

HIGH COUNTRY

FEBRUARY 2023 ■ FREE

Plumas, Lassen and Sierra Counties

Life

On the COVER:

A look at the heroes volunteering in our fire services and how you can help. See story on page 16.

Cover photo by Kim Eliason

INSIDE:

Confronting the conflict between ranchers and wolves ■ Who was the man behind Beckwourth Pass?
Four-term DA's most memorable cases ■ The long and winding road to Presidents' Day
High school students take a class in happiness ■ Homemade bagels - yum!

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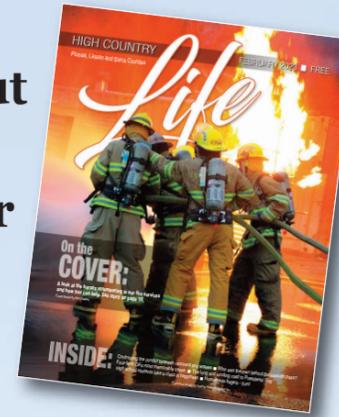
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About the cover



As part of their training, firefighters use propane-powered fire simulators to learn how to safely fight a three-dimensional gas fire.
Photo by Kim Eliason

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A note from our staff
Feather Publishing Co., Inc.

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our February edition of High Country Life. Each month we try to provide a variety of stories that emphasize our way of life in this corner of Northern California.

This month is no different. Learn about Jim Beckwourth and why there is a pass and trail named after him. Another man of importance in Plumas County is District Attorney David Hollister who was just elected to his fourth consecutive term in office. Learn which cases have had the most profound effect on him.

Feeling the need to be in the kitchen? Learn how to bake a delectable bagel, or hear from the mother/daughter duo of Eva Small and Teri York about their new project,

"Kitchen Kaos" as they offer some tried-and-true jello recipes for your enjoyment.

There are a few holidays in February including Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day. Lassen editor Sam Williams shares more information on the latter and an update regarding area wolves.

February is a short month; we encourage everyone to take advantage of every day. Enjoy some outdoor snow sports or get cozy near a crackling fire. There's lots of chocolate available in heart-shaped boxes — so indulge in a box — for yourself!

Have a wonderful February!

From the staff at High Country Life

File photo



A Class of Higher Purpose:

Psychology and THE GOOD LIFE

By Meg Upton
mupton@plumasnews.com

Paul Cavanaugh is excited to come to class every day. That's not always the case for neither teachers nor students in any school district, but Cavanaugh is teaching a pilot program class with Plumas Unified School District: "Psychology and the Good Life." His students are taking notice and are subject to a rare discussion in high school — happiness. Students at Quincy Junior Senior High School are getting a year-long opportunity to delve into the psychology of happiness. "I knew Mr. Cavanaugh had a passion for this topic. He had sought

High Country Life

February 2023

A free regional monthly magazine about the people, places and events in Lassen, Plumas and Sierra Counties.

Published locally by:
Feather Publishing Co. Inc.
and the Lassen County Times
Main office: P.O. Box B,
Quincy, CA 95971
530-283-0800

Cobey Brown, publisher
Debra Moore, Plumas editor
Sam Williams, Lassen editor
Cindie Williams,
Robert Mahenski,
graphics, layout and design

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Local insane person and af-fish-ionado Dave Bissell takes advantage of the last days of fishing season at Eagle Lake.
Photo by Zayne Bissell

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'Students learn that they have signature strengths to help them deal with inevitable adversity'

—Paul Cavanaugh

out his own training and has led a session for our staff using this content," said Kristy Warren, assistant superintendent and curriculum and instruction director. "When we needed an additional elective at Quincy High, this seemed like a great fit for students and Mr. Cavanaugh. I am thankful that he has developed this elective course and we often look for ways for teachers to share their passion with students through course development."

The QHS class is based on and adapted from a course developed at Yale University, which soon became the most popular class offered at the university. Cavanaugh used his time in the first months of the pandemic to take the course back in 2020 taught by Dr. Laurie Santos though he'd been reading about positive psychology for 20 years. He was intrigued with the idea of research-based approaches to happiness.

"The class was excellent, and covered

what doesn't make us happy; what does make us happy," said Cavanaugh. The class also included "rewirements" which are logs to track activities such as journaling what you're thankful for, developing good habits, and keeping track of random acts of kindness.

That fall of 2020, Cavanaugh contacted the famed professor and asked about adapting her curriculum for high schools. He participated in Zoom workshops to

figure out how to adapt the material for high schools. A high school class was launched in spring of 2021. He then approached PUSDn about doing a psychology elective at QHS for the fall 2022.

"It wouldn't have happened without the support of Assistant Superintendent, Kristy Warren, QJSHS Principal Jennifer Scheel, or counselor Jill Dupras," said Cavanaugh.

Readers interested in "The Science of Well-Being" can take the original course for free at <https://www.coursera.org>.

The QHS class takes the information given in that class and personalizes it for adolescents in Plumas County. "A major focus of the class is the relationship between success and happiness. Many of us are raised to think that if we achieve success, some happiness may come our way. The research shows this is 100 percent backward. Professionals who report feeling happy perform better in their jobs, including doctors, teachers, and salespeople. It's obvious, really, but our lives are set up the other way around. My goal is to change that," said Cavanaugh.

In some ways, it's about meeting students where they are and in the lives they've been living. "Students learn that they have signature strengths to help them deal with inevitable adversity, and the importance of resilience, character and perseverance in living a happy life," said Cavanaugh.

The class has many benefits to students—not just a grade.

"Positive psychology is a pretty new field, started by Dr. Martin Seligman at the University of Pennsylvania. Prior to that, psychology offered interventions for serious problems. I like to use a car analogy: psychology used to be about fixing a blown engine, while positive psychology is about maintenance and fine-tuning," said Cavanaugh.

In addition to Dr. Santos's Yale curriculum, Cavanaugh shares the works of Dr. Seligman, Shawn Achor, Dr. David Schwartz, Stephen Covey, and many others in the field.

The students explore the role of sleep, stress, exercise, brain wiring, gender, exploration, survival, attention, memory, arts, and sensory integration in our happiness, among other things. The course also helps students develop a sense of empathy — something that researchers have noted has been absent in curriculum and in some students in recent decades.

Cavanaugh would like to see the course developed across the district.

"I would like to spread the word that the class is available to students and families, and share some resources with the community at large," said Cavanaugh.

For our communities in Plumas County recovering from the Dixie Fire, this course has real potential to do some good in the wildfire-stricken areas of the county where many students have lost their homes and — in the cases of Canyon Dam and Greenville — their towns. **HCL**



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California program provides compensation to address ranchers' conflict with wolves



A trail camera captured this image of three members of the Lassen Pack of wolves. Local ranchers have expressed their concern about what could happen to their livestock when the young pups grow large enough to join the hunt. Courtesy of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife



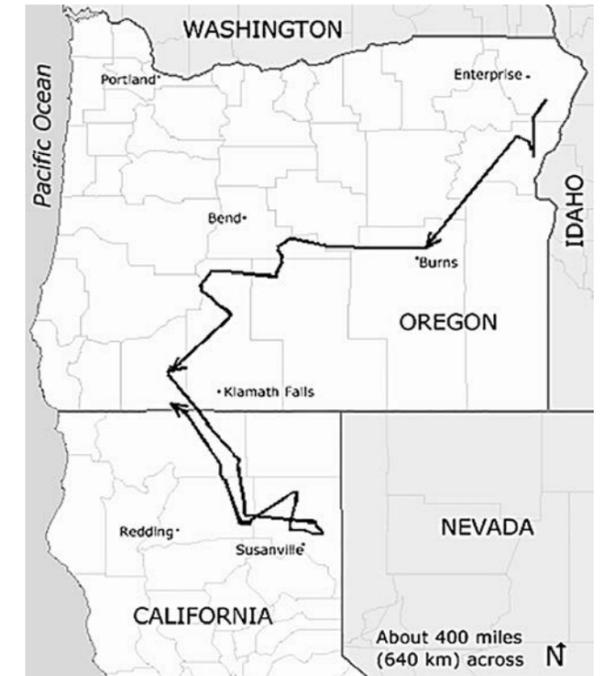
OR-7, the first wild wolf to venture into California since 1924. Courtesy of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

any of that money for fees or costs. "What the legislature did by appropriating that money — they recognize this is an important part of the coexistence of wolves on the landscape with ranchers," Scott said. He estimated fewer than 15 applications for compensation have been filed so far and several of those have been approved. He said he didn't have the exact numbers, but "The actual issuance of the funds is from the state controller's office. I understand several of those have been issued. Some may be in place as of now, and we may be returning some ... Our conviction is this is the rancher's money, and it's passing through us as good stewards of public funds."

