



Alta Dutch Flat Gold Run COMMUNITY

Volume 32 – No. 4

Published by the Dutch Flat Community Center with member support

Winter 2021

Learning to Live with COVID-19



Open House in May 2021 at Dutch Flat's Golden Drift Museum

By Sarah Fugate

As the COVID-19 pandemic made its way from 2020 to 2021, people in our community and around the globe learned better strategies for dealing with it and added tools to their arsenal for fighting the dreaded virus.

In January 2021, vaccines became available, being distributed to medical personnel and first responders before they were available to the general public. As the shots rolled out, they were offered to older, more vulnerable residents first.

Ultimately, we had choices between the two-shot Pfizer and Moderna versions and the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine. By the end of the year, vaccine doses were available to people as young as age 5.

Early in the vaccine roll out, supplies were limited with availability only at certain locations. Today, anyone can walk into just about any pharmacy and receive a shot, including a booster dose, if needed.

By summer, infection rates had declined. This led governments to reduce restrictions, allowing more events to occur. The Golden Drift Museum was able to open for its usual season. Monte Vista Inn allowed indoor dining again. Additionally, our community was able to resume Monthly Potlucks, the Dutch Flat 4th of July Parade, our Annual Pool Barbeque fundraiser, the White Elephant Sale, and Halloween at the Dutch Flat Community Center, among other events.

Yet, as the year went on, the pace of

vaccinations slowed. To re-energize the drive to put shots in arms, Governor Gavin Newsom began offering lotteries that awarded cash prizes to adults who had been vaccinated and other incentives to those who received the shots. Even with those incentives, the pace of vaccinations has not returned to the heights of the start of the roll out.

According to placer.ca.gov, 621,434 Placer County residents, or about 63 percent, are fully vaccinated. Residents with natural immunity, i.e., those that have been infected and recovered, is reported to be 38,645, or



Revelers on Halloween at the Dutch Flat Community Center

COMMUNITY
PO BOX 14
DUTCH FLAT, CA 95714

Non-Profit U.S.
Postage
PAID
Permit No. 14
Dutch Flat, CA
Carrier Pre-Sort
Postal Patron



December DFCC Potluck

about 4%, though this number is difficult to record, since there is no requirement for the general public to report infections. The dashboard states there have been 40,298 confirmed COVID cases in Placer County since the pandemic began and 488 residents have died while infected.

These 2021 numbers include the surge at the end of the year due to the emergence of the delta and omicron variants of the virus. The rate of infection for both is much quicker than previous variants. Yet, due to the vaccines' protection, no wholesale lockdowns have been instituted in the state, as they were during the earlier days of the pandemic.

Among the brighter spots found in the gloom of the virus was the return to in-person schooling this year following months of students learning remotely with varying degrees of success. Classes and athletic events have resumed, though infections and exposures have sidelined players and caused games to be rescheduled or canceled. And as school boards have implemented mask mandates in response to surging case numbers, some parents have pushed back, causing conflict at meetings.



Annual Friends of the Dutch Flat Pool Barbeque, 2021

COMMUNITY STAFF

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

Editorial Staff:
Sarah Fugate, Editor
Tom Fugate, Photo Editor, Proofreader

Reporters & Columnists:
Marybeth Blackinton
Sarah Fugate
Tom Fugate
Bill Gallaher
Laura Glassco
Michelle Hancock
Bob Kims
Debby McClatchy
Mia Monroe
Mike Mutto
Annette Purther
Robin Reynolds

Other Contributors:
Joan Chlarson - DFCC Watercolor

Dutch Flat Community Center Board of Directors:
Bob Kims, President
Alex Prero, Vice President
Brent Nyberg, Treasurer
Alicia Lampley Gebel, Recording Secretary
Bill Charles, At-large
Kris Johnson, At-large
Alan Willsmore, At-large

Email: dfcc.newspaper@gmail.com
Address: 933 Stockton Street, Dutch Flat
U. S. Mail: PO Box 14, Dutch Flat CA 95714
Website: www.dutchflatcc.org
Facebook: Dutch Flat Community Center
Twitter: @dutchflatcc

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

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

We welcome contributions from readers. Submission deadline for the next issue is December 10, 2021.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Attic: Thursdays, 10 am - 1 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. June-August, 6:00 pm. Dutch Flat Swimming Pool, Mattel St. 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.

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. 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.

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 Dutch Flat Community Center Board President

By Bob Kims

Happy Winter Everyone,
OK, so it doesn’t look or feel like Winter. We have been experiencing mostly clear and warm weather especially for this time of year. I hope you have been able to take advantage of the nice weather. We have been able to start soil preparation for the landscaping improvements planned for the Center. The hope is that we will soon install a water system and plants so that our Center will have a nice, appealing look to the front. There have been many positive comments from community members about the effort to improve the look in front of the building, thank you. The plan includes choices that will improve the curb appeal and require limited maintenance. We hope the landscaping looks as good as the beautiful building does.

Some of the nice events held at the Center are the monthly potlucks. They had to be canceled during the worst of the recent pandemic but they are back now. Our November potluck was a big success. Everyone had fun and ate some good food, yum. By the time you read this we will have had the December potluck which is usually attended by our largest crowd. I hope you have attended some of these events because it is a great way to meet and visit neighbors from the surrounding area and you get a chance to eat some good food. As an added bonus we have fun. The potlucks are held on the third Thursday every month except July. We usually have the August potluck at the Dutch Flat pool.

The Dutch Flat Community Center is supported by your membership dues and various fundraisers. The DFCC Board of Directors controls the various aspects of the building including maintenance, fundraising, expenses, etc. The Board is made up of volunteers that want our building to be and remain a successful part of our community. We are looking for people that want to be on the Board and work with the other Board members to support, manage and maintain the Center. Do you think you would like to support the Center and become

a Board Member? Please contact a current Board Member for details and to see what your participation would entail.

