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Volume 36 – No. 3 PUBLISHED BY THE DUTCH FLAT COMMUNITY CENTER WITH MEMBER SUPPORT **Fall 2025**

Legendary Local Hero
Charlie Bridges
1941 - 2025



By The Bridges Family

Photo by Tom Fugate

Charles Louis Bridges Jr. passed away in his sleep at home in Dutch Flat on August 14th, 2025. Born in Auburn, California, September 21st, 1941 he attended primary school at the Dutch Flat School and graduated from Placer High School. After graduating, Charlie was employed by PG&E, where he retired after 32 years of service. Although retired, he never stopped working.

Charlie’s work ethic and passion to help others was demonstrated in and around his community, where he served as a volunteer firefighter for 48 years, the last 20 at the rank of Captain. He also helped to manage and maintain the Dutch Flat Mutual Water Company for decades. Neighbors knew who to call if they needed something welded, repaired or dug out. He was an excellent backhoe operator, welder and mechanic.

Charlie is survived by his two children, Linda and Mary, seven grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and his two sisters. He was preceded in death by his wife, Dorothy, and his parents, Charles Sr. and Eleanor Bridges.

By Ernie Bullard

I’ve known Charlie Bridges for over 40 years – not as long as of you, but longer than most. It’s hard to summarize forty years of memories into a couple of lines, so please bear with me.

Charlie was everyone’s friend.

I met Charlie in 1982. Back then, I mentioned to Charlie that I needed to cut down some trees around my house, and a few days later, he showed up with a chainsaw and cut down a 3-foot diameter Locust tree. That was Charlie; he didn’t expect anything in return – just wanted to help out.

After talking for a while, he convinced me to join the Dutch Flat Volunteer Fire Department. He said it was for the benefit of the community – that they need more volunteers to have an effective fire department and that I could ensure that my own house was protected by joining. He added that I would also have some fun with the other volunteers.

Charlie ran that fire department for more than 45 years.

Charlie took his commitment to the fire department very seriously. He was a strong leader and good role model. When he put that red Captain’s helmet on, he was all business. He would go out on calls two or three times a week at 2 or 3 in the morning for medical aids, chimney fires, accidents on the freeway, and, yes, truck fires. Most people had no idea how many times Charlie went out – he never bragged about it, he just did it matter-of-factly. He made sure that our Dutch Flat fire department was always ready, that firetruck checks were done weekly, that volunteers attended training every Saturday morning, and everyone was properly equipped. Charlie was dedicated to making sure that Dutch Flat had a good fire department and he did it almost single-handedly. All while working full-time for PG&E.

Charlie Bridges was a man’s man. He was built physically strong and solid, and morally straight. He didn’t lift weights; he was in construction and lifted iron and steel all day. He was one of the best backhoe operators in this area and he was proud of it! When he sat in the seat of his backhoe working a trench, he was happy.

He was a skilled master mechanic, not just for engines but for all the trades, like welding, heavy equipment, and construction. More accurately, he was a *grand* master mechanic. He could fabricate his own parts or tools if he didn’t have them. He was also a *master* engineer; he understood how things worked, and he could explain to you why a water pump would cavitate and how to stop it.

After I left the Volunteer Fire Department, I started working with Charlie with the Dutch Flat Mutual Water Company in 1988. Charlie ran the water treatment plant and I did the paperwork. Not only did Charlie run the plant, he also repaired the water mains and equipment on the deteriorating water system. He helped everyone in town with their household plumbing issues and water leaks. After we raised a little money through rate increases, Charlie wanted to gunite the settling basin to stop the water leakage. He borrowed some equipment from PG&E in

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Alta and, with the inexperienced help of a few of us, he completed the roughly 8,000 sq ft job in one weekend – no nonsense or wasted time. He just got it done.

Charlie and I worked together at the water company for 36 years – Charlie worked there much longer. Things were always breaking and I saw Charlie at least once a week. After a few more water rate increases, we had enough money to seriously modernize the water treatment plant. That’s when we started to work with Fred Fahlen, owner of Weimar Water. Fred is probably the best Water Engineer in Northern California and a staunch supporter of small water systems. Fred created the plans for the modernization of our water system and helped obtain the permits, then he started to work with Charlie to transform our water plant. Charlie got rid of the swimming pool filters, and we found a couple of used large pressure water filters from PCWA. Charlie cut off the tops, sand blasted them, painted the insides, and welded the tops back on. Charlie installed water pumps and color-coded plumbing, mixing and monitoring stations.

