



Alta Dutch Flat Gold Run COMMUNITY

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It's the snowiest season to date, Sierra Snow Lab confirms

But 20 more feet are needed to break record

By Suzie Dundas



Alta-Dutch Flat School on March 3, 2023

Photo by Amy Alden

It is, officially, the snowiest year to date in our region. Following a nearly two-week series of storms that dropped more than 15 feet of snow in parts of the Sierra Nevada, the official numbers are in: we have received more snowfall, as of March 6, than in any other season — or at least any season since 1971-72, the earliest year for which the UC Berkeley Central Sierra Snow Lab, on Donner Summit, has daily measurements.

As of March 6, the Snow Lab has measured 580 inches, or just over 48 feet, of snow since Oct. 1. The greatest amount of seasonal snowfall, in inches, from Oct. 1 through March 6 recorded.

“We have received more snowfall this year, from Oct 1 to current, than any other year,” Snow Lab lead scientist Andrew Schwartz

confirmed via email.

Annual snowfall totals at the Sierra Snow Lab are measured from Oct. 1 to Sept. 31, so any snow that falls in October, November or December is added to the following year’s total. It’s important to note that snowfall to date is not the same as snow pack, which is a measurement of snow depth.

While the current snowfall to date means our region could be on track to set a new single-season snowfall record, it’s still nearly 20 feet short of the current record. That record was set in 1938, when 68.24 feet (818.88 inches) of snow was recorded on Donner Summit.

However, the Snow Lab usually points to the 1951-52 season as the record — which brought 67.65 feet (811.8 inches) of snowfall to Donner Summit — as earlier years were measured in a different location.

“Prior to 1946, the Central Pacific railroad at Donner Summit was making measurements of the snow,” says Schwartz. “We use the data prior to 1946 to examine overall trends, but it isn’t directly comparable to the Snow Lab’s data because the site and methods were different for the railroad.”

Daily data from the Snow lab goes back to the late 1950s, but only data from 1970 and more recent is digitized.

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Dutch Flat’s water system to be updated

By Ernie Bullard

Last Summer, Dutch Flat Mutual Water Company (DFM) announced that the funding agreement for construction of a new water distribution system had been executed by the State Division of Financial Assistance (State) and Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) on our behalf. Upon completion of the construction project, DFM will consolidate its operations into PCWA, and DFM will dissolve as an entity.

The construction project is made possible by a substantial grant from the State Water Resources Control Board. The approval process for the funding agreement was delayed 22 months, due to the Covid pandemic. DFM is also receiving assistance from Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), a non-profit organization that provides assistance to rural communities.

In September 2022, DFM and PCWA obtained and recorded the required Rights of Entry and Easements from those owners whose property will be affected by the construction of the project.

In November 2022, project bids were received from construction companies with the low bid coming in at just over \$4.0 million, which exceeded the original project funding agreement. As a result, additional funding was requested from the State to cover the increased construction costs. These additional costs were anticipated due to the pandemic delay and recent inflationary increases.

The Dutch Flat Mutual Water Company’s goal throughout this process is to create a water secure future for the community.

In early January 2023 we received approval from the State, increasing the funding to complete the project construction, and we executed Amendment No. 2 to the Consolidation Agreement with PCWA and DFM to reflect the increased construction costs.

On January 19, 2023, the PCWA Board approved a budget amendment for the project in the amount of \$6.0 million for design, construction, water connection costs, and engineering support. In addition, a construction contract was awarded to Mountain Cascade, Inc. (Livermore, CA) for project construction, and a Professional Services Agreement was signed with Peterson Brustad (Folsom, CA) for design, construction, and engineering support.

DFM customers may be contacted by PCWA during the project about the upcoming schedule and construction coordination.

The project includes:

- Replace all of the 50-year-old water mains and water meters in Dutch Flat,
- Replace and Upgrade fire hydrants to current standards,
- Install approximately 8,800 feet of treated water pipeline
- Install 108 services, meters and vaults
- Add a pressure reducing station
- Connect to the PCWA Alta treated water distribution system
- Disconnect the DFM 0.33 million gallon per day water treatment plant
- Consolidate the Dutch Flat Mutual Water Company into PCWA.

Below is a revised project timeline to help you visualize the project milestones.