The biggest fundraiser of the year has been the annual White Elephant and Estate Treasures Sale. Kathy and I have coordinated this event for the past few years and we have enjoyed a lot of support from local community members. You have donated many wonderful items throughout the years and then returned on sale days to add more support by buying items. Some of you have spent time working to prepare for the sale by cleaning, sorting, pricing and displaying the donated items. Then on sale days many of you have worked the sale while, we hope, having some fun. We want to thank you for your help and support. The sale could not be the success it has been without the support of all of you. While Kathy and I have enjoyed working on this event, the 2022 sale will be our last. This wonderful fundraiser needs someone to take on that responsibility. They do not need to run it the same way we have been doing it so don’t let that stop you. Please step up and keep this event going. We would love to hear from someone(s) and work with them during 2022 for a successful hand-off.

The annual membership renewal notices will be in your mailbox early in 2022. This is a big part of how the Center can continue to stay open and thrive. Please return you membership dues and encourage your neighbors to join. We have membership letters delivered to every PO Box in Alta, Dutch Flat, Gold Run and Emigrant Gap so if you don’t see one in yours please speak up. We also have some members outside of our immediate area so we mail letters to them. Your friends and relatives that don’t live close by can also be members if they want to support our Center. Please encourage everyone to support your Dutch Flat Community Center.

Thank You,
Bob Kims

Winter Storms: stay prepared, be vigilant



Ridge Road in Dutch Flat

Reprinted from Placer County e-Newsletter

A record-setting winter storm resulted in unprecedented amounts of snow in the upper elevations of Placer County. Heavy snow and downed trees and utilities have caused extensive road closures, travel complications and damage to infrastructure. Placer County has [proclaimed a local emergency](#) due to the ongoing threat from winter storm conditions. Placer County Supervisors Robert Weygandt and Cindy Gustafson have also [issued a statement](#) encouraging preparedness and patience as the storm recovery continues. Residents and travelers can view real-time traffic, power outage and other storm-related information on our [Ready Placer dashboard](#). Winter preparation tips can also be found on our [Ready Placer winter webpage](#).



Golden Drift Historical Society News



Dutch Flat’s Hearse

By Sarah Fugate

It’s time to become a 2022 Member of the Golden Drift Historical Society.

The Golden Drift Historical Society is responsible for maintaining and operating our Golden Drift Museum, which is devoted to the history of the area, to preserve and protect the historical character and heritage of our community, and to undertake related educational and cultural activities designed to protect and improve our quality of life.

The Society pursues this mission by recruiting and educating docents to work in the Museum, collaborating with Placer County Museums Division to improve and expand our exhibits, working with Placer County Building Department to maintain the historical character of our community, and offering historical and cultural events to inform and unite our community.

From its inception, the Society has been an independent, self-governing Membership organization. Membership is open to all interested persons. Membership dues and supplemental donations are used by the Society to educate and retain docents, maintain and improve the Museum and its exhibits, develop and publish educational materials for the general public, offer events, and much more.

In 2022, the Society plans to install two additional historical signs, one describing the Towle Brothers accomplishments and one highlighting Dutch Flat’s Chinatown. We will begin the project of refurbishing the Hearse House and the Hose Cart.

California native plants will be planted in the Community Garden. We are working with Placer County Parks Division to commence a major clean-up project in the Dutch Flat Public Cemetery. We will undertake a fundraising campaign to raise money for new fencing and signage for the entire Dutch Flat Cemetery. Finally, two traffic radar repeat signs will be installed, one on Sacramento Street and the other on Main Street, in an attempt to slow traffic coming into Dutch Flat.

Please become a 2022 Member of the Golden Drift Historical Society. Your dues fund our operations enabling us to continue to preserve and promote our local history. Any and all donations are also welcome. You may offer your donation for general operations or specify a project that you would like to fund.

A Membership form will be sent to current members in January. For those who are not current Members, and current Members who want to save a stamp, please visit our website, www.goldendrift.org, choose a Membership Option, and click Pay Now to pay with a credit card.

The Golden Drift Museum will open for its normal season on May 27, 2022. Our operating hours are Friday through Sunday, noon until 4 pm. The Museum is also open on holidays during the May through September season and can be opened by appointment by calling Placer County Museums Division at (530) 889-6500.



Old Chinatown on Sacramento Street

Monte Vista Inn

I-80 at Dutch Flat, California



Dining Room is now open **Tuesday—Saturday** from **5:00 pm**

Featuring savory meals cooked to order
and our famous homemade desserts

Reservations needed on weekends

Please call **530-389-BEEF (2333)**

Welcome Home *A personal story*



John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

A Poem by John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

High Flight was composed by Pilot Officer John Gillespie Magee, Jr., an American serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force. He was born in Shanghai, China in 1922, the son of missionary parents, Reverend and Mrs. John Gillespie Magee; his father was an American and his mother was originally a British citizen.

He came to the U.S. in 1939 and earned a scholarship to Yale, but in September 1940 he enlisted in the RCAF and was graduated as a pilot. He was sent to England for combat duty in July 1941.

In August or September 1941, Pilot Officer Magee composed High Flight and sent a copy to his parents. Several months later, on December 11, 1941 his Spitfire collided with another plane over England and Magee, only 19 years of age, crashed to his death.

His remains are buried in the churchyard cemetery at Scopwick, Lincolnshire.

Biography and photo courtesy of the United States Air Force

A sonnet written by John Gillespie Magee, an American pilot with the Royal Canadian Air Force in the Second World War. He came to Britain, flew in a Spitfire squadron, and was killed at the age of nineteen on December 11, 1941 during a training flight from the airfield near Scopwick.

Portions of this poem appear on the headstones of many interred in Arlington National Cemetery, particularly Aviators and Astronauts

High Flight

“Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I’ve climbed and joined the tumbling mirth of sun-split clouds -
and done a hundred things You have not dreamed of -
wheeled and soared and swung high in the sunlit silence.
Hovering there I’ve chased the shouting wind along
and flung my eager craft through footless halls of air.
“Up, up the long delirious burning blue
I’ve topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
where never lark, or even eagle, flew;
and, while with silent, lifting mind I’ve trod
the high untrespassed sanctity of space,
put out my hand and touched the face of God.”

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.

