

Spring-Summer

1998

MONO



LAKE

NEWSLETTER

20th Anniversary Summer
Celebration and more ...

Mono Lake Newsletter

Spring-Summer 1998

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Volume 21, Number 1



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Twenty years. Over 7,000 days. Plus a few extra years of work before the Committee was official. That's a lot of hours of work on Mono's behalf, and they've added up to something amazing: a once-threatened lake rising toward a new future, a distant city committed to wise water use, and a well populated family of Mono Lake supporters. In this, the Mono Lake Committee's twentieth year, we're planning to bring everyone together for one terrific event to celebrate. Look for details on pages 8-13 and 20-23 and plan to join us at the lake.

Looking at what's been accomplished in 20 years, imagine what the future holds! Dave Winkler, one of the original researchers who saw Mono's plight, proposes intriguing scientific questions for the future in his article on the opposite page. Restoration work, education, and ongoing protection efforts are all in our future together as well. Look for lots of restoration news in the next issue, as we expect a Water Board order by then.

Back in the present day, all sorts of things are happening at Mono Lake this year, from Outdoor Experiences (pg. 13), to Field Seminars (pgs. 24-26) to detailed scientific research (pg 6). And one Mono Lake family event of note: Congratulations to Sally Gaines on her recent marriage to Rick Kattelmann!

—Geoff McQuilkin

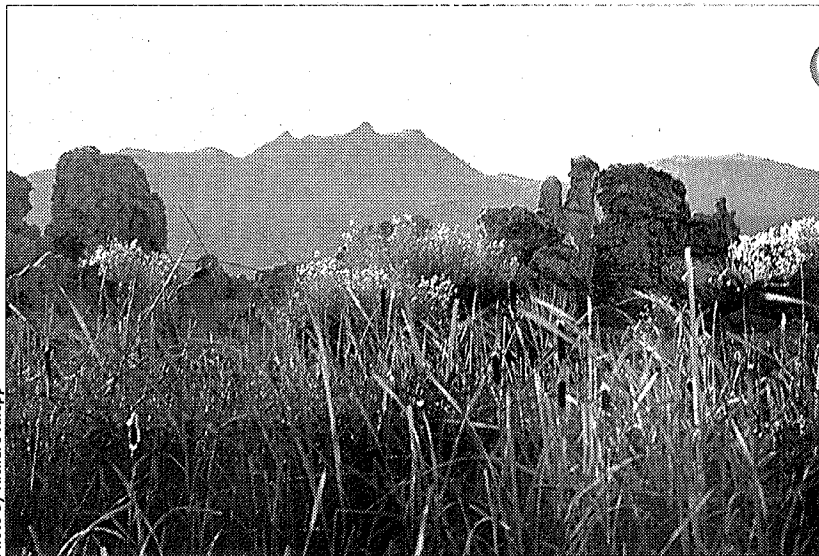


Photo by Richard Knepp

Mono Lake Committee Mission

The Mono Lake Committee is a non-profit citizens' group dedicated to protecting and restoring the Mono Basin ecosystem, educating the public about Mono Lake and the impacts of excessive water use, and promoting cooperative solutions that protect Mono Lake and meet real water needs without transferring environmental problems to other areas.

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20 years studying Mono's health may now leave time for pursuing

Questions of intrinsic interest

by David Winkler

Having done my last active field research at Mono Lake in 1982, I was surprised and pleased to be asked to write a brief retrospective about research there: surprised because there are others who have much more current expertise in research at the lake; pleased because I have tried to stay in touch and feel my experience in "the early days" may allow me to bring a different perspective to discussion of research at the lake.

When the Mono Lake Committee was founded in 1978, it was done so by biologists dedicated to an increased understanding of the Mono Lake ecosystem. The biological understanding of the lake gains its modern foundations from the "Mono Basin Research Group" of 1976. Not only did this group of undergraduates (which also included David Herbst and Gayle Dana) conduct the first ecosystem-wide study of the lake, but it was in the camp on DeChambeau Creek that many seminal discussions first took place: just how and whether an organized research group should continue at the lake, what kinds of solutions might be crafted to reduce the environmental problems engendered by a falling lake, etc.

While discussing these issues and so much about the biology of the lake over a bowl of oatmeal in the morning or a watermelon on a dry, hot afternoon, many lasting friendships also were forged and strengthened. David and Sally Gaines were part of that original camp. They and I had been good friends at UC Davis, and David had first introduced Jefferson Burch and Christine Weigen to the lake on a brief visit from the Slate Creek Valley in the previous summer. When Jefferson, Christine, and I first met in the fall of 1975 to discuss writing the proposal for the grant that was to fund our research in 1976, our meetings included a session in David and Sally's living room in Davis.



Dave Winkler, 1994: Testifying before the State Water Resources Control Board.

I mention these friendships because my own memories of the early days of Mono Lake research are bittersweet. By conducting my dissertation research amidst opposing political and legal interests and the persistent inquiries of journalists, I learned a great deal about how the media and the political and legal systems deal with problems facing our society. This was a very valuable experience (probably something like joining the Marines) and my only real regret is that the challenges of reconciling my scientific interests and goals with David's increasingly consuming activism left us less close as friends when he was killed than we had been a few years before.

Looking back at the report from the 1976 study, most of the findings have stood the test of time and legal action extremely well. And subsequent research has built on that foundation to answer most of the pressing questions (at least those that could be answered) relating to the debate over lake levels. There are certainly many remaining issues that pertain to the lake's health and its restoration, but now that the lake-level debate has cooled, it seems an appropriate time to consider indulging in some research at

the lake for no other reason than the intrinsic interest of the lake's ecology and the biology of the animals and plants that live there.

To an ecologist, the Mono Lake ecosystem might be most parsimoniously described as discrete, moderate in size, long-lasting, and simple. All lakes are aquatic islands in a sea of land, but Mono Lake is even more discrete than most—no streams carry its organisms and nutrients away. The Mono Lake ecosystem is just the right size for research; there are few ecosystems that support billions of macrobiota across which one can travel in an hour's boat ride. Despite its considerable size, many ecosystems as large would have disappeared or changed drastically over a few tens of thousands of years. But Mono Lake shows every sign of having existed for hundreds of thousands of years. The longevity of the Mono Lake ecosystem is especially notable given the ephemeral nature of most other lakes in the Great Basin. But most

continued on page 4



It's worth saving

*20th Anniversary
Mono Lake Committee
1978 - 1998*

Pgs. 8-13: Restoration Days

Pg. 20: Property Purchase

Pgs. 21-22: Grand Reunion

Back cover: Fall Century

distinctively for Mono Lake, its ecosystem is relatively simple. A lake so large and old with no fish is exceptional, and the lake's formidable production of algal and bacterial populations that are consumed almost exclusively by brine shrimp and alkali flies make it even more remarkable.

Mono Lake's mud is infamously deep, black, and smelly, and it is in Mono's mud that I feel that one of the most interesting scientific adventures lies waiting. In recent years there has been a great deal of interest in the "egg banks" in which aquatic invertebrates sometimes leave

substantial numbers of their eggs buried in the bottoms of the lakes in which they live. As sediments accumulate in the lakes, eggs from earlier years are buried progressively deeper in the mud, and sediment cores can reveal the history of the invertebrate populations. The brine shrimp in Mono Lake are unlike many others in that their eggs do not float, and they are thus ideally suited to studies of their egg banks. Eggs recovered from deep in sediments can often be hatched out, yielding an incredible rebirth of historical populations in the laboratory. Animals from eggs laid many years before can be reared side-by-side with modern animals, and their reproductive biology and resistance to stresses can be assessed. Not until it is tried will we know how far back in time we can explore these populations, but such research has the potential to answer some of the most resistant questions of Mono Lake biology: how have the shrimp responded to the many variations in salinity? Have any changes in physiology, body size, etc., been the result of natural selection and a change in the genetic composition of the shrimp, or have the animals been able to respond with simple physiological adjustments?

Another fascinating question relates to the color forms of the Mono shrimp: some are pink and some are aqua in color. Some attribute these differences to the shrimp eating different kinds of algae

or to different modes of hemoglobin synthesis, and I also once heard the hypothesis that the blue-colored form carries a virus responsible for the color. But what influence, if any, does bird predation have on the relative advantages of these two forms? A historical record might give us excellent evidence.

Anyone who has paddled a canoe in Mono might have wondered what is behind the dense aggregations one sees among the shrimp: even away from fresh spring inflows that engender huge "boils" of shrimp, there are

smaller plumes, especially in relatively shallow water. Are these the result, as some researchers have suggested, of purely physical convective columns of water that entrap the shrimp? Or are they active aggregations for mating? Or for the numerical advantage of reducing an individual shrimp's chances of being eaten? These and many other questions on the shrimp await further research.

And finally, to birds. How do the lake's birds track the remarkably variable distribution of shrimp and flies around the lake? How much of the prey patchiness is the result of physical processes like wind, and how much might be consequences of the birds themselves depleting patches of their food? Some of our research in the old days began to get at this problem, but there are many recent technological developments for monitoring population densities and bird movements, and the time is ripe for exploring these questions at Mono.

Just how birds might move to track variation in food densities raises larger-scale questions about how the breeding birds that use Mono Lake might respond to variation in the availability of food and nesting sites throughout the Great Basin. How do the breeding gulls recognize and rank available habitat, and where do young birds from Mono Lake end up breeding? To aquatic birds searching for breeding opportunities in the Great Basin, this region is an enor-

mous expanse of inhospitable terrain punctuated occasionally, and unpredictably, with islands of suitable habitat. And one of the most active areas of ecological research today relates to the challenge of explaining the spatial dynamics of animal populations. Mono Lake and its sibling lakes in the Great Basin together provide an ever-changing palette of resources available for feeding and nesting. Just how do each of the many species of aquatic birds in the Great Basin choose where they will attempt to breed or feed during migration? And how do the differing ecological requirements of each result in different patterns of movement, gene flow, and evolution across this broad expanse of the Earth's surface?

I find these last questions especially compelling, not only because the Great Basin is one of the best places on Earth to address these questions, but also because thinking of these questions takes me back in time to the very earliest days of my research at Mono Lake. Many of us in the original Mono Basin Research Group saw the study at Mono Lake as only the beginning in a larger understanding of the lakes of the Great Basin. And as I dream of returning to the lake to do research, I dream of seeing a larger scope of endeavor characterize research there: an endeavor in which the coupled curiosity and concern for Mono can be expanded to include all the lakes of the Great Basin.

David Winkler was an organizer of the 1976 Mono Lake study and edited its report. In the winter of 1977-78, he dug David and Sally Gaines out of their idyllic life in the North Coast of California to found the Committee. Winkler worked on the plovers, phalaropes, grebes, and gulls at Mono Lake from 1976 through 1982. He migrated to Europe and then to Cornell University in upstate New York, where he is now Associate Professor and Curator of Birds. Winkler's field work in New York has never held the same wild appeal for him as that at Mono, and he is optimistic that his daughters have now grown old enough to allow him some research time at Mono once again. 🐦



Dave Winkler, 1976:
Conducting gull research.

Mono Lake snapshot: Spring, 1998

Mono Lake is rising, and many changes are taking place. In this article, and subsequent *Newsletter* issues, we will try to convey a snapshot of the changes being observed at Mono Lake, along the rewatered streams, and in the lives of people living and working in the Mono Basin. Across the basin, these changes offer exciting opportunities to learn more about restoration.

Changing shoreline

The recent wet winters have brought Mono Lake up an astounding nine feet since the State Water Board issued its decision in 1994. Probably the most noticeable result is change along the lake's shoreline. The rising lake is inundating vegetation, cutting new beachlines, and surrounding dusty tufa towers with water. Salt grass and rabbitbrush wave under water instead of in the wind. New berms and shallow lagoons are building, most prominently along Mono's southeastern and northeastern shores, a result of the combined dynamics of prevailing winds, lake currents, and sediment supply.

At the mouth of Rush Creek, a large bay now extends upstream mixing salt water with fresh. The bay, or "ria," is one of the new features of a restored Mono Lake. As Mono Lake fell, Rush Creek incised its channel—up to 25 feet at its lower end. At the stream's mouth, this canyon now creates a protected bay where lake water and stream water first meet. The fresh water quickly becomes saline, but it remains fresher and lighter than the lake's hypersaline water for a while, floating at the surface and creating a phenomenon known as hypopycnal stratification.

And tufa towers! The tufa-scape at Mono Lake is changing. As Gary Nelson wrote in the Winter 1998 *Newsletter*, some of the towers have fallen, undercut

by the rising lake. Others, formerly stranded on land, now are now knee-deep in Mono's reflective water.

New habitats

Submerged vegetation provides a new substrate for the versatile alkali fly and its pupae. As the lake rises, and for sometime thereafter, this new substrate will be available to the flies. Ongoing monitoring will indicate how this new substrate plays a role in the lives of alkali flies at Mono Lake.

Last fall, on their migration south, eared grebes fell from the skies. Grebe "fallouts" are not unheard-of, and once this duck-like bird is on land, it is unable to take off again. No one really knows why so many became "beached" last fall; all we could do was put the birds we found back into the lake. An interesting grebe fact: Recent aerial surveys have shown that grebe numbers at Mono Lake have probably been underestimated for years. The total count is now estimated to be almost two million birds!

Gull researchers wonder whether the gulls will recolonize Negit Island this season. The gulls abandoned Negit in 1979, when coyotes first crossed the landbridge exposed by the falling lake. Last year, the landbridge was resubmerged, but no gulls were found nesting on Negit. Researchers wonder: how long will it take for gulls to recolonize former haunts? We'll watch for them in 1998.