- January 2023 – Award construction contract - completed
- April 2023 – Begin construction
- January 2024 – Construction End
- February 2024 – Project closeout

The DFM goal throughout this process is to create a water secure future for the community and to be as transparent as possible. We will provide updates as we move forward.



Towle Caboose in snow

Photo by Laura Glassco

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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, 2023.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Attic: Thursdays, 10 am - 1 pm.

Auburn Interfaith Food Closet: Monday-Friday, 10 am-2 pm, Wednesdays, 4-7 pm, last Saturday of each month, 10 am-2 pm. 1788 Auburn Ravine Rd, Auburn. 530-885-1921. Delivery available.

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. 6:00 pm. Bring a place setting, your own drink, 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 Arts & Crafts: Thursdays, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. All are welcome. Learn something new!

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

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 schedule on Page 8.

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 message from the DFCC President

By Laura Glassco

Since our Board took office last November, we’ve had a busy time putting together our plans for 2023. Karen Charles has worked tirelessly to take over the responsibilities of Treasurer, which include bill paying and government filings, receiving all the Membership dues, and updating contact information. Shannon Molloy, as our Recording Secretary, has made many improvements to our social media footprint, as well as, providing us with Board meeting minutes. Alicia Lampley-Gebel, as our Corresponding Secretary, has taken the lead as our Advertising Manager, working with existing advertisers, as well as, securing several new ones. Suzanne Vidal has taken the lead in creating new and exciting fund raising projects: a soon-to-be-available-for-sale DFCC license plate frame, an insulated tote bag, as well as, a 4th of July pet contest. Alan Willsmore’s wife, Shelly, has stepped up to be a co-chair for this year’s White Elephant Sale (see Shelly’s article for more information on the WES). A 2023 budget has been created and ongoing expenses against revenues are now being closely followed.

There are several other events in the works, so stay tuned for postings. We look forward to seeing you all at these events and helping to keep our community a wonderful place to live!

The Annual Membership Drive is going very well. A huge thank you to each of you who have sent in your dues. And, if you haven’t yet done so, you’re not too late. These fund help to keep our Community Center active and maintained.

Thank you from all the Board Members!



Photo by Marybeth Blackinton
Laura Glassco

Upcoming events at the Dutch Flat Community Center

- 3rd Thursday of March, April, May and June – Community Potluck
- April 8th – Easter Egg Hunt and Party
- May 6th – 7th Annual Dutch Flat Spring Artisan Faire

DFCC gets new fire panel and more

By Laura Glassco



Photo by Laura Glassco

Zach Woods and Zach Haslett

A huge thank you to the Sacramento Branch of Bay Alarm! Zach Haslett, Branch Manager of Bay Alarm, lives with his family in Alta and is also a Director on the Alta Fire Department. He was able to, not only secure a replacement fire panel, but all new smoke detectors (15) and a new outdoor alarm bell for the Center, as well. He, along with Zach Woods, Level IV Installer, installed all of this top-of-the-line equipment at no charge! This meant crawling in the basement in the freezing weather, up ladders in the 20’ ceilings of both floors and working in the dark, dank attic. Over several days, they worked tirelessly to ensure that our Center is protected.

Let’s give the two Zachs and Bay Alarm a huge shout out of appreciation and support!

Coming Soon!
Available at DFCC Potluck in April



DFCC Insulated Tote Bag, dark green with Joan Chlarson watercolor, \$20



DFCC License Plate Frame, \$15



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Welcome Home - *A personal story*

By Bill Gallaher

This column is the second part of my story while “in country” during the Vietnam war in 1971-72. I was a USAF navigator in EC-47s. To briefly catch up you poor souls that haven’t been able to follow our Community newspaper, I promised our readers that I would take you on a typical EC-47 combat mission over South Vietnam and Cambodia.

The EC-47 was simply an old WW II C-47 that had upgraded engines, filled with secret electronic gear and renamed. The mission of all EC-47s was to electronically track enemy troops and supplies as they moved south along the 1200 mile Ho Chi Minh trail from North Vietnam, through Laos and Cambodia and ending in South Vietnam. We did that by monitoring enemy radio transmissions and sending pertinent information to the appropriate agencies.