Learning from Mother Nature



By Vicky Hines, Farmer, Scientist, Founder Alta Ego Farm

Taking a break from prepping for our first big snowstorm of the season to write this article. It’s been 5 years since we moved to Alta and what a long, strange trip it has been. When we first bought the house, all of our friends could not understand why we were moving to a little town in the Sierra Nevada. Perhaps we didn’t understand why either, but we knew this was the place for us. Thank God we trusted our little voices, because this is so the place for us. And in terms of surviving mentally, physically, and spiritually the last year and a half, I could not have done it without living here.

For all of our 33 years of married life, my husband and I have worked in different states. I have worked down in the Bay area, and he has worked in Reno Nevada. Lived. We have lived in Reno, we have lived in the Bay area, and in our last move, as all of our children were heading off to college, we decided to live halfway in between. And that took us to Alta. At the time I was an amateur gardener and had dreams of getting a nice little vegetable garden. Ha! Little did I know what was in store for me.

In the intervening years we have been flooded in, snowed out, without power for a week, without water for days, and we serve as a general cafeteria to the local inhabitants of bears, mountain lions, and foxes. We have lost at least 50 livestock over the past 5 years - probably more. I will admit a portion of that loss comes from ignorance and having never had more than two cats to care for in my life. Today we have 3 livestock guard dogs, 2 cats, 12 ducks, 6 geese, 25 chickens, and 60 rabbits at last count. The rabbits are the most difficult to keep track of because, well as you know, what they say about rabbits!

When we first bought the property I was still working down in the Bay area and would come up on the weekends. In 2019 I was dismissed from my job. Turns out that was the best thing that could ever happen to me. I took the next 6 months just living on the land - our Alta Ego Farm. And then came the pandemic and I could do nothing else but watch, observe, and learn from the land. I never realized how much there is to learn by observing what is right around us.

I have always been a keen gardener and a few years ago, I studied to be certified as a permaculture landscape designer. At the time I barely knew what it was. Explaining permaculture in depth is probably an article in and of itself, but suffice it to say permaculture is about managing the land and everything on it in an attempt to achieve the complete harmony that mother nature

does so gracefully and without the blink of an eye. Everything on the land has multiple purposes, and the goal is to have your land truly self-sufficient. What does this look at on the farm? My ducks and my geese graze through the fruit orchard fertilizing it and aerating the soil as they go. My rabbits poop, the poop goes into the vegetable garden, and from the garden grows food for the rabbits to eat. And the cycle continues. And the cycle grows.

Being with the land, learning from the land - has been a saving grace for me during these very difficult times of our world. And as visitors come to the farm, they too are rejuvenated and re-energized after connecting with mother nature. The more I saw how meaningful it was for our friends to visit, the more I became committed to sharing whatever part of that experience I can with the broader community.

So, what started out as a small vegetable garden has become a business. Alta Ego Farm - providing nourishment for the mind, the body, the soul and the earth. We don’t grow enough on the farm to do a regular Farmers market. What I want to grow is an awareness and an appreciation for the land and for our food. The farm is a demonstration and educational farm, where guests can come and connect in some small way with the beauty of mother nature and the land that we are so blessed to live on.

Across the 10 acres of the farm, I work to demonstrate as many different principles of permaculture and regenerative agricultural practices as possible. We have square foot gardening, companion planting, hay bale gardening, a food forest, and the list goes on.

We will be selling and sharing our surplus produce locally. But I am most excited about offering classes and experiences to our guests in one of the most breathtaking locations I have ever lived. That is, on the ridge of the American River canyon.

As I’ve learned from living within the wild, progress is incremental. Often two steps forward, one step back. I was ready for a big opening in the fall, and then came the Delta variant surge. I’m keen to start some classes, but now its snow season. So, I’m now thinking about online classes.

I’d love to hear community feedback about what you’d like, what you would enjoy, and how I can continue to contribute to this amazing community.

Check out our social media on Facebook at Instagram (AltaEgoFarm) and our website (www.altaegofarm.com). I look forward to welcoming all.

PLIGHT! PESTILENCE! PANDEMIC!



American Chestnut

By Mia Monroe

Plight! Pestilence! Pandemic! **No! this is not a covid story!**

It IS a story of a survivor, far away from home but easy to admire in Dutch Flat: The specimen chestnut tree in the cemetery.

I had heard the story about this most common tree of the eastern states: from 40 million years, once upon a time, to just a century ago there were 3 billion chestnuts that provided food for humans and wildlife, lumber and nourished the soil. Then a blight from Asia decimated the population and has essentially wiped it out in its natural range.

The search was on for a cure, a vaccination! Think these topics are complicated and confusing today? Look up the options for a genetic and medical lesson: revitalization, back crossing, transgenics, inter crossing and hypervirulence. Since some involve gene splicing, there is ethics and debate about whether to naturalize any successful efforts into the wild. And they all take time!

I had heard the story about this most common tree of the eastern states: from 40 million years, once upon a time, to just a century ago there were 3 billion chestnut trees.

In the meanwhile, our neighbor Robin Reynolds found a resistant Chinese chestnut and it is now doing quite well downtown (treevia #1: can you find this tree when you pick up your mail?) When I eagerly found a wild one (and later another) in our Morley cabin woods, Robin told me he too had been a chestnut seeker and found several more around Dutch Flat! I’m hoping my seed germinates and I can share. There’s hope for chestnuts in Dutch Flat! Now maybe someone will unearth some evidence of “our” tree’s origin: who planted it and when!

Chestnuts are in the same family as oak and beech (but only very distantly related to horse chestnuts), noted for their spiny burrs containing three seeds. They are deciduous, have male and female parts on same tree but can’t self-pollinate so there must be at least two! Treevia #2: can you find both in cemetery? The leaves are simple (not lobed) and have toothed edge (thus there species name: dentata) and when I first saw them “turn” a decade ago I had that ah ha moment of just what the color chestnut is, either in my crayon box or on a beautiful head of hair or a much admired horse. That reddish brown is distinctive!

The wood is invaluable for lumber (particularly staves) and thus the tree’s reputation for longevity, intuition, and centering as well as in the tree= meaning dictionary chestnut is listed as the symbol for justice and honesty.

