



Alta Dutch Flat Gold Run COMMUNITY

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Spring 2021

Shasta

By Sarah Fugate



Shasta and Makayla

This story brought warmth to our community during the cold winter days. The Hoover family of Alta lost their female, Anatolian Shepherd/Golden Retriever mix, Shasta, on December 12, 2020. Shasta was frightened by fireworks and ran through an electric fence and over a regular fence to escape. Shasta's family was not home at the time and, a short time later, came home and found her missing.

That night, with friends and neighbors, they searched for Shasta until well past midnight. The following day, a large contingent searched for Shasta the entire day. They searched everywhere. For the next two weeks, when Jonathan Hoover got home from work, he would put on a headlamp and walk around looking for Shasta. On weekends, he would also hike around Alta looking and calling for Shasta.

Sharon Hoover called all the area veterinarians, animal shelters and Animal Control Units from Truckee to Grass Valley and down to Auburn. She posted announcements on every Facebook page in the area she could find. No one had seen Shasta.

When Sharon called the California Highway Patrol, she was told that on the night Shasta disappeared, a dog matching Shasta's description had been hit on the freeway at Crystal Springs. A month later, there was a possible sighting of Shasta in Gold Run.

The Hoover's 5-year-old daughter, Makayla,

was devastated over the loss of Shasta. Two weeks after Shasta disappeared, the Hoover family got a new puppy they named Duke. The puppy helped Makayla a little bit, but she still wanted Shasta back, so she prayed. She prayed every night that God would bring Shasta back.

Fifty-four days after Shasta disappeared, on February 4, JB Burton posted on the All Things 389 Facebook page that she had found a large, cold dog. JB coaxed the dog into her shed and fed her. Hoping the dog was Shasta, the Hoovers drove to the Burton residence, less than one mile from their home. The dog had managed to get out of the shed and was wandering in the woods when the Hoovers arrived. Jonathan whistled for Shasta and she came as fast as she could. She was so excited to see her family. Shasta was found!

After nearly two months on her own, a visit to a veterinarian confirmed that Shasta had a dislocated hip, was super thin and needed a lot of rest. All were surprised that she was able to survive that length of time in the wilderness. She lived through two snowstorms, one a blizzard, freezing temperatures and predators, all with a dislocated hip.

When all the adults had given up hope for Shasta's return, five-year-old Makayla had faith that God was going to bring her dog home. The Hoovers and, presumably, Shasta, are grateful she is home. All of us are happy that Shasta is home.



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MAY IS WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS MONTH

Reprinted from [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

We are all adjusting to new schedules and routines due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. One thing many of us have in common is we are spending more time at home which makes it especially important to prepare and protect our homes. As hotter, drier weather of summer approaches, the risk of wildfire increases. While practicing social distancing, FEMA encourages you to make sure your home and your family are prepared for wildfires.

The United States Fire Administration promotes [simple ways to prevent a fire from affecting your home](#) and community, including:

- Reduce amount of flammable materials and brush that can burn around your home by removing pine needles, dry leaves or other highly flammable materials.
- Protect your roof: Trim branches that overhang your home and remove any leaves, needles, and sticks from your roof and gutters.
- Move wood piles and small propane tanks away from your (and your neighbor's) home, 30 feet or more is best.
- Embers from a burning fire can get under an unprotected porch or through vents. To prevent this, [install a wire mesh screen with openings no larger than 1/8th inch](#).

WILDFIRE Preparedness First Weekend in May

Join a work party project to help keep our community safe from wildfire.

Maintain your defensible space by

- Removing vegetation within 5' of structures
- Raking under decks, porches and around sheds
- Pruning low hanging tree branches
- Collecting downed tree limbs and branches
- Clearing leaves from gutters and roofs

Details will be posted at local Post Offices.
questions? contact PlacerSierraFireSafeCouncil@gmail.com



@placersierrafiresafecouncil



wildfireprepared.org



firewise.org

Be prepared in case you need to evacuate:

- Keep important documents in a fireproof safe, on a USB drive, or store password protected documents online.
- Check your home insurance to make sure your policy protects your current home value and includes wildfires.
- Give yourself time and evacuate early if possible. If you can't leave, designate a room that can be closed off from outside air in case air conditions become hazardous.
- Make your household [emergency plan](#) and [go-kit](#). When making plans, don't forget the needs of pets. Make sure that you know more than one way out of your neighborhood.
- Sign up to receive [emergency alerts and notices](#) for your community.
- [Ready.gov](#) offers vital safety tips on what to do before, during, and after a [wildfire](#).

Another important thing to consider is buying flood insurance. After a wildfire, flood risk increases due to the inability of charred vegetation and soil to absorb water. Rainstorms after a wildfire lead to increased runoff down slopes and into channels, streams, and rivers. Flooding after fire can be fast, severe, and include mudflows as runoff picks up debris, ash, and sediment from the burn scar. Flood insurance can protect property owners from catastrophic financial impacts of flooding following a wildfire.

Wildfires can develop and spread quickly, leaving little time to get somewhere safe. Know what to do to keep yourself, your family, and your pets safe and take steps now to protect your future.

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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: June 10, 2021

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Ongoing Events - Some are currently canceled, due to pandemic.

The Attic: Thursdays, 11 am - 2 pm.

Bingo: 1st Fridays, 7:00 pm. Alta Community Center. Proceeds benefit the Alta Volunteer Fire Department.

Dutch Flat Community Center Board of Directors Meeting: 2nd Mondays, 6:00 pm. Location varies. Contact Bob Kims, 530-389-8684.

Dutch Flat Community Center Potluck: 3rd Thursdays. Sept. - June, 6:00 pm. Dutch Flat Community Center, 933 Stockton St. Bring a place setting and a dish to share.

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

Dutch Flat United Methodist Church: Sundays. Fellowship Dinner, 5:00 pm. Worship Service, 6:00 pm.