All missions started with a preflight briefing. We received information on where we were going, what type of targets we were looking for and, based on reports from previous missions, what kind of enemy anti-aircraft or small arms fire we might encounter. Sometimes we would be looking for a specific target, going to a specific area, or just trolling. Our crew consisted of two pilots, a navigator, and 2-4 radio operators. During a mission, when a radio operator picked up and identified an important signal, he would call it back to me as the navigator, and my job was to locate and plot it.

A “typical” mission might sound like this:
Somewhere over South Vietnam or Cambodia:

“R.O. (Radio Operator) to crew. Heads up. We’ve got a signal from a guy we’ve been tracking and last time we heard from him he was 100 miles north. Nav, I’m sending you the frequency.”

“Roger that. Nav to Pilot, turn left to three five zero degrees and hold steady.”

“Copy. Turning to 350 degrees. Co-pilot, check map for AA sites.....

Steady on 350 degrees, holding steady.”

“.....Nav to crew, ARDF (Airborne Radar Direction Finder) locked on, LOP (Line Of Position) plotted. Turn right to 080 degrees”. (The ARDF gave me a compass bearing from the airplane to the radio transmission. A LOP is that compass bearing plotted on the map.)

“....Steady on 080 degrees.”

“....Nav, to pilot, got him. LOP plotted, turn to 170 degrees”.

“Pilot to nav..... No can do. There are current small arms reports for that sector.”

‘Nav to crew. Foolish decision by the bad guys. There might be something important down there.... Pilot, can we turn to 270 degrees?’

“...Pilot, to nav, roger that, turning to 270.”

“....Nav to crew OK guys, LOP plotted.

Let’s get out of here. Pilot turn to heading 360. We have 3 good LOPs. I’d like to get more, but with the ground fire in the area let’s find our next target.. I’m going to contact a FAC (Forward Air Controller by secure transmission) to fly down and take a look. I also need to get a fix to upgrade our position.”

Once the LOPs were plotted on a map, the computer processor computed the spot all LOPs crossed, the estimated accuracy, and almost instantly the navigator had a close idea of the coordinates of the enemy’s position. High priority target locations were sent immediately to headquarters and/or to a FAC. FACs had an extremely dangerous job to fly low, well within small arms range and take a look. Other target positions and transmissions were simply logged and turned it at the end of the flight.

During each flight, we were always aware of many “what ifs”? My main “what if” was “what if we have to make an emergency landing”. As the navigator, part of my job was to always know where we were and the location of friendly airfields in case of an emergency. We didn’t think too much about getting shot at, sometimes not even using the issued flack jackets untillet me tell it this way:

To protect us from anti-aircraft fire, we were issued flack jackets, heavy enough to stop shrapnel or a bullet. We could either wear or sit on it. But either way they were very uncomfortable. Because all of the enemy fire came from the ground, if we used the flack jackets at all, we usually sat on them. And, because all our missions were 5-7 hours, most of, us didn’t use the jacket all. Until.... one of my fellow navigators was sitting on his flack jacket, on his steel chair. He told me he thought someone had kicked his butt. But instead, a large caliber bullet had come through the bottom of the airplane, through the steel chair, and embedded itself in his flack jacket. He said, “if I hadn’t been sitting on the jacket I would literally have lost my ass”. After that, we all sat on the jackets.

He made a necklace out of the bullet.
Flying wasn’t the only fun and games. After surviving another flight over enemy territory we’d usually hit the officers club on base or go into Saigon for entertainment and French food. Vietnam had been under French influence prior to the USA getting involved, so we could get authentic and outstanding French cuisine.

Saigon, especially at night, could be as dangerous to Americans as flying. One of the unusual aspects of the Vietnam War, was that it was hard to tell the enemy from the good guys. Many Viet Cong (VC: South Vietnamese men and women, loyal to the northern cause) lived in and around Saigon.

Bombings and assassinations happened. That being known, we were young and dumb and hungry to get off base. We didn’t take the danger seriously until one night we watched a lady in a long flowing gown, on a small motorcycle, drop a package in a trash can. Oh Shit! Is that a bomb? Get out of here or wait it out? We ducked behind a car to wait it out. We only had to wait a few minutes before a rider on another motor scooter pulled up and retrieved the package. Fortunately for y’all reading this, it wasn’t a bomb or I may not be sharing this with you. It was most likely a black market drop.