Meromixis

Mono's water is changing too. As happened in the 1980s, large inflows of freshwater due to several wet winters have stratified the lake year-round. Typically, temperature and salinity differences cause the lake to stratify during the summer months, while cooling of the water in the fall causes the lake to mix completely from top to bottom. This

mixing brings nutrients from the lake's lower levels to the surface waters. For the last two years, Mono Lake has not mixed thoroughly, and the lake has entered a state of chemical stratification, or "meromixis." Whether and to what degree meromixis will affect the lake's productivity are important questions we all are interested in.

Mono Basin streams

Even as we wait for a State Water Board decision on restoration at Mono Lake, the streams are running and life along them is coming back. The 1994 Water Board decision set minimum and peak streamflows, which, thanks to the series

continued on page 7

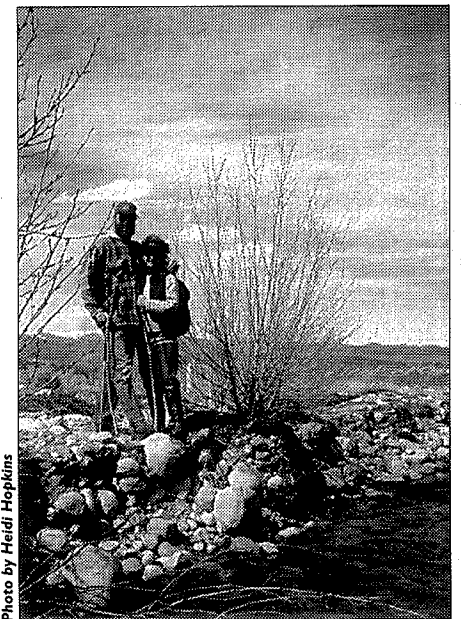


Photo by Heidi Hopkins

Cottonwoods planted in the early 90s along Lee Vining Creek are now taller than people in places. These planted cottonwoods stabilized banks which were elsewhere eroded during the January 1997 flood. Pictured with the trees are Lee Vining residents Ilene Mandelbaum and Steve Barager. A former Committee staff member, Ilene helped orchestrate the initial phases of creek restoration. She still checks on the creeks often.

Mono Basin updates

Forest Service Scenic Area faces further budget cuts

A year after implementing a fee program for South Tufa and its Visitor Center exhibits, the Forest Service is handling budget cuts by further reducing funding for operations in the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area.

The Forest Service Visitor Center opened in 1993 and immediately offered a broad array of interpretive programs, as well as lengthy summer hours of operation. In 1998, staffing is substantially reduced and field programs will be limited to more popular events such as South Tufa walks and nighttime star programs. The Center will be open daily, but with reduced hours. With millions of dollars invested in Mono Basin facilities and significant land management responsibilities, it is critical that the Scenic Area's budget not be cut further.

Conway Ranch purchase complete

Escrow closed on the Conway Ranch, and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) now owns this historic property in the north Mono Basin. Under the terms of its agreement with Mono County, TPL will sell the ranch to the county once the county raises sufficient grant funds. Ultimately, it's anticipated that Conway Ranch will be owned and managed by Mono County.

In the agreement between Mono County and TPL, the county described its interest in the property as a site for fish-rearing facilities, open space preservation, wetlands mitigation banking, waterfowl habitat maintenance and enhancement, and historical and cultural preservation.

The Bureau of Land Management is considered a back-up buyer if the county fails to raise all the funds needed.

Mono Basin highway widening

CalTrans will spend \$10 million this summer to widen the shoulder along Highway 395 roughly between Old Marina and Cemetery Road, along the west shore of the lake. Attention will be required to avoid impact to the lake and its shoreline.

Drawing on resources from a gravel plant near Rush Creek, CalTrans also plans to expand seven miles of Highway 395 south of Lee Vining to four lanes in the year 2000. This will include crossings of Rush, Lee Vining, Walker, and Parker creeks. Committee staff will be keeping an eye on these projects and their potential lake and creek impacts.

Water Board to release restoration plans soon

In mid-April, and again in mid-May, the State Water Resources Control Board met to review its staff recommendations on the Mono Basin Restoration Plans. The Water Board's decision was not released in time to include in this newsletter; watch for details on our website (www.monolake.org)!

The pending decision on the restoration plans will complete the Water Board's precedent-setting efforts to protect Mono Lake. In its 1994 decision, the Water Board not only ordered specific protections for Mono Lake and its streams, but it also required DWP to develop restoration plans for the lake's tributary streams and for waterfowl habitat.

The restoration plans before the Water Board were presented as a Settlement Agreement among many parties since the plans drawn up by DWP in 1996 were considered unsatisfactory by many—including the Committee.

The Water Board may approve the Settlement Agreement, reject it, or order specific modifications.

The Committee is particularly eager to

have this decision in hand, since certain activities, most notably monitoring of recovery, are "treading water" until the decision is released.

Some restoration monitoring slated for 1998

Despite the lack of a Water Board decision, the entities who have been engaged in the Mono Lake struggle for years met in March and discussed their respective plans for "ad hoc" monitoring in 1998.

DWP will continue the stream monitoring work it began voluntarily last year under the direction of Bill Trush, mapping two more sections of stream channel along Rush and Lee Vining creeks. DWP also will continue to fund Dr. Joseph Jehl Jr., who conducts migratory bird studies and who last year included boat and aerial surveys of waterfowl. In addition, the Department of Fish & Game plans to conduct two aerial waterfowl censuses in the fall.

No FERC news

No decision has been announced by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on the relicensing of the Lundy power plant. The terms of the license could address upgrading the power plant return ditch, which returns water to Mill Creek after it has passed through the power plant. Upgrading the return ditch will be necessary to increase flows in Mill Creek for restoration purposes.

HR 859 temporarily defeated

There will be no hearings, and thus no action, in Congress this year on a proposed bill that would have repealed water conserving, ultra-low flush toilet standards. Letters from Mono Lake supporters helped accomplish this! However, the bill is likely to be reintroduced next year.

of wet winters, have provided healthy flows in the streams (and one astonishing 80-year flood event in January 1997).


Along Lee Vining Creek, cottonwoods planted under court-ordered interim restoration in 1993 now stand up to 12 feet tall. Stream channels opened in the mid-1990s have significantly raised the water tables in certain sections of the bottomlands. Nonetheless, Lee Vining Creek, hard hit in the past by diversions compounded by fire and flood, remains in many places blown-out and shallow, lacking soils adequate to support vegetation. Scientists project that Lee Vining Creek will take far longer than Rush Creek to restore.

Portions of Rush Creek are showing great promise. In October 1995, workers reopened a side channel (Channel 10) in the heart of Rush Creek's bottomlands. Two years later, ducks and fish were seen enjoying the deep, slow water. The aquatic plant *Elodea* had reestablished itself in many places along the channel, a sign of good water velocity and substrate. Other natural channels in the bottomlands, still dry, await rewatering.

And the fish are there too. We've seen them hiding in the deep water. So did the osprey, we presume, who was hovering overhead.

Land management

"We're just trying to deal with it as it comes," says Janet Carle, ranger for the Tufa State Reserve, who's out there making changes in operations to keep up with the rising lake. By late winter, six or seven sections of County Park's wood boardwalk were floating in the lake, making it problematic to remove. The land area at South Tufa is shrinking, presenting a crowd-management challenge. So far, the South Tufa trail has had to be rerouted at least two times over the last two years.

Tufa Reserve staff have always vigorously discouraged boaters' disturbance of the tall tufa out in the lake where in recent years an osprey has nested. With the lake surface rising, they wonder, will the osprey still find the tower a safe place? We'll see. 

Research at Mono Lake

Mono Lake and the Mono Basin attract scientific researchers interested in a wide range of questions. Beginning with this newsletter issue, we're attempting to keep track of who is looking at what; please let us know (info@monolake.org) about projects we're missing.

The importance of Mono Lake and Great Salt Lake to eared grebes nesting in British Columbia

Sean Boyd, Pacific Wildlife Research Centre, Canadian Wildlife Service

Evolution of desert colluvial boulder fields, Eastern California

Donald A. Friend, Mankato State University

Riparian bird population monitoring

Sasha Heath, Point Reyes Bird Observatory

Alkali fly population monitoring

Dave Herbst, Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory, University of California

Mono Basin air quality monitoring

Great Basin Air Pollution Control District

Mono Lake migratory bird studies

Joseph R. Jehl Jr., Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute

Meromixis, nutrient cycling, and plankton dynamics

Robert Jellison, Marine Science Institute, University of California Santa Barbara

Mono Lake oxygen isotope concentrations

Hong-Chun Li, University of Southern California

Mono Basin hydrology monitoring

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

Turbulent mixing and resource supply to phytoplankton

Sally MacIntyre, Marine Science Institute, University of California Santa Barbara

California gull nesting and reproductive success

Dave Shuford, Point Reyes Bird Observatory

Mono Basin geomorphology, sedimentology, biogeography, and paleoclimatology

Scott Stine, California State University Hayward

Sand dune genesis studies

Scott Stine and Lora Teitler, California State University Hayward

Demography and mating systems of the bee-fly *Lordotus*

Catherine A. Toft, University of California Davis

Development of sand dune ecosystems on the north shore of Mono Lake

Catherine A. Toft, Deborah Elliott-Fisk, and James H. Richards, University of California Davis

Stream restoration studies

Bill Trush, California State University Humboldt

Remote sensing and tufa investigations

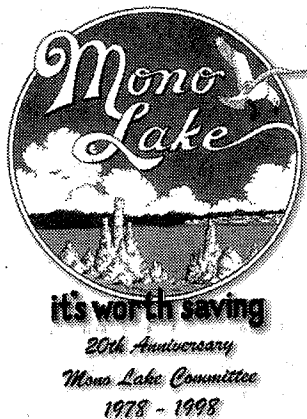
Jack Farmer, NASA

Mono Lake water chemistry

US Geological Survey

Lee Vining Canyon bighorn sheep studies

John Wehausen, White Mountain Research Station



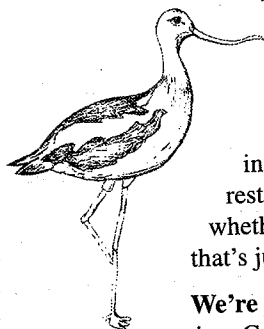
RESTORATION DAYS!

Mono Lake is rising, the Committee is 20 years old, and we're celebrating!

It's been 20 years ... there've been a lot of legal battles, fun times, tough days, and plain hard work, but now it's time to celebrate the victories and the future. Join us at Mono Lake for four fun-filled days of activities over Labor Day Weekend, September 4-7.



It'll be a time for exploring Mono Lake and the Mono Basin, looking for birds, investigating the new shoreline, revisiting old haunts, and learning about current Mono happenings and participating in restoration activities. Not to mention that Restoration Days promises to be a lot of fun!



Start the weekend by listening to bluegrass music, then throughout the weekend connect with friends you haven't seen in years, explore this remarkable place with scientists, naturalists, and Committee staff, go on birding tours with experts, learn more about the restoration work and plans, visit Mono's volcanoes, discover more about the stars and sky, and have a campfire at South Tufa.

Meet with scientists, local land managers, and Committee staff to understand better what's happening to Mono Lake and the streams that feed into it. We'll have a Restoration Workshop focusing on current restoration efforts, creekside talks about how the return of water is affecting riparian vegetation and how to tell whether a creek is healthy, along with a Volcano Tour, South Tufa Walks, and a Lee Vining Creek Tour. And that's just a sampling of the activities!

We're kicking off the celebration by hosting a concert at Guss Hess Park on Friday evening. Come listen to Dave Herbst's bluegrass band *Rush Creek*. Bring a blanket, a low-back chair to sit on, and a picnic. Watch the sun go down over Mono Lake while listening to great bluegrass music, and get ready to dance!

Join us for the inspiring Rehydration Ceremony, highlighted by Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Raymond Andrews' delivery of a blessing for the lake. Afterward we'll gather at County Park to talk about the old days, what's happening now, and look ahead to the next 20 years. What will the lake look like in 20 years? What will the Committee look like in 20 years? We'll be taking the Grand Reunion photographs that afternoon as well, so make sure you're there!

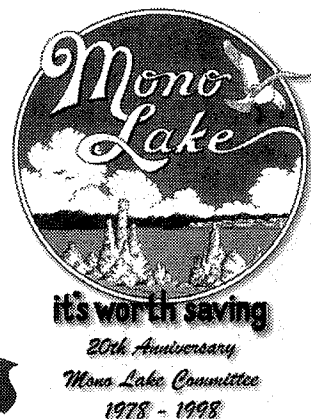
As you know, the Mono Basin is a very special place, and spending time along the lake's shore, climbing the Mono Craters, sitting still and watching the flies and birds, or venturing all around the Mono Basin can be educational and inspiring for all. Join us for a great time!

We'll see you in September!



RESTORATION DAYS!

HERE'S THE SCHEDULE FOR FOUR FUN-FILLED DAYS



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH

9:00 ✧ Check-in begins

Check-in and Reunion signup begins at the Mono Lake Committee Information Center and Bookstore. See who's already here or leave a note for someone who is on the way.

4:00 ✧ "Battle for Mono Lake"

A Stephen Fisher Production in association with PBS Station KTEH in San Jose, "The Battle for Mono Lake" is the most comprehensive television special ever made about the effort to save Mono Lake. This hour-long documentary video looks at Mono Lake's many facets including the natural and human history of the Mono Basin, the growing body of scientific research about the lake, the importance of the Public Trust Doctrine in shaping water policy in the West, and the role of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in stream diversions that caused the lake to shrink. Shown at the Committee Information Center and Bookstore.

6:00 ✧ Guided South Tufa Walk

The most famous tufa grove at Mono Lake, South Tufa receives thousands of visitors from all over the world every year. Sunset provides a wonderful experience as the light of evening illuminates the tufa towers, the birds welcome night-fall, and the shadows of the desert grow long. Join a Mono Lake Committee naturalist for an in-depth look at this wonderful place and a general introduction to Mono Lake's fascinating ecosystem. Tours are 1½ hours long and meet at the South Tufa Kiosk in the parking area at South Tufa. South Tufa is now a federal fee area; adults are charged a \$2 fee, which is good for a week, while children under 12 are free.