Some of those funds have been spent for direct loss, and some funds also have gone for deterrence grants, but Scott said the third prong of the program — Pay for Presence — is much more complicated. "What is the presence of these animals doing to the herd and how do we compensate for that?" Scott asked. "Obviously it isn't something that has an ubiquitous impact across the landscape. You've got some areas where the wolves are on their operation on a regular basis, and they're taking animals. They're having an impact that's really hard to measure — percent loss of weight or conception or all of these kinds of things. I don't want to come across like we're just wringing our hands because we're not. We're driving ourselves to get to a full program ... Working with our stakeholders, we're including virtually every type of compensation that has ever been tried in this pilot program ... We accept that as something you can't completely measure, and we're trying to get compensation in spite of that. That's the hard part ... It's not just a straight-forward, cut and dried situation."

The history of wolves in Northeastern California
Ranchers in California had no reason to fear wolves after someone shot the last one

OR-7's travels through California. Courtesy of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife



Wolf OR-93 traveled from Oregon to Southern California and tragically died after being hit by a vehicle near Interstate 5.



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By Sam Williams
swilliams@lassennews.com

A pilot program — the Interim Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation Program approved last year by the California legislature — may help northeastern California ranchers recover some of the losses they have suffered due to wolves. "Currently two elements of the Interim Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation Grant Program are operational — the loss compensation and the deterrence grants are both live," said Jordan Traverso, a public information officer with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. "CDFW is currently finalizing the final element — Pay for Presence." Scott Gardner, Wildlife Branch Chief with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, said the legislature approved \$3 million in funding for the program in the Budget Act of 2022 — "a specific appropriation to fund a pilot program for livestock compensation" for losses due to wolves. "All \$3 million that was appropriated needs to get in the pockets of these ranchers," and CDFW is not taking

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Kent Laudon, a wolf biologist with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, talks about the satellite tracking data obtained from a collared wolf at a Lassen County Fish and Game Commission meeting. According to the data presented, OR-44, a collared 2-year-old gray wolf from the Chesnimnus Pack in Oregon, covered 450 miles — about six miles per day — during a six-week visit to California. Photo by Sam Williams



The presence of wolves in the Taylorsville and Genesee areas back in 2018 raised ranchers' concerns about what the wolves' presence means for their livestock. Photo by Heather Kingdon

in the Golden State near Litchfield in Lassen County in 1924.

But all that changed Dec. 28, 2011, when OR7, a lone male wolf dispersing from the Innaha Pack in Oregon, crossed the state line and entered California, probably seeking a mate. School children excitedly named him Journey and made him a celebrity.

"It's too early to say with any certainty whether wolves will again become a resident species in California," Department of Fish and Game Director Charlton H. Bonham said in December 2011. "But it is definitely an historic predator surrounded by legend and lore."

"We believe the return of wolves to their native habitat in our state is a great ecological story, one we knew would be met with mixed emotions," said Jordan at the time. "We will continue to work with the many stakeholders involved."

Richard Egan, Lassen County's Administrative Officer and member of a ranching family, expressed a completely different opinion.

"There are good reasons why our forefathers exterminated them when they did because they're a menace like Polio," Richard said. "I don't know why you'd want to bring back a scourge like the wolf, but I guess some people do — apparently a



A trail camera captured this image of the female of the Lassen Pack and two of her pups. Experts believe at least two new pups were born in April 2018, increasing the size of the pack to a breeding pair, two yearling pups and at least two new pups.

Courtesy of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

majority of Californians do."

And so, the return of the wolf to California began. According to the CDFW, OR7 moved back and forth across the border several times and even spent quite a bit of time in Lassen County before returning to Oregon and starting a pack there. Later one of his descendants crossed the state line, found a mate and began the Lassen Pack.

As one might imagine, before too long, the inevitable conflict between wolves and

cattle erupted, and ranchers started seeking solutions. North state rancher Mark Coats wrote a story for the Lassen County Times in March 2019 and reported the first cattle/wolf kill in Siskiyou County came in August 2015.

Although no one realized it at the time, California's wolf-free zone turned a corner in 1973 when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the northern Rocky Mountain wolf, *Canis lupus*, as an endangered species

and created three recovery areas, including one in Yellowstone National Park. Between 1995 and 1997, 41 wolves from Canada and Montana were released in Yellowstone. Since then, the packs have flourished, their population has grown and the wolves have dispersed and created new packs across the northwestern states.

While OR7 enjoyed his status as the only documented wolf in California at the time, the Federal Endangered Species Act,



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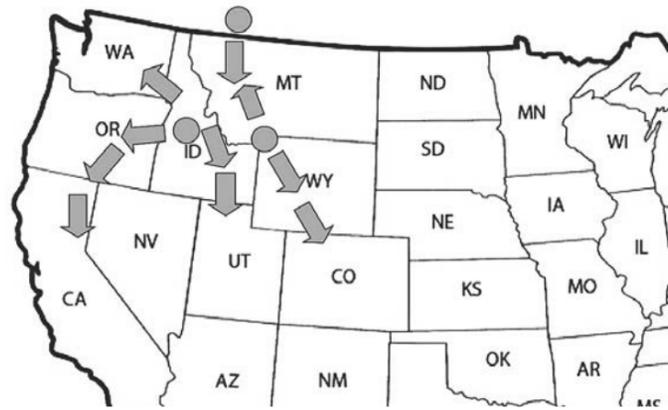
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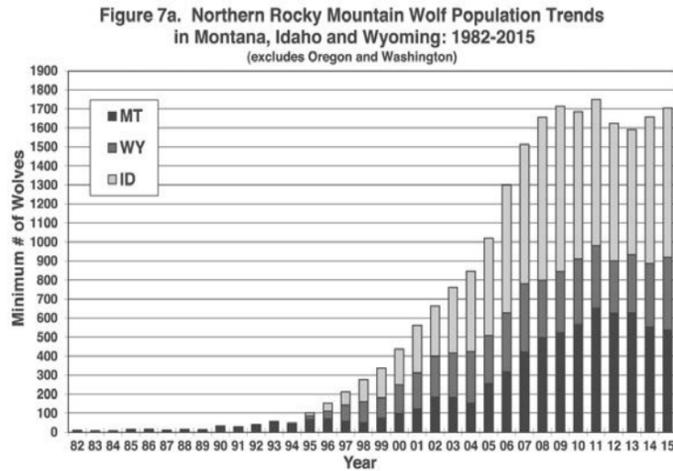
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Where are the wolves going?

Graphics courtesy of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife



Everywhere they go, the number of wolves rises.

administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, protected him and any other gray wolf that came into California.

That federal law prohibited the harassment, harm, pursuit, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capture or collection of wolves in California, or the attempt to engage in any such conduct. Penalties include fines up to \$100,000 and one-year imprisonment. In October 2020, the Trump administration revoked the gray wolf's endangered species status and returned their protection to the individual states and the Native American tribes. The gray wolf remains a protected species under California law.

While some ranchers and conspiracy theorists claim the wolves are being released into California, CDFW said the wolves are simply dispersing naturally as their numbers grow.