Daytimes in Saigon were a nice break. Sometimes I could almost forget why I was there. Lots of colors and beautiful people in amazing clothing. Vietnamese women are beautiful, with soft features, and many with long flowing colorful dresses.

But the horrors of war were around almost every corner and on many main streets... South Vietnamese veterans with missing limbs. Begging. Are you kidding me? A veteran who lost a limb, fighting for his country, has to beg for food? I was glad I was in the USA military service.

Many bars hired beautiful women to lure lonely G.I.’s into the bars. The girls flirted and the men bought them drinks. The drinks for the guys were alcohol, while the drinks they were buying for the girls were “Saigon Tea”. No alcohol. The girls weren’t shy about how they got G.I.’s into bars. I once had a girl run out of a bar and grabbed my hat off my head. I had to go into the bar to get my hat. 3 hours later...

Vietnamese children were fun. Give them chocolate and they are your BFF. Chocolate was a favorite, but another delicacy was: crickets. The kids would build a small cage out of sticks. Then, looking through canals and drainage ditches along the roads, they caught crickets, blew under their wings to madden them, and then put two pissed-off crickets in the cage. It was usually a fight to the death, with the winner living to fight again, and the loser eaten by whichever child caught it.

Crickets were a nice snack, and as much as the kids loved them, there was another uncommon delicacy that was as special to them as it seemed gross to me. Once in a while looking through the canals to find crickets, a lucky kid would find a large gray grasshopper. This apparently was a delicacy, because the live grasshopper would immediately disappear into the child’s mouth. I say “disappear”. That’s not entirely correct. Actually, the 5” long insect was big enough that when the lucky kid popped it in his mouth, the grasshopper’s legs would stick out. And the legs were still kicking.

That’s my story. Let’s hear from you!!

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The Not-So-Common Raven

By Annette Rodgers Purther

The Common Raven is actually not so common; in fact they are incredibly intelligent, monogamous, omnivorous, and the ultimate trickster.

They are the largest of the Passerine Songbirds, weighing roughly 3 pounds.

The deck is stacked in the Raven’s favor. They can live in a variety of habitats, from snow to desert to mountains to forests. They are scavengers with a varied diet that includes fish, meat, seeds, fruit, carrion, and garbage; so keep that trash secured beyond their reach or you will find yourself upset that you’ve left them your McDonald’s bag. BTW, they can differentiate fast food bags for doggie bags; yet, they are also known to eat undigested food from scat. Yuck to us is yum to them.

They are not above tricking animals out of their food—one raven will distract the other animal, for example, and the other will steal its food. Coyotes may actually seek out Ravens and Magpies in numbers realizing food has been found. Ravens have few predators and live a long time: 17 years in the wild and up to 40 years in captivity.

They control populations of a wide range of prey species they consume in their diet. Feeding on carrion these birds also help to keep their ecosystem healthy. There has been research suggesting that Ravens are involved in seed dispersal. In the wild, they choose the best habitat and disperse seeds in locations best suited for their survival.

Once mated, a pair of Ravens will leave “The Teenage Gang” they’ve been hanging out with since hatching the spring before. They will join with other young unpaired Ravens to increase their “inexperienced at life” chance of finding food, thus surviving. Large carcasses are rare during winter, so while 1 or 2 juveniles wouldn’t stand a change against adult defenders, a menacing youth gang can easily muscle in on the feast.

I’ve been watching and studying a resident pair of Ravens that live on our acreage for 3 seasons thus far. They do not share their territory with other Ravens other than their own brood for about 6 months; at which time, the juveniles are given the boot and they scoot to find their own future in the wild.