Golden Drift Historical Society Board Meeting: 1st Sunday of February, April, June, August, October and December, 3 pm. Location varies. Contact Sarah Fugate, 530-389-2121.

NFARA Board Meeting: 3rd Tuesdays, 7:00 pm. Location varies. Contact Jim Ricker, 530-389-8344.

Pioneer Union Church, Gold Run: Worship Service, Sundays, 10 am, online; Parking Lot service when weather permits.

Sierra First Baptist Church, Alta: Worship Service, Sundays, 11 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 letter from the
DFCC Board President,
Bob Kims

The work on the water in the basement issue at the DFCC is just about complete. The wall was exposed, faults and holes were patched and the wall was sealed. A drain was put in place to run the water around the Center and out the back of the property. A membrane was put against the wall before the area was back-filled. Thanks again goes out to Bob Hampshire and his crew for the good work. During the work a portion of the sidewalk that leads to the tennis courts had to be torn up in order to run the drain line. That section of sidewalk needs to be replaced so we would appreciate any help volunteers would like to offer for that job.

We hope to make the grounds around the Center pretty and appealing. The weeds and wild growth above the tennis court have been removed. Blackberries were removed from behind the center and some other trimming was done. We will soon be ready to start planting some trees, shrubs and flowers following a landscaping plan that will make us proud. Yes, we will need volunteers to help with work like installing a watering system, amending the soil and planting. And yes, we will be asking if you will help with costs for buying plants and/or supplies. We are not ready to buy plants just yet, but when we are ready, there is a list of plants from the landscaping plan. The goal is to make the Center more appealing so people want to use it.

You have probably heard that a kitchen remodel has been discussed for some time. We do not have the funds to do the whole job at this time, however, we have been able to procure some cabinets that will be installed in what used to be called the Library. Once those cabinets are installed, we can take the cabinets out of the current kitchen area to clear up space for more working area. I bet you have guessed by now, we do hope to get help from volunteers for this job, also.

In my last letter, I reminded everyone that since all fundraisers had to be canceled, we hoped that members would be generous in their donations to the Center. We have been very fortunate as a number of members have made some very nice donations. I want to thank everyone who has made these donations. We have also applied for and received a couple of grants that were designated to help non-profits and businesses that have been affected by the pandemic. We are watching and will apply for any grants that may be available in the future. I would appreciate it, if any members that sees an opportunity to apply for a grant contact me or another board member so we do not miss a chance to apply.

I miss getting together. It seems like such a long time since I have seen most of you. The “stay at home” orders and recommendations to stay away from groups and crowds have kept us mostly isolated for a year now. Last year’s St Patrick’s dinner was canceled at the last minute mostly because of snow and we have not been able to get together since then. We all look forward to the time when we can resume “normal” activities, however, gatherings and events at the DFCC will continue to be canceled until it is safe to have them.

Fundraisers and events are not the only things that have been missed. It has been a year since we have had a potluck at the Center. I have mentioned in the past that I like to eat, but I also really miss seeing everyone at these get-togethers. I have heard from others that feel the same. We would like to start having the potlucks again, but we must wait until it is safe to do so. Everyone please stay safe and healthy. I hope to see you soon.

LETTERS

I enjoy the community newspaper and sincerely appreciate the work that goes into publishing it but, given the recent horror in Washington DC caused in part by the unchecked spread of misinformation, I feel like we need to make sure we are all focused on finding truth, not “alternative facts.”

Your article about how the community has coped with COVID-19 praised the “American scientists” that developed the vaccines. In truth, the first vaccine to be approved was developed by German scientists who had immigrated from Turkey.

That’s right, Muslim immigrants were the brains behind that vaccine, not American scientists.

Don’t take my word for it, Google it... in this day and age, ignorance is a choice.

Anonymous

I finally caught up and read the recent Community paper, including the nice Jim Sanders piece.

Thank you and the entire Community team for producing such a fine newspaper — especially during these difficult times. Your very fine work is much appreciated.

Sincerely, Paul Myers

Letters can be sent to dfcc.newspaper@gmail.com or P.O. Box 14, Dutch Flat, CA 95714.

SLOW DOWN IN
DUTCH FLAT!

By Laura Glassco



Many of you that live or drive in the downtown Dutch Flat streets are aware, we have a great deal of personal and business vehicles that are exceeding safe speeds. Many of us have taken it upon ourselves to motion for a speeding driver to slow down, but that has typically not been successful. Some of our residents have put up signs that ask drivers to slow down. Unfortunately, that hasn’t made an impact either.

A group of concerned residents attended our first Dutch Flat Traffic Project Zoom Call with the Director of Public Works for Placer County and a Traffic Engineer in January. From that call, we learned that a process needs to take place to determine what the speeds are, and from what direction, Traffic sensors have been placed throughout our community to gain the necessary data needed to take corrective action. Once we have the data, we’ll work with the County to determine what types of speed control measures will best fit our specific problems. It’s quite possible that cross walks, stop signs and other speed deterrents will be recommended. We are working towards a goal to have improved speed control measures in place by the Fall of this year.

If you are interested in participating in the Traffic Project Committee, please contact Laura Glassco, lauraglassco@yahoo.com or 916 778 8308.

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Welcome Home

A personal story

By Bill Gallaher and Jon LZ Gator



198th Infantry Brigade, Chu Lai, Vietnam

This is our second column by military vets, for vets, and about vets and their families. In case you didn't see the last issue, if you're a military veteran, especially a veteran who has been deployed away from home, "Welcome Home" has a special meaning. We have a number of vets in our tri-village area of Alta. Dutch Flat, and Gold Run and we all have stories. Stories that will make you cry, laugh, and sometimes make you ask why did that happen? Stories of families effected by their veteran's experiences, stories about how our experiences changed us, and stories that will touch us all in different ways. I'm asking all vets and families to join with me in sharing our stories. Please email me, Bill Gallaher, at hiddnlakes@aol.com. I will share your pain and joys with our community.

I'm asking all vets and families to join with me in sharing our stories. Email your stories to hiddnlakes@aol.com to share your pain and joys with our community.