Are you also a reader? Recall the symbolic chestnut in *Jane Eyre*? And recently a main character in Richard Powers’ *The Overstory*. Maybe you tell jokes or stories, even a few “old chestnuts” that you’re known for? Or you can recall the opening lines of a once popular poem, “under the spreading chestnut tree” and bring smiles.

Maybe the happiest memory is the one at this time of year: Nat King Cole’s chestnuts roasting on an open fire, jack frost nipping at your nose...happy winter holidays!



Pacific Realty - Dutch Flat, CA
Suzanne Vidal, Realtor-Broker

email:pacificrealty2@gmail.com
phone: (360) 317-8083
CA RE Lic #00956435

Neighborhood that survived the Creek Fire shows potential for slowing wildfires near communities



Consulting forester Julieanne Stewart stands on the half of Rock Haven that received forest thinning treatments.

By Kerry Klein, Valley Public Radio

On the outskirts of the town of Shaver Lake, in the Sierra Nevada northeast of Fresno, a left turn off of Highway 168 will take you into a small community on a wooded hillside.

It’s a cluster of homes known as Rock Haven. Julianne Stewart explains the cabins here date back to the original town of Shaver Lake, which was relocated and flooded when the San Joaquin River was dammed in 1927. “Most of these homes are about 100 years old, many of them have been handed down through generations from the original owners,” she said.

Stewart doesn’t live at Rock Haven. She’s a Registered Professional Forester at a consulting company. She’s been managing the trees on this rugged property for years, and she points out a stark dividing line on a hillside that became pivotal during the Creek Fire. “There’s the green, there’s the not so green,” she said.

To the left is an ash-covered slope punctuated with the charred husks of trees, denuded of needles and leaves, and on the right, green trees that look normal aside for char marks on the trunks that subside about 10 feet off the ground. The cabins are completely untouched. The difference was in how the forest was managed on each side. “That was the boundary line from what was treated before the fire to what was treated after the fire as part of cleaning up,” Stewart said. “It’s pretty stark.”

A few years ago, Stewart helped the residents obtain state funding to thin their dense stands of trees, but the funding covered only a little less than half of the 160-acre property. So when the Creek Fire roared through the area last fall, the untouched half was devastated, but the treated half slowed the blaze. The fire still crept through, but it stayed low to the ground and didn’t have enough fuel to burn the defensible space around the houses.

Not only that, firefighters also used the property to help protect the community of Shaver Lake. It’s an example of how forest management can help mitigate the effects of catastrophic megafires, [which threaten lives and destroy hundreds to thousands of homes each year](#). “I’m so happy that these cabins are still here,” said Stewart, “and as a forester, maybe even more importantly, that we have this much green healthy forest still here that’s going to be here for wildlife doing everything that it needs to ecologically.”

Stewart’s work at Rock Haven, which she refers to as treatments, involved removing dead trees and closely packed living ones, as well as the underbrush and lower branches known as “ladder fuels” that could help a fire climb from the ground to the canopy.

After the treatments were finished, Stewart says the forest at Rock Haven was a far cry from just five years ago, when it was completely overgrown. “I think we can probably see close to 300 feet in some directions right now,” she said. Back then, however, “Visibility would have been probably closer to 20 feet, just incredibly thick.”

On the untreated half of Rock Haven, dead and charred trees have been felled, piled and burned so that new seedlings can be planted. Thick forest is beautiful, but it’s unsustainable in times of drought when densely packed plants are competing for resources, and it makes for a dangerous amount of fuel in a region that’s overdue for wildfire.

Rock Haven was critical in the early days of the Creek Fire, according to Jim McDougald, a CalFire Division Chief who at the time was assigned to Fresno and Kings Counties. When the blaze thundered to Shaver Lake, it first hit land surrounding Rock Haven that had also been treated, and it slowed. Then, because Rock Haven was so well cleared, and it already contained roads, CalFire firefighters could haul in a handful of engines and bulldozers.

For a day or so, McDougald says, they used Rock Haven as a home base, utilizing dozers and small burns to widen the highway and set up a protective border around the cabins and the wider community of Shaver Lake. “Having the ability to put that line around it and having those dead trees out of that community helped us do our jobs,” said McDougald. “It helped the whole community, of course.”

The work at Rock Haven was funded through the California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP), [a cost-sharing program managed by CalFire](#). Across four decades, CalFire has awarded more than \$75 million in CFIP grants to projects to make forests healthier and ready for wildfire. And

McDougald says the Rock Haven project is a clear CFIP success story. “You bet, very very successful,” he says.

The treatments at Rock Haven didn’t come cheap: They cost nearly \$2,000 per acre, a price that would be untenable at a forest scale. “The large landscape is very difficult. It’s so big,” he said, but McDougald argues better management is feasible—and urgent—in priority areas near communities. “It doesn’t have to be the whole landscape, but if you do things in strategic areas, you can reduce the impacts and provide firefighters opportunities to start picking these fires up.”

Julianne Stewart agrees. “As soon as the fire starts, everyone can tell that’s an emergency,” she said. “I think that the emergency is existing right now, and I think we need to respond as if it were an emergency right now.”

Looking out over the devastated half of Rock Haven, Stewart says it’s hard to not feel a sense of personal loss. “It’s a pretty huge disappointment to me,” she said. “On any day of the week, I would much rather see a healthy functioning forest that is providing all the goods and services we count on it for. So it makes me really sad.”

But she’s also motivated to restore the forest here in a healthy way, helping big trees mature without being outcompeted for resources by faster-growing ground cover. With a new round of CFIP funding in hand, Stewart is ready to plant 16,000 seedlings to start a new ecosystem of pines, cedars, fir and giant sequoias.

“As foresters, you kind of are committed to a piece of land. You’re never done. No matter what,” she said. “We just have our biggest challenge cut out for us now, where we’re starting from ground zero really and trying to re-establish a forest.”





Sierra Animal Wellness Center

Thank You

*to all of our clients and friends
for making this possible*

Best Veterinarian, Best Veterinary
Hospital, Best Customer Service

From all of us at Sierra Animal Wellness Center



Located at
1506 S. Canyon Way, Colfax, CA 95713
530.346.6611



Peggy Roberts, DVM

John Sutter - Captain of Contrasts

Part One

By Debby McClatchy

John Sutter, like so many influential individuals of history, walked a fine line between legality, morality, and getting things done. Most people like him have a certainty of mind that justifies the dubious deed. They expect that history will judge them by their accomplishments, and not by the details. Unfortunately, they are too often correct.