Fred was so impressed with Charlie’s abilities and hard work that he wanted Charlie to work at Weimar Water, which he did for about 15 years and Charlie thought the world of Fred. Charlie became an indispensable part of Weimar Water, while continuing to work at our water system.

Good things don’t last forever, so we were relieved when we obtained a grant to consolidate our water company with PCWA. This big change would allow Charlie to step down, not work so hard, and not worry about our community water system.

Gradually, mother nature caught up with Charlie, and he started to slow down. During the final months of his life, I tried to visit Charlie once a week, but was not always able to do so. Ray and Sherry Cunningham checked on him more frequently, and other neighbors like Connie Gulling did so as well. Charlie got frustrated and a little angry. He couldn’t do projects anymore, he couldn’t use his backhoe anymore, and he hurt and didn’t have a lot of energy. I think one of his grandsons said it the best: “Charlie was mad that he couldn’t be Charlie.”

The last time that I saw Charlie was Wednesday, August 13th. It was a warm comfortable afternoon, I thought maybe I could get Charlie to go up to his garage to just putter around, and get his mind off his miseries. But, he just wanted to sit and talk.

He had been thinking and told me that he felt he “wasn’t a very good husband, that he had taken the option to work for PG&E in Willits, only coming home on weekends, and had left Dorothy at home with the kids”, and this bothered him because he wasn’t home all the time.

I responded “Charlie that’s ‘bullshit’, you were a great husband. You did what you had to do to support your family. Dorothy didn’t object, so you shouldn’t either.”

He nodded, thoughtfully.

He then told me that his daughters have been great. Mary was coming over once or twice every day to make sure he had food and had taken his medicine. Linda was constantly taking him to doctor’s appointments and bringing him down the hill for family celebrations.

I told him “Charlie you have two wonderful daughters, and they love you very much.”

And he said “Yes, they do, I am very lucky.”

Charlie did not wake up the next morning.

– Rest in peace, old friend.

COMMUNITY STAFF

Publisher:

Dutch Flat Community Center
P. O. Box 14, Dutch Flat CA 95714
530-389-8310

Editorial Staff:

Sarah Fugate, Editor

Reporters & Contributors:

Caroline Maccoun Airola
Ernie Bullard
Nancy Bullard
Sarah Fugate
Bill Gallaher
Laura Glassco
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Email: dfcc.newspaper@gmail.com

Address: 933 Stockton Street, Dutch Flat

Website: www.dutchflatcc.org

Facebook: Dutch Flat Community Center

X: @dutchflatcc

Views expressed in letters, guest opinion pieces and other contributions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor, the Dutch Flat Community Center, or its Board.

This newspaper is published quarterly and distributed to Dutch Flat Community Center members and to residents of the Center’s service area from Gold Run to Emigrant Gap in Placer County, California.

We welcome contributions from readers. Submission deadline for the next issue:

December 10, 2025.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Attic: Thursdays, 10 am - 1 pm.

Dutch Flat Community Center Board of Directors Meeting: 2nd Mondays, 6:00 pm. Location varies. Contact Laura Glassco, 916-778-8308.

Dutch Flat Community Center Potluck: 3rd Thursdays. 6:00 pm. Bring a place setting, your own drink, and a dish to share.

Dutch Flat Seventh Day Adventist: Prayer Meeting/Bible Study, Wednesday, 5:30 pm, Sabbath, Saturday, 3:30 pm. Children’s Church same time and place. 936 Stockton Street. Contact 831-710-7712.

Dutch Flat United Methodist Church Pancake Breakfast: 2nd Saturdays, 8:00 am -10:00 am.

Dutch Flat United Methodist Church Arts & Crafts: Thursdays, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. All are welcome. Learn something new!

Dutch Flat United Methodist Church: Worship Service, Sundays, 11:00 am. Fellowship lunch following service. Contact: 916-847-8477.

Golden Drift Historical Society Board Meeting: 1st Monday of February, April, June, August, October and December, 7 pm. Golden Drift Museum, Main Street. Contact Sarah Fugate, 530-210-5085.