We have a volunteer! (Ha, one thing we learned in the military: don't volunteer!) Thanks Jon. Our first story was about a young Air Force navigator who watched the Vietnam War carnage from 5000 feet and was glad he wasn't a grunt (grunts are the military's door kickers and trigger pullers, in short, they're the pointy end of the spear). Now you all get to meet one. Welcome home, Jon. Here's Jon's story:

I was in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. I was an infantry platoon leader initially and then spent some time as an assistant adjutant on a forward fire base with the 198th Infantry Brigade. My parents were not vets and were not happy that I would be going to Vietnam and would be in harm's way. So why did I go? I went because I felt my future was in this country, not in Canada or Europe.

Some thoughts:

I remember coming "in country" in July 1969, landing at a central location site where you spend a day getting your gear and finding out where you are going. I was amazed that, in that 24 hour period, I saw half of the trainees from my Officer Basic Course. Some were gung ho, some were scared to death and in tears and some, like me, were just overwhelmed by the crush of the entry process. Clearly someone in an administrative fort stateside pulled a drawer out of a filing cabinet and cut orders that sent everyone to Vietnam.

I ended up at a forward fire base outside of Chu Lai. I was a platoon leader in a rifle company. Company size was about 50 to 60 men. Our mission was to patrol around a parcel of ground to make sure that there was no indication of enemy presence or activity. Especially the forming of a mass force that could inflict serious damage on a US base (or wipe our Company out). Every day we would be picked up by a group of helicopters and transported to a site known only to our Company Commander. From the drop zone we travel (on foot), a few miles to a designated village. We would set up a perimeter around the village (Ville) for security, and sweep through

the Ville to see if there was anything unusual happening. The villagers in these Villes were dirt poor and diseased. Largely populated (during the day) with old women and children. No men or women of fighting age. Not very exciting work, but it did have a purpose, and danger. Sometimes you couldn't tell which side the Vietnamese villagers supported.

A note here: Many men and women of fighting age were either fighting with the Army of South Vietnam (ARVN) or the Viet Cong (National Liberation Front of Southern Vietnam or NLF)-dedicated to liberating South Vietnam, originally from the imperialist French and then Americans. The goal being to reunite north and south into one Vietnam.

So what was my "take-away"?

Back in the rear a lot of the enlisted men acted pretty tough. Out in the field, especially when you are under attack, everyone is scared and they fall in line and they look to the officers to tell them what to do. Butts pucker.

War kills and maims the good and the jerks alike. My best friend (for a short period of time) was a fellow lieutenant who was married and had two kids. He stepped on a mine, lost a leg, part of an arm and his genitals. I was with him when med-evac came. He just wanted to get home and see his family. A year later he did. He became a minister in Arizona and died about six years ago. I never reconnected with him.

I remember a punk kid from inner city Philadelphia. Just a real pain in the neck and a slacker. He too stepped on a mine and lost his legs. I envision him back in Philadelphia selling newspapers from a cart outside a train station to commuters coming to work in the morning from the Suburbs.

War has no conscience. It takes at random and it gives at random, some won't know for a while, but all will be changed.

I remember a large man, C. B., a superb soldier and fabulous athlete. Also a great shot with a machine gun at 200 yards

The overall mission of the war was flawed because wars are often based on the prior war and obsolete views of the world by leaders who have more ambition than judgment. If we wanted to win the war we would have bombed the North off the face of the earth. I envisioned thousands of street-pavers lined up on the DMZ and they would pave over the north, all the way to Hanoi. Crazy huh? That's the mind of a young lieutenant in an impossible no-win situation in a war he couldn't emotionally support but had a job to do.

My job and my goal was to remain alert, use good judgment, and try to not do something stupid. I wanted all my men, and myself, to not get killed. Most of us just wanted to do our time and go home. I was not looking for glory. This was not going to be my life's work. I didn't think the war was justified going in. The experience I had while in it convinced me of that. I guess I was lucky because I didn't ever believe it was right, so I didn't feel betrayed. I am a kindred spirit of all vets, I just managed to jump over the cuckoo's nest and land unscathed.

Golden Drift Historical Society News

By Sarah Fugate

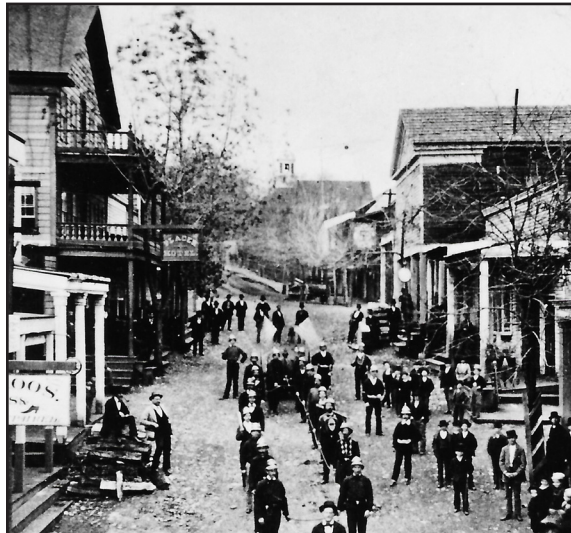


Placer County is now in the state-designated Red Tier which means we can open the Golden Drift Museum for our normal season and schedule. Assuming we have enough docents to do so, we will open May 28 and resume our normal schedule: Friday through Sunday, noon until 4 pm, through October. We look forward to welcoming visitors and locals to our Museum again.

We have applied for government -sponsored COVID-19 Relief Fund grants to make up for the approximately 50% loss of income that we experienced in 2020. So far, we have applied for three grants. We are waiting to be notified on two of them, the third, for \$2000, has been granted. (See the article on Page 8 of Community).

A new Chinese Pioneer History exhibit for our Museum is being built by the Placer County Museums Division and should be installed sometime this year. Currently, there is a temporary, transitional exhibit in its place. Additionally, the County is rebuilding the back porch and stairs of the Museum. This work should be completed prior to our Grand Opening in May.