6:00-8:00 ✧ Bluegrass Music

Listen to Dave Herbst's *Rush Creek* bluegrass band on the grass at Guss Hess Park. Bring a blanket, a low-back chair to sit on, and a picnic. Watch the sun go down over Mono Lake while listening to great bluegrass music and get ready to dance! The concert will be at Guss Hess Park in Lee Vining.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH

7:00 ✧ Bird Watching in the Mono Basin with Dave Shuford

Join Point Reyes Bird Observatory's Dave Shuford for several hours of birding along the shores of Mono Lake. Part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, Mono Lake serves as a host to nearly 100 species of water birds, making it one of the premier birding spots in California. Come join the phalaropes, avocets, grebes, pintails, and many more birds during this exciting exploration with an experienced Mono Basin ornithologist. Meet at the Information Center and Bookstore.

8:00, 9:30, 11:00 ✧ Mono Lake Canoe Tours

Dip your paddle into clouds of brine shrimp and experience Mono's fascinating ecosystem from a unique and unforgettable vantage point. Tours leave from Navy Beach and explore South Tufa from the water for about an hour. The fee is \$15 for adults, \$6 for children ages 4-12. Sorry, no children under 4 or pets. Reservations are required and can be made by calling (760) 647-6595. Tours leave from Navy Beach.

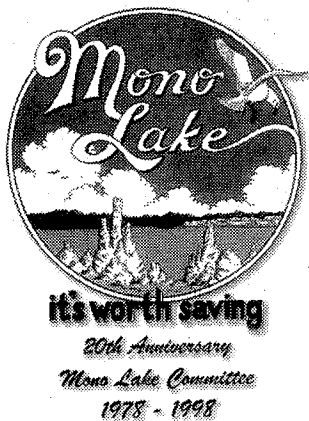
9:00 ✧ Lee Vining Creek Walk

Join a Committee naturalist for a walk along Lee Vining Creek and learn about this vital Great Basin habitat, its past, and its future. Meet at the Information Center and Bookstore.

9:00-12:00 ✧ Restoration Workshop

Informal presentation on the status of restoration at Mono Lake by scientists who study the Mono Basin's ecosystems and local land managers, such as the US Forest Service and the Tufa State Reserve. The workshop overview takes place at the Forest Service auditorium. We will then break into several working groups and go to either the lakeshore or the north shore to look at areas that are being restored. Potential topics include: meromixis, waterfowl habitat, and creek restoration. Among the group leaders are biologist Dave Herbst and ornithologist Dave Shuford. Meet at the Forest Service Visitor Center Auditorium.

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ **More on the next page**



RESTORATION DAYS!

SATURDAY (CONTINUED)

1:00-2:00 ✧ Sign Painting

Kids of all ages meet at Old Marina to paint signs to celebrate our 20th birthday.

2:00-3:00 ✧ Rehydration Ceremony

At past ceremonies, Bike-A-Thon cyclists returned water they had carried from Los Angeles to the lake. Now, with the lake rising, we celebrate by marking where we think the shoreline will be next year. Raymond Andrews, a descendent of the Mono Lake Kutzadika'a, will highlight the ceremony by delivering a blessing for the lake. Meet at Old Marina to participate in this inspiring ceremony.

3:00-4:30 ✧ Grand Reunion & Annual Meeting

For 20 years, Mono Lake Committee members, families, and friends have gathered on the shores of Mono Lake to discuss the fate of the lake and the role of the Mono Lake Committee. We'll talk about the past, and look to the future as well. Listen to stories by staff about how the changing landscape is affecting their work, hear stories of long-time members, and share your impressions of Mono Lake. Afterward, Grand Reunion photographs will be taken, so make sure you come and stay!

4:30-5:30 ✧ Music by Coalition of Native American Musicians

Sit on the grass at County Park after the Annual Meeting and listen to the beautiful music of *Coalition of Native American Musicians*. This is a group of Native American musicians and recording artists that come from many areas of expertise to perform together. We are honored to have them donate their time and talent to help us celebrate our 20th birthday.

6:00 ✧ Guided South Tufa Walk

Once again, here is an opportunity to join a Mono Lake Committee naturalist for an in-depth look at this wonderful place during the best time of the day. Tours are 1½ hours long and meet at the South Tufa Kiosk.

6:00-7:00 ✧ Photographers' Reception

Join the many photographers who have helped document the Mono Lake story over the years at a reception given in their honor by the Mono Lake Committee. The show "Twenty Years at Mono Lake: A Photographic Retrospective" features selected photographic works from these artists and will be open for viewing. Artwork will be available for sale.

8:00 ✧ "The Battle for Mono Lake"

Here's another chance to see the most comprehensive television special ever made about the effort to save Mono Lake. The movie is about an hour long, and was produced by Stephen Fisher in association with PBS Station KTEH, San Jose. Actor Richard Hatch kayaks in Mono's briny water, treks across the then-exposed lakebed to Negit Island, and learns of Mono's geology and ecology.

8:00 ✧ Star Talk and Telescope Viewing

Join Mono Lake Committee staff member Mike Klapp for an exploration of the night sky of the Mono Basin. Hear stories of the heavens from all over the world, and view myriad deep sky objects through two high-powered telescopes. The dark skies of the Eastern Sierra provide an excellent forum and the stars rarely fail to put on a show! Dress warmly for this 1½ hour presentation and meet on the back patio of the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Visitor Center.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH

6:00 ✧ Sunrise Gathering at South Tufa

Come watch the sunrise and see this incredible area come alive. Hear the birds awaken, see the light of the new day fall upon the tufa towers, and join some of Mono's best photographers, to capture the sunrise. Meet at the South Tufa kiosk.

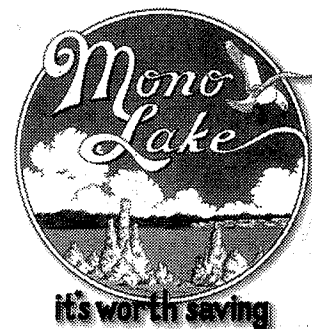
7:00 ✧ Birding Walk

On this birding tour, long-time Committee friends and former staff members Jim and Debbie Parker will share their expertise while searching out Mono's birds.

8:00, 9:30, 11:00 ✧ Mono Lake canoe tours

Canoe tours are again offered, so if you haven't made it onto the lake yet, here's another chance. The fee is \$15 for adults, \$6 for

RESTORATION DAYS!



children ages 4–12. Sorry, no children under 4 or pets. Reservations are required and can be made by calling the Mono Lake Committee at (760) 647-6595. Tours leave from Navy Beach.

9:00–12:00 ✧ "The Story of the Survivors"

Join biologist and restoration expert Scott English for hands-on restoration work. This year, we'll plot, count, measure, and water trees that were planted during restoration projects in past years. There will be much needed documentation work and caring for the trees. Be prepared for hot sun and bring water, sunscreen, a hat, and sturdy shoes. Meet at the Information Center and Bookstore.

10:30 ✧ Aqueduct Tour led by the Department of Water and Power

Learn about the Los Angeles Aqueduct by visiting the Lee Vining diversion dam and other Mono Basin facilities. The tour will be led by DWP officials and will show how water is moved and stored on the way to Los Angeles. Meet at the Information Center and Bookstore.

1:00 ✧ "How has the rewatering of Mono's streams affected vegetation?"

Explore the streamside vegetation along Lee Vining Creek with botanist Mark Bagley and discover how stream rewatering has affected riparian plant communities. Mark works throughout the Eastern Sierra and is an expert on local plants. Meet at the County Road crossing of Lee Vining Creek on the west side.

3:00 ✧ "How are things changing in the creeks?"

Join biologist Dave Herbst as he leads an exploration of the life in Lee Vining Creek. Dr. Herbst will focus on bioassessment of stream health, demonstrating how invertebrate and vegetation analysis can reveal much about a stream ecosystem. This tour lasts about two hours and meets at the County Road crossing of Lee Vining Creek. Dave is a long time Mono Basin researcher and a fascinating speaker—don't miss this thought-provoking event. Last year, this was the most popular workshop!

6:00 ✧ Volcano Tour at Panum Crater

Join us as we explore the youngest of the Mono Craters! Merely 640 years old, Panum's abundance of pumice and obsidian—plus its spectacular views of the Mono Basin—make this tour a pure delight! This 1½ hour walk begins at the Panum Crater parking lot and ventures to the top of Panum's

rocky plug dome. Meet at the Panum Crater kiosk.

6:00 South Tufa Walk

How were the tufa towers formed?

Here's one more chance to learn more

about this magnificent area. Tours are 1½

hours long and meet at the South Tufa kiosk. South Tufa is now a federal fee area; fees for adults are \$2 and are good for a week, while children under 12 are free.

8:00 ✧ Star Talk & Campfire at South Tufa

The Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve and the Mono Lake Committee will jointly present a star talk at Mono Lake's South Tufa area. As the evening cools off, there will be a campfire in the parking area where we can tell stories about the weekend and say good-bye to friends who are leaving early on Monday. Meet at the South Tufa kiosk.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH

7:00 ✧ Morning Birding Expedition

Join local bird expert, State Ranger, and Committee Board Member Dave Marquart for this bird outing. One last chance to see that snowy plover, black-necked stilt, or juvenile California gull! Meet at the Information Center and Bookstore.

8:00, 9:30, 11:00 ✧ Mono Lake Canoe Tours

It's almost the last chance until next year to float among the tufa towers and brine shrimp. Treat yourself to this very special way of experiencing Mono Lake before the paddles and canoes are put away for the season. The fee is \$15 for adults, \$6 for children ages 4–12. Sorry, no children under 4 or pets. Reservations are required and can be made by calling (760) 647-6595. Tours leave from Navy Beach.

9:00–12:00 ✧ "The Story of the Survivors" (continued)

This hard but much needed work continues from Sunday. Help to measure the growth of recently planted trees, as well as count and water them. Again, be prepared by bringing water, snacks, sunscreen, and sturdy shoes.



it's worth saving

20th Anniversary

Mono Lake Committee

1978 - 1998

RESTORATION DAYS!

PLANNING FOR THE WEEKEND

The Mono Lake Committee Information Center and Bookstore will be the headquarters for the weekend. The kiosk in front of the Committee will have a schedule of events posted, and will be a place to leave notes for friends. The Committee also will be the official check-in spot for the Grand Reunion, so make sure you stop by to let us know you've arrived.

☼ THE WEATHER

Visiting Mono Lake at the end of summer is usually very pleasant. Most of the mosquitoes are gone, the rabbitbrush is blooming, and grebes cover the lake. The days tend to be warm, but temperatures rarely exceed 85 degrees. At night, temperatures drop to the mid 40s. Thunderstorms are always a possibility.

☼ WHAT TO WEAR

The days are warm, so shorts and T-shirts usually suffice. The intense sun makes hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, and water bottles necessary. It's worth packing a rain jacket too, especially if you'll be out hiking. Bring warm clothing and hats to ensure evening activities are enjoyable.

Appropriate footwear can also make your trip more enjoyable. For most events, sandals and tennis shoes should be fine, but it's worth bringing some lightweight hiking boots as well. If you are going on a canoe tour, extensive walks at the lake, or

FRIDAY September 4

9:00
Check-in and Reunion
registration begins
4:00
"Battle for Mono Lake" showing
6:00
South Tufa Walk
6:00-8:00
Bluegrass music
by Dave Herbst's "Rush Creek"



SATURDAY September 5

7:00
Birding with Dave Shuford
8:00, 9:30, 11:00
Canoe Tours*
9:00
Lee Vining Creek Tour
9:00-12:00
Restoration Workshop
1:00-2:00
Sign Painting
2:00-3:00
Rehydration Ceremony
3:00-4:30
20th Celebration, Grand Reunion,
and Annual Meeting
4:30-5:30
Coalition of Native American Musicians
6:00
South Tufa Walk
6:00-7:00
Photographers' Reception
8:00
"Battle for Mono Lake"
Star Talk with Mike Klapp

SUNDAY September 6

6:00
Sunrise Gathering
7:00
Birding with Jim & Debbie Parker
8:00, 9:30, 11:00
Canoe Tours*
9:00-12:00
Restoration Work
10:30
Aqueduct Tour led by DWP
1:00-3:00
Vegetation Workshop
3:00-5:00
Stream Health Workshop
6:00
Volcano Tour
South Tufa Walk
8:00-10:00
Star Talk & Campfire

*Canoe tours require advance
reservations—call (760)647-6595

MONDAY September 7

7:00
Birding with Dave Marquart
8:00, 9:30, 11:00
Canoe Tours*
9-12
Restoration Work continues



RESTORATION DAYS!

helping with restoration work, bring shoes you won't mind getting wet.

✿ ACCOMMODATIONS, CAMPING, AND DINING

We are very happy to have the support of several local businesses which are offering special discounts for Restoration Days participants. They are listed below. This will be a very busy weekend for Lee Vining, so please make your reservations early if possible. When you get to Lee Vining, come into the Committee for a card that you can present for your discount.

If you want to camp, we've arranged several options and additional campgrounds are available nearby. Wherever you camp, please be courteous and considerate, and clean up your area when you are finished.

- The Best Western Lake View Lodge is offering a 10% discount on lodging, no minimum stay.
- The Tioga Lodge is offering 10% off on a two-night stay.
- Camping will be allowed at County Park on Saturday night only, by special permission from DWP and Mono County.
- Camping will be available at Lee Vining High School, Friday through Monday, on the grass surrounding the school. The showers and bathrooms will be available 24 hours a day.

- To finish off a meal in town, Nicely's is offering a free ice cream cone with lunch or dinner to all Restoration Days participants!