Pioneer Union Church, Gold Run: Worship Service, Sundays, 10 am.

Placer County Library Mobile Service: See Page 7.

Sierra First Baptist Church, Alta: Sunday School, 9 am. Worship Service, Sundays, 10:30 am. 33990 Alta Bonny Nook Rd., Alta. Contact 530-389-2168.

Sierra First Baptist Church Bible Study: Mondays, 8:30 am,

Sierra First Baptist Church Community Lunch: Mondays, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm. Free.

Sierra First Baptist Church Food Pantry: Thursdays, 10 am - 12 pm.

A message from the DFCC President



Photo by Sarah Fugate

By Laura Glassco

We’ve had a wonderful summer season! Our 4th of July festivities were many--5k Race, parade, kid’s games and the dinner dance were enjoyed by all! The weather was very cooperative so that all these events were held on a very mild summer day.

Thanks to Roxane and Ken for hosting our summer Potlucks at the Pool in July and August!

Our largest fundraiser of the year, the White Elephant Sale, produced record sales! Thank you to all who donated items and to those volunteers who worked tirelessly to create this new benchmark!

What’s coming up?
Our 3rd Annual Oktoberfest will be held at the beautiful Dutch Flat Hotel gardens on Saturday, October 4th from noon to 4 p.m. Anderson Valley Brewing Company will,

once again, donate their excellent beer. Come and enjoy a traditional bratwurst lunch and dance to the music of the Brandon Daniels Band.

More events on the schedule are: the Annual DFCC Halloween party on October 31st for kids of all ages, the 2nd Annual Christmas Light Parade on Friday, November 28th, will take place featuring our very own Santa!

Continue to enjoy our wonderful autumn season and stay healthy and happy!



Here’s what’s coming up this Fall:

October 4	Noon - 4 pm	Oktoberfest
October 31	6 pm	DFCC Halloween Party
November 28	6 pm	Christmas Light Parade through Dutch Flat

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Welcome Home-A Generation’s Legacy

The Vietnam War 50 years later

By Bill Gallaher

“I’ve heard of the Vietnam War. It was part of WW 2”

Wait. WHAT? I heard that statement from a 30-year-old man in March 2025.

In his defense, can you, dear reader, explain to your family what the Vietnam war was all about? 2025 is the 50th anniversary of the ending of the Vietnam War. Winston Churchill said, “Those that fail to learn from the past are doomed to repeat it.” Maybe we need a quick history lesson to honor the over 58,000 USA service members that died in a losing cause.

First off, the Vietnam war was NOT part of WW 2. The Vietnam War, 1955-1975, was an armed conflict in Southeast Asia between communist, mainly Russian and Chinese, and anticommunist, mainly USA, ideologies.

In 1954 the Geneva Accords split Vietnam temporarily into communist North and anti-communist South. Nobody was happy. The communists wanted all of Vietnam. Western countries wanted to keep S Vietnam permanently anti-communist. The problem from both sides was the word “temporary”. The Accords required elections to determine the fate of the whole country. Some countries, including the United States and South Vietnam, did not sign the agreement, being afraid of corrupt elections which might have led to a communist Vietnam. The fear was that if Vietnam fell to communism, neighboring neutral countries, like Laos and Cambodia would inevitably follow, like row of falling dominoes. (Which happened.) This was known as the “Domino Theory”.

The war begun in 1955 with a communist uprising by local communist Viet Cong forces against the S Vietnamese government. The war ended in 1975 with a communist takeover of all of Vietnam.

Vietnam was unique, being the first “television” war the American public had ever seen. Almost every night Americans could watch live TV coverage of the war, including how many of our boys were being killed with nothing to show. The problem was that the war was not about territory being captured. It became a “body count” war. The idea being if we killed more of the enemy than they killed us, we could win.

As the war dragged on and more of our family members were killed, American public opinion turned against the war. No evidence of a winning strategy resulted in indifferent, if not hostile, treatment of military veterans and Vietnamese refugees. I personally experienced hostility after coming home. I know Vietnam vets that still will not talk about or even reveal that they are Vietnam Vets. I once had a T-shirt that read “Blame the War, Not the Warriors”.