Sutter’s legacy leaves us various versions of the man. He was known as the builder of Sutter’s Fort, guardian of the Sacramento Valley, indirectly responsible for the discovery of gold in 1848, plus linking the United States to Russia, Alaska, Mexico, South America, and Hawaii in the mid-nineteenth century. But he was also a proponent of manifest destiny and all that meant to California’s indiginous residents.

Eight biographies of Sutter were written in the 1900s, all conflicted about his character and reputation. Historic sources were few. Recently found family papers have presented new insights. I’m mainly using a biography written in 2008 by Albert L. Hurtado.

Many of Sutter’s personal qualities made him a likeable man. He was good-looking and polite, gregarious, loving to his family and close friends. This appealing attitude wasn’t feigned and most took him at face value. His generosity was endearing; his enthusiasm catching. Unfortunately, under this easy surface was a calculating and driven man.

Johann August Sutter was born in 1803 in Kandum, a small village in today’s Germany. His father was a Swiss papermaker. As a child he was imaginative and clever, always seeking attention. Shorter than average, he developed a social status to compensate. He wed a local heiress; she gave birth the next day. Sutter proved a poor businessman and went into debt. To avoid prison Sutter sold what he could and left for America. His wife Anna was saddled with his debts, but remained loyal to him until her death. In America Sutter blamed all but himself. Dressing to impress, he kept creditors at bay with pure performance. When someone addressed him mistakenly as “Captain”, he accepted the title as true and kept it.

Arriving in New York City, Sutter found it not to his liking and left for St. Charles, Missouri. His hopes of working a large farm there were dashed as he would need a lot of capital to buy slaves. He next looked at trade with Mexico, but the risk of war was foreboding.

In the 1830s the need for horses on the frontier was insatiable. Sutter was so successful with his first speculation, buying horseflesh in Missouri and then selling westward in Santa Fe, that he could trade on this one venture for quite a while. Unwary investors weighed down this “American Persona” with money, which Sutter spent on whiskey. Through numerous schemes and cons Sutter always stayed just ahead of his creditors, and finally did well enough in the illegal horse business to buy a small farm in Missouri.

In 1838 the local sheriff commanded Sutter to appear in court for debt. Threatening suicide, Sutter received a grubstake from a friend and left for California, then part of Mexico. He traveled the two thousand miles as part of a horse and wagon train, along what would soon be called “The Oregon Trail”. He funded the trip by selling liquor and other goods to the trappers and Indians at a rendezvous near the Popo Agie River.

Passing through multiple forts, including Fort Laramie, gave him ideas for his future site and business in California. He also recognized that the beaver fur trade was in decline, pushing the mountain men further west, and he aimed to provide them with new prospects in California.

Sutter completed the trip down the west coast by ship via Hawaii (the winds did not cooperate!), accumulating testimonials from many influential men. The reputation of the “Swiss Gent” preceded him.

In July, 1839 Sutter arrived at Yerba Buena, a small Mexican outpost on a peninsula surrounded by redwoods. There was no hint that this would become the city of San Francisco. After negotiating a holding on the Sacramento River with then Governor Alvarado, Sutter visited Vallejo’s vast holdings, and then Fort Ross, a Russian enclave on the coast. Both encouraged him and showed him that local Indian labor led to business success.

Sutter filled three boats with workers, trade goods, agricultural, blacksmithing, and carpentry tools, muskets, and rifles. He left Yerba Buena and immediately became lost on the uncharted river. Hounded by mosquitoes and confused by the many levees, they eventually made the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers. His hired Hawaiians quickly erected a large adobe structure.

Sutter was initially successful due to his sheer energy and optimism. He also had important backers who trusted his judgement. He was one of the first to live among the Indians of the Valley and named his area “New Helvetia”. During the previous twenty-five years missionaries, soldiers, horse thieves, fur traders, malaria, and smallpox had weakened and shrunk the native population. Sutter was easily able to take charge with a combination of gifts and armed force.

Sutter didn’t “hire” missionary Indians as they were too controlled by the Spanish. He quickly put down uprisings, but craftly protected the friendlier tribes, mostly Nisenan and Miwoks, gaining reciprocity from their leaders. Pay was metal discs only good at his stores. Workers became customers and Sutter kept complete control. He surrounded himself with a private militia of mountain men and sailors.

Sutter enclosed his businesses with an adobe wall in 1840 and completed his “fort” in 1844. His goal was to establish a self-sufficient “hacienda” using credit, cheap labor, and good will. He then repaid his debts very slowly and largely discounted, which kept him going, but not on firm ground. The fur trade was still a lucrative business in California, plus the annual salmon run provided an income from smoked fish.

In 1841 American immigrants began arriving in California. Sutter encouraged and helped many of them, employing quite a few. In 1842 he purchased from the Russians all of Fort Ross, including buildings, animals, tools, equipment, and boats. All on credit. Just transporting everything almost bankrupted him.

Sutter’s land grant went from the Fort to the Sutter Buttes in the north, the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the east, the Feather River in the west. More rivers, including the San Juaquin, Mokelomne, American, and Consummes, often swift and bloated, made great natural barriers to anyone wanting to attack his holdings.

Sutter pushed the limits of his political and military authority, calling himself a “patriarch, priest, father, and judge” and telling the historian Bancroft in 1876 that he had the “power of life and death over both Indians and white people”. His courtesy to whites was balanced by his treatment of Mexicans, whom he felt underneath him. His rapacious use of Indians was even lower. He routinely interfered with their cultural

Sutter pushed the limits of his political and military authority, calling himself a “patriarch, priest, father, and judge”.

and marriage customs. He needed twelve families to fulfill certain requirements of his grant, so he married many frontiersmen to female Miwoks. Sutter, himself still married to Anna, kept an Hawaiian mistress, then numerous Indian women, fathering many children. The practice was common. Sutter’s blacksmith supposedly had nineteen Indian wives.