✿ FINAL NOTES

The Mono Lake Committee Information Center and Bookstore will be open from 9:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. throughout the weekend, and staff will be available to assist you.

If you want to go on a canoe tour, please make your reservations as early as possible by calling (760)647-6595.

Information and updates will be posted on the kiosk in front of the Committee Information Center and Bookstore.

There is no alcohol allowed at Guss Hess Park, County Park, or the Lee Vining High School.

Please try to carpool whenever possible, as parking in some locations is limited—plus, it's the right thing to do.

Have fun! ➤



it's worth saving
20th Anniversary
Mono Lake Committee
1978 - 1998

Sponsors help OE

This summer the Mono Lake Committee expects to host up to 13 groups through the Outdoor Experiences Program (OE)! In 1997 we hosted a total of seven groups from Los Angeles and Southern California.

This year many of those groups will return, joining with new ones to make this the biggest year ever for the OE program. The list of participating groups include: Korean Youth and Community Center, Watts Labor Community Action Committee, Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Mothers of East Los Angeles—Santa Isabel, ExPERT, ADRO Environmental, Adventure Camp USA, Iglesia Poder de Dios, and the Asian American Drug Abuse Program.

OE leaders Mike Klapp and Matt Moule will be returning to lead the

groups through another exciting summer of camping, hiking, canoeing, and educational programs that give Southern California inner-city youth an opportunity to explore a world beyond Los Angeles.

Thanks go to Mono Lake Committee members for being a big part of the success of OE. We also thank the following organizations, businesses, and individuals who have made important contributions in 1997-1998: **Adventure 16/Adopt-A-Pack Foundation, ARCO, Duty Free Shops, ExPERT, Joan Edwards, Metropolitan Water District, Mothers of East Los Angeles—Santa Isabel, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles Urban Resources Partnership, and Pacific Enterprises.**

Motor needed for gull study

Each year, Point Reyes Bird Observatory leads a study of the gull population on Mono's islands. The study requires a boat, the boat requires an engine, and the current model is worn out.

Sponsors are needed to help raise \$2000 toward the price of a new 15-horsepower, 4-cycle engine to get the researchers back and forth to the study plots. The new engine is being made available at a 30% discount by the dealer and is environmentally friendly.

If you're interested in helping out, contact Shannon (shannon@monolake.org) at 760-647-6595 or send your donation and a note to the Lee Vining office.

Mono Basin Journal

A roundup of less political events at Mono Lake

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

Mono's fish-free expanse doesn't satisfy many pelicans, but they pass by nonetheless. On rambling journeys to Walker and other Great Basin lakes, they flap high overhead in rough formation. One April day, however, two hundred spiraled over Mono's north shore, flashing great black and white wings, then banking into near invisibleness.

If you've been to South Tufa a million times, or less, it's time for another visit. The rising lake moves relentlessly through the grove, forcing trail rerouting, creating fresh shoreline landscapes. It's a challenge to identify which of the tufa towers now reflecting



in the lake once shaded the trail on the long walk to the shore.

A clear sign that winter has been shouldered out by spring came near midnight one night as thunder and lightning played around Lee Vining. After a winter of plentiful snow, my first thought on hearing the crash outside was that another cascade of snow and ice had slid off the roof. A moment later came the realization that it couldn't be so; I stepped outside into the cool spring rainshower to watch the lightning flash. It hit the ground at the far side of the creek, briefly illuminating the water now rushing on through the dark. ⚡



Lakewatch

El Niño delivers

by Greg Reis

An El Niño-driven wet winter has caused Mono Lake to rise and the Sierra snowpack to soar. The April 1 Gem Pass snowpack water content was 49.2 inches, about 154% of normal. Much of this accumulated during February: in Lee Vining we received over 15 inches of precipitation this season, with 8.5 inches of that occurring in February.

The Mono Basin runoff forecast for the 1998 runoff year (April 1998–March 1999) is 134% of normal. This runoff is expected to cause Mono Lake to rise from its April 1, 1998, level of 6383.0 feet above sea level to just over 6384 by the end of the summer. This will be the highest Mono Lake has been since 1972!

Lake level gauge

A member recently asked us how we get lake level information. The lake level gauge is a staff gauge demarcated in

tenths and hundredths of a foot. DWP staff read this gauge and, as the lake rises, replaces it if necessary (it will be replaced this year). When it is replaced, DWP surveys the elevation of the new gauge from an established nearby benchmark. When the reading gets to LA, DWP adds 0.4 feet to it, to make it agree with the official USGS datum. This number is reported on the LA Aqueduct reports, which we receive weekly by mail. Therefore there is about a week between when the gauge is read and when we see the data. We post the elevation on the Mono Lake Web Page and in the Information Center when it arrives.

Redefining water use

In the description of a "cfs" in the last "Lakewatch," we stated that one acre-foot is enough for a family of five for a year. Many publications (just like this

one did) still cite this level of water use. A member wrote to point out that this amount of water would supply ten times as many families if they all conserved water at the high level his family of four does. Every 800 families conserving water at the level they do would conserve the equivalent of 1 cfs of water for one year. At this rate of water conservation, it would only take 110,000 water conserving families to completely replace what DWP was exporting in the 1970s from the Mono Basin. Just think of the incredible volume of water that can be saved if everyone conserves this actively! With your help in conserving as much water as you can, we can literally redefine water use in California!

Greg Reis is currently the Committee's Canoe Coordinator. He's a long-time lake-level wonk. ⚡

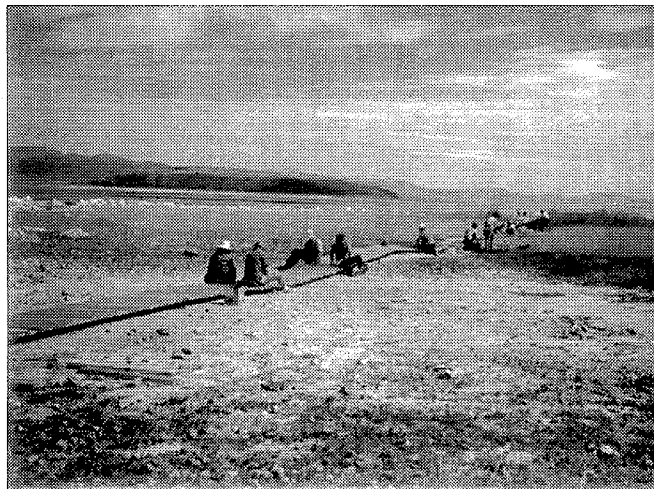


Photo by Lauren Davis

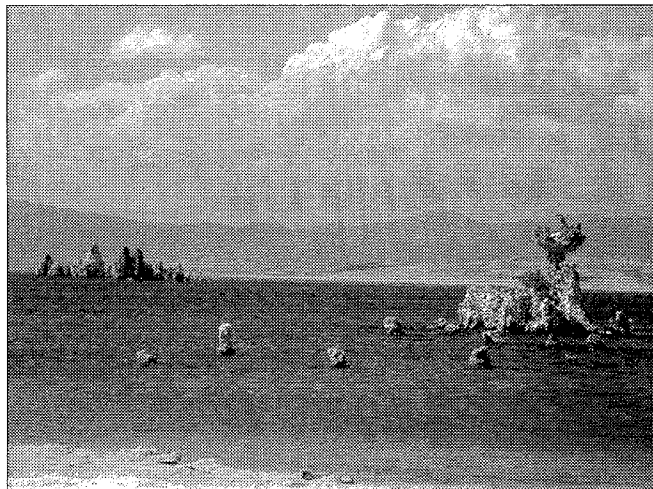


Photo by Betty Shannon

Mystery Benchmarks

Test your Mono Basin identification skills!

Here are four photos from Mono's past ... where and when were they taken? How high do you think the lake was then? Answers on page 26.

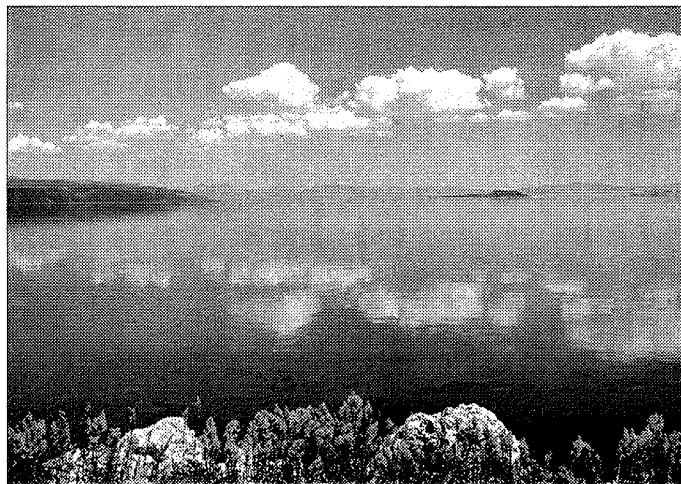
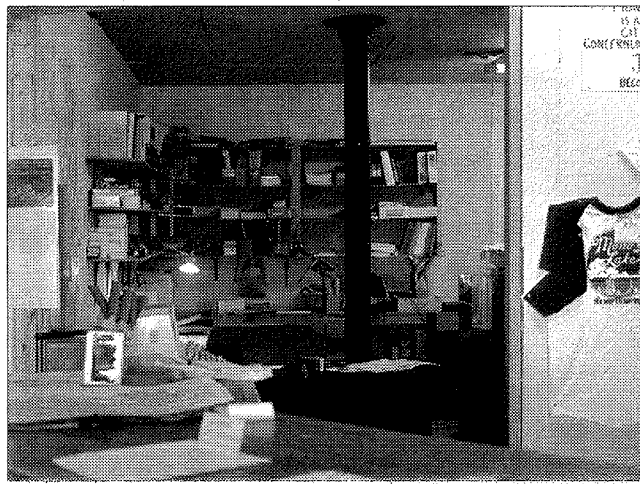
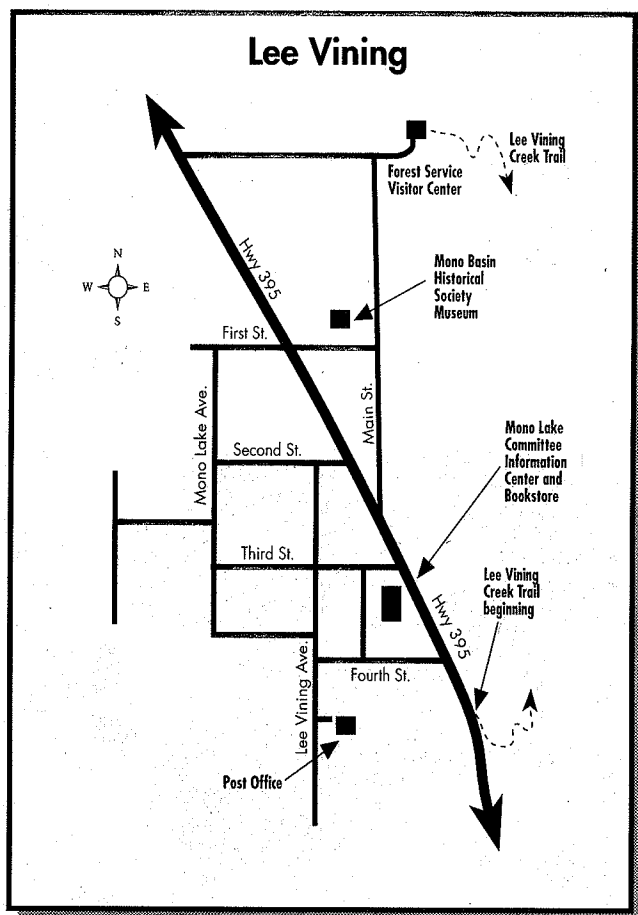


Photo by Hubert Lowman



SUMMER AT MONO LAKE

MONO LAKE & LEE VINING MUSEUMS AND VISITOR CENTERS



Mono Lake Committee Information Center and Bookstore

For information on everything that's happening in the Mono Basin, stop by the Mono Lake Committee Information Center and Bookstore in the middle of Lee Vining. Our staff can provide you with activity schedules, lodging information, suggested hikes, and even a map or two. Educational exhibits and free slide and video presentations discuss the natural and political history—and future—of Mono Lake, and an excellent selection of regional books, T-shirts, maps, and other merchandise is offered. You can even join the Committee on the spot! Located in the middle of Lee Vining, next to Nicely's Restaurant, the Center is open daily from 9 A.M. to 10 P.M. for the summer (9–5 the rest of the year). And the Committee is open 24 hours a day at www.monolake.org.

Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce

Find out everything you need to know about lodging, dining, and other local services in Lee Vining. Motel rate-sheets, brochures, and more are available. The Chamber is housed in the Committee Information Center and Bookstore, and is available on the Internet at www.leevining.com.