"Wolves walked into the state," Scott said, "and they moved into the state on their own. We're in a spot where we've got our mission, and that's where we are."

Can wolves really travel so far? Well, consider this. OR93 surprised even the experts. The year-old wolf walked from Oregon to as far south as Kern and Ventura counties before being hit and killed by a vehicle alongside Interstate 5 in November 2021. He reportedly is the first wolf in Southern California in 200 or 300 years. His death caused turbulence among environmentalists.

"I'm devastated to learn of the death of this remarkable wolf," said Amaroq Weiss, senior wolf advocate with the Center for Biological Diversity. "His epic travels across California inspired the world ... I thank him for the hope he gave us and for a brief glimpse into what it would be like for wolves to roam wild and free again ... OR-93's epic

California journey was a beacon of hope in a time when other states are waging a brutal war on wolves, killing them by the hundreds. He was simply doing what wolves do, heading out on his own searching for a mate. I always knew the odds of his finding another wolf on the Central Coast were slim to none, but his relentless wanderings seeking a kindred spirit connected him to the hearts of so many. He won't be forgotten, and we'll honor his memory by continuing to fight for the safety of wolves everywhere."

According to the Center for Biological Diversity, "Protecting habitat and building effective wildlife crossings in the form of overpasses and underpasses would help wolves safely re-establish here and prevent imperiled species like mountain lions from becoming locally extinct."

Like it or not, the wolves are here now, and here's some hope for the ranchers to recover their losses.

CDFW Wolf Livestock Compensation Grants

According to the CDFW website, "The CDFW has launched an Interim Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation Grant Program. This program aims to help minimize the impacts wolves have on livestock producers in California. Apply now!"

"CDFW is receiving recommendations from a range of experts and stakeholders in order to implement a more comprehensive pilot program in the coming months. That program will address three areas of need (prongs): payments for the impacts of wolf presence on livestock, compensation for livestock loss and non-lethal deterrent use. This program will remain in effect until funds allotted in the 2021-22 state budget are exhausted."

Livestock loss compensation

"Livestock producers who have lost animals to confirmed or probable wolf predation, as verified by CDFW, can apply for compensation at fair market value for losses incurred on or after Sept. 23, 2021."

For questions or assistance, email: Wolfprogram@wildlife.ca.gov.

Deterrence method(s) compensation

"Livestock producers who use non-lethal deterrent methods to deter wolf presence near livestock in areas of known wolf activity can apply for compensation of associated costs. The CDFW supports the use of various non-lethal techniques to deter wolf presence near livestock. Producers, landowners, their employees and agent(s) are encouraged to contact their County Agricultural Commissioner, the CDFW, and agency partners for technical assistance and to explore options."

According to the Interim Wolf Livestock Compensation Grant Program Livestock Loss Application Form, "In 2021 the California state legislature appropriated funding to the Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop a grant process to allocate funds to pay for the deterrence of wolf presence near livestock, the impacts of wolf presence on livestock and for verified loss of livestock for participating ranchers."

The CDFW has developed an Interim Wolf Livestock Compensation Grant Program to immediately award grants for the second and third prog of this legislative direction to address livestock loss and use of non-lethal deterrent methods. CDFW will accept applications and award grants on an on-going basis. CDFW applications may be submitted by email at wolfprogram@wildlife.ca.gov. HCL

CDFW Wolf Management Update — July through September 2022

Lassen Pack

There were a minimum of two adults (LAS09F and LAS16M) and five yearlings and five pups. LAS09F's collar ceased functioning on August 19, and there are no other functioning collars in the pack. The pack continued utilizing summer range differently this year, perhaps due to local deer distribution changes resulting from the Dixie Fire. Collaring operations were conducted for a 60-day period ranging from June 24 to August 23, and over a 70 mile area. A pup (LAS35M) was captured but too small to collar. Otherwise, efforts were unsuccessful, due to wolves demonstrating trap savviness and pups being moved 15 times over a large area (e.g., 15 linear miles between the furthest sites). Local pack movement changed each time the pups were moved. There were no confirmed depredations during the quarter.

Whaleback Pack

There were a minimum of two adults (breeding wolves OR85 and WHA01F), five yearlings, and eight pups, with one functioning VHF collar (OR85). The satellite/GPS component of OR85's collar was no longer functioning as of June 14. The pack is utilizing its home range similar to last year. Collaring operations were conducted over two periods for 10 days in September but were unsuccessful. There were four confirmed depredations during the quarter.

Beckwourth Pack

Surveys so far have yielded a detection of a minimum of two to three wolves, with some smaller tracks indicating possible pup. The new area of detection is far from where the Beckwourth pack was detected last year,

and therefore it is not yet known if the wolves are from the Beckwourth pack or a new pack. DNA from a scat identified one wolf as LAS19M (from the Lassen 2020 litter) in the new area of detection. Last year, LAS12F (Lassen 2019 litter) was detected in the original area of detection.

Dispersing wolves

There have been no new dispersing wolves detected during this period. Because we have regularly detected dispersing wolves in California since December 2011, it is likely that a small number of uncollared dispersers exist in the state at any moment in time. More information about these and other wolves can be found on CDFW's gray wolf web page in a document called "California's Known Wolves – Past and Present." CDFW continues to receive and investigate reports of wolf presence from many parts of California. Public reports are an important tool for the Department. Please report wolves or wolf sign on the CDFW Gray Wolf webpage: www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Gray-Wolf/Sighting-Report.



Here's the photo of a Lassen Pack wolf — a winner in the 2020 California Wildlife Photo of the Year contest. Photo by Randy Robbins

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The long and winding road to

Presidents' Day

By Sam Williams
swilliams@lassennews.com

Those of us from California who are old enough to remember the days when we had darker hair can probably also remember when we celebrated the birthdays of two presidents back in our youth — George Washington's Birthday (Feb. 22) and Abraham Lincoln's Birthday (Feb. 12). Today, we have one federal holiday,

Washington's Birthday, commonly known as Presidents' Day (the third Monday in February, Feb. 20 this year), that celebrates every American president. So, what happened?

Let's start at the beginning. Back in the good old colony days, the British Empire followed the Julian Calendar — not the Gregorian Calendar adopted by the rest of the world in 1582. But the empire finally capitulated, adopting the Gregorian

Calendar in 1752. Under the Julian Calendar, Washington was born Feb. 11, 1732, but such dates were normalized after adoption of the Gregorian Calendar and Washington's birthday was changed to Feb. 22 to match the Gregorian date. After his death in 1799 Americans began to celebrate Washington's Birthday.

Eighty years later, Washington's Birthday became a holiday in Washington, D.C. thanks to an act of Congress in 1879

and then a federal holiday in all the states in 1885. Washington's Birthday was celebrated on Feb. 22 until 1970.

Lincoln's Birthday, Feb. 12, has never been a federal holiday, but it remains a state holiday in California, Connecticut, Missouri and Illinois. By 1940 24 states and the District of Columbia celebrated Lincoln's Birthday.

Ah, but then thanks to the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, Washington's Birthday moved to the third Monday in February — what we now know as Presidents Day, a day when we honor both Washington and Lincoln and all those who have served in the nation's highest office.

That act of Congress moved three federal holidays to Mondays — Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day and Labor Day. It also moved Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October, but that didn't last long, and Veterans Day soon returned to Nov. 11. By design, the act created more three-day holiday weekends for the working folks.

Washington, of course, led the military through the Revolutionary War, and served the first two four-year terms as president.

Lincoln led the nation during the Civil War when 11 states seceded from the union. John Wilkes Booth shot and killed Lincoln at Ford's Theatre just five days after the Confederate States of America surrendered, ending the war. Lincoln also issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, freeing those held as slaves in the Confederacy.