Alta Raven



Raven pair



Raven landing

Photos by Annette Rodgers Purther

Important Wildlife Contacts

- **Placer County Wildlife Facebook Page.** Created to share information pertaining to our local area wildlife. I encourage followers to share their own experiences with our local wildlife, including newly found nests (careful not to disturb occupants), ID questions, and *interesting facts about wildlife*. Please Like this FB page.
- **Gold Country Wildlife Rescue (GCWR)-Placer County’s Local Rescue,** (530) 885-0862. Open year round, seasonal hours. Follow message directions. 11251 B Avenue, Auburn, across from Animal Control.
- **California Wildlife Encounters-Wildlife Research & Rescue-Ben Nuckolls.** Wildlife Capture Specialist, (916) 803-7053.
- **Michelle Dodge** - Field Capture Specialist with GCWR. Contact for difficult or dangerous captures, orphaned or injured wildlife. Reach her through Gold Country Wildlife Rescue’s Hotline or Facebook direct messenger.
- **Wildlife Rehabilitation & Release (WRR),** Grass Valley. 24/7 Hot Line: (530) 432-5522; www.cawildlife911.org. Intake Center: (530) 477-5774. May 1 - August 31. Off season/hours: call hot line.
- **Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care (LTWC),** (530) 577-2273.
- **NorCal Bats,** permit with Wildlife Rehabilitation & Release, (530) 432-5522 (Grass Valley); (530) 902-1918 (Davis)
- **Kindred Spirits** - fawn-only rescue, (530) 889-5822. Fawns are born without a scent. Doe will leave fawn for up to 8 hrs+-. If fawn is not in distress, monitor only. DO NOT TOUCH FAWN. Leaving your scent and, hence, giving fawn a scent for predation to happen.
- **California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CADWF)** - North Central Region 2, (916) 358-2900; email: R2Info@wildlife.ca.gov. Serving both Placer & Nevada Counties.
- **Bear League of Lake Tahoe.** Call for bear issues, (530) 525-7297.
- **Toogee Sielsch, Tahoe Toogee on FB,** bear expert, (774) 315-03353; email: toognian@gmail.com. See his Facebook page for enlightening bear information & wonderful trail camera videos.



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White Elephant Sale lives another year

By Shelley Willsmore

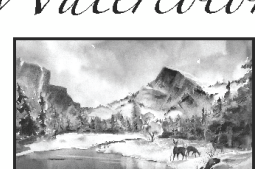


Collectibles Room at the WES


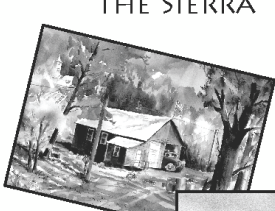
If you have not lived in the area very long, or you have not attended or participated in the WES, you probably don't know what I'm talking about. WES is an acronym for White Elephant Sale. The Dutch Flat Community Center hosts it's annual fundraiser, White Elephant Sale, on the Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend. The first WES was held in 1968, 55 years ago. We skipped the event in 2020 so, instead of this being our 56th WES, it is actually the 55th.



Joan Chlarson
Watercolors



DRAWING AND PAINTING
THE SIERRA



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2023 White Elephant Sale Dutch Flat Community Center September 2nd & 3rd

So, back to what is the Dutch Flat WES? Opportunity! It is an opportunity to donate useable, unique, retro, practical, gently used, items you no longer want or need. They are displayed for shoppers from our community as well as visitors from far and wide, to have an opportunity to help support our Community Center. And, in the case of donors remorse, an opportunity to buy them back! And an opportunity to help contribute your skills, talent and labor to transform the Center into a bargain hunter's delight!

For the past 5 or 6 years, our past President, Bob, and his wife, Kathy, Kims and Kathy's sister, Kay, have worked tirelessly to make this event a huge success. They have officially retired from their duties and the members of the Center are deeply grateful for all they have contributed over the years. A team of four volunteers have stepped up to share the responsibilities of administration and carry on where the Kims and Kay have left off—big shoes to fill. And we will need lots of additional hands and feet to make WES 2023 a success.

All proceeds go toward the preservation and maintenance of the historic, 1898 Dutch Flat School House, which is the Center's treasure of a building. The community at large is welcome the third Thursday of each month for a pot luck, except during July and August because volunteers are setting up the White Elephant Sale. The Center hosts a St Patrick's Day dinner, an Easter Egg Hunt, the 4th of July Salad Luncheon, and a children's Halloween party. The building is also available to rent for weddings, memorials and other celebrations.

You may bring your donations to the center every Wednesday and Saturday from 9AM to noon, starting July 12. It takes a lot of work to pull this event off. We have volunteers in charge of the various areas and they will need help. There are several areas you can volunteer for, i.e. the General Store, Collectibles, Heirlooms, Clothing, Decor, Furniture, Sporting Goods, Hardware, Kid's Corner, just to name a few, Please contact Shelley Willsmore at sywillsmore@gmail.com or call the center, 530 389-8310 and leave a message with your name and phone number and someone will contact you. As we get closer to July, there will be a planning meeting. Or, if you can, show up on a Wednesday or Saturday during July and August and we will put you to work.