Mono Basin Historical Society Museum

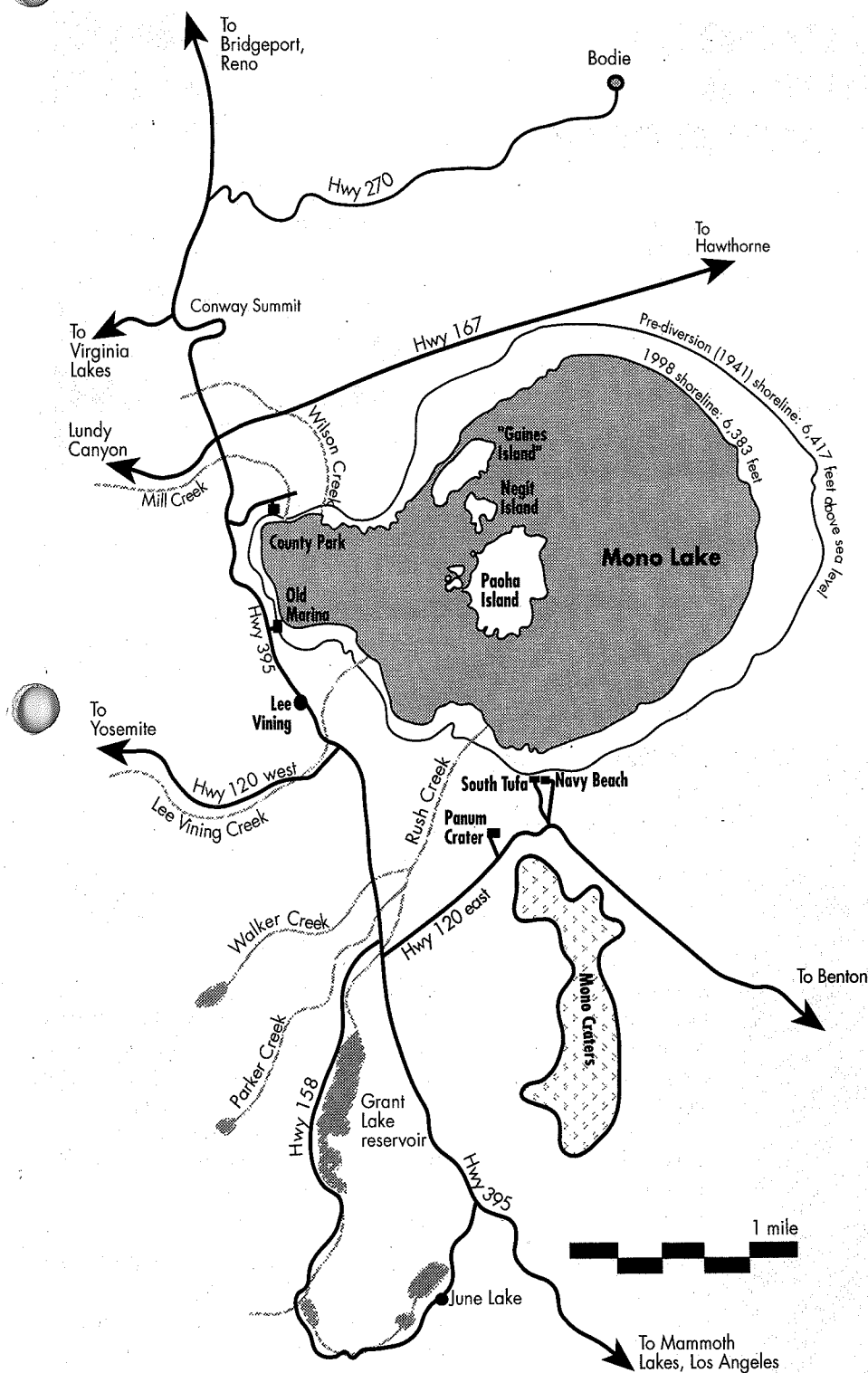
Located in Lee Vining at Guss Hess Park, the Historical Society Museum houses a fascinating collection of materials from the Mono Basin's past. See Native American artifacts, gold mining implements, and even the old Bodie bar, all kept within the former Mono Lake schoolhouse.

Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Visitor Center

The Forest Service Visitor Center, just north of town, features an excellent view of Mono Lake, educational exhibits, an art gallery, and selections from the "At Mono Lake" photo exhibit. Patio presentations by rangers occur during the day, and a dramatic Mono Lake film shows regularly on the motion-picture-size screen in the theater. Additional special programs may be scheduled, so check one of the schedules posted throughout town. Visit them on the Internet at www.r5.pswfs.gov/inyo/vvc/mono/mbnfsa.htm.

SUMMER AT MONO LAKE

Help us protect and restore Mono Lake!



How far is it?

**Distance in miles
from Lee Vining to:**

South Tufa	11 miles
Yosemite Park entrance	13
Tuolumne Meadows	21
Mammoth Lakes	27
Bodie	32
Bishop	66
Yosemite Valley	77
Lake Tahoe	110
Reno	140
Death Valley	177
San Francisco (via 120)	250
Los Angeles	303
Las Vegas	340



it's worth saving

*20th Anniversary
Mono Lake Committee
1978 - 1998*

SUMMER AT MONO LAKE

ACTIVITIES, EVENTS, AND PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE MONO BASIN

South Tufa walks

Conducted three times daily throughout the summer, these walking tours are an excellent introduction to Mono Lake. Walks last about an hour and meet at the South Tufa parking lot at 10:00, 1:00, and 6:00. No charge for the walk, but a \$2 fee is required to enter South Tufa.

Canoe tours

Experience Mono Lake from a different perspective! Canoe tours depart every Saturday and Sunday morning at 8:00, 9:30, and 11:00. \$15 for adults, \$6 for children. Reservations required by calling (760) 647-6595.

Creek walks

Join a Mono Lake Committee naturalist for a walk along Lee Vining Creek. Take a close look at this vital Great Basin habitat, and learn about the plants and animals of the area as well as the restoration work done on the creek.

Stargazing

Join State Reserve Rangers Dave and Janet Carle for an evening of stargazing and astronomical lore at Navy Beach.

Special programs

Slideshows, lectures, field seminars, and more occur all summer. Check in for a schedule of upcoming special events—and see page 24 for field seminar information.

Lee Vining Creek trail

Connecting the town of Lee Vining with the U.S. Forest Service Visitor Center, the creek trail takes you down close to one of Mono's recovering tributaries. Pick up the self-guided "Creek Trail Brochure" for profiles of the plants and animals you may see, as well as the creek's history of water diversions and restoration work.

Panum Crater

Come face to face with recent volcanic activity! Formed only 640 years ago, Panum Cra-

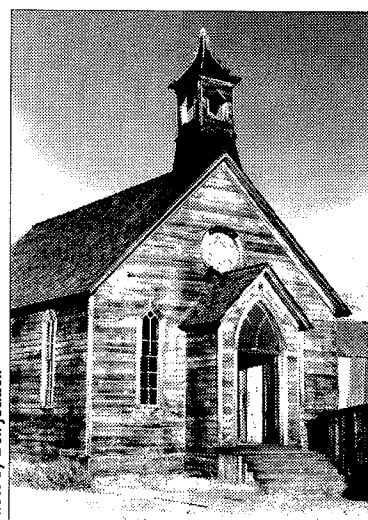


Photo by Don Jackson

ter offers lots of interesting terrain to explore on your own. Guided tours, led by the Forest Service, are also available.

County Park

A great spot for picnicking, birdwatching, and visiting the lake. A boardwalk to the lake departs from the bottom of a large grassy area. Restrooms available.

South Tufa

The best spot to visit Mono Lake! A self-guided nature trail takes you among the tufa towers and along the lakeshore. Take along the Committee's latest publication, *South Tufa: A Self-Guided Nature Walk*, to enhance your trip.

Birdwatching

The Mono Basin is famous for birds. The diversity of local habitats creates a wide range of birding opportunities. Mono Lake hosts over 95 species of water birds alone, is a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve, and is sure to provide you with a great day of birdwatching.

Fishing

Try your luck along Lee Vining, Rush, or Mill creeks, or at Ellery, Saddlebag, or Lundy lakes. Lee Vining stores provide bait, tackle, and information on where the fish are biting!

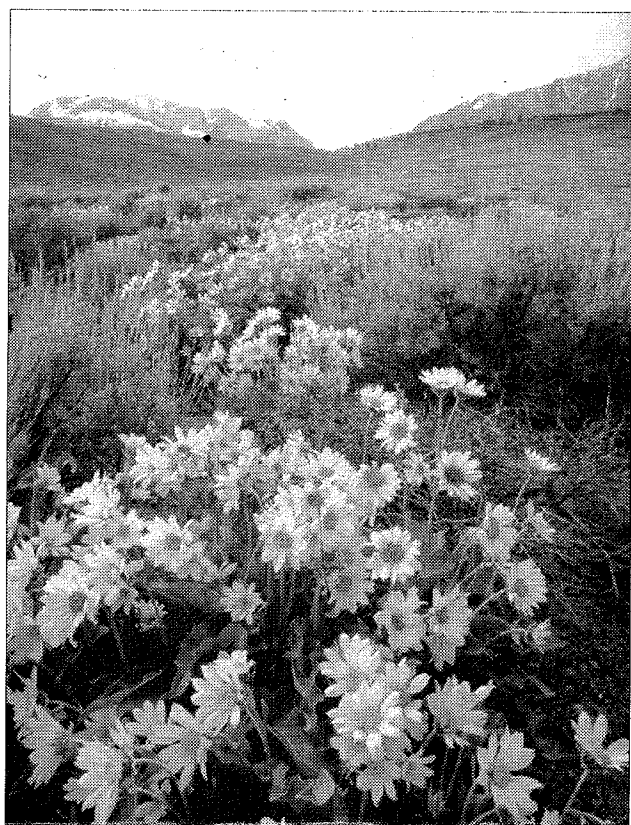


Photo by Richard Kneep

SUMMER AT MONO LAKE

Photography

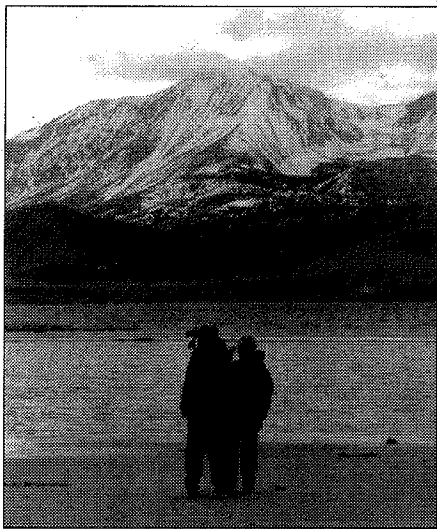
The varied and vast scenic beauty of the Mono Basin offers endless opportunities for photographers of all skill levels. Visit glacier-clad mountains, aspen-lined streams, ghost towns, and tufa groves.

Exploring

The Mono Basin is yours to explore. Walk the lakeshore or hike through the sagebrush flats. All kinds of discoveries await your curiosity.

Bodie ghost town

Bodie, located about 30 miles north of Lee Vining, offers a glimpse into California's past. The gold mining town is preserved in a state of "arrested decay" and was once one of the largest towns in the state. Today, you can roam the streets, looking through windows into preserved homes and businesses. Rangers lead tours and offer special programs, and a museum showcases a collection of artifacts. The park is open 8 A.M. to 7 P.M. during the summer (museum closes earlier); \$2 admission per person.



June Lake loop

The Highway 158 loop winds past the town of June Lake and through a glacier-carved canyon with views of towering peaks and quiet lakes. Popular for fishing and camping, the loop makes for a nice afternoon drive as well.


Yosemite

Ever popular, Yosemite is one of the crown jewels of the National Park system. A visit to the valley offers the chance to see towering waterfalls, sheer cliffs, and many famous landmarks. But be sure to visit the rest of the park as well; easily accessible from Mono Lake in the summertime is Tuolumne Meadows, which offers an excellent sampling of High Sierra wildflowers and hiking. A seven-day pass is \$20 per car.

Devil's Postpile

Located beyond the town of Mammoth Lakes, Devil's Postpile is an unusual geologic formation of columnar basalt. The surrounding area offers spectacular scenery, and the hike to nearby 101-foot Rainbow Falls is popular.

High Sierra hiking

Find a trail and head off in search of wildflowers, lakes, and solitude. Numerous trails are available for day and overnight hiking in the Sierra. Stop by the Mono Lake Committee Information Center for maps and advice. 

Resources in the region

Lee Vining and Mono Lake

Mono Lake Committee Information Center
(760) 647-6595

www.monolake.org

Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce
(760) 647-6629

www.leevining.com

U.S. Forest Service Visitor Center
(760) 647-3044

Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve
(760) 647-6331

Regional Weather Forecast
(760) 935-7663

Yosemite

Information by Phone
(209) 372-0200

Campground Reservations
(800) 436-7275

Hotel and Motel Reservations
(209) 252-4848

Wilderness Permit reservations
(209) 372-0740

Southbound on Hwy 395

Mammoth Lakes Visitor Center
(760) 924-5500; recorded info: 934-1094

Devil's Postpile
(760) 934-2289

White Mountain Ranger District (Bishop)
(760) 873-2500

Lone Pine Interagency Visitor Center
(760) 876-4252

Death Valley Reservations
(760) 786-2345

Northbound on Hwy 395

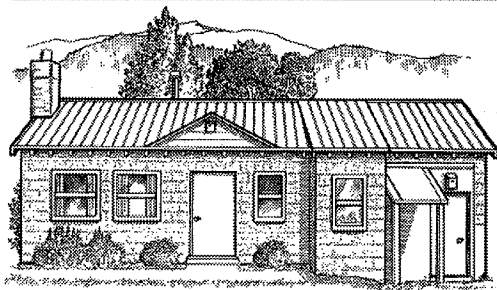
Bridgeport Ranger Station—Toiyabe Forest
(760) 932-7070

General

California Road Conditions
(800) 427-7623

Inyo National Forest Wilderness Permits
(888) 374-3773

SUMMER AT MONO LAKE



The Pumice Palace

The Committee's seasonal sanctuary

by Gary Nelson

Editor's note: As many members know, the Committee has long made use of the property and housing owned by Sally Gaines. We're now endeavoring to raise funds to purchase the land and houses for lodging, storage, and researcher needs in the years ahead. This article captures our history there over the last twenty years.

Springtime sightings of gulls on Mono Lake's still-icy waters have always presaged the arrival of other transients. One special group of itinerant wanderers will shortly begin their Mono migrations—at least as soon as finals are over. From all over the country, college students will converge on Lee Vining to take their place as our latest interns and, like several generations before them, will walk west on 3rd Street and through the door of their new home: the intern house, a.k.a. the pumice palace.