In 1843 Sutter sold off some of his land to pay off debts, even though some of it was still mortgaged to the Russians.

Sutter loved his brandy, and his distillery was one of his successes. His corn liquor, called pisco, proved unpopular, but his wine suited the locals. It is unfortunate that one of the ways he kept his Indians peaceful was to keep them drunk. By the late 1840s Sutter himself was rarely sober.

Meanwhile, by 1844, the American citizens in California were weary of Mexican dominance. John C. Fremont and Kit Carson had just arrived at Sutter’s Fort after a grueling journey down from Oregon. Fremont’s letter to his wife, Jesse, became an instant bestseller and sparked interest in going west. More U.S. citizens made the journey to California; militias were organized; land titles were sought; and then ships arrived with professional military units from back east. Sutter carefully aligned himself with the rebels by providing intelligence about landowners in the state.

He soon changed his mind, worried about the future, and sided with the Spanish. Sutter put together an army of Indians, mountain men, and supporters, and left the fort in charge of the Mexican governor, Micheltorena. Then Sutter got cold feet and surrendered. Half his men deserted. His Indians were reduced to pack animals. Sutter was eventually released after pledging allegiance to the rebels. He made it home to New Helvetia by stealing horses from the Indians, who had stolen them from others. Mexico was still in control.

By the spring of 1845 Sutter was broke; creditors had renewed their claims; the Russians were mad, and his workers upset and restive. He needed to plant wheat to pay off debts, and these workers were crucial. Some were still loyal. Those who were not he captured and sold into slavery. Learning that a Miwok leader, Raphero, was gunning for him, he found and executed him, displaying his head on the Fort’s gate. His finances improved.

The wheat harvest was good and Sutter’s fortunes recovered. The Russians seemed happy with a partial payment. However, an offer by the Mexican government to buy the Fort fell through as the Russians still had a lien on it.

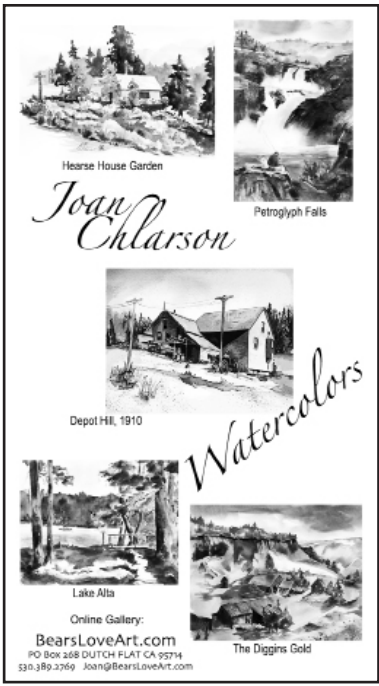
By 1846 Sutter was surveying the American River with hopes of building a gristmill there. He also realized that irrigation water could be tapped off the American and Sacramento Rivers. But now in April the U.S. Congress officially declared war on Mexico. Fremont’s blatant mistreatment of the Indians was causing unrest, and a revolt by the valley tribes was also imminent. Sutter was to be a prime target. Fremont used this as an excuse to take charge of the Fort, supposedly providing protection for a reluctant Sutter.

The war ended in January of 1847 when the Spanish surrendered to Fremont at Cahuenga Pass. Sutter regained his Fort; however, life was going to become more difficult under U.S. bureaucracy and restrictions. One of the first official decrees of this new government was to appoint

Sutter as an Indian agent. This proved a silver lining.

Without Sutter’s help, the famous Donner Party of 1847 would probably have perished. He sent supplies which kept off starvation. He funded and supplied three rescue parties that brought back survivors. Lansford Hastings, whose “shortcut” was so disastrous to the party, and Lewis Keselberg, the last survivor out and vilified as a cannibal, both later worked for Sutter.

Part Two - next issue

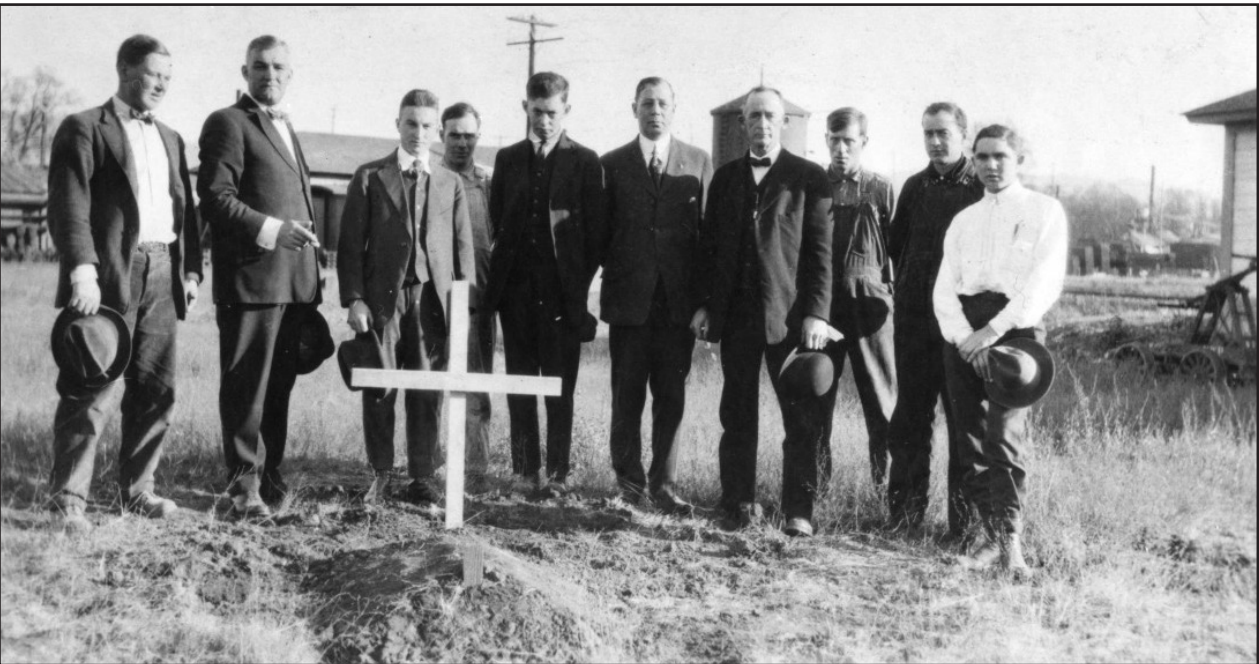


LAW OFFICE OF JOEL C. BAIOCCHI

JOEL C. BAIOCCHI
ATTORNEY AT LAW

POST OFFICE BOX 67 · DUTCH FLAT, CA 95714
530-389-9175 · 530-389-9176 FAX

Boomer Jack - The Northwestern Pacific’s (NWP) Railroad Dog



Burial site of Boomer Jack in Willits

Submitted by Michelle Hancock

Prologue - Travels with the Hancocks’