The 2023 WES will be held on September 2nd and 3rd from 9AM to 2 PM. No early birds, but you can get there early and join the line. It is a lot of fun, you will meet new neighbors, and be a part of one of the best communities on earth. Thank you, in advance, for your participation.

Warming Signs of Life and Hope!

By Mia Monroe

Diane Star hikes amongst the Dogwoods

Photo by Sarah Fugate



As days lengthen and warm up, we can hardly wait to get outside, see what is emerging and arriving! A spring in our step! Plus, we're learning that scenes small and large that fill us with awe are so good for our mental well-being and could include a bird singing on a branch, sunset or the starry night.

Having a nature connection as part of our everyday routine is a Nordic custom of *friluftsliv* or "open air life". It's all about finding simple ways to delight in being outside, regardless of weather or season. And it strengthens family or friendship bonds, as well as, fostering a caring spirit for our world.

Another culture that has a tradition of seeking nature for its health benefits is Japan's *shinrin-yoku* or "forests bathing". It describes the practice of spending time in the woods to soak up its health benefits. It can be social and is usually a slow, leisurely stroll at a pace to notice small things, take in the scents and sounds around you to feel and find a wholeness in the company of trees. Here's a few tips: intentional breathing, pausing, noting changes, walking lightly and seeking "messages" from nature often brings smiles, spontaneous expressions of gratitude and noticeably relieves stress. There's even a whole new vocabulary including my current favorite: *komorebi*, a Japanese word for sunshine filtering through the trees.



Photo by Emmaline Gravel

Snowy trees and sky

As the late Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, suggests, "With each step the earth heals us, and with each step we heal the earth."

This time of year, we have an abundance of negative ions, generated whenever water collides. Stormy days, waterfalls, rapids all offer the health benefits of these powerful molecules (a visit to the seashore is also a super negative ion experience!). You can also benefit from negative ions by getting out in the sun since they are also produced by ultraviolet rays leaving you feeling healthier, less stressed and more energized.

Whether you yodel, walk your dog, sketch, plant a garden, or put your face up to the sunshine, in nature is a great time! As Annie Dillard says, "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives".



Sierra Animal Wellness Center



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It Takes A Village

By Geri Lennon

Dutch Flat resident, Kim Glassco, uses his snow blower to clear Main Street.



Photo courtesy of Sacramento Bee

I'm writing from the sunny Bay Area, snow-less and out of my home in Alta, Dutch Flat. Here, the daily commute is bumper to bumper in heavy rain, sprinkling and well just about any combo of weather but the white stuff. Before I left on Feb 27, I spent hours shoveling decks, path and car berm. I felt oddly proud of myself for just ignoring a back issue and gettin' 'er done, in case far more of the mysterious white stuff created dangerous weight on my decks. I gave up my trusty parking place on Main, and then was sent "berm-mania" photos piling far above my capacity to re-enter when I could.

Here's the miracle. I never thought I'd write this but I am in awe to see the personal outreach that is taking place on my computer screen. The media hyped their usual warnings which were often ignored by the looky-loos who just have to drive where they are warned not to go to see, yep, the white stuff.

I watched the 1Weather channel by the hour. I prayed and then prayed some more. And more of the white stuff fell. A hero came and relieved my decks of weight before arrival of the river of no return (atmospheric river?) scene now playing out. Bottom line? After Snowmageddon last year, which was costly and unbelievably powerful, its brother or sister sneaked in to surprise us all.

Day after day, I thought I could return home, but was told to wait and see. And now, reviewing all the photos and videos of our Facebook Community Page, I am

overwhelmed with gratitude. MOST helped one another and just a few were not getting just how hard everyone was working to keep people safe and then, sigh, the animals. Y'all had me at the rescue of the mini donkey, as well as, lost and confused dogs and cats.

I am in no way making small or romantic humor about what the foothills and higher up mountain areas are experiencing as I write this. Frankly, I am in awe. The help neighbors are extending those with shoveling and earth moving are villagers helping their own. I've suggested for years to have a phone chain, but I now get that the social media has played a huge part in moving people to places where they can help. Thank you one and all.