The pumice part of the nickname is actually true, since the house is built of bricks composed of Mono Craters pumice mixed with cement. While hardly palatial, this humble dwelling occupies an historic place in the battle for Mono Lake.

After spending three summers camping out around the lake, David and Sally Gaines began a futile search for a place to rent in Lee Vining, where demand for rental housing always exceeds the supply. However, a lot with two small houses was for sale. Escrow closed in January 1979, just in time for the Gaineses to learn about the phenomenon of frozen pipes.

David and Sally moved into the "front house" (pumice palace). The four room abode also served as the Committee's first office and information center. One of the canoes that David used to give canoe tours on Mono Lake still rests atop a weathered rack on the house's north

wall. The "back house," a conglomeration of different buildings, was used for intern housing. The houses switched roles in 1983 when the Gaines family moved into the back house after extensive remodeling and the birth of their daughter Vireo.

Since then, the pumice palace, in its role as "the intern house" has been home to an astonishing array of humankind ranging from tie-dyed-in-the-wool hippies (who wouldn't be caught dead without every Grateful Dead live bootleg recording known to be in existence) to a president of her local Reba McEntire fan club. It has been called home by such diverse luminaries as Everett the human gull (who could exist for months solely on chips and salsa), Alkali Flat, Esteban, the Playa Princess, Shannon de Spring, and the Desert Peach.

To a wandering person of seasonal lifestyle who values eccentricity of design over luxury, the intern house speaks of home. The rough-hewn wood paneling and exposed beams invite free expression via posters and pushpins. The shelves by the door have traditionally been reserved for the display of treasures gathered during journeys of personal exploration throughout the basin. Feathers, rocks, and coyote bones are commonplace. While a cougar skull probably takes first prize, my favorite was a piece of worm-sculpted pine which resided on the second-to-the-top shelf. In the flickering glow of candlelight it resembled a miniature grove of sand tufa, inviting your imagination to take liberties in interpreting its intricate shapes.

The kitchen has seen culinary endeavors ranging

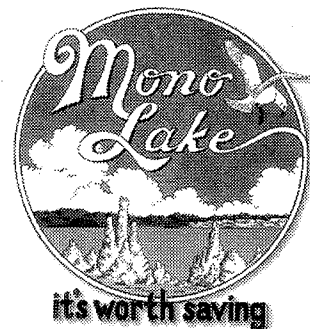
from the Sublime (Mike's burritos, Linda Lou's pizza) to the Ridiculous (Elliot's overflowing cascade of soybean froth, Bug's fried kutzavi (alkali fly pupae)) and the Asphyxiating (my Kung Pao chicken, with blackened chiles). Sitting on one of the benches in the kitchen's cozy dining nook over an improvised meal is where I have really gotten to know the interns. Tales of campus life from around the country, discussions of environmental ethics, the relative merits of various Neil Young albums, and questions about that particular dude/babe who works over at the Forest Service have taken place time and again over that table.

Over the years, many people have done work to save Mono Lake that most likely would not have been done had the Gaineses not provided them with a place to hang their hat, a shower to wash off the brine, and a woodstove to dry their socks over. I hope to see many of these folks again at the Grand Reunion. For those interns who do return and revisit the intern house it will truly be a home away from homecoming.

Gary Nelson is the Committee's Canoe Tour Supervisor. In the early days he was known to visit the intern house cookie jar before tours. 🐾



Mono Lake Committee 20th Anniversary Grand Reunion Labor Day Weekend 1998



*20th Anniversary
Mono Lake Committee
1978 - 1998*



A grand reunion is planned!

Calling 20 years of photographers, scientists, volunteers, Committee staff and interns, Bike-A-Thon cyclists, canoe guides, Board members, Committee members, supporters, and friends—join us!

Meet at Mono Lake on Labor Day weekend to see friends from the past twenty years! The party begins Friday night with music in the park, and continues all weekend (see pages 8–13) with natural history walks, bird watching outings, star talks, and fun! Make sure that you see the brand new slideshow and the recently premiered documentary “The Battle for Mono Lake.” Don’t miss the Annual Meeting on Saturday, where you can catch up with the lake and the many changes that have taken place since the historic Water Board Decision in 1994. *Reunion photographs will be taken right after the Annual Meeting.*

When was the last time you visited the lake and the Committee?

Have you been here since the Dance Hall was remodeled? Remember the old wood stove that heated the offices! The freezing customers in the Information Center and the frozen brine shrimp tank? Remember the old configuration of the Icehouse? Remember the old computers? How about the lake level ... if you were last here in the early 1980s, you’ll find the lake about 10 vertical feet higher!

We want to see you at the reunion!

This is your chance to see your old friends, housemates, co-workers, and fellow members. We are contacting as many former staff members, volunteers, Bike-A-Thoners, scientists, and photographers as we can, and all supporters are invited. Check the Mono Lake Home Page at www.monolake.org/events/reunion.htm to see which of your old friends are coming!



Help us find others!

We need your help! Our list of reunion invitees is incomplete. We are still searching for addresses of staff, interns, scientists, Bike-A-Thoners, and long-time friends of Mono Lake. If you know someone who has lost contact with us, or someone who should have gotten an invitation but hasn’t, send a note, email, or call with their new address. Take a look at the list of names of people that we haven’t been able to find on the Mono Lake Home Page at www.monolake.org/events/find.htm, and contact us if you know where they are!

We are eager to see you and to catch up on your new work, homes, and family. This reunion is all about YOU, the ones who put the energy together to make the Mono Lake story one of success.

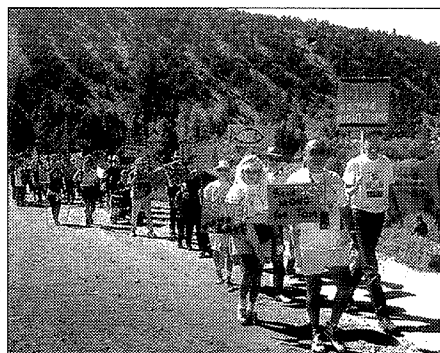


20th Anniversary
Mono Lake Committee
1978 - 1998

Mono Lake Committee 20th Anniversary Grand Reunion Labor Day Weekend 1998

Can we make you nostalgic? Join us at the Grand Reunion to share even more memories!

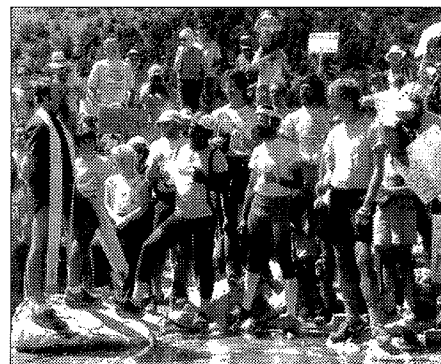
David Gaines' newsletter essays *** Equinox tailgate parties down at the Jeffrey pines on lower Lee Vining Creek *** The Public Trust decision *** At a staff meeting Sally Miller (a.k.a. the Mail Queen) was making a point while trying to wrap a package and got completely tangled up in shipping tape *** Dave's yearly Intern Initiation Hike up Mt. Dana *** Life before computers in the Mono Basin *** When the Ice House actually held ice *** When Bug brought



fried kutzavi to a potluck for Gary and Masa Snyder. Our relief when Masa pronounced it, "Delicious!" *** Sally Gaines' awesome Bucketwalk luncheons *** The amazing winter gathering on the south shore for Dave and Don's memorial service. A wonderful circle of love *** The tears of joy and gratitude when Vireo came out of her coma after the accident *** Martha's determination to ride the Bike-



floor could be refinished, Dr. Pepper for breakfast, three months of eating at Nicely's almost every day *** The first canoe tours with Gary and Alkali sitting by the lake hoping to talk some visitors into canoeing *** Board meetings, potlucks, and campouts at Burger's Retreat *** The day Sage ran into the intern house with a garden hose during a water fight with the interns. &



A-Thon thwarted by a peculiar accident involving a chimney *** Following the water down Parker and Walker creek channels when their flows were

restored *** The first mention of lake levels of 6392 feet and higher *** That great day when the Third District Court of Appeals finally let the DWP lawyers really have it! (We didn't know judges could get mad in public.) *** Rising to applaud as the Water Board concluded their vote to protect Mono Lake *** Max headroom *** Listening to David Gaines practice his mandolin while on his daily stroll with the kids. He pushed Sage's stroller with his hips and Vireo walked alongside. Even with the windows shut



you could hear them pass by the intern house and head down the street. Wheels rattling on asphalt and sweet notes hanging in the air *** The fine used book selection in the old slideshow room *** The walls of the slideshow room covered with Bucketwalk signs *** Job interviews that consisted of learning to run the cash register *** During the remodel: Going home covered in sawdust every day for weeks, crawling over every inch of the dance hall floor for hours to pound down the nails so the



Naturalist notes

A Mono Basin chronicle

January: American sparrow, first winter sighting of a sora ... bald eagle perched on bitterbrush watching over the highway ... 60 pinyon jays on the north shore ... 25 sage grouse sighted at Lee Vining airport (looking for a ride?) ... white-throated sparrow in town, long-eared owls near the shrimp plant ... rough-legged hawks ... a bit to the south, two adult bald eagles and two juveniles, not to mention magpies and ravens ... 32 sage grouse at northeast end of the airport runway.

February: 3.76 inches of precipitation in three days ... Highway 395 closed for two days ... deep snow at Old Marina ... more storms ... two red-tailed hawks and 60 green-winged teals at Black Point ... 3-4 feet of snow across the basin ... coyote on highway ... where did the South Tufa trail go? ... first red-winged blackbird of the season ... tracks in the snow on the glacial moraines.

March: A solitary California gull ... flocks of America white pelicans high overhead ... 13 turkey vultures riding the thermals near Horse Meadows ... three bighorn sheep not far past the Tioga Road closure ... sharp-shinned hawk shopping for lunch in backyard trees ... yellow-headed blackbirds make various appearances ... on the butterfly side of things, numerous painted ladies passing through ... gray fox in the south basin, unfortunately found as roadkill ... no-see-um larvae in the lake (how can you see the larvae but not the ums?) ... berms and backwaters at the south shore ... County Park sightings of common snipe; red-winged, Brewer's, and yellow-headed blackbirds; a sora; song sparrows; American coot; four Canada geese; green-winged and cinnamon teals ... ruby-crowned kinglet ... black-crowned night-heron at shore ... the osprey pair return to the south shore.

April: Eagle hunting on the shore, could be golden, could be bald ... American white pelican resting at the water's edge (dreaming of lakes with fish?) ... first sightings of violet-green swallows ... cliff swallows too ... six cinnamon teal and two northern shovelers ... 12 eared grebes, six horned larks, a sage thrasher and a song sparrow ... alkali flies in small bunches at the edge of shallow lagoon of recently flooded grass ... more turkey vultures ... a common loon at South Tufa ... immature golden eagle flying over the highway ... at the west shore, willets in flight, another dozen eared grebes ... Bridgeport Creek flowing, forming lagoons at the shore ... two loggerhead shrikes ... two California quail near Bridgeport Creek ... one hundred plus mallards and pintails in the creek ponds ... sandpipers at the shore ... owl pellets atop ice-age tufa ... five snowy egrets ... greater and lesser yellowlegs, black-necked stilts ... long-billed dowitchers ... Caspian tern heard over Mono City ... great tailed grackle at County Park.

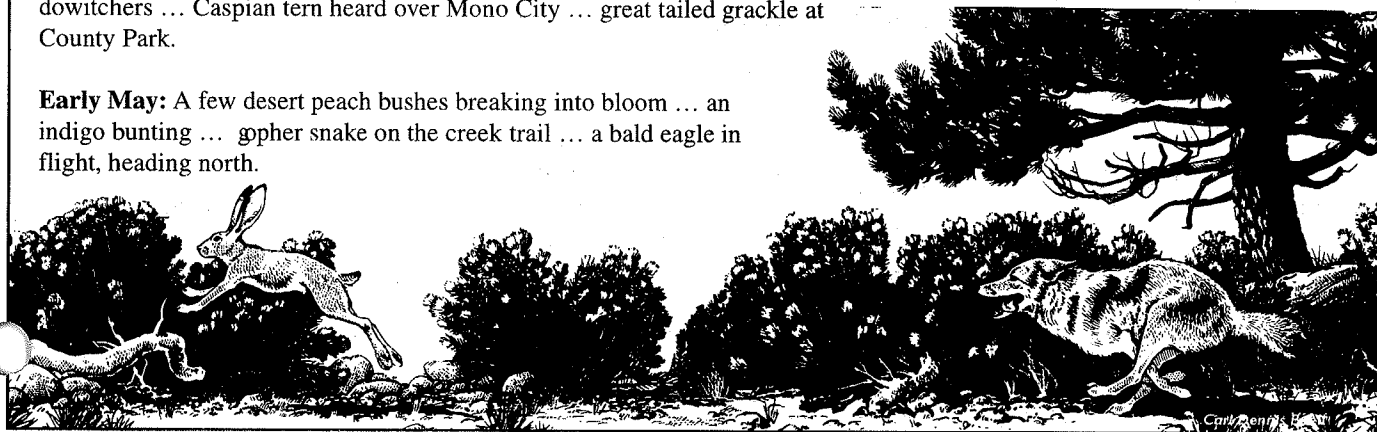
Early May: A few desert peach bushes breaking into bloom ... an indigo bunting ... gopher snake on the creek trail ... a bald eagle in flight, heading north.

Mono Lake Live!

It's not quite the same as being at the lake, but you can now keep your eye on Mono via our new Mono Lake WebCam! Pictures (from the Information Center attic) are updated every 10 minutes.

You can also track the latest in Lee Vining and Mono Lake weather conditions with our Internet weather station. Special thanks go to weather enthusiasts and donors **Tom Melatis** and **Peter Vorster** for funding a heating coil that warms the precipitation gauge, allowing us to report snowfall as well as rain.