But here's a real irony. Presidents' Day will never, ever fall on Washington's Birthday, Feb. 22 because the third Monday in February will always fall between Feb. 15 and Feb. 21. **HCL**

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FIRE SERVICES

YOU CAN HELP:

Volunteering and fundraising are essential

By Mike Taborski • mtaborski@plumasnews.com

Volunteer fire service is a historic and essential component of emergency and disaster response in the United States. Of the 1,041,000 firefighters in the U.S., more than 65 percent are volunteers and 82 percent of all firehouses are entirely or mostly volunteer, according to the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), and the percentage of volunteers we rely on locally is even higher — but those numbers are dwindling, both locally and across the nation. Lack of time has been bantered around as the main reason for a general decline in volunteerism, but in this case that deserves a much closer look into its implications for further consideration.

Volunteer firefighters have long been the backbone of emergency response throughout this region. Whether it's responding to fire calls, medical emergencies, car accidents, rescues, natural disasters, hazardous materials incidents or a host of other calls and emergencies, we depend on our volunteer firefighters to serve as first responders — now more than ever before.

Not only do they provide these critical services, but volunteers also save our communities money. NFPA estimates volunteer firefighters save American taxpayers nearly \$140 billion annually and another \$450 billion in lower insurance premiums.

Ever wonder what it takes to become a volunteer firefighter or member of a department's support team? Simply put, if you are in good health and want to serve your community in an impactful and meaningful way while enjoying an atmosphere of spirit and camaraderie with the feeling that you are making a difference — then you have what it takes to get started as a fire service volunteer!

Fire Academy and training

Volunteer firefighters today are now required to complete much of the same training as career firefighters. Each of our local departments will have their own specific set of initial screening requirements such as a high school diploma, physical and background check for new recruits. Once vetted, they will provide you with all the necessary and ongoing training you'll need. Firefighters also can attend the Quincy Fire Academy where they receive extensive hands-on and classroom training held each spring spread over six consecutive Saturdays.

The first Fire Academy was held in 2002 and since that time has graduated more than 500 students from all over Plumas, Lassen and Sierra counties. It is held at the Quincy Volunteer Fire Department's training facility, the only one in Plumas County with a training facility that has all the necessary features, including a three-story training tower, a propane-fired live fire facility and an array of various other training props to help firefighters prepare to handle the variety of responses they encounter routinely in a safe and efficient manner.

Graeagle Fire Chief Ed Ward described the training grounds as "very unique in our region, with a ton of great props and learning tools that most of us do not have on our own."

It takes some 35 instructors who volunteer their time, expertise and training each year for these classes. The Academy is operated on a break-even basis by the Quincy Fire Protection District. The cost of materials and supplies are covered through a per-student fee typically paid by each fire department for their respective attendee(s).

"Firefighters attending the Academy receive basic structural firefighting training based on a nationally



Our volunteer fire departments continually conduct classroom education for firefighters.

recognized standards," explained Quincy fire chief and academy leader Robbie Cassou. "We sometimes have previous graduates return to go through the training again and, of course, they are always welcome if we have space.

"Additional training continues at their own fire departments along with ongoing continuing education each year," said Cassou. There are many regional opportunities through the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and other organizations in addition to a growing number of online programs, many for free.

Fundraising

If, for whatever reason, being a volunteer firefighter doesn't work for you there are other ways to show your support and appreciation to your local department and its vital ongoing efforts.

Operating a safe and efficient volunteer fire department is expensive. The list is extensive and includes things like the cost of insurance, maintaining fire houses, equipment, trucks, hoses, protective fire clothing, breathing apparatuses and so on. The department's budgets far outpace the incremental property tax revenues most special districts receive. Some fire districts are fortunate to have successfully passed additional property tax assessments with that added revenue going directly to that department to help fund their specific needs.

Additionally, most, if not all, fire departments also routinely hold a variety of fundraising events throughout the year such as pancake breakfasts, raffles, product sales and the like. Many also receive small cash donations from grateful residents or businesses who are not tied to any event. Some, if not all, will also accept in-kind donations in the form of things that include construction labor, repairs and maintenance and office help. How much money is raised through these efforts varies, of course, but it could be estimated that it ranges from 3-10 percent of annual budgets.

Plumas Eureka Fire Department Chief Steve Munsen, who is also president of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association, said that attracting and keeping volunteer fire fighters is a huge problem nationally and certainly for the 19 departments in Plumas County. He added that if people, for whatever reason, can't volunteer as a firefighter, there are many other tasks and projects every department can use help with. "Our fire departments need your help, please consider getting involved and volunteering in some capacity," he said. "I encourage you to contact your local department to see what you can do to specifically help them with the challenges each of them face."

Bottom line

The personal rewards and satisfaction received from fire and rescue service is a long list and often beyond description. There is a sense of accomplishment after controlling a building fire, joy and elation when a child is born, compassion for accident victims, and fulfillment in teaching fire safety.

It can be time consuming, but the rewards of helping your community, friends and neighbors through volunteer fire service is unmeasurable. These folks bring out the best in a community. **HCL**



Firefighters are taught a number of safe entry techniques geared towards a variety of scenarios.



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Remembering Jim:

The man who
discovered

BECKWOURTH PASS

The Jim Beckwourth Cabin and Trading Post in Beckwourth, California.
Photo courtesy of Plumas County

By Lauren Westmoreland
lwestmoreland@plumasnews.com

Many folks drive over Beckwourth Pass as they make their way through eastern Plumas County on Highway 70, but few know the story of the man who discovered the pass, nor the history behind it.

A true man of adventure and larger than life, James, aka Jim Pierson Beckwourth, was the only African American pioneer to

record his many experiences as an explorer and mountain man who lived in the early 1800s.

Beckwourth was born in Frederick County, Virginia, in 1798 to a father who was a white military officer and an enslaved mother of thirteen. His family moved to Missouri when he was thirteen, and after four years of schooling, he became a blacksmith's apprentice.

According to his book, Beckwourth



The old Beckwourth's Hotel as shown in this image provided by Plumas County Museum, circa 1910

James Beckwourth became known for his bravery and ability to survive in the wilderness.

ultimately got into a spat with the blacksmith and found himself quickly on an expedition to the lead mines in Wisconsin. Beckwourth became interested in the wilderness when he joined an expedition in 1823, pushing into the wild west with the Rocky Mountain Fur Trading Company and working as a fur trader and mountain man. Beckwourth then became known for his bravery and ability to survive in the wilderness.

In 1825, Beckwourth's book noted that a tribe of Crow warriors had captured him, and thus began a six-year period when

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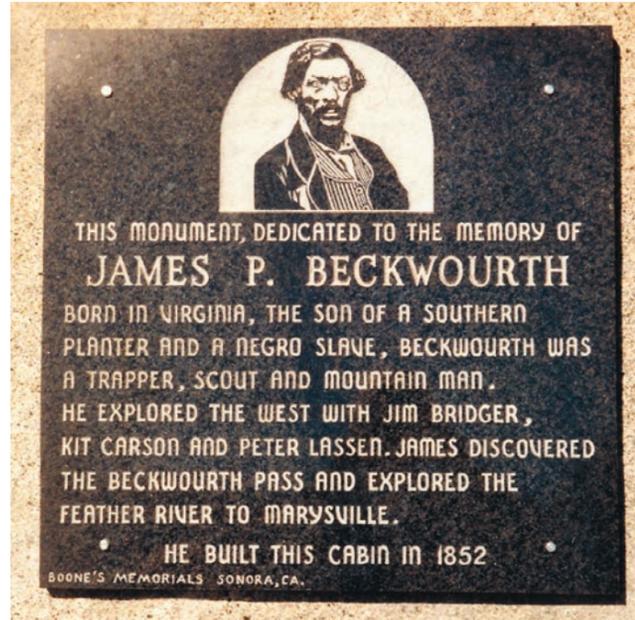
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A daguerreotype of James Pierson Beckwourth.
Photos courtesy of Plumas County



Right: A monument at the Beckwourth Cabin.

Below right: The cover of a book written about Jim Beckwourth.