The slogan of the Wounded Warrior Project is “The greatest casualty is being forgotten”. Is this what is happening to our history and



the veterans who fought the war? Is it not enough that we were disrespected when we came home? Now will we be the “forgotten soldiers” of the most unpopular war of the 20th century? What are history classes teaching?

OK, enough history and preaching. I arrived in Vietnam in mid-1971. I believed that a third world country like Vietnam, couldn’t defeat our super power nation, in 1964, President Johnson called the Vietnamese a bunch of “Jungle Bunnies”. After a few months “in country”, I realized we were vastly underestimating these “Jungle Bunnies”. The Vietnamese had been fighting both the French and Japanese for decades and were well entrenched and prepared to defeat the best trained soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen in the world.

No war should be fought by politicians. Unfortunately, because of political “cold-war restrictions, there were things we just couldn’t do, some of which could have shortened the war and allowed combatants on both sides to go home to their families. I personally experienced the restrictions as part of my job as an

USAF navigator flying over S Vietnam and Cambodia.

Here’s what a mission might sound like: “Hey crew, this is your navigator. Heads up guys. We will be crossing into Cambodia in about 10. Remember, once we cross the border, if we see or locate any of those supply caches that we’ve been tracking, we can report them, but we can’t call a strike in on them. That really pisses me off because we know those supplies are headed into South Vietnam to kill our guys.” Finding and tracking the troops and supplies was the job of my squadron, the 360th TEWS, or Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron. If we could find the enemy in either N or S Vietnam, we could direct a Forward Air Controller or FAC to fly down and take a look, and or sometimes an air strike may be called in. However, because of restrictions, there were areas and targets that we were not allowed to approach or destroy. The Vietnamese knew

if they were in either Cambodia or Laos, they could hide in plain sight, they could cross an international border from a neutral nation to attack us, and then cross back across the border and we couldn’t touch them.

The most frustrating “off limits” targets that I saw were enemy supply and ammo caches in Cambodia, some of which were visible from the air. We knew these supplies were waiting to be transported south along the Ho Chi Minh trail to resupply the NVA and Viet Cong (VC), leading to the killing more of our troops. However, not all was lost because many times we secretly tracked troops and supplies as they traveled south. Intelligence analysts would guesstimate when the targets would be crossing into either North or South Vietnam, and at that point they could be found and destroyed. So how do we do that? Unfortunately, these “jungle bunnies” didn’t inform us as to which dark night the caches would be moved, nor which route. . The combined north to south distance of North and South Vietnam is 1025 miles. The Ho Chi Minh trail was a web of 9940 (some estimates are over 12,000) miles of tracks, trails, road, and waterways. It crossed back and forth from N and S Vietnam into Laos and Cambodia. One day they are where we can attack them, and the next back across the border. Much of the movement of supplies was at night, and hiding during the day was not difficult because of the jungle canopy.

Despite all the high tech tactics the USA could throw at the trail, which included listening, bombing, and top notch troops, over a million troops and thousands of tons of supplies moved along the trail from 1959 to 1975.

As a result, the largest and best military in the world was no match for the guerrilla combat tactics of Vietnamese soldiers and peasants.

So, 50 years later, I believe the legacy of the Vietnam War still clouds the reputation of the USA as the “good guys”, the “guys in the white hats”, “defenders of democracy”. However, I believe there is a good thing that has come from our country’s collective experience in the Vietnam war. We now respect our heroes in uniform. Personally, I have received many “thanks for your service” in the past few years. And I saw a group of civilians waiting at the Sacramento airport to greet a group of vets coming home from the Iraqi war. I was told none of the civilians were relatives or friends of the vets. They just wanted to welcome them home. I am happy for those vets, but it still hurts that most of returning Vietnam vets had the opposite greetings. In retrospect, regardless of the final outcome, the Vietnam war was a defining moment in our country’s history. It was and is a Generation’s Legacy.

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Photos by Sarah Fugate, Harry Gin and Annette Rodgers Purther

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By the Light of the Moon

By Mia Monroe

Tonight, August 23, is the new moon and I have come late to appreciating this moon phase. Friends shared that this is a time for introspection, a time to set intentions and manifest new beginnings plus clear negativity and create space to welcome new opportunities. And a great time to be out stargazing!