We look forward to serving as a cultural gathering place again in 2021. See you at the Museum.



Reliance Hose Company, Main Street, Dutch Flat

Another Story from Vietnam

By Jon LZ Gator

I can't confirm the validity of the following story, but it makes a good point.

A Vietnamese guide took an American tourist to a memorial outside of Hanoi that is dedicated to the many wars the Vietnamese people have endured. They first saw a massive temple-like building. It was very ornate with golden adornments. The guide said, "now we will see another memorial". It was a large statuary of clearly victorious soldiers. The guide said, "there is one more monument I want to show you". That monument was diminutive, compared to the others. It was not very ornate and rather "blockish", with little architectural merit. The tourist asked the guide, "why did you show me these?" The guide responded, "these are our memorials, much like your memorials in Washington that commemorate the wars you have fought". The tourist said, "oh, that first one must be to celebrate your victory in what we call the Vietnam War." The guide said, "no, that one is to celebrate our victory over the Chinese to gain our own country. That war took a thousand years. The second statue is for our war to liberate ourselves from the French. That war took 150 years. The last memorial is very modest and represents our victory over the Americans... it didn't take very long."

Dutch Flat Pool News

By Mike Mutto

For the first time in many years, we have had a great response to our need for lifeguards. Many locals have applied and we wish the best of luck to all the applicants. If you are someone or you know someone who would like to apply, please go to www.placer.ca.gov, as soon as possible. You must be Red Cross Certified as well as Title 22 trained. Training classes are available through Auburn Recreation District and you can register online at www.auburnrec.com. Remember if you pass the course and are hired, your class tuition will be refunded by the Pool Board. Wild rumor has it that a few of the prospects already have their WSI certifications which just might allow us to offer swim lessons for the kiddo’s this summer.



Regarding our pursuit of the earmarked Prop. 68 funding and matching County funds to build the new bathroom facility this year and possibly replace the surrounding pool deck next year, we are “rounding third base and heading for the plate”. One of the last hurdles set up by the State to close the process is that we negotiate another 30-year lease with Placer County. A final draft is just about ready for signatures and County supervisor’s approval at the next meeting in April. Our old lease was 18 years old ready to sunset in 2023 and quite simple. As you would expect, the new one contains a lot of legal verbiage and stipulations that need to be negotiated with the Parks Dept. to protect the interests of all parties. This has been a two-month process that without the help of our Parks Dept. Liaison Lisa Carnahan could have taken much longer.

Many thanks and a big shout out to our local attorney Joel Baiocchi for all his donated time and efforts working with the Board in closing out this deal, which will benefit our community for many years to come (and get us the State funding).

Save these Dates please for the pool clean-up May 8th and our now annual benefit BBQ on August 7th.

Board members will be reaching out for donations for the silent auction and anybody that could hustle one up for the event can contact myself @ (530) 389-2902 or Laura Glassco @ (916) 778-8308 Any and all donations will be greatly appreciated.

We will have t-shirts and cool cup holders for sale again this year. We’ve had them made in very patriotic colors with shirts being blue and holders being red. They will be available for sale at the pool. This is one of our primary fundraisers so buy several for a great cause!

In the off season, thanks to the generosity of our retired sheriff, Rick Armstrong, and Marybeth Blackinton, we are the proud new owners of a real deal flagpole that will be installed for all to see and when the pool opens on Memorial Day. Thanks again Rick and MB!

PLACER SIERRA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL Make America Rake Again!

By Lauraine Bacon

Living in the beautiful Sierras comes with the responsibility to protect our precious natural environment. Creating and maintaining defensible space around your home and property is one of the most important activities you can do to help spare your home from the threat of fire. The risks are higher in the Sierra foothill communities where trees are more dense, empty lots are often uncared for and winter storms shower the ground with tree limbs, pine needles and vegetation. Left unattended this vegetation accumulates into fire fuel.

Once you’ve gathered those fallen branches, raked up the pine needles and leaves what do you do with these dry and combustible fuels? Obviously, removing them from your property is the goal. Dumping them in your neighbor’s empty lot or down a hill on public property is not the answer. This just moves the threat a bit further from your home and possibly puts someone else’s home or property at greater risk.

Practice safe fuels management by chipping, raking or control burning. The Placer Resource Conservation District (PRCD) offers a residential chipping program to help you meet your defensible space goals. Funding has enabled PRCD to offer this service on a cost-share basis reducing the fee to \$80/hour. This is an affordable and easy way to remove branches, limbs and small logs from your property. Discounts may be available for veterans, disabled and low-income residents. One of the key benefits to the chipper program is it helps to reduce smoke pollution that occurs with residential burning. According to the EPA, the biggest health risk from smoke is from the fine particles that can lodge into your lungs. While this can cause minor health issues such as a runny nose it can also cause and lead to more damaging health problems especially for those with compromised immune systems.

Rake up pine needles, leaves and debris that can’t be processed by the chipper to help reduce fire fuels on the ground. You can bring then to the Meadow Vista Transfer Station for disposal. You can also order a green waste dumpster from Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal and have the convenience of the dumpster at your location for a week before it is picked up. Some of these organizations have programs for low cost or free drop off services to help in reducing fire fuels. Check with the organization provided in the resources at the end of this article for more information.

While hauling your vegetation debris is the safer option sometimes it just isn’t practical or even possible. Residential burning, also referred to as “door yard burning” is another option for fuels management during certain times of the year. Best practice is to prepare these burn piles when the vegetation is dry and cover them with a tarp. Do not burn wet vegetation as it results in excessive smoke. Burning is only allowed on approved “burn days”. Starting May 1st, 2021, Residential Door Yard Burn Permits will be required for all outside burning.

While it is often easier and more convenient to burn your vegetation in a “controlled burn” situation it is not without risk. Just because it is deemed an approved burn day many situations



can lead to unsafe burning.