I'm doing my part by being an elder cheerleader from afar. I knew darn well if I remained I had two options: getting in the way or hurting my back again and well, praying is my best option. I'm also thanking a hero who spent hours shoveling my decks and roof trim and keeps me informed. I'm also thanking all those who stopped to help everyone they could, the ones snowed in, the one's snowed out and wellIt takes a village. Bless you one and all.

P.S. That also includes those who took photos, waste management folks who did the best they could in impossible volumes of snow and personal danger, PG&E and AT&T power workers, church folks, teens with shovels and every single person who said: ***How can I help?*** Bless you one and all.

Volunteer at the Golden Drift Museum

By Sarah Fugate

Volunteering at the Golden Drift Museum is fun, you get to meet a lot of people, and you have the opportunity to learn a lot about the unique history of our area. The extent of the commitment is up to you. The Museum is open Friday through Sunday, May through September, from noon until 4 pm. You can volunteer just one day of the season, or many. Plus, the Golden Drift Historical Society shows its appreciation for your service with an annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at the Monte Vista Inn!

Contact Anne Holmes, GDHS Volunteer Coordinator, at (530) 823-1341, or visit our website and fill out the form.

Join us in sharing our history with visitors from both near and far. You get to spend a nice afternoon in downtown Dutch Flat and you get full access to all the Museum has to offer.

Give it a try. You may like it.



Volunteers and visitors at the Museum

Correction: In the Fall 2022 issue of Community, I wrongly stated in the first paragraph of my article that Spain was paid \$15M for lands won by the United States. In fact, since Mexico had won independence from Spain, the money went directly to Mexico.

Debby McClatchy

Bob Hampshire



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Placer County - Part One

By Debby McClatchy

My lucky ticket at the Dutch Flat Community Center’s potluck raffle won the prize, “A History of Placer County, California”, originally written in 1882 and a reprint sponsored by the Placer County Historical Society. It is a treasure and full of wonderful, detailed information about the county we call home.

When we speak of “firsts” here, we are acknowledging the contributions of thousands of gold miners who arrived in California in the mid nineteenth century. Of course, real “firsts” should be attributed to those living in the area beforehand, the indigenous natives and the Spanish.

The First Gold Mined in Placer County

In the spring of 1847 Claude Chana, a native of France, arrived in California, after traveling west with a wagon train. He had a choice of four established destinations: Sutter’s Fort, Sinclair’s Ranch on the American River, and Johnson’s Ranch and Sigard’s Ranch, both on the Bear River. Chana chose Sutter’s Fort and began work as a cooper. Across his work bench labored James Marshall, then Sutter’s wagon maker. The two became fast friends.

Seven months later Chana moved to Sigard’s Ranch, a haven for Frenchmen, mostly old trappers enjoying retirement. Communication between the three ranches and the Fort was swift and constant as mountain men and other travelers went from one to the other. When Marshall found the gold nugget in Coloma in February of 1848, news and confirmation of the strike reached Sigard’s in a short time.

Chana decided to see for himself. As land above the rivers was unexplored ridges, he traveled downriver to Sutter’s Fort, then up the American River to Coloma. At the Fort he acquired two traveling companions, one being Sam Brannan, also extremely interested in the strike.

The news was good. Coloma was already full of miners, staking claims and panning with whatever receptacle they could engineer. Many were French. Chana returned to Sigard’s Ranch by the same route, to put together his outfit and supplies.

Among the mountain men resting at the ranch were Philibert Courteau, who had come to California with Fremont in 1844, and Francois Gendron, an experienced resident of the state since 1832. These two, plus another French comrade named Eugene, along with twenty-five Indians and thirty-five horses, joined Chana on his expedition. First they cut down a tree and fashioned “bateas”, wooden pans for washing the dirt.

Gendron, the most familiar with the area, encouraged them to take a shortcut right across the ridges to the American River from their location on the Bear River. In two days they reached the place now known as “Ophir” on the Auburn Ravine. It was May 16, 1848.



Placer County Courthouse

Before he turned in for the night, Chana took a batea up the ravine. His pan yielded three good-sized nuggets of gold. As soon as it was light enough, everyone started to pan the river. The area was christened “North Fork Dry Diggins”.