A monument that can be found whilst travelling over Beckwourth Pass on Highway 70, dedicated to "the discoverer and to the pioneers who passed along the trail by the Las Plumas Parlor No. 254" in May 1937.

Beckwourth lived with the tribe, earning the rank of war chief over time and marrying at least ten different women in the tribe.

Ultimately, Beckwourth returned to the road, attempting to run a couple of trading posts in Missouri before being recruited by the U.S. Army to fight the Seminole tribe in Florida.

Beckwourth went on to spend time in Colorado and New Mexico, marrying a woman named Luisa Sandoval and establishing the town of Pueblo, Colorado, with her.

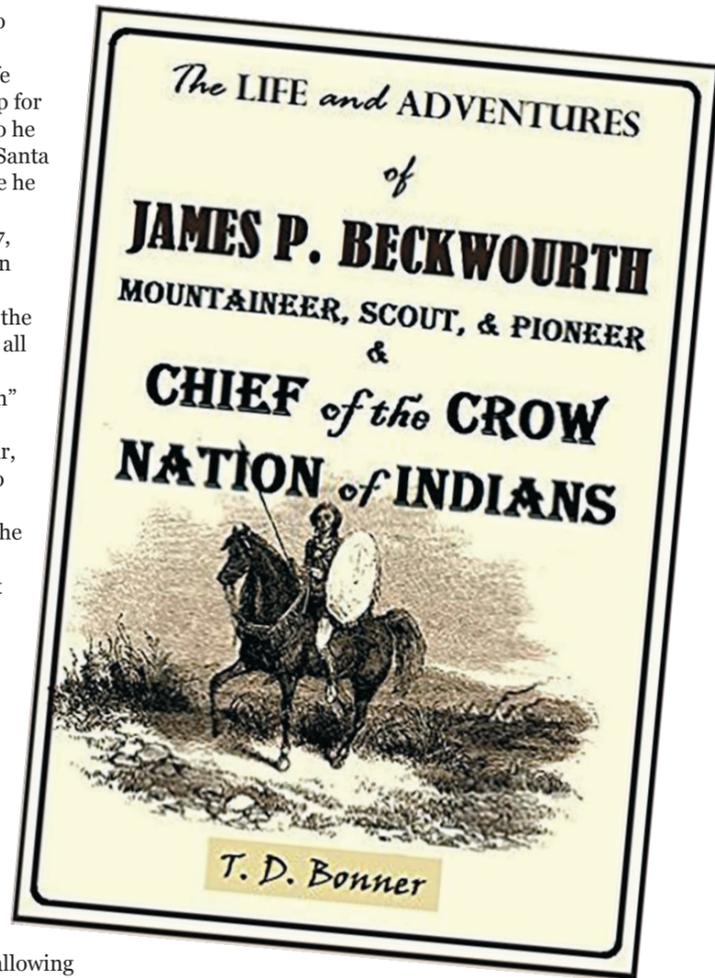
His travels took him to California to seek better trading opportunities in 1844. Still, he and several of his companions fled with 1,800 area horses back to Colorado after a significant outbreak of hostilities between white settlers and the Mexican government around 1845.

When he returned to Colorado, Beckwourth discovered that his wife Luisa had given him up for dead and remarried, so he decided to relocate to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he opened a hotel.

Unfortunately, by 1847, there was a massacre in Taos of all the white settlers, and he joined the retaliatory force. After all this, he earned the nickname "Bloody Arm" for his skill at fighting.

After this time of war, Beckwourth decided to try returning to California in time for the oncoming Gold Rush, becoming a chief scout for a man named General John C. Fremont in 1848.

Jim Beckwourth went on to make history in what is now Eastern Plumas County with the discovery of Beckwourth Pass in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. This pass was a significant discovery, allowing travelers to navigate through the treacherous Sierra Nevada mountains into gold country without risking the trip over Donner Pass, which had become infamous



by this time.

This pass became an essential route for thousands of travelers, traders, settlers, and

gold prospectors trying to reach the west coast.

Beckwourth Pass was also chosen by the Western Pacific Railroad as the "gateway to the west."

Beckwourth is credited with discovering the pass in 1851 and improving the Beckwourth Trail.

Originally a Native American path through the mountains, Beckwourth Trail began near Pyramid Lake and the Truckee Meadows before climbing up to what is now known as Beckwourth Pass and descending through Marysville.

According to Beckwourth's own account, the communities of each gold town along the trail were supposed to assist in funding it. Still, when Beckwourth tried to collect a payment, Marysville had experienced two massive fires and could not pay.

After that, Beckwourth decided to

establish a ranch, hotel, and trading post in the newly settled town of Beckwourth, California.

In 1854 and 1855, Beckwourth began to dictate his stories to a Justice of the Peace named Thomas D. Bonner whom he met by chance at a hotel in the California gold fields. Bonner has been described as an itinerant justice of the peace and a temperance speaker and journalist for The Pittsburgh Sun.

Beckwourth was known for his storytelling skills, which were put to great use in his autobiography "The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth," published in 1856. In this fascinating book full of tall and short tales, Beckwourth wrote about his adventures in the wilderness, his encounters with Native Americans, and his discovery of Beckwourth Pass.

His book was published in 1856 in the

United States. While the complete accuracy of all details is still up for debate, it seems that Beckwourth was a part of nearly every major event in the "winning of the West" in one way or another.

The editor of his autobiography even stated his opinion that "some men are rarely worthy of belief, but that Jim was always Beckwourthy of unbelief."

Beckwourth's legacy lives on today, as Beckwourth Pass is still an important route for travelers, and there are several historical markers and monuments dedicated to Beckwourth in the area. Beckwourth's life and adventures continue to inspire people to explore and appreciate the beauty of the wilderness in Plumas County and beyond.

For those who have enjoyed this story, much more can be found at the Plumas County Museum at 500 Jackson St. in Quincy; 530-283-6320. [HCL](#)

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Plumas County's first four-term district attorney reflects on his work

By Debra Moore
dmoore@plumasnews.com

Every day, I am dealing with someone's worst day." That statement reverberated in my thoughts long after my interview with Plumas County District Attorney David Hollister came to an end. As a prosecutor, Hollister works with crime victims and their alleged perpetrators — arguably it's the worst day for those on both sides.

For the past 30 years Hollister has worked to bring justice to victims, beginning with the Alameda County District Attorney's office where he served as Deputy District Attorney to Plumas County where he is beginning his fourth term as District Attorney. Hollister is proud of the fact that he has never had a case reversed on appeal.

But three decades of prosecuting criminals, some of which were very high-profile cases, can take their toll. You see things that you can't forget — such as the



District Attorney David Hollister begins his fourth term in office this year — which is unprecedented in Plumas County for that position.

Feather Publishing file photo

battered body of a toddler or a traumatized 7-year-old rape victim left with great bodily injury.

Hollister described both as two of the most heart-wrenching cases he has tried. And though he gained convictions in both

cases he can't restore the life of the toddler, nor the innocence of the 7-year-old. The latter testified against her attacker, which was difficult. "She wouldn't talk to anybody," Hollister said. But she liked basketball and Hollister was a former

'You have to push away the noise and always strive for justice'

David Hollister is the district attorney — not a judge, but he played that role when he mentored then Quincy High School student Kayla Thackeray with her senior class project.

Feather Publishing file photo

college basketball player. "I spent hours with her shooting baskets," Hollister said, and she testified. For years after the trial, she would send Hollister Christmas cards. That case was in Oakland.

The other case that remains with him is the 2015 case in Quincy when a man was convicted of killing his girlfriend's 2-year-old son. That case impacted everyone who worked on it, as details emerged of the brutal assault.

Hollister likened the aftermath of dealing with such cases as putting pebbles in a jar. "My jar is getting pretty full," he said, but he's not ready to be done. Hollister, who turns 57 in March, said he still really likes his job "and will do it for as long as the voters will have me."