Brian Eagan, Battalion Chief/Colfax, Alta Battalion, CAL FIRE/Placer County Fire Department, Nevada/Yuba/Placer Unit, says, “In 2020, 17 of 47 vegetation fires in the Colfax/Alta Battalion were related to residential door yard burning. Homeowners must be aware that if their fire escapes their control or if they are not following the rules of the Residential Door Yard Burning permit they may be found liable for any damages that occur.”

Each year burn piles get out of control and landowners can be issued a ticket, incur fines that can run into tens of thousands of dollars or even serve jail time if found to be criminally negligent. A homeowner in Weimar left his home thinking his fire was out only for it to erupt again causing excessive burning on his property. Another longtime resident in Alta had watered down the area surrounding his burn pile rather than raking down to dirt. Dry vegetation underneath caught fire and it traveled uphill into thick underbrush. Luckily, his neighbor had cleared vegetation along their property line so the threat to his home was minimal.

Follow the rules for safely conducting a door yard burn, listed on your burn permit. Permits are free and are now available at www.burnpermit.fire.ca.gov.

If everyone shares in this responsibility, we will all be safer collectively.

RESOURCES

Placer Sierra Fire Safe Council - www.placer.ca.gov/2401/Placer-Sierra-Fire-Safe-Council
Placer Resource Conservation District – www.placercd.org

Chipper program: 530-889-0111 x3
Meadow Vista Transfer Station – 2950 Combie Road, Meadow Vista – 530-885-3735
Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal- waste101.com or call 530-583-7800

Burn permits - <https://burnpermit.fire.ca.gov/>
Placer Air Quality Control District (Burn Day message) – 530-889-6868

CAL FIRE’s public website Ready/Set/Go: <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/>

Get involved at www.Firewise.org

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History of Sourdough and the California Gold Rush

By Michelle Hancock



Sourdough bread baked at home by Michelle Hancock

Sourdough was probably discovered by accident, as most things are. It is simply a mix of ground grain or flour mixed with water. It is the oldest and most original form of leavened bread and the oldest recorded use of sourdough is from the ancient Egyptian civilization around 1500 BC. There are many stories as to how they first discovered it, but you can probably imagine that some flat bread dough was left out and some of the wild yeast spores that are in air got mixed in the dough and caused it to bubble and rise. It was lighter than flat bread.

Interestingly, Egyptians also made a lot of beer and the brewery and the bakery were often in the same place. Perhaps a batch of flour may have been mixed with the beer and produced a light loaf of bread, or the wild yeast spores were thick from the brewing and got into the bread dough and caused the dough to rise even more than the usual wild sourdoughs.

Through experimentation, the Egyptians found that some of these sourdough cultures worked and tasted better than others. And, they discovered they could keep the culture alive by saving a little raw dough from their baking and adding more flour and water to it and produce the same flavor. This is known as the sourdough starter. A good sourdough culture became very important to everyday life and was taken around the world by explorers on their expeditions.

According to legend, Christopher Columbus was the first person to bring European sourdough to America in 1492. He carried with him a crock of bread starter – a fermented product that still takes the place of commercial yeast in artisan bread baking to this day. However, wheat was not produced in America until almost 350 years later in 1839, so, most likely the first bread in America was cornbread.

The American history of sourdough bread really starts during the Gold Rush. When gold was discovered in Coloma, California in 1848 it ignited a massive influx of prospectors to the area from other regions of the United States, Europe and Australia. Many arrived with little more than the clothes on their backs. Among the few prized possessions, they brought with them were jars of sourdough starter that held the promise of a full belly. To thousands of hopeful (and hungry) miners who risked it all in pursuit of striking it rich, those jars of cultivated wild yeast represented a semblance of stability and a taste of home, even amid backbreaking work and an uncertain future. Sourdough starters served as a lifeline to which the miners literally clung. Legend has it that the bread starters were so important to these miners that they would cuddle and sleep with their starters on cold nights so the yeasts and bacteria that made them viable would not die. The same goes for miners in Alaska.

Due to the sudden population explosion, farms could not keep up with the surge in demand, making affordable food an elusive commodity in many parts of the state. The discovery of gold also excited the locals too and many farm workers left to pan for gold leaving many farms abandoned. Local food merchants, seeing opportunity as droves of miners rushed the gold fields, inflated their prices on everything from fruit to flour. A single egg could command \$3 (more than \$80 per egg in today's dollars). Needless to say, merchants struck more riches than the gold miners. After traveling thousands of arduous miles to stake their claim to wealth, most hopefuls in the mining camps ultimately made very little money. Faced with limited funds and resources, the miners could extend only a small amount of purchased flour by mixing

it with sourdough starter – a more affordable solution than buying a fresh loaf of bread. Sourdough starter was a way to turn something that was essentially shelf-stable into something that was a bit more delicious and also nutritious.

The city of San Francisco during the Gold Rush of 1849 was a small outpost of uncertain allegiance to Mexico. It was flooded with miners looking to get in on the action, along with a penchant for gambling, which concerned the townsfolk. The miners also brought with them from the mining camps their bread starters.

The Boudin family, who were well known master bakers from France, came to the San Francisco area during the gold rush days in California. And as the story goes, they obtained some sourdough starter from a miner. They found the new bacterial inhabitants of the area that was introduced to the starter created a sharper sourness than they were used to – a tang that has since become one of the defining traits of San Francisco's renowned sourdough bread.

As the city's bread fame grew, a rumor circulated that the strain of bacteria found in the starters' wild yeasts was responsible for San Francisco sourdough's distinct tart flavor and simply could not be reproduced anywhere else in the world. Thus, it became known as *Lactobacillus Sanfranciscensis*, which remains so named for the City by the Bay, with a nod to the era that cemented sourdough as part of San Francisco's identity.