Often I plan where I'll be for the full moon for its beauty, illumination and that feeling that connects me to my friends, similarly moon gazing. I think of the special names for each one, hum moon-themed songs, eat round treats.

But I often am frustrated when other night spectacles are hard to see in a full moon's light such as a planet, constellation or meteor shower. But one of the important natural gifts of Dutch Flat is the dark sky. We're just far enough away from city lights and there's not too much locally to light things up. Maybe we might consider becoming part of a movement of officially designated dark sky communities.

In the meanwhile, we can take advantage of that monthly dark night when the moon is nearly between Earth and the sun. One side of the moon faces the sun and is illuminated but the side the Earth sees is dark...we call this dark moon the new moon phase of the lunar cycle and not to be confused with the side we never see: the dark side of the moon!

Plan to look at the starry sky during the dark of the new Harvest Moon, set the goal of being in sync with nature. The October 6 full moon will also be a Super Moon! Check out a free subscription from earthsky.org. Let's howl!

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More on the Transcontinental Railroad

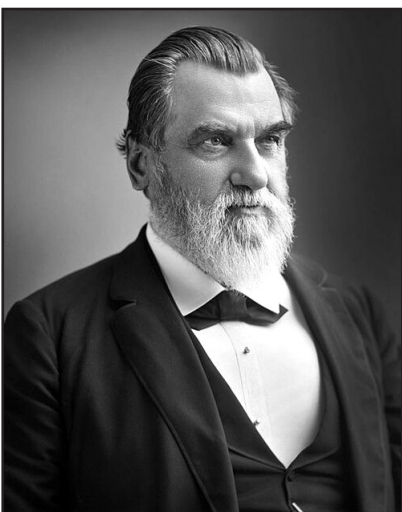
By Debby McClatchy

Leland Stanford, one of the Big Four, owners of the Central Pacific Railroad, and Governor of California at the time, had five brothers who immigrated to California before him. He was able to piggyback upon their successes, giving him an advantage and a quicker route to wealth than the average arrivee in 1852.

Theodore Judah and Dutch Flat’s Doctor Strong made their exploratory trip to find the perfect route for the railroad late in the winter of 1860. They had help. They were accompanied by Samuel S. Montague, a railroad engineer and surveyor. It was this man’s expertise in the mechanical aspects of the survey, cuts, fill, tunnels, and grades, that actually produced a successful trip. They were trapped by an unexpected blizzard and almost didn’t make it back to town. Unlike Judah, Montague did not attempt to set company policy, and was, therefore, kept on by the Big Four, while Judah was set aside and marginalized.

One of the reasons the building of the railroad made so much money at the beginning of construction was that their geologists declared the Sierras to start at a totally level area seven miles east of Sacramento, and the U.S. Congress agreed. The Big Four made twice as much money for eighteen miles of valley land, netting an additional half a million dollars in profit. Newspapers called the railroad the “strongest corporation in the world because they could move a mountain range twenty-five miles!”

The Big Four (Stanford, Crocker, Huntington, and Hopkins), owners of the Central Pacific Railroad, made huge profits from the building of that railroad. They were also awarded acres of land that would someday be valuable. But not in 1869. After the completion of the railroad in Promontory, Utah, the company lost money for years. The Big Four had assumed the European companies shipping their goods to the Orient would now use the CP’s rails. However, the Suez Canal opened a few weeks earlier, giving those companies



Leland Stanford

a better alternative, and their business was lost. Also, timing was off for western expansion. The Gold Rush was over, Natives were hostile, and families stopped coming. The Big Four tried to sell but couldn’t find buyers for their price. Other railroads were being built and taking their profits.

One of the Big Four, Curtis P. Huntington, was described as “a hard and cheery old man, with no more soul than a shark”, “scrupulously dishonest”, and “ruthless as a crocodile”. He actually was the leader of the Central Pacific, relegating the slow-thinking and less shrewd Stanford to a secondary position. Huntington realized the only path to profits lay in a monopoly, and, as soon as the golden spike was driven in, he began buying up all the competition. He also negotiated land leases with towns near the railroad that gave the Central Pacific control of distribution points. Along with railroads, they bought river boat and steamship companies. They brought their rates down to ridiculously low prices and forced any remaining competitors into bankruptcy.