While it's heart wrenching, it's also rewarding and Hollister can run down a long list of cases that he is proud to have



worked, including the "Riders" — when he was assigned as the sole attorney to investigate, evaluate and prosecute four Oakland police officers charged with 30 on-duty crimes ranging from kidnapping to conspiracy to obstruct justice. "There was a lot of pressure, a lot of threats," he said of the experience. "But you have to push away the noise and always strive for justice."

When asked to name his most rewarding case, Wallin-Reed came to mind. In that case, which was featured on the television show Dateline, Hollister successfully prosecuted Gregory Chad Wallin-Reed on murder charges in a "stand your ground" case where Wallin-Reed pursued and fired at a car full of young men who had taken solar lights. In addition to Hollister, detectives with the Plumas County Sheriff's Office, were featured on the Dateline show, recounting how they collected evidence in

the case.

"This was very high profile; it was supposed to be an acquittal, but the fact that all of us — the Sheriff, the DA and the jurors all said, 'No. This is not a stand your ground case,'" made the difference.

Hollister said he enjoys a good working relationship with Sheriff's personnel, and they, in turn, appreciate his work.

District 4 Supervisor Greg Hagwood, who served as Sheriff during Hollister's tenure, said the working relationship is paramount. "In order for public safety and law enforcement to effectively serve citizens and visitors of Plumas County, it's absolutely essential that the Sheriff, the sheriff's office personnel, and the District Attorney have a close, collaborative working relationship."

Beyond the relationship, Hagwood lauded Hollister for being a tireless, talented

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When the weather is fine, David Hollister can often be found fly fishing. Feather Publishing file photo

It's not always criminals that make the work challenging

prosecutor who has one of the highest conviction rates in the state. Hagwood said that Plumas County is fortunate to have someone of his caliber, and the fact that he has never been challenged on the ballot speaks to the public's confidence in him as well. Hagwood added that Hollister instills confidence in the deputies walking into court because they know that he is unwavering and always prepared.

Hollister also highlighted the good working relationship he has with the judiciary including Judges Ira Kaufman, Janet Hilde and Doug Prouty. "It's been a pleasure to work in those courts," he said.

He also praised his staff. "I have been so fortunate to have hard-working, dedicated people," he said. "They do their work with grace, consistency and skill. There are people who have been there 14, 16, 18 years."

The work is challenging and knows no set hours. "You are on call 24/7," Hollister said. "It's impacted birthdays, holidays, Christmas." If there's a homicide, Hollister gets the call.

And it's not always the criminals that make the work challenging. Hollister cited local government and new laws out of Sacramento as examples. For the past year, Hollister has been the sole prosecutor in the DA's office, a fact he partially attributes to the low pay offered. During that time, he prosecuted all felony and juvenile cases, managed the Drug Court and Mental Health Court calendars, met all in-custody charging and on-call responsibilities, and administered the office of 10.

But that will change soon with the addition of two new assistant district attorneys that Hollister recruited. He will have help administering the roughly 1,000 cases annually that come through the DA's office. "I won't have to cover every calendar,

every decision," Hollister said. Both individuals are taking large pay cuts to come to Plumas County, but the area attracted them.

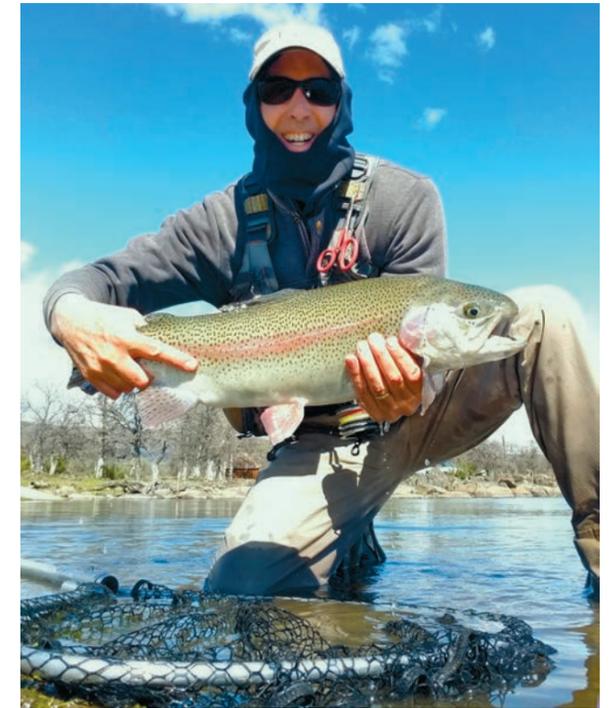
It's what originally drew Hollister and his wife, Lara, who is the principal of Quincy Elementary School, to move to Quincy back in 2003, and it's what will entice him to stay when he retires. (Though he always plans to work in some fashion — whether it's teaching, such as he has at Feather River College, or prosecuting cases on a temporary basis for other jurisdictions.) But when he's not working, he will enjoy what he describes as the "adult amusement park" to be found in Plumas County with its opportunities to hike and fish and play golf.

But for now, more time will be spent in the courthouse than on the Middle Fork. He is beginning his fourth term as district attorney, and it

is coming during an interesting time, when the state judiciary has resumed its intention to build a new courthouse in Quincy. Hollister likes the idea of placing it at the back of Dame Shirley Plaza and connecting the courthouse lawn to that of the plaza. (This would require closing Court Street.) "This would provide a courthouse square approach," he said, "and not disturb the Veterans Memorial."

He also wants to continue to meet the high expectations that he sets for his office. "We are open 7 to 5 and we never missed a day; never missed a court appointment," he said — not even during the pandemic.

Twenty years after he arrived in Plumas County to take a job as a deputy district attorney, Hollister still enjoys the work and remains committed to it. "I am happy to be a steward of this office," he said. **HCL**



David Hollister holds one of his catches — the district attorney enjoys fishing, golfing and hiking when he's not in the courtroom. Feather Publishing file photo

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Celebrating National Jello Week

Feb. 13-19 is National Jello Week

Jell-O® is a registered trademark, but 'jello' is a generic term for a gelatin dessert and the premixed boxes that make it. Older recipes from the 1800s referred to it as 'jelly,' especially 'calf's foot jelly.' There's also a plain gelatin, no flavoring or coloring added; the most common brand currently is Knox.

One thing to know about adding fruit to jello:

Don't use certain fresh fruits, because they contain a protease enzyme which destroys protein – keeping the jello from

thickening. These fruits are kiwi, figs, papaya, pineapple and prickly pears. However, you can make these (except the kiwi) useable by peeling and cutting up the fruit and boiling it for 5 minutes.

Sorry, there evidently is no way to make kiwi useable. Canned fruits are acceptable because the canning process renders them cooked enough to work.



Strawberry Jello Salad. Photos by Teri York

3-Layer Jello

Dissolve one small box (3 oz.) lime jello with 1 cup hot water. Stir in 5 ice cubes until they melt. Pour into a greased mold, set until firm.

Make up one small box lemon jello per box instructions. Let set awhile on counter to cool.

Beat 3 oz cream cheese until creamy. Add to lemon jello. Add 1 cup crushed pineapple, drained. Pour this mix over lime jello. Let set for a while.

Mix up one box cherry jello. Let cool, then pour over other jellos.

Strawberry Jello Salad

- 1 pkg (large) strawberry jello
- 1 10-oz. pkg frozen strawberries, thawed
- 1 small can crushed pineapple
- 1 cup hot water
- 2 bananas
- 1/2 cup pecans
- 1 tsp Knox unflavored gelatin
- 1 Tbsp cold water.

Dissolve the strawberry jello in the hot water. Dissolve the Knox gelatin in the cold water.

Drain the crushed pineapple. Slice the bananas. Chop the pecans. Drain liquid from the thawed strawberries. Mix it all together, chill.