The popular Bay Area chain, Boudin Bakery later trademarking its signature loaf as, "the Original San Francisco Sourdough." All these years later, Boudin still makes its sourdough from a gold miner's sourdough starter – though it was nearly lost in the 1906 Great Earthquake which forced an emergency evacuation. Louise Boudin, the bakery's monarch grabbed a bucket of the original starter before running to safety. She instinctively protected the 'mother dough,' which linked the Boudin's bread back to its early beginnings.

The ancient Egyptian sourdough, back in 1500 BC, was the only form of leavened bread that existed until just a few centuries ago, which means we have been eating this leavened bread longer than other breads. This form of leavened bread hasn't changed much with modernization and is one of the least processed breads we can eat.

Winter Wanderings and Wonderment

By Mia Monroe

Springtime and I'm looking forward to a good dose of Vitamin F: forest fun, thanks to the wonderful abundance and variety of trees at Dutch Flat. Soon we'll smile at the blossoms floating in the air as gentle breezes stir blooming apple and pear! The ivory dogwood blooms are a treat and our legendary sugar pine, the giant oak and giving locust add to that innate feeling we "know": forests lift our spirits. AND science tells us trees are great for our health so let's give them a tip of the hat for all that fresh air! Science also confirms what many have learned this year: the solace of nature, the healing power of a walk, the aroma not only smells good but IS good for us!

Recently when looking for leopard lily a dear friend and I were tipped off to a once legendary bay laurel in Canyon Creek, noted for its distinctive fragrance and thus a boon to us Dutch oven chefs! We easily found it, but also enjoyed the time by the cascades lush with Indian rhubarb while watching towhee and hummingbird share the forest shade with us. Special moments with spicy leaves to share later.

Those of us who wander and meander find much to wonder and learn thanks to the special geology, creek to ridge diversity, and overall mild climate of our Dutch Flat environs. As we look more closely we see the web of interconnections (check out Doug Tellamy videos and you'll gain life-changing appreciation of our oak



Anna's Hummingbird

community!), the importance of pollinators (help monarch butterflies: <https://xerces.org/western-monarch-call-to-action>), value our dark skies (we saw the comet from the Diggins!) and nature's awe right next to us...interested? my book shelf has John McPhee's *Assembling California*, Obi Kaufmann's tour de force *The Forests of California*, Charles Hood's lively series *A Californian's Guide to the Birds* (another is the *Mammals Among Us*, and the indispensable John Muir Laws field guides (beautifully illustrated!)).

When I learned the harmonica has always been linked with trains and today's deepening appreciation of each breath, my hope is to carry one in my pocket, plus my other goal is to take John Muir Laws free drawing workshops on-line to start an illustrated nature journal ...I'm eager to swap notes! See you out in the wonder of it all.

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Peggy Roberts, DVM

Placer County in 1861

By Debby McClatchy



Main Street, Dutch Flat, 1860's

The bookstore in the Golden Drift Museum contains a replica of the Placer County Directory of 1861. It is great fun and informative reading for the history buff and general reader alike. It gives a window to our county’s populace, businesses, politics, and culture during a year when the economy was popping, due to the emergence of hydraulic mining.

Placer County was inaugurated by an act of the California legislature on April 25, 1851. There were large turnouts for the first few elections of County officials. One was too close to call between the two favorites. The results were contested, one candidate died, and, finally as a compromise, the incumbents were just kept in office.

The first gold miners in the area were from Oregon. James Marshall found his nuggets in early 1848, but news and acceptance of this did not reach the East in time for gold seekers to travel West that year. Many “48ers”, from Oregon, spent the summer along the Middle and North Forks of the American River, before returning home before the freeze. Those who stayed over for the winter of 1848/49 endured 17 weeks of continuous rain, then snow. The population of the foothills shrank to 50. Trails to mining claims were washed out and food was scarce, except for venison.

It was not until a warm spell in February of 1850 that the miners became a stampede. Later in the year, families started to arrive by wagon train and permanent homes and settlements began. Fires are a constant threat, and every town burns down, some more than once. Dutch Flat was the only exception.

By 1861, Dutch Flat was the largest town in Placer County, fueled by the construction, from 1854 to 1859, of the Placer County Canal which brought water from the Bear River to our area. The 1860 census places Dutch Flat’s population at 443, out of the County total of about 3700. Of these, 373 list their occupation as miner, although most held other part time jobs to get by. The other 70 were generally services of use to the miners, including eleven merchants and their nine clerks, 7 saloon owners, six blacksmiths and carpenters, 5 ditch men with one owner, 4 farmers and milkmen, three butchers, two tailors and lawyers, and one each livery stable owner, newspaper editor, teamster, water company owner, tinner, hose maker, baker, doctor, constable, druggist, shoemaker, schoolteacher, hotel owner, engineer, and librarian. Plus, William Parsons who listed his job as “the biggest liver in town”.

Names that stand out in this census include Dr. DW Strong, druggist and our transcontinental railroad catalyst; H. Hudepohl, owner of the largest mercantile in town and, later, the largest gravestone in our cemeteries; E.L. Bradley, pivotal owner of the Dutch Flat Waterworks; Charles Stephens, first owner of the Dutch Flat Hotel; Charles Dornbach, still living in town and one of our founders; W.C. Stratton, then the California State Librarian; and William

Uren, listed as a blacksmith, later an important surveyor and contractor.

This census describes Dutch Flat with 140 families, 7 grocery stores, 17 saloons, 8 clothing stores, two breweries, three blacksmith shops, 2 hardware mercantiles, two tin shops, 2 hotels, one drugstore, one each carpentry and cabinet shops, one restaurant, 2 butchers, 1 baker, three schools, and one church.

Placer County had a judge, a sheriff, clerk, recorder, district attorney, treasurer, coroner, public administrator, and a superintendent of schools. The County was divided into 10 townships, each with a tax collector, an assessor, two justices of the peace, two constables, and three road commissioners. There were 15 post offices.

