16,000 an hour, and up to \$15,000 a drop—and the costs skyrocket. And that's just one fire. Petersen sums up the logistical challenges of firefighting well: "It's a million little hurdles to get to one final goal."

"FIRE IS NOT JUST FLAMES"

While the most visible part of what firefighters and firefighting agencies do is to put out fires, Harvey aptly points out that, "Fire is not just flames." In addition to charring large swaths of land and threatening the safety of Nevadans and their property, wildfires adversely affect air and water quality, destroy crucial habitat of endangered and at-risk wildlife such as sage grouse, and interrupt commerce by causing highway and interstate closures. Putting them out quickly can help to minimize these impacts, but Harvey and Petersen agree that firefighting agencies are most interested in having fewer fires to fight. "The best way to deal with fire is to not have it," Harvey says.

An increasingly large focus of the BLM, the Nevada Division of Forestry, and firefighting agencies around the nation is to build what Harvey calls a comprehensive protection program focused on preventing fires with community education and planning, intelligent management of fuels, and maintenance of forests and

rangeland. "About a third of fires in Nevada this year were human caused," Petersen says. While Harvey points out that the number of fires started by people in Nevada is vastly less than states where upwards of 80 percent of fires are traced to human negligence or, worse, intent, both agree that there is ample room for improvement. "We're seeing far more human-caused fires than we used to," Petersen says. He says that various restrictions based on fire danger in regions of the state help to decrease the instance of human-culprit fires, but they are hard to enforce and it is up to individuals to make intelligent choices. "We're seeing a lot of fires caused by stupid human tricks," he says, specifically mentioning the use of exploding targets in sport shooting and operating off-road vehicles in places with restrictions against them.

Organizations such as Living With Fire, an interagency collaboration aimed at offering all Nevadans tools and resources to educate themselves about methods of mitigating fire risks, play an important role in reducing the dangers posed and damage caused by fires. Harvey is a big advocate of pre-planning and creating and maintaining defensible space. Defensible space, whether it's building homes with fire-resistant materials, proper management of vegetation surrounding buildings, or fuel breaks to separate developed land from the range helps prevent wildfires from damaging property and makes it easier for fire crews to do their jobs safely and promptly. "Fire prevention is a quality-of-life issue," Harvey says. "The better we are at managing wildland fires in Nevada, the better Nevada is for everyone." ▀



KIPPY SPILKER

Living With Fire

A collaborative organization provides Nevadans with safety recommendations.

Living With Fire is a cooperative effort between the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada Division of Forestry, Nevada Fire Safety Council, Sierra Front Wildfire Cooperators, USDA Forest Service, and University of Nevada, Reno Cooperative Extension that develops and maintains a system of wildfire threat reduction recommendations specifically for Nevadans, but it's helpful for homeowners across the nation. According to Petersen, the group's efforts have won national acclaim and are the basis for many similar organizations around the country.

The program began in 1997 thanks to a grant and the efforts of UNR's Ed Smith and Paul Tueller and fire chief

The overwhelming majority of wildfires in Nevada are suppressed before they grow big enough to gain any attention, such as this small blaze west of Carson City near Kings Canyon that photographer Kippy Spilker reported on August 4.

Loren Enstaad of the Sierra Front Wildfire Cooperators. Living With Fire offers many resources related to fire safety, including educational materials (in English and Spanish), workshops, training, youth activities, and a comprehensive, 20-item Ember Awareness Checklist, a reference to help ensure that homes have the best chances of surviving a wildfire. A particularly helpful tool is Living With Fire's "What Homeowners Can Do" Program, which gives homeowners tips on living more safely and how to minimize risk and damage before, during, and after a fire.

Each year, Living With Fire hosts Wildfire Awareness Week, May 4-11, 2013, to help build awareness and encourage action to reduce the wildfire threat to Nevada homes and communities. ▀

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Living With Fire

livingwithfire.info

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Ed Smith: smithe@unce.unr.edu, 775-782-9960