Cran-Raspberry Salad

Eva's note: I'm pretty sure my mom got this recipe when she became one of the 'Church Ladies' who set up meals for events like meetings and wedding receptions. For a more 'family-sized' dish, cut everything in half.

- (Serves 16)
 - 1 can (20 oz.) crushed pineapple and juice
 - 2 pkgs (6 oz. each) raspberry flavored jello
 - 2 Tbsp lemon juice
 - dash of salt
 - 1 can (16 oz) whole berry cranberry sauce
- Drain pineapple, reserving 1/2 cup juice. Set both aside.

In large bowl, stir gelatin and 3 cups boiling water until dissolved. Stir in 2 cups cold water, reserved pineapple juice, lemon juice and salt. Spoon about 1/4 cup gelatin into an 8-cup ring mold.

Arrange pecan halves to form a circle in gelatin mold; refrigerate until set. Meanwhile, refrigerate remaining gelatin until it mounds slightly when dropped from a spoon. Spoon 1-3/4 cups gelatin into mold. Stir pineapple and cranberry sauce into remaining gelatin. Spoon over gelatin in mold. Chill until set. Unmold to serve.

Spread sour cream over top if desired. Note: To serve not using a mold, mix whole recipe together, minus pecan halves and



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Lease or purchase: Businesses must determine whether an agreement is a lease or a conditional sales contract. Payments made under a conditional sales contract aren't deductible as rent expense.

Unreasonable rent: businesses can't take a rental deduction for unreasonable rents paid. Rent is unreasonable for deduction when it is higher than market value or a professional appraisal. Usually, unreasonable rent becomes a problem when business owners and the lessors are related. Rent paid to a related person is reasonable if it's the same amount a business owner would pay to a stranger for use of the same property.

Office in the home: a business owner's workplace can be in their home if they have a home office that qualifies as their principal place of business. Business owners who rent their home and have a home office as their principal place of business may also qualify for a deduction. IRS Publication 587 has more details about this deduction.

Rent paid in advance: rent paid for a business is usually deductible in the year it is paid. If a business pays rent in advance, it can deduct only the amount that applies to the use of the rented property during the tax year. The business can deduct the rest of the payment over the period to which it applies. Business owners can review Publication 535, Business Expenses, for detailed examples on rent paid in advance.

Canceling a lease: a business can usually deduct the costs paid to cancel a business lease.



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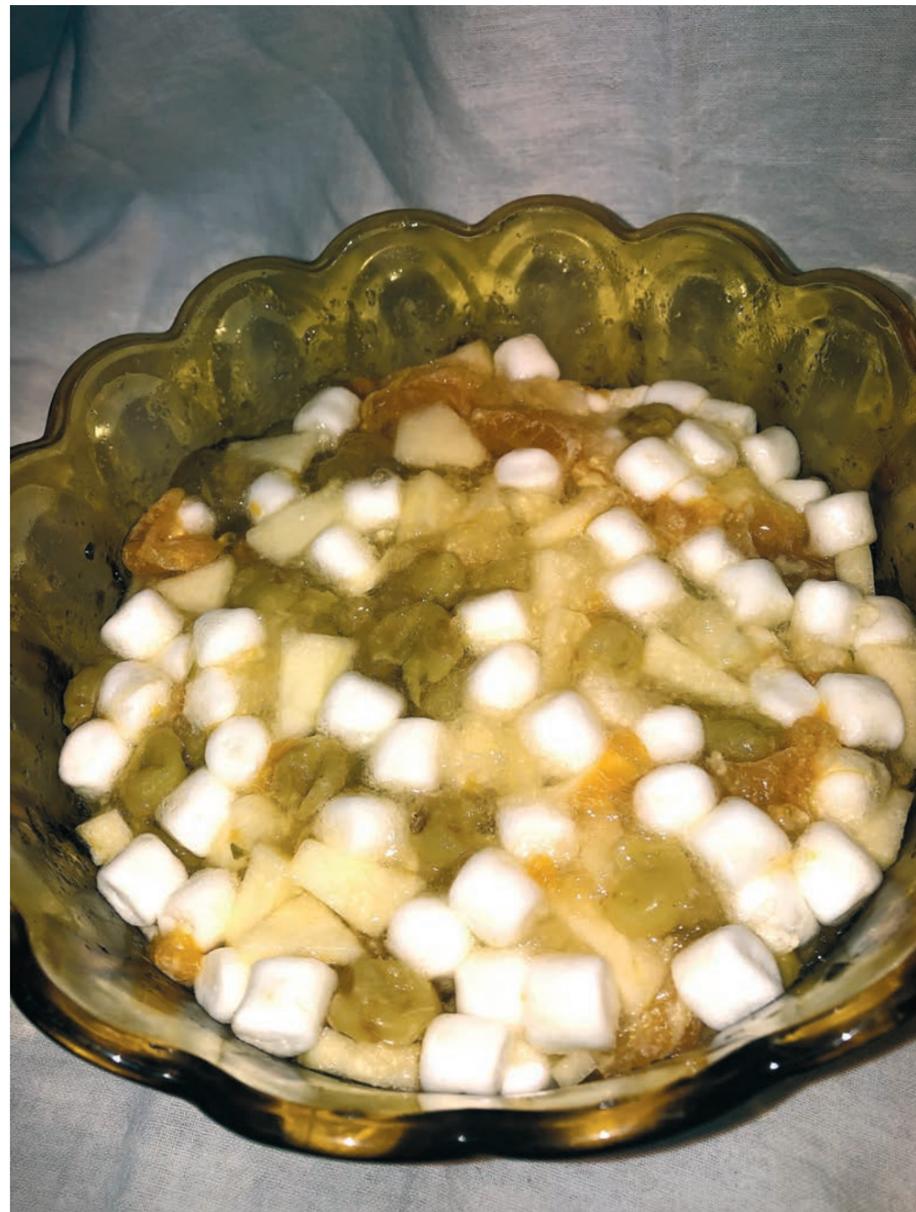
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Ginger Ale Jello Salad provided a sweet ending to my birthday dinner.
 Photo by Eva Small

pour into 13x9x2 inch baking dish. Chill until set. Spread sour cream on top before serving.

Ginger Ale fruit salad

- Makes 6 servings
- 2 Tbsp plain gelatin (2 packets of Knox brand)
 - 1/4 cup cold water
 - 1/2 cup boiling water
 - 1/4 cup lemon juice
 - 2 Tbsp sugar
 - 1 cup ginger ale (7.5 oz. can)
 - 1 cup seedless grapes
 - 1 banana
 - 1 apple
 - 2 oranges or 2 cans mandarin oranges (11 oz. each, drained)
 - 1/4 cup chopped walnuts or pecans

Soak gelatin in cold water 5 minutes. Then add the boiling water, stir. Add lemon juice and sugar, stir to dissolve the sugar. Add ginger ale, stir gently. (The soda will bubble up, so be sure to use at least a 5-cup bowl.) Pour mix into a bowl, refrigerate while you work on the fruit. Keep an eye on it, don't let it set completely firm. If you still have fruit to cut but it's getting too firm, just pull the bowl out of the

fridge and let it sit on the counter while you finish up.

Cut grapes in half. Slice banana. Peel and chop apple. Separate oranges into sections and remove membranes. (You won't have membrane to remove if you're using canned mandarins.) Fold all fruit and nuts into the jello mix. Turn into mold or large serving bowl or individual dessert cups; chill.