The eight most important towns in Eastern Placer County were Auburn, Michigan Bluff, Yankee Jim’s, Dutch Flat, Deadwood, Bath, Tanyard, and Ophir. Of these, only two remain active today: Dutch Flat and Auburn. Bath was absorbed as Foresthill grew, Deadwood became part of Georgetown, Michigan Bluff was decimated by earthquake and fire. The remainder are ghost towns.

Prominent towns in Western Placer County included Gold Hill, Virginia, Rattlesnake, Pine Grove, and Stewart’s. Rattlesnake is now under Folsom Lake and Pine Grove is part of Newcastle. None of the rest are currently listed on the map of California.

The two dominant political parties, in 1861, were the Whigs and the Democrats. The latter held a majority, but was split into two factions, so the Whigs usually won.



Chinatown, Dutch Flat

The Big Four’s wagon road was the second attempt to link Dutch Flat with the silver mines in Nevada. The first was the “Lake Pass Turnpike Company”. It bogged down over conflicting routes. The Big Four were more successful, using our Dr. Strong’s recommended route.

The Dutch Flat Methodist Church was organized in 1857 by the Reverends Hinkle and Simons. It was completed in 1861. Membership numbered 40; cost of the building in its furnishings was \$3500. There was a parsonage, built for \$600. Its Sunday School, started in 1857, had 75 pupils and eight teachers.

The first newspaper in Placer County was the “Placer Herald”, first published in 1852. It promised to be “free and independent”, but rarely succeeded. The “Placer Democrat” was next, but was only around for two weeks; its liberal views didn’t sell newspapers. Next came the “Auburn Whig”, the “Placer Press” and many more small town tries at publishing. All held one-sided views and were commercially unsuccessful.

We think of pears and cherries as paramount in Placer County agriculture but, in 1861, wheat was the main crop. It was also grown in Napa and Alameda counties, but Placer’s bushel yield was two to one of theirs. Other crops were peaches, apples, plums, apricots, quince, nectarines, figs, almonds, currants, grapes, and blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries. Of the total 102,500 acres in the County, about 12,000 were under cultivation.



Strong’s Drugstore, Dutch Flat

The directory is full of advertisements for local businesses. There are five for Dutch Flat. “Armstrong’s Livery Stable”, on Main Street and known locally as “the old stable”, advertised the sale and boarding of horses, carriages, and buggies. The second ad is for “J. Hughes”, a store specializing in boots, shoes, and clothing. Next, was “Hall and Allen, Bankers”, with branches also in Auburn and Todd’s Valley. The “Dutch Flat Livery Stable”, under owner Thomas Morris, was “prepared to offer as fine a turn-out as can be had in the state”. Finally, the aforementioned, Dr. D.W. Strong, offered “drugs and medicines, fancy articles, camphene, alcohol, kerosene, paints, oils, dyestuffs, lamp chimneys, etc.”

In this year of 2021, with so many of our day-to-day norms upended, it is comforting to read about life in 1861: somewhat simpler, perhaps less stressful, and we can take hope from that.

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The Lingering Danger of COVID-19

By Sara Bellem

In today’s world of extreme political correctness, I hesitate to use the term, “The fat lady has sung”. It was an old saying to indicate that something difficult was over. She came on stage and performed her aria and that was the end of the “project” or difficulty. Today, the precious overweight lady has NOT sung. She hasn’t even come center stage for her ending aria.

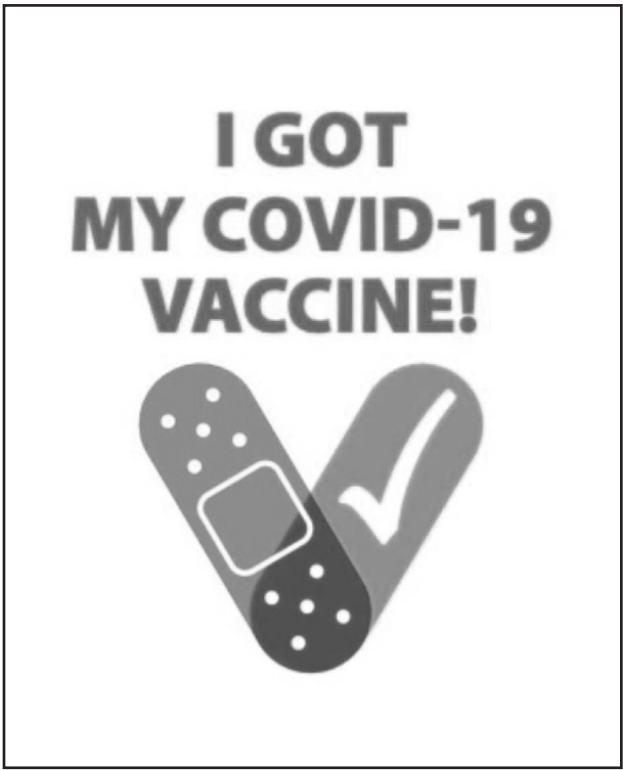
I think the nonsense surrounding the quick opening of restaurants and bars, and de-masking the entire populace is insane. We may have experienced a decrease in numbers of COVID-19 cases because of a focused attempt to curb the spread, but it is not enough. We must continue to stay vigilant.

The race to get everyone vaccinated is understandable, but is also mystifying to me. I am not an anti-vaxer. In fact, I wrote a chapter in a recent book on the importance of vaccines, the old-genre variety. Now, with the advent of genomic methods, the mRNA and other genomic vaccines are the expected modality. I, for one, however, am waiting for an older-genre vaccine, one that has worked, as in measles etc. But call me ultra conservative.

We may have experienced a decrease in numbers of cases, but must continue to stay vigilant.

Tinkering with genomes is not without its surprises and with this aspect of things, surprises can take some time to manifest. But, for those who are comfortable with risk, sure, take the mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) and the DNA genre: Astro Zeneca and Johnson and Johnson. I prefer to hunker down and wait for the next generation of vaccines to present themselves. But yes, I emphasize hunker down. I’ve had too much experience with lethal viruses to be cavalier about them. I’m going to only associate with people who are careful and are staying within their bubble, where possible. I have great compassion for those people who run businesses, like restaurants, but waiting a bit longer will ensure that a another surge will not be likely. It just makes sense to me.