They continued for three weeks, up and down the ravine and a neighboring area called the Baltimore Ravine. Even though they continued to find numerous nuggets, the total amount was disappointing. The ground wasn’t overly rich; they were inexperienced at mining; their tools were crude and minimal. The result of their three weeks of labor was only three pounds of gold.

News came of a large strike on the Yuba River, and Chana and his companions left for greener pastures. By late 1849 Chana had amassed \$25,000 worth of gold from the Yuba area.

Their claim at Ophir was immediately staked by Nicholas Algier. He employed Indians, knew what he was doing, and took out a fortune in gold. James Marshall left overcrowded Coloma, tried his luck here, and moved on.

Whiskey, Weather, and Tenacity

In the summer of 1848, a company of miners working the Middle Fork of the American River between Murderer’s Bar and Buckner’s Bar had such an inordinate amount of trouble with alcohol, the group agreed that anyone caught drunk would be fined an ounce of gold dust to the common treasury and forfeit his dividends. This was easily enforced at the evening divide-up. However, whiskey was so prevalent, packed in by mule train weekly, and announced by horn and gunfire, it was inescapable. Everyone was being fined on a regular basis; the scheme collapsed; and the company split up.

As winter was coming, most went downhill to Sutter’s Fort or uphill to the ridges. (Before Dutch Charlie’s Flat was founded by the Dornbachs in 1851, it was an area populated by single miners in the winter months.) Seven men decided to stay in crude cabins built high on the banks of the river, hopefully prospecting on sunny days. An unexpected

flood took everything they owned and taught them the vagaries of California’s winter weather. Luckily, they all survived, and, a persistent group, re-outfitted at a settlement in Greenwood Valley. They returned, built higher, and lived on deer and grizzly meat until the thaw.

Frozen ground had kept them from prospecting. By spring, wagon trains and ships coming round the Horn and from Panama and Nicaragua brought thousands of new seekers to the Middle and North Forks of the American. Gigantic flumes were proposed, but most miners were using rockers and pans.

A claim was for fifteen feet of riverbank, extending across the water and including the opposite bank. If there was a “bar” in the river, the claim stopped there. Men were taking out half an ounce to several pounds of gold daily.

Five companies, The Vermont, Buckner’s Bar, Sailor Claim, Murderer’s Bar, and New York Bar, totaling over four hundred miners, united to build a mile-long flume. There were no sawmills so the task was daunting. A sawmill was improvised using a circular saw secured to a number of horses. Unfortunately, they quickly wore out, and the hills were covered by spiritless, sore-necked animals. Another idea, using lumber for the support and canvas for the actual flume, proved better, and many men were paid to sew the cloth. Weeks later and many dollars spent, finally in September, the flume was completed. All went to bed, fantasizing the wonderful riches to be gained in the morning.

While they slept a tremendous storm started up in the higher elevations.

Small natural dams in the river had accumulated over time, but this storm was so large, it washed them away. When the flood, condensed by the granite walls of the canyon, and full of trees, rocks, and debris, hit the flume, it swept it away, flowing down like a gigantic white serpent. The labor of hundreds of men for months was destroyed in a few minutes. The only silver lining found miners downstream supplied with free canvas for two to three years.

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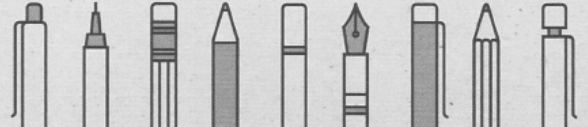
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Dutch Flat & Alta

Open to the Public

Alta-Dutch Flat School

Thursday
9:45 - 11:15 am

April 6 & 20
May 4 & 18
June 8 & 22



Dutch Flat Community Center

Tuesday
10 - 11:30 am

April 11 & 25
May 9 & 23
June 13 & 27

Book Club at Dutch Flat Community Center

10:30 - 11:30 am

April 25 - The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles

May 23 - The Soul of an Octopus by Sy Montgomery

June 27 - The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek
by Kim Michele Richardson

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Space is free & limited
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(916) 532-6305
christinamanis@hotmail.com

Susan Winje
(530) 389-8000

Lynn Oliver
(530) 305-8290

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