San Francisco remained the only hold-out, furious that the CP had bribed voters to win an election favorable to their needs. There were so many protests and negative press that Huntington abandoned plans to use the City as a terminus. The CP changed its name to the Southern Pacific and slowly began to get out of the red. The land they had been awarded finally began to attract families and other emigrants. The Railroad finally brought in profits, and these eventually became massive.

The first Chinese to work on the railroad were a crew of fifty hired by Charlie Crocker as an experiment. Recommended to do so by Leland Stanford and Crocker’s brother, E.B. (We love his art museum in Sacramento), the idea was considered ridiculous by most. Crocker offered to pay them \$26 a month and took them to the railhead. The crew immediately set up camp, ate a simple meal of dried cuttlefish and rice, with water boiled for tea, and slept soundly. The next day these “hundred pound weaklings” worked a twelve hour day and finished more work than any previous crew. By summer there were two thousand Chinese working in the mountains, with thousands more arriving from China. As Charlie Crocker said, “They build the Great Wall of China, they can build a railroad.”

In 1887 the Southern Pacific was in competition with the Sante Fe Railroad for emigrants to the Los Angeles area. They both charged \$100 for a ticket from Kansas City. When the Sante Fe brought their fare down to \$95, the SP countered with \$90; the Sante Fe dropped to \$85; the SP went down to \$80, and so on. On March 6th, mostly due to a communication glitch, the SP slashed their fare to one dollar and thousands of new emigrants rushed to the ticket offices. Even though a few days later the rate rose to \$25, so many people had decided now was the time to go West, 120,000 eventually made the journey. Promoters promised cheap land prices and a new Rush was on.

Those who could afford to pay extra came by Pullman, but most traveled in what became to be known as Emigrant or Zulu cars, with wooden slats that would be seats during the day but folded down into beds at night. There was an oil burner for cooking and washing.

A broken down circus was hired to lead parades to bring in new buyers, who were given free food, transport, and entertainment. Worthless desert areas starting at one dollar an acre were soon sold for hundreds of dollars. By the end of 1887 profits from this land grab surpassed those of the Gold Rush in most years.



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The Whispering Stones of Dutch Flat

By Caroline Maccoun Airola



In the heart of the California Sierras, where the pines stretch toward the sky and the wind carries whispers of the Gold Rush, lies the small town of Dutch Flat built in the 1800's. Nestled among its rolling hills is a sacred place—a historic cemetery where time seems to pause, and the past speaks through weathered tombstones and wildflowers. For me, Caroline Maccoun Airola, Braun, Harrod, this cemetery is more than a resting place for the departed. It's a living memory, a tapestry of my family's history and the land we've called home since my grandparents arrived from the Bay Area in the 1940's, looking for a new life in retirement.

As a child in the 1950s, I wandered the town with family, neighbors and friends, my small hands brushing against delicate sweet peas and vibrant flowers that danced in the Sierra breeze. The air hummed with life—birds trilled from ancient pines, and lizards darted across mossy stones. The cemetery was a sanctuary, a place where the living and the dead coexisted in harmony with the wild. Each gravestone told a story: miners who struck it rich, families who built Dutch Flat's first school train tracks, and dreamers who never left these mountains. I felt their presence, as if they were watching over us, grateful for the flowers that bloomed in their honor.

But time and good intentions can wound as much as they heal. In recent decades, well-meaning volunteers, fearing wildfires or seeking order, sprayed herbicides across the cemetery's forest floor or hacked away at its natural beauty. Native plants—vital to the Sierra ecosystem—withered under the assault. Blackberry vines, relentless and invasive, crept over paths and tombstones, choking the delicate balance that once thrived here. By the time I returned as an adult, a California native plant enthusiast with soil-stained hands and a heart full of memories, the cemetery I loved was almost unrecognizable. The birds were quieter, the flowers fewer, and the stories etched in stone were harder to read beneath the tangle of thorns.

This was personal. My family's roots run deep in Dutch Flat, from the first Maccoun's who settled here to the generations that

followed, including my own childhood spent wandering these hills on horseback. The cemetery wasn't just a place; it was a promise—a connection to those who came before and a responsibility to those who will follow. So, I rallied a group of neighbors, ecologists, and volunteers, all united by a shared love for this land. I call them "Wildlife friends," and our mission was clear: to protect, restore, and maintain this sacred space, not just for the people it honors but for the ecosystem it sustains.