Steve and I took a couple of train excursions in October and November. In November we took the first Rocky Mountaineer Train excursion in the United States from Denver, Colorado to Moab, Utah through the Rocky Mountains to the Red Rock Canyons of Utah. More about that in the next edition. In October we stayed over at the coast in Fort Bragg, right off the beach. One of the things I have always wanted to do, as silly as it may seem was to ride the Skunk Train through the Redwoods. That was one thing as a kid I never got to do – so Steve and I enjoyed riding the Skunk Train out of Fort Bragg. A fun little adventure for kids and adults alike. While we rode the train, we picked up this dog story I had to share. It reminded me of the classic Jack London story, White Fang.

Check out the lumber loads as they pass. See if you can see a dog sitting on top of one of them. His name is Boomer Jack. He was an independent, black bob tailed dog of uncertain ancestry and no fixed address. He appeared in the 1910’s, adopting the NWP railroad as his home line. He rode the rails between Trinidad and the San Francisco Bay. Over the span of 14 years, he was seen everywhere from Blue Lake to Marin. Jack Rode the Eureka streetcars and he mooched food on the streets of Arcata. In fact, it was said that he knew the routes of the streetcars in Eureka. He could locate particular railroad men’s houses, despite the fact that they were located far from the train station. What set Boomer Jack apart was his sense of independence and freedom. These were the characteristics that the men of the NWP, who fed and cared for him, admired. Jack, unlike other railroad dogs of legend, belonged to no one man. He would ride the rails to a particular town, stay for a day or two and then be on his way, never overstaying his welcome.

He would even, on occasion, ride passenger trains. He ranged far and wide even staying in a San Francisco hotel after being smuggled in by one of his railroad buddies. Discovered, he was kicked out. But he returned to the establishment to lift his leg to leave his mark. At one point he vanished. Some thought he disappeared forever. Then the NWP home office received a telegram from some trainmen in South Carolina asking about a dog with an NWP badge on his collar. Boomer Jack had somehow made a cross country train journey. Relieved that their mascot was still among the living they wired instruction for his safe return to the West Coast. He was watched over by lineman on the way back and arrived safely to start riding his home line again. His tenacious instinct for travel even continued following a fall from a train resulting in a severe leg injury. His accident elicited a lot of sympathy up and down the line. A fund was established to pay his medical bills. So much was raised that a bank account was opened in his name in Eureka. His lame leg slowed him down and as he aged, he often needed help getting up in a cab. Jack died in 1926 in front of the Willits station. He was found lying peacefully on the ground. The workers of the NWP made a small redwood coffin and he was buried in the Willits switchyard. He was mourned up and down the line.



Judge rejects lawsuit over California school mask mandate

By John Woolfolk, Bay Area News Group

A judge rejected challenges to California’s statewide requirement that students and staff wear face masks indoors at schools to prevent the spread of COVID-19, leaving it to the governor to decide when it’s safe to lift the mandate. The judge heard arguments earlier in the week on a [lawsuit brought in July by two parent groups](#), Reopen California Schools and Let Them Breathe, arguing the mask requirement was not based on scientific evidence of need and that the face coverings are physically and mentally harmful to kids. San Diego County Superior Court Judge Cynthia A. Freeland disagreed, and granted a demurrer sought by the state, effectively putting an end to the lawsuit. “While there is a fundamental right to an education, courts routinely have permitted the exclusion of students who refuse to comply with public health and safety measures designed to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, measures far more invasive than a mask mandate,” Freeland wrote. Jonathan Zachreson, founder of Reopen California Schools, said “we will continue to fight the arbitrary and harmful mask guidance and are currently exploring our various legal options.” California was the first state in the country to require students returning to schools this fall to wear masks indoors, and is [among 15 states](#) that have school mask mandates, according to the data tracking site Burbio, which says 10 states have banned mask requirements, though all but one in Utah has been overturned. The California Department of Public Health had said the mask requirement aligns with recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “by layering multiple other prevention strategies” such as face masks when students cannot be adequately separated in classrooms. “Many of California’s school facilities can’t fully accommodate physical distancing,” the department said in a statement July 13. “California will continue to require that masks be worn indoors in school settings, which also will ensure that all kids are treated the same.” The complaint argued that the state’s mask mandate for all students regardless of local infection rates or whether they are vaccinated is arbitrary, not based on scientific evidence, harmful to students and impedes their education. It further alleges that the state’s guidance on testing students who aren’t showing symptoms of COVID-19, and quarantining to contain outbreaks, are unnecessary and burdensome. Though the mask requirement was issued before federal regulators this month authorized COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 5-11, state officials haven’t indicated when masks might no longer be needed in schools, citing fears of rising cases in California and much of the country in recent weeks. Freeland ruled that because the state had described its guidance on testing for the virus in schools and quarantining as recommendations which school districts are free to use at their discretion, the state could not be sued over them. As for the mask mandate, Freeland rejected the parent groups’ contention that Gov. Gavin Newsom had abused his authority under a declared state of emergency due to the pandemic to make such a requirement.