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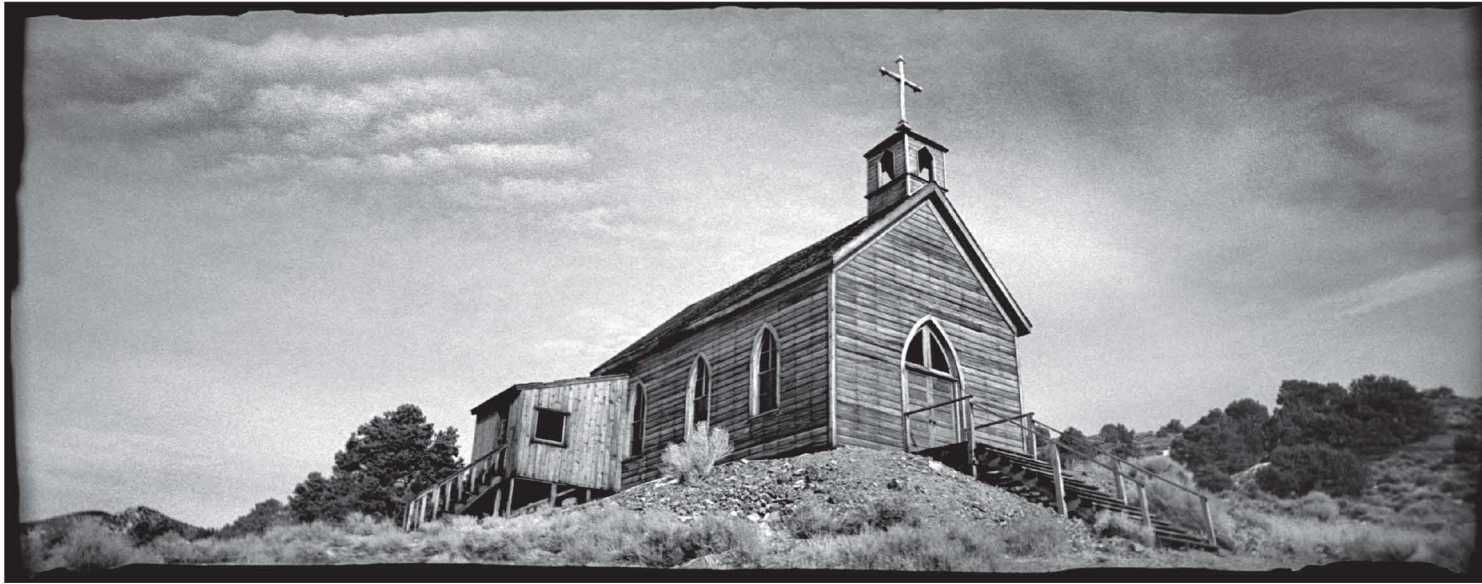
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World Renowned

Eureka photographer Deon Reynolds was recently honored for his timeless black-and-white images of Nevada. All four photos on this page won Honorable Mentions in the prestigious 2012 International Photography Awards (photoawards.com).

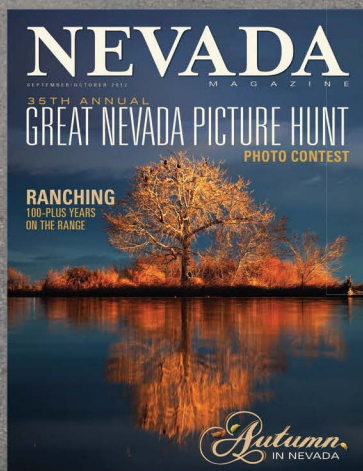
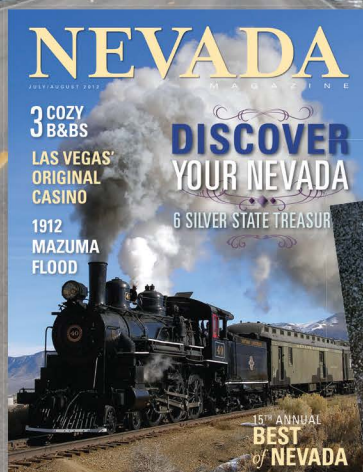
"All of my black-and-white panoramic photographs are shot using a modified Kodak Fun Saver Panoramic 35 disposable camera," Reynolds says. The cameras were no longer produced after 1999, but he has found an innovative way around that. "I reload the original camera housing with Kodak Tri-X film. Some of my disposables have had more than 100 rolls of film through them."

While digital is the go-to medium of most modern photographers, Reynolds still spends hours in the darkroom developing his own film. He also loves Nevada's back roads, which is evident in the diversity of subjects here. From the top are the historic Manhattan Church, a solitary house in Jiggs, and two lonely fences—one in Huntington Valley and another at Potts Ranch in Monitor Valley.

PHOTOS BY DEON REYNOLDS
DEONREYNOLDS.COM

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