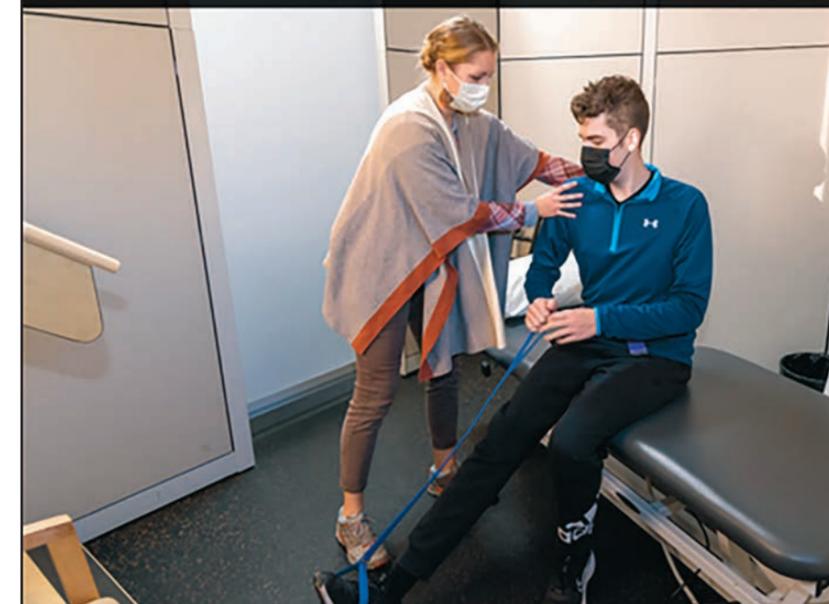
Eva's note: I made a few changes in this recipe for my birthday dinner recently. I was out of bananas and nuts, so I added 2 cups of miniature marshmallows. I might cut back to 3 Tbsp lemon juice next time, and add 1 Tbsp water to keep the liquid volume right. I let the jello get too firm while I was messing with the fruit, so I had to chop up the jello in order to stir in the fruit. It would have never formed right in a mold after I did that. After refrigerating in a large bowl for a few hours, it came together more, but I still doubt it would have maintained its shape after coming out of a mold. HCL



3-layer Jello molded. Photo by Teri York

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Celebrating *Bagels* from the comfort of home

By Lauren Westmoreland
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February 9 is National Bagel and Lox Day, and while many store-bought bagels are a tasty way to celebrate, there is nothing quite like the taste of a bagel that has been homemade.

As a year-round bagel and lox fan, I have tried many bagels, but only recently have I begun testing various recipes of my own with great enthusiasm, and finally came upon a mix that works well for me, every time.

This recipe can be tweaked with toppings and flavorful add-ins and is a convenient single-day project whereas most bagels are a two-day endeavor.

This recipe calls for:

- 2 tsp. active dry yeast
- 4 tsp. white sugar
- 1 ¼ cup warm water (roughly 110 degrees)
- 3 ½ cups bread or all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp. salt
- Toppings, such as everything bagel mix, parmesan cheese, smoked salt, cinnamon

sugar, minced onion - the possibilities are endless.

Instructions:

Start by dissolving the sugar in the warm water before adding the yeast. Allow it to rise - you should see a thick foam on top of the mixture when it is ready, usually five to ten minutes later.

Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl and make a well in the center. Pour in the yeast, water, and sugar mixture when ready.

Mix the dough until it pulls away from the walls of the bowl and turn it onto a lightly floured surface. Continue to knead until you have a firm, moist dough that is smooth and elastic. Add more flour as needed to achieve this firmness.

Lightly grease or oil a large clean bowl and put the dough in, turning to coat the dough completely before covering the bowl with a damp dish towel and setting it aside to rise for about an hour, or until the dough is double the size it was at the start.

Punch the dough down and let it rise again for another ten to fifteen minutes.

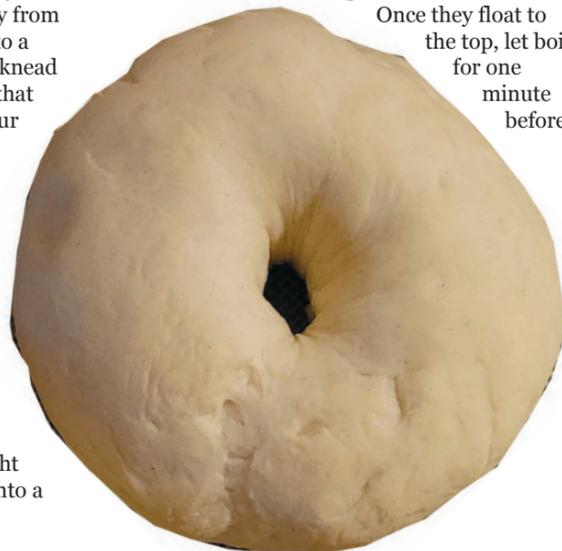
Gently divide the dough into eight small pieces and shape each piece into a

perfectly round ball. Coating your finger in flour, press down through the center of each dough ball to the counter surface to make a hole, and then gently stretch the ring you formed into a bagel shape.

Place the bagels on a cookie sheet that has been lightly oiled and let rest for another 10 minutes. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees and bring a large pot of water to a boil.

After the water is boiling, reduce the heat and use a large slotted spoon to lower the bagels into the water.

Once they float to the top, let boil for one minute before



There's arguably nothing better than a fresh batch of homemade bagels

flipping and repeating for another minute. For chewier bagels, increase the boiling times to two minutes on each side.

If you are adding toppings, have those ready to add as soon as the bagels are removed from the boiling water, so they stick.

Bake at 425 for 20 to 25 minutes, until the bagels are golden brown. Cool on a wire rack and enjoy with a nice spread of cream cheese, some lox and capers - or any other way you like! **HCL**

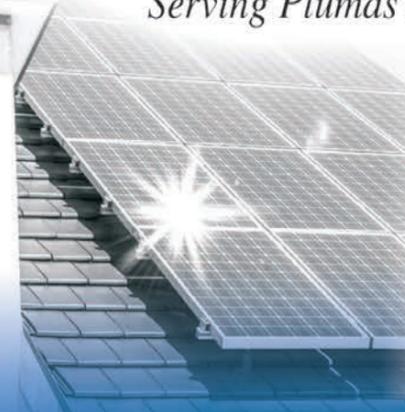


An assortment of bagels fresh out of the oven, just in time for National Bagel and Lox Day.

Photos by Lauren Westmoreland



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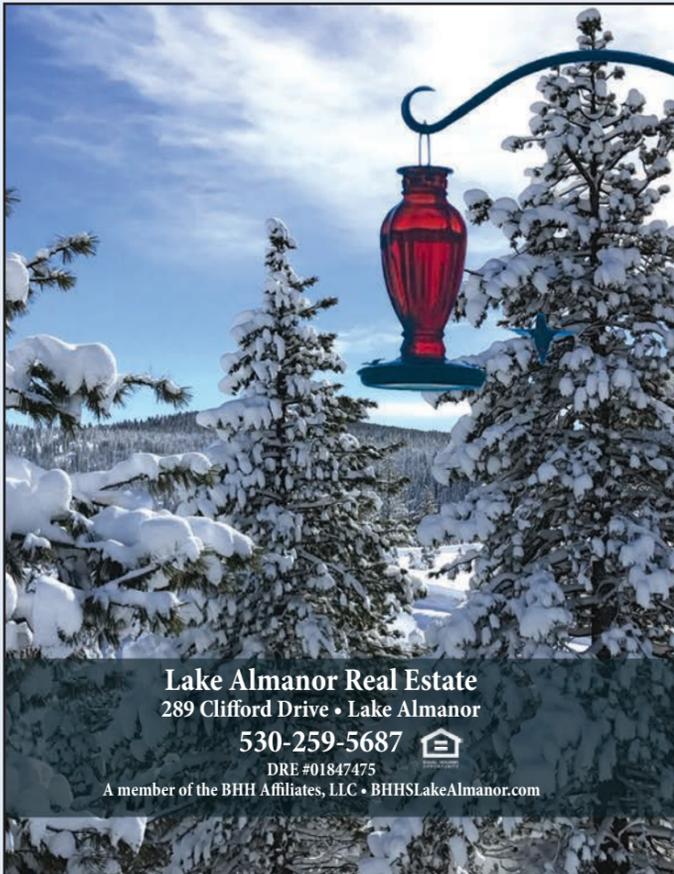
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