Parents protest mask mandate outside Alta-Dutch Flat School

Dutch Flat Community Center
933 Stockton Street,
P. O. Box 14
Dutch Flat CA 95714
Membership form

Name

Address

CityStateZip

Phone(optional)

E-mail

(optional - We'll send you updates on events, activities and volunteer requests)

Donation amount: \$

CheckCredit Cardexp date

Billing zip code3-digit CID

PLEASE MAIL YOUR DONATION TO THE DUTCH FLAT COMMUNITY CENTER,
P. O. BOX 14, DUTCH FLAT CA 95714

The Dutch Flat Community Center is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization and
all donations are tax deductible (TIN 68-0484699).

Obituaries

Lauraine Marie Bacon June 7, 1961-November 28, 2021



Lauraine Marie Bacon

Lauraine Marie Bacon, a community leader and environmental enthusiast, passed away on Sunday, November 28, 2021, at her home in Alta, CA after a long bout with cancer. She was 60 years old.

Born in Connecticut on June 7, 1961, Lauraine and her family relocated to Marin County, CA in 1975. She graduated from Novato High School and went on to earn her BA in Marketing and MBA from Sacramento State University. As Vice President of Marketing for KABA Audio Productions and an advertising account executive, she enjoyed a career that incorporated her

passion for music, photography and graphic arts. She relocated to Dutch Flat where she lived until 2016 when she purchased her current home in Alta.

A gifted musician, Lauraine played the guitar, piano and the fiddle, just to name a few. The most recent addition to her living room was a full drum kit. She loved playing folk songs around the (permitted!) campfire. She rarely left home without her ukulele, and her vocals – like her cow bells -- were fearless. She volunteered at countless music festivals and would travel great distances to catch up with a favorite group.

She was an avid gardener and every year Lauraine started her vegetable garden from seeds, delivering tomatoes and beans to friends and neighbors all summer long.

Lauraine’s dedication to the community was unparalleled. She participated at every chance, from parades to performances. She was the Colfax Chamber of Commerce representative on the Placer County Visitors Council in 2003. She served as President of the Dutch Flat Community Center in 2010, 2011 and 2012. A natural promoter, she opened the Rainbow Gallery of Art & Music in Colfax, providing a stage to spotlight local artists and musicians.

“Lauraine was continuously working to preserve and maintain the beauty of this area. Her passion, her commitment and love of community was deeply inspiring. She truly encompassed the concept of loving your neighbor,” said District 5 Supervisor Cindy Gustafson. “Our county will forever be grateful for her contribution and her memory will live on in the amazing work she did.”

Her love for nature and the outdoors

inspired her involvement with “firewise” communities. She completed the CalFire Volunteer Firefighter Academy with certifications in Wildland Fire Suppression and HAZMAT Operations before joining the Alta Fire Department in 2010. More recently she was appointed to the Placer Sierra Fire Safe Council, joining many organizations and communities through outreach and education so they may better prepare for wildfires.

“She was passionate about bringing people together, sharing what she knew and learning what she didn’t know,” said Placer Sierra Fire Safe Councilmember Mark D’Ambrogi. “She was always willing to give of herself at any time to make her community a better place for all of us. Those that knew her truly could call her a friend and someone to count on.”

Lauraine was devoted to her many friends, referring to them as her “tribe.” Despite her illness, in the past year she kayaked, ice skated, hiked, road-tripped and camped; she brainstormed, networked and organized; she went wine tasting, danced in the front row, sang with the band, and laughed hard. Also, she was able to help care for her mother, Lois. The hours they spent cooking, doing puzzles, planting flowers and painting meant everything to Lauraine.

She is survived by her mother, Lois Brown Bacon of Colfax, sister Carolyn Cardinal (Fred) of Colfax, three brothers; Gary (Ying) of Fairfield; Richard (MaryAnn) of Nevada City; and Paul of Petaluma, CA; and five nieces and nephews. She was pre-deceased by her father Kenneth Avery Bacon and a sister Margaret Joyce Bacon of Novato.

Mary Evelyn Rose Berger September 20, 1928-October 14, 2021

Mary passed away on the afternoon of October 14, 2021 in Santa Cruz, California at the age of 93. She was born September 20, 1928 to Bernard and Annabell Rose in Marion County Arkansas. A child of the Ozarks, she loved to speak of her young life in the mountains among her many kin folk.

Mary traveled the many roads of this country with her partner and beloved husband of 63 years, Howard Berger. In 1958 they met and married in Redwood City California. Later they moved to San Jose to raise their brood. This devoted mother of six worked full time for Lockheed where she rose through the ranks to executive level.

Mary was a loving mother to Patricia, Rosemary, Michael, Scott, Kelly, and Karsten. Her great maternal generosity extended to her younger siblings, Ina and Scotty, her three nephews Paul, Timothy,

Karl, her grandchildren, Nicholas, Lore, Shane, Will, Josh, Seth, Ian, Timothy, Mara, Kyle, Caitlin, and Mary, and a dozen great and great-great grandchildren. Always an influential matriarch she led by example.

Upon retirement she and Howard moved to Dutch Flat California where they lived for 30 years. There in the mountains they grew food, read piles of books and held large family gatherings. She and Howard were a bridge couple to be reckoned with at local card tables. For health reasons, in 2012 they returned to the central coast.

Despite many challenges of advanced age Mary continued to have a great outlook on life. Welcoming every day, she lived a spiritual life. Her exit from this world was part of that life. She looked death straight in the eye and embraced it. The river had at last met the sea and they were one.



Mary Evelyn Rose Berger

Rainbow Music Company

Christine Bonner

(530) 346-8369

Rob Bonner

MUSICIAN / TEACHER

robertbonner1@gmail.com

PO Box 1234

Colfax, Ca. 95713

Mobile Notary

Dena Saunders

530 389-2133

C.530 558-5838

notary389@yahoo.com

PO Box 892

Alta, CA 95701

Alta Dogs Pet Sitting

* Happy, Healthy, Professional Care

* Daily Exercise & Outdoor Play time

* 10 Years Experience Vet Assistant

* Pick-Up & Delivery Available

* Toe Nail Trimming

Jeri Wohn

References Available

530-401-1570

jeriwohn85@gmail.com

Check out our Facebook page

Susan Winje

(530) 389-8000

Lynn Oliver

(530) 305-8290

Karen Calvert

(530) 906-2336

Broker License #01184606

email: alta389@gmail.com