Conditions are updated every 10 minutes! There's more too, so check it all out at www.monolake.org/live!



1998 mono lake committee field seminars

Birds of the East Slope

David Lukas, June 13-14

\$90 per person/ \$75 for MLC members

In spring, the east slope of the Sierra Nevada hosts a fascinating mix of birds. Desert birds, water birds, and forest birds are all present. Over the course of two days, this field seminar will focus on both migrating and breeding birds in a wide range of habitats. Learn the finer points of identifying these species by sight and song. Well-known for his enthusiasm and knowledge, David Lukas has led over a hundred birdwatching and natural history programs for The Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, and other groups.

Geology of the Mono Basin

Tim Tierney, June 27-28

\$90 per person/ \$75 for MLC members

Perhaps nowhere else in California is the geology more varied than in the Mono Basin where both glaciers and volcanoes have left their mark. Explore weird mineral towers, volcanoes, and glacial remains. The first day will be spent exploring the area by car and foot. Day two will focus on thoroughly investigating a few special points of interest. Tim is a geologist and author of the Committee's *Geology of the Mono Basin* field guide.

Gull Research: Chick Banding

Point Reyes Bird Observatory Research, July 2-5

\$120 per person per day; meals and overnight stay

This is the second phase of California gull research. Repro-



Photo by Richard Knepp

ductive success will be estimated by counting and banding gull chicks in eight study plots. Observe at close quarters the second largest California gull rookery in North America. Please call for more details.

Mono Basin Wildflowers

Ann Howald, July 11-12

\$90 per person/ \$75 for MLC members

The Mono Basin is an exceptional place to see wildflowers—fuzzy desert lupines, prickly-stemmed “fried egg flowers,” scarlet gilia, skunk monkeyflower, and many more. Wildflowers are the focus of this class, but we won’t neglect the insects, birds, and other critters that eat them, pollinate them, and distribute their seeds. Join Ann, biology instructor and experienced Mono Basin naturalist, to explore the basin’s botanical treasures.

Native American Basketry & Campout

Lucy Parker, July 10-12

\$120 per person/ \$100 for MLC members

\$50 materials fee

In the tradition of the regional Paiute, learn to make a small coiled basket from seasoned willow with a design in split redbud and fresh willow similar to a Pomo-style fast basket used for gathering nuts and berries. A group campsite in the Jeffrey pine forest will offer the opportunity for traditional story telling and songs. Lucy Parker is a descendent of the Yosemite Miwok, Mono Lake Kutzadika’a, and Pomo peoples. She learned traditional handiwork from her mother, a master basket weaver, and will pass on some of her knowledge in this 3-day seminar. This seminar begins Friday afternoon. Camping is not required to participate.

Mono Lake Photography: Scenic and Wildlife Wonders

Moose Peterson, July 17-19

\$175 per person/ \$150 for MLC members

Explore the incredible wildlife and scenery of Mono Lake through your camera lens. The seminar begins Friday night with a slide show. Saturday will be a full day of photography beginning very early with star trails and sunrise at Mono Lake. After breakfast, we'll be back down at the lake photographing the vast collection of shorebirds, waterfowl, and other avian wonders. After lunch, we will travel to Lee Vining Canyon and explore the beauty of Lee Vining Creek. We'll visit the lake again at sunset and then conclude the day with an evening of sharing slides and prints. On

Sunday morning we'll return to Mono Lake for sunrise and a final half-day of activities. Moose is a professional photographer who has developed particular renown for his environmentally sound wildlife photography.

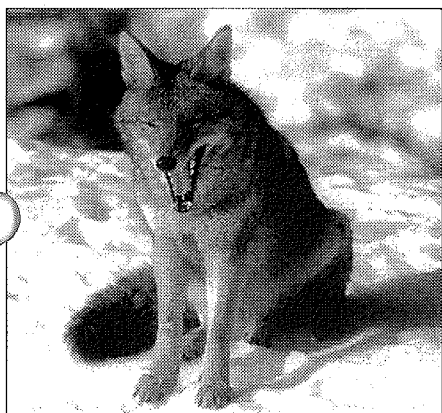


Photo by Moose Peterson

Environmental Education: A Field Seminar for Educators

Dave and Janet Carle, July 20-23

\$100 per person

One unit of college credit, accommodation, breakfasts & dinners

Science, mathematics, social studies, environmental studies, and the visual arts—Mono Lake can be used as a model for a wide range of curriculum concepts. Designed for educators to enhance their skills in environmental education, this new seminar stresses study in the field and involves some easy hiking. Accommodation will be at the remote Burger's Sierra Retreat, located at an elevation of 8,000 feet. This pristine mountain locale near Mono Lake with tall aspen, fir, and pines provides a welcome setting for your stay in the Mono Basin. This promises to be a unique experience for educators. Please call for more information.

Mono Basin-Eastern Sierra Wildlife

John Harris, July 25-26

\$90 per person/\$75 for MLC members

This seminar will introduce you to the fabulous wildlife diversity of the Mono Basin. With habitats ranging from desert sand dunes to alpine meadows and fell-fields, the Mono Basin is home to a many wildlife species. We will visit sites representative of major habitat types and become familiar with the common amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals of each. Adaptations to environmental conditions and habitat relationships will be stressed, and an emphasis will be placed on the importance of riparian habitats. John Harris received his BS in Biology at Stanford University in 1976 and his Ph.D. in Ecology at the University of California, Davis in 1983.

Past Peoples and Environments of the Mono Basin

Wally Woolfenden, August 1-2

\$90 per person/\$75 for MLC members

This new field seminar is designed for people with a broad range of knowledge in anthropology and the natural sciences—or none at all—who want to learn more about prehistoric people and the Mono Basin environments in which they made their home. We will explore geological and archaeological sites and talk about the evidence and methods used by scientists to reconstruct past environments and the ways that people adapted to them. Your instructor, Wally Woolfenden, has lived and worked on both sides of the Sierra Nevada as an archaeologist and paleoecologist for the Forest Service since 1977. Wally holds a Ph.D. in Geosciences and Anthropology from the University of Arizona.

Alpine Wildflowers/Camping

Mark Bagley, August 15-16

\$95 per person/ \$80 for MLC members

A big winter in the Sierra promises a fantastic, late summer wildflower show! The headwaters of Lee Vining Creek, near Tioga Pass and Saddlebag Lake, feature some of the best and most accessible locations for studying the magnificent flower displays of the High Sierra. After reviewing the basics of plant structure, the workshop will journey through subalpine forests, across meadows and fell-fields, along cascading creeks, and around jewel-like lakes identifying up to 150 species of flowers, trees, and (continued pg. 26)

Call 760-647-6595 for registration and information. Ask for the seminar desk.

shrubs. Mark, a consulting biologist in the Eastern Sierra, will lead this field seminar's easily paced 2-4 mile hikes at the 10,000 foot elevation. This field seminar includes a reserved group campground at Saddlebag Lake (elevation 10,000 feet) for those who wish to camp.

Fall Bird Migration

Dave Shuford, August 22-23

\$90 per person/ \$75 for MLC members

The east slope of the Sierra Nevada is a major migration route for birds traveling from northern nesting areas to warm southern habitats. As a result, early autumn is the time of year to see the greatest diversity of landbirds, shorebirds, and waterbirds in the Mono Basin and on Crowley Reservoir. We will learn to identify up to 100 species by plumage and calls, and probe the secrets of their natural history. Dave Shuford is an expert on birds and well acquainted with where to find them in the Eastern Sierra.

Stream Restoration in the Mono Basin

Richard Ridenhour, August 29-30

\$90 per person/ \$75 for MLC members

What is restoration? How do we define the habitat to be restored? This field seminar will investigate the evolution of stream restoration in the Mono Basin and attempt to answer difficult questions relating to the science. The seminar will involve two days in the field at Rush and Lee Vining creeks exploring past and present restoration work. Richard Ridenhour served as a scientist on the Restoration Technical Committee that helped direct the Mono Basin stream restoration program until October, 1994. He is an emeritus faculty member of the Department of Fisheries and former Dean of the College of Natural Resources at Humboldt State University.

Paoha Island Kayak

Stuart Wilkinson, September 12

\$60 per person/ \$50 for MLC members

Wind and weather permitting, visit Paoha Island for a picnic lunch! Stuart is well versed in Mono Lake ecology, history, and politics and this natural history kayak tour will cover a wide range of topics relating to this high desert lake. Plan on four to five hours for the tour. Some kayak experience is recommended for this trip to Paoha Island. Kayaks and safety equipment are provided.

Mono Lake in Pastel

Moira Donohoe, September 19-20

\$90 per person/ \$75 for MLC members

Mono Lake and the Eastern Sierra offer a dramatic setting for your pastel interpretations. The aspens in September will be in transition from green to gold and burnished orange. Delicate sand tufa, gulls and blackbirds, and an azure lake provide quick-study possibilities. This seminar is designed

for the beginning and intermediate pastel artist. The advanced pastel artist is also welcome. Participants will learn about materials, techniques, and tips for working in the field while developing their skills in working with composition and color. Your instructor, Moira Donohoe, is a resident of Yosemite National Park. She is an accomplished pastel artist.

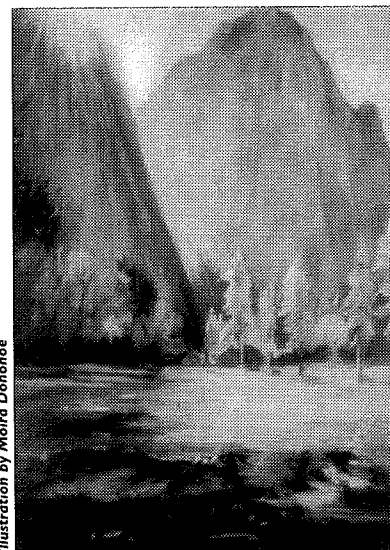


Illustration by Moira Donohoe

Mono Basin Fall Photography

Richard Knepp, October 9-11

\$125 per person/ \$100 for MLC members

The Mono Basin in autumn is one of the greatest photographic experiences in the country. Spectacular foliage and skies combine with exceptional light, presenting ample subject matter for photographers in both color and black and white. Join accomplished photographer Richard Knepp to explore varied shoreline locations at sunrise and sunset and to discover fall color in nearby canyons. Subjects for discussion include composition, exposure techniques, filtration, basic theory of the Zone System, and developing a personal vision. Photographers of all levels are welcome; a fully adjustable camera of any size or format is suggested. This seminar begins on Friday evening.

Call 760-647-6595 for registration and information. Ask for the seminar desk.

Page 15 Mystery Benchmarks answers. Top left: Building the David Gaines memorial boardwalk at Old Marina, 1989, lake level 6376 feet; Top right: Fantastic tufa shapes at South Tufa, 1966, lake level 6387 feet; Bottom left: Mono Lake from the west shore, 1962, lake level 6394 feet; Bottom right: Early Mono Lake Committee office and information center, summer 1981, lake level 6373 feet.

"The Battle for Mono Lake" premieres in Los Angeles

Panelists emphasize importance of water conservation

by Shelly Backlar

On Sunday, March 29, Frances Spivy-Weber welcomed over 300 friends and supporters of the Mono Lake Committee to the Southern California premiere of "The Battle for Mono Lake," a PBS documentary by Stephen Fisher Productions in association with KTEH, San Jose, which was shown at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall.

Fran began the celebration by reminding us that as we celebrate 20 years of advocacy for Mono Lake, we must look to the challenges that lie ahead, to healing the damage and to restoring the Mono Basin ecosystem.

Both the producer, Stephen Fisher, and the host of "The Battle for Mono Lake," Richard Hatch, were on hand to introduce the film. Steve spoke about his relationship with Mono Lake and explained that after many years of watching the lake level drop, it was in 1990 while hiking in the Mono Basin that he was inspired to tell Mono Lake's story. "'The Battle For Mono Lake' is a Jimmy Stewart story where democracy triumphs and the people are heard," said Fisher.

In an inspiring introduction, Richard Hatch confessed that he knew little about Mono Lake before joining the project. It is through Hatch's explorations—and interviews with attorneys, scientists, water managers, indigenous peoples, and activists—that Mono Lake's story is told. Hatch said that the experience "opened my heart to Mono Lake. I have become one of Mono Lake's most avid supporters."

After the film screening, Committee Board Co-Chair Ed Manning moderated a forum discussion that included Fisher, Hatch, and others who played a significant role in Mono Lake's protection: Rich Atwater, president of Bookman-Edmonston Engineering and former General Manager for the West Basin and Central Basin Water Districts; Ruth Galanter, Los Angeles City Councilmember and water conservation trail-

blazer; and Elsa Lopez of Mothers of East Los Angeles—Santa Isabel, the first community organization to launch LA's ultra-low flush toilet program.

Elsa Lopez described how she became involved with the pilot effort to distribute ultra-low flush toilets throughout Los Angeles via community organizations. While she admitted several times, "I did not know what I was getting into," she stated that toilet distribution and water conservation projects are changing people's lives. "It is important to educate the children," she emphasized. "When they learn, they are eager to spread the word to their parents and to others in the community." Elsa, who is entering her fifth year with Committee's Outdoor Experiences Program, said, "After the first trip to Mono Lake, once workers and their families saw first hand what their efforts were protecting, toilet distribution went through the roof!"

Ruth Galanter, proclaiming herself as "the toilet lady," played a pivotal role in the Los Angeles City Council's decision to require ultra-low flush toilets in all new residential and commercial developments. Ruth emphasized that times are changing at DWP. The toilet distribution program has been accelerated and efforts are underway to retrofit laundromats with the front-loading, water-saving machines now used in Europe.