In the meantime, there is little mention of repurposed drugs that may work to alleviate the hospitalization and deaths of many. I lost two of my dearest friends in nursing home infections of COVID. Both were not aware of repurposed drugs. The NIH first hauled out Remdesivir and it was not only highly expensive, but did not work well. Dihydroxychloroquine worked in India and Africa for COVID in the early stages of the disease. It has been touted for many decades as treatment for most malaria. If you are unfortunate enough to get bitten by a mosquito carrying chloroquine-resistant malaria, other more potent and expensive drugs are utilized, especially in Africa. There is a second “re-purposed” drug called Ivermectin. Google Dr.



Kory and Dr. Mavik, and NO they are NOT unestablished doctors. They have remarkable reputations as excellent physicians. Ivermectin’s use in curing River Blindness in Africa was awarded the Nobel Prize. It also treats scabies, and is in experimental use with dengue and zica in other countries. It is also used in veterinary treatment of parasites in horses, dogs and other animals. I find it a complete mystery as to why it has had such difficulty being tested vigorously in the USA. It has been tested, but not vigorously, by NIH.

I’m not interested in conspiracy theories. This drug saved my adopted son’s life in India. It has a phenomenal record of hitting COVID when it starts. By the way, it is inexpensive, given orally in simple tablets and can be taken at home. The KEY is early treatment, within the first two to three days of COVID symptoms. Two to three doses over a total of five days ,in most cases (given early treatment), greatly diminishes the symptoms of COVID and avoids hospitalization, as well as death. It is also used in prophylaxis, especially for health care workers.

Decrease in hospitalization and death is being touted with most of the vaccines at present. Ivermectin does the same, decreasing serious COVID-19 and has a profound track record worldwide, but is still being questioned in the USA.

My game plan is to eventually go ahead and get the vaccine when I choose, but have Ivermectin in my cupboard for any hiccups with variants.

We are continuously reminded that more infectious and serious variants are already presenting. We do NOT know if the vaccine covers these variants. So, Ivermectin would be a repurposed drug that could prevent another surge and far more deaths. It could be stored as backup, in case the variants break through the vaccine barrier.

But it seems to me that Americans are insistent on breaking free. A rush to judgment without taking the needed precautions could prove disastrous. At best, it will keep the virus going.

As we move toward spring break, Easter, and the merry month of May, and our beloved outdoor barbecues... Well, you do the math. Carelessness is rampant in party-goers.

Most doctors and medical organizations strongly recommend maintaining masks and self-distancing after vaccinating. This is clearly a message of, “we do not know just how protective the vaccines are at the moment”. They are only a first line prevention and, to what extent, is still unknown. So, it will be helpful if we all settle down and just be vigilant for a while longer.

Freedom, barbecues and church gatherings can take place with masking and self-distancing. As for hugging? Wow, I miss it too, but when I was working with Ebola, it was clear it could kill you. COVID-19 has demonstrated it can accomplish that as well. The overestimation that it is a simple, flu-like disease is simply and horribly incorrect. Long-haulers are already experiencing serious organ problems. Careless freedom is not freedom.

We have passed beyond the 400-day mark of this pandemic, as well as 500 thousand deaths worldwide. May I remind us all, this virus and its danger are real. If it hasn’t killed someone near you, give great thanks. According to Placer County’s website, there are almost 20,000 cases reported in the county, with 232 recorded deaths. In Dutch Flat, there are presently 10 cases registered. In Alta, there are 30. Let’s pray for all those involved in these situations in our own villages. A few months ago, a local said, “we live in the mountains, it won’t come here”. IT HAS.

With this in mind, if someone has COVID, or has been exposed to COVID, it is not only prudent, but essential and potentially lifesaving, to quarantine and report the disease to public health authorities. Contact tracing is not policing, it is an essential part of controlling more outbreaks. This should NEVER have to be said. It is painfully obvious to me. Do the right thing! And should I bore you? Let’s all row in the same direction.

The slightly overweight woman needs to get on stage to sing her Aria.

Resource:

Excellent research for Ivermectin: FLCCC, Dr. Mavik, Dr. Kory, <https://COVID19criticalcare.com/>

The latest numbers in our area:

Alta: 31 cases
Dutch Flat: 10 cases
Emigrant Gap: less than 6 cases
Colfax: 264 cases
Applegate: 81 cases
Auburn: 2433 cases

Source: placer.ca.gov

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Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce Awards Grants to Local Nonprofit Organizations

By Laura Glassco



Pictured left to right: Randy Eley, Treasurer, CACC, Tim Ryan, Director, CACC, Laura Glassco, President, Friends of the Dutch Flat Swimming Pool, Amy Andrews, CEO, CACC, and Bob Kims, President, Dutch Flat Community Center.

CACC representatives hand-delivered grant awards to happy recipients in Dutch Flat

In March, the Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce, (CACC), in partnership with the City of Colfax and Placer Shares Collaborative Grant Program, accepted and approved applications for numerous non-profits and small businesses in the area they serve, which is Applegate to Cisco Grove. A check in the amount of \$2000 was given to each recipient.

The purpose of this grant program was to assist small businesses and non-profits during the current pandemic. Many businesses and

organizations have had to reduce employment or close their doors indefinitely. Similarly, non-profits such as the Dutch Flat Community Center and the Dutch Flat Swimming Pool have not been able to hold fundraisers that are crucial to maintaining building and recreational locations. The Golden Drift Historical Society was also a grant recipient. The award of these much needed grants is critical to continue providing the community with opportunities for education and recreational entertainment.

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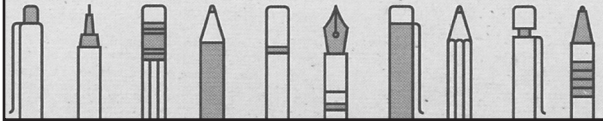


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