The forest floor in the Sierras is no mere carpet of dirt and leaves. It's a living system, a cradle of biodiversity where native plants like manzanita, ceanothus, Humboldt lilies, and Dogwood trees anchor the soil, feed pollinators, and preserve the delicate balance of the forest. These plants are survivors, adapted to the Sierra's dry summers and cold winters, but they need our help to reclaim their place. We began by removing the blackberry vines, their thorns snagging our gloves as we worked. We replaced them with native seeds, carefully chosen to thrive in this rocky soil. Lilies and milkweed returning, their colors a quiet rebellion against the damage done. We clear pathways, not with chemicals or heavy machinery, but with hands and hearts, with the goal of every tombstone being seen and every name remembered.

As we work, the cemetery breathes. Birds return, their songs weaving through the Pines. Lizards skittered across sun-warmed stones, and insects dance among the forest floor. Each day brings new discoveries: a hidden grave marker uncovered, a rare native fern sprouting where none had grown in years. More of the community has joined us with newcomers learning the names etched in stone. We are not just restoring a cemetery; we were rebuilding a bond between the people of Dutch Flat, the relatives who have loved ones here and the land they share in common.

One spring morning, as a young girl I remember running through the cemetery, my eyes wide with curiosity. "Who are all these people?" I asked, pointing to the graves. My mom smiled, "They're the ones who built this town," she said. "And we're taking care of their home, so they'll always be remembered." I nodded, then ran off to try and catch a lizard, my laughter echoing through the trees. Fast forward, now that I am old, I feel the weight of my ancestors' dreams and the hope of the future resting lightly on my shoulders.

We Stewards of the Stones are more than caretakers. We are the future, honoring those who have passed by giving back to the land that holds their stories. This cemetery, with its wildflowers and whispering pines, is a testament to resilience—human and natural. As we work, we're not just restoring a forest floor; we're weaving a legacy, one that will bloom for generations to come in the heart of Dutch Flat.

Nancy Longnecker 1930 - 2025



Nancy Joy was born to Hetta Grace LaMarr and Frank T Rogers in San Francisco, California, on January 5, 1930 and was baptized at Mission Dolores. She passed away to be with the Lord on August 21, 2025.

Nancy's grandfather, Frank E. Keenan was Road Foreman of Engineers for Southern Pacific Railroad and lived in Blue Canyon, California. When Nancy was three years old she, and much of her family, moved to Blue Canyon to be near her grandfather Frank, and grandmother Zoah.

Nancy attended Blue Canyon School and then later Mount Saint Mary Academy in Grass Valley. After High School she married Hensel Longnecker in 1946. They purchased and together built their home upon property in Alta, California.

Together Nancy and Hensel raised five of their own children and several others. Their home was one of love, open arms, full plates, and understanding.

Mom and Dad were both heavily involved in the local community, having helped start the Alta Fire Department and associated Lady's Auxiliary. They were both involved with significant improvements to the now Alta-Dutch Flat Elementary School, along with serving on its board of trustees. They also worked together in serving the community through work with the Dutch Flat Pool.

Nancy was a founding member of the California Bottle Diggers Association and served as secretary of the Antique Bottle Collector's Association.

Nancy loved the history of our area and was deeply interested in its preservation.

Our family friend Walt Manning once said, "Nancy could make cardboard taste delicious and turn a piano crate into a home."

Nancy was an excellent home cook and took pride in her clean yet humble home. Always welcoming others with an open door, cup of coffee, a listening ear, and plenty to eat.

Her hugs were known far and wide. People would always come to get one and see her whenever she was out in public.

She had lots of love and joy to share. Some called her the "Mountain Mama".

There will be a Celebration of Life on the afternoon of October 18, 2025 from noon to four at the Alta Firehouse Community Center. Please come and celebrate Nancy Joy with her family.

Donations can be made to St Dominic's Catholic Church in Colfax, Saint Jude's Hospital, or EWTN Global Catholic Television Network.



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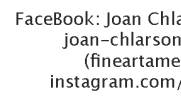






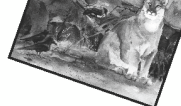


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October 16 - *Soul Surfer* by Bethany Hamilton
November 13 - *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict
December 11 - *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan

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