Rich Atwater noted that because of the successful toilet distribution and water conservation programs, Los Angeles residents have returned water consumption to 1970s levels. Rich, who is currently involved in the CalFed Bay-Delta Program water hearings, emphasized that two-thirds of California's water supply can come from conservation and wise water management. "By using reclaimed water, and by storing water in underground water aquifers in the San Fernando and San Joaquin Valleys, we can reduce the need for imported water."

Everyone needs a 1.6 gallon toilet

The Mono Lake Committee believes California is ready for a new water policy that puts efficient use of water first, making plenty of room for protection of nature and the needs of people today and in the future.

As Ruth Galanter, Rich Atwater, and Elsa Lopez pointed out at UCLA, the Mono Lake Committee has been directly involved with programs that prove people can substantially reduce their need for water. More can be done not only in Southern California, but also throughout the state.

The Mono Lake Committee is putting this experience to work in the current CalFed Bay-Delta Program debate.

If you would like to know more about the CalFed Bay-Delta Program, contact Committee Executive Director Frances Spivy-Weber (*frances@monolake.org*).

The event culminated with a 20th Anniversary Celebration Reception, sponsored by Santa Monica's **Border Grill**. We thank all those who attended and supported this event. Special thanks to the following individuals and corporate sponsors, who donated \$500 or more to the event: **American Hi Definition, Inc., Border Grill, William Dahl, Environment Now!, John Genette and Associates, Pacific Enterprises, Marion and Rocco Siciliano, and Trader Joe's.**

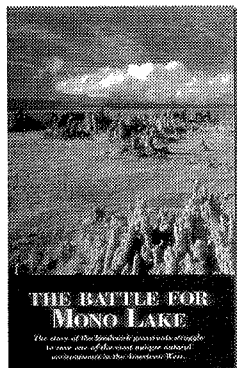
Shelly Backlar is the Committee's Development Director. She owns a low-flow, 1.6-gallon model herself. ♀



NATIVE AMERICAN BASKETRY FROM MONO BASIN RESIDENT LUCY PARKER

Newly arrived in our store and featured in the center photo are Native American willow baskets made by local basketweaver Lucy Parker. Lucy has studied this craft for years with her mother, master basket weaver Julia Parker. These baskets are used for gathering piñon nuts and berries.

Willow basket prices range from \$40 to \$150. Each basket is unique; please call for specific basket information and ordering.



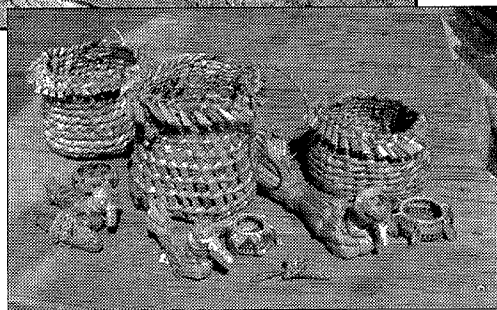
Enjoy the comprehensive documentary in your own home!

#120 57 minutes, VHS: \$19.95 A Stephen Fisher Production in association with KTEH, San Jose.



Featured in the photo below are miniatures, decoys, and baskets historically used by men for hunting. Made by Lucy, these baskets are constructed of seasoned tule gathered in the high summer.

Tule basket and decoy prices range from \$20 to \$90. Each creation is unique; please call for specific information and pricing.



Use our **postage-paid envelope** to send in your order!

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Daytime phone _____

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SHIPPING RATES

Up to \$10 \$4.00
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\$25 - \$50 \$5.50
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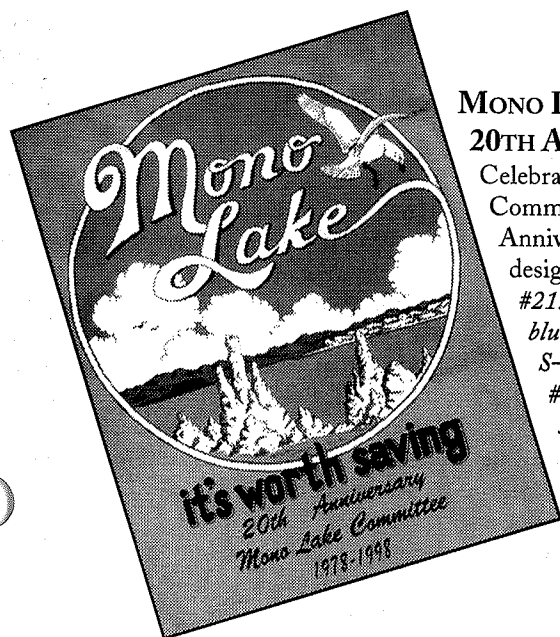
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Mono Lake Committee P.O. Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541

Quan	Item	Size	Color	Price	Total
	Battle for Mono Lake Video			\$19.95	
	Long Sleeve 20th T-Shirt			\$20.00	
	Short Sleeve 20th T-Shirt			\$15.00	
	Denim logo shirt		blue	\$35.00	
	Hat (specify):			\$20.00	
	Cap (specify):			\$13.00	
	Basket (call for details):			\$	
Shipping: use rates at left					
Subtotal					
CA residents—add 7.25% sales tax to subtotal					
Total					



MONO LAKE COMMITTEE 20TH ANNIVERSARY T

Celebrate the Mono Lake Committee's 20th Anniversary with this classic design from the early days!

#215 short sleeve in blue, sage, or ash grey,
S-XXL: \$15

#216 long sleeve in blue, sage, or ash grey,
S-XXL: \$20



COMMITTEE LOGO DENIM SHIRT

Information Center Assistant Ramona Clark gets excited by our new long sleeve denim shirt featuring the Committee logo above the left pocket! Perfect to take along for cool evening trips to South Tufa.

#217 embroidered logo, M-XXL: \$35

HATS!

Mono Lake Lupine cap
#224, amethyst, one
size fits all: \$13



Mono Lake Columbine cap
#223, terracotta,
one size fits all: \$13



Mono Lake Columbine outback hat
#221, sage green, M-XL: \$20

Mono Lake outback hat
#222 sage green or navy blue, M-XL: \$20

1997 Free Drawing winners enjoying prizes

The 1997 Mono Lake Free Drawing was held in November, the prizes "have been distributed, and the winners are enjoying their fortune!

Congratulations are in order to everyone who helped make the 1997 Free Drawing such a success. It couldn't have happened without the generous donations from both sponsors and supporters who sent in their tickets. Keep an eye on your mailbox, or call us for tickets—because this year's 20th Anniversary Free Drawing is the best and biggest ever! And now here's the list of 1997's lucky winners.

Ms. Julie Gordon of Berkeley won the Grand Prize! She'll be heading out on a llama trek adventure in either Yosemite or Sequoia-Kings Canyon, courtesy of **Trailhead & Co.**

Ms. Hali Hammer of Berkeley won the Ansel Adams Treasure Prize: a signed Ansel Adams lithograph donated by the **Ansel Adams Gallery of Yosemite, Pebble Beach, and the Mono Inn!**

The June Lake Ski Spectacular went to

Dr. George Sardina of Valley Center, while the Lifesong Intro Adult Camp session was awarded to **Heather Garrison-Peck** of Nevada City. The prizes were donated by **June Mountain Ski Area, Big Rock Resort, Carson Peak Inn, the Tiger Bar, and Lifesong Nature Awareness and Wilderness Camps.**

Mr. Charles Reed Jr. of Huntington Beach won the *Solar Living Sourcebook*, courtesy of **Real Goods.**

Mr. Larry Horton of Eschalon won a weekend in Yosemite at the Ahwahnee, thanks to **Yosemite Concession Services**, and **J.S. Cooper** of Paso Robles won the Mammoth Mega-Getaway, donated by **Mammoth Mountain Bike Park, Royal Pines Resort, Lakefront Restaurant, Alpenrose, Giovanni's, and The Great Outdoors.** **Ms. Theresa Ryan** of Healdsburg won the Balloon Adventure & Historic Inn Stay package, donated by **McGee Creek Inn, Roadhouse Grill, and High Sierra Ballooning Co.**

Mr. Robert J. Riddell of El Cerrito won a Mono Basin Weekend package, as did **Mr. Charles J. Schneider** of Pleasanton. We expect to see them both this year and thank local businesses **Best Western Lake View Lodge, Mono Inn, Nicely's, and Bodie Mike's** for sponsoring the weekend.

Mr. Everett Haslam of Santa Cruz won the **Bushnell Binoculars Birder Bonanza.**

Five Mono Lake Committee Premium Prizes were awarded, including special items from the **Committee Information Center and Bookstore!** Winners were: **Ms. Ellen M. Benson** of Del Mar, **Mr. Roger J. Crawley** of Menlo Park, **Mrs. Florence J. Eder** of Tiburon, **W.E. Krueger** of Daly City, and **Mr. Peter Minkel** of Fairfield.

And **C. E. Schwerdt**, of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, won the outdoor clothing donated by **The Territory Ahead.**

Thanks also go to prize donors **Murphey's Motel, Campmor, and Anything Goes.**

Staff migrations

New to the Committee lineup for the summer are two enthusiastic Monophiles ready to take on the job of Information Center Assistant. **Ramona Clark**, of Mono City, and **Kevin Hepburn**, of Mammoth Lakes, will be mastering the ins and outs of the Information Center and Bookstore. Ramona is more than excited about the summer, and Kevin is hardly new to the job—he was an intern back in 1986.

Two veteran staffers will be Outdoor Experiences Coordinators this summer, helping plan and lead trips for Los Angeles youth. **Matt Moule** got started with the OE program in 1995 when he was an intern; he is rumored to be a fine card player. **Mike Klapp** worked

with the OE program last year, spent the winter polishing Web page graphics, and returns for another busy summer in the field.

Throughout the summer our intern crew will be leading walks at South Tufa, paddling visitors among the tufa towers, and providing information at the store. **Anna Christensen** has just completed her junior year at Scripps College and is studying biology with an emphasis on plants. **Joeseeph Cosgrove** graduated from Indiana University this spring with a degree in outdoor recreation and resource management. **Arya Degenhardt**, returning for a second year at the lake, just graduated from Prescott College. **Jodi Jensen** is studying biology

and environmental studies at Scripps College; she'll be graduating in 1999. And **William Lickiss**, currently a student at CalState Sacramento, rounds the group out with an interest in Mono Lake and a proficiency in Taekwondo.

Also joining the Committee crew for a month or two is volunteer **Erin Ryan**, a musician with a degree in ethnomusicology, a future in law, and a little extra time to help out Mono Lake. Look for her prose on the Mono Lake Homepage. Thanks Erin!

Farewell to **Cheryl Ecklund**, who spent almost a year with us coordinating summer activities, working in the store, and polishing off our new book: *South Tufa—A Self-Guided Nature Walk.*

Member Corner: News from the membership desk

by Rebecca Dobert

In memoriam

Our thoughts go out to former staff member **Karyn Helfrich**, a Bishop resident, who gave a donation in memory of her brother **John** who passed away recently.

James and Linda Thomas, Josephine De Franco, Gladys Pope, and the Employees of K-Mart #4449 in San Jose all gave in memory of **Leland Nelson**. His generosity touched many....

Sonia Cook sent a donation in memory of a greatly missed member of the Lee Vining community, **Jim Harlan**.

Ethel and Jim Ahrens gave in tribute to dear friends **Edith and Andy White**, in fond memory of times spent together on the 1984 Mono Lake luxury bus tour.

Velma Murray sent a gift in memory of **Byron and Flossie Hoff**.

Matching gifts

Danny C. Hartford and Lawrence White both had their gifts matched by **Adobe**. **Glenn C. Skinner's** gift was matched by the **Sun Microsystems Foundation**. **IBM** matched dollar for dollar the gifts of **D.A. Stoessel, J.F. Farber, and G.M. Lennon**.

Chase Manhattan Bank contributed on behalf of **Julian F. Baden**. The **BankAmerica Foundation** matched the gift of **Traude Buckland**. **Mal Warwick and Associates** matched the gift of longtime member **Alan Magree**. **McDonnell Douglas** mirrored the donations of employees **Maris Valkass and Earl Biven**.

C.N.A doubled **Philip Ratcliff's** generous contribution. And **Waste Management** charitably matched **Benjamin Smith's** gift.

It's been one year since I joined the crew here in Lee Vining: one out of 20 years of perseverance, working toward the goal of protecting Mono Lake. I've had the privilege of not only working with membership issues, but also of pinch-hitting for some of our other programs—education, policy, and the bookstore.

This past August I put my interpretive skills back to use on the waters of Mono via Committee canoe tours. What an inspiration! I met so many enthusi-

astic newcomers: people who got up at the crack of dawn for a canoe ride and left at noon as savvy politicos, arguing Mono's case. It restores one's faith in the power of the single voice.

Then I was working in the bookstore on St. Patrick's day. It was warm and sunny, and three women stopped in and spent time browsing and talking. One was member **Anne Gotchy**, a Guardian of the Lake. She shared with me a story about the first time she came to Mono, asked eagerly about the water level, bought a copy of *Storm Over Mono*. On her way out the door towards an afternoon of exploring, she turned to me and said "Thank you for all the great work you do."

Imagine, I thought, members thanking me. The concept seemed astounding. What I mean is that I am nothing but a vehicle for the goodwill and effort of you, our members. I take your hopes and resolve out of envelopes and do the paperwork. For you to thank me. A gift. To live and work in this relentless place, to get to be one of the ones who can go and dip my toes in the rising water ... I live in proxy for the true givers. I hope that you truly realize it. I'm humbled every day by the kindness and sheer determination that arrives via U.S. Post. People send us the only dollar they can spare some months, just to let us know that they are out there. The true gift is yours, every one. I sincerely hope that I live up to your example. Thank you, our fellow advocates, for 20 years of never giving up what you believe.

Rebecca Dobert is the Committee's Membership Coordinator; she'll soon be interfacing in structured query language.

From the mailbag

My wife and I knew David Gaines from when we attended ... weekend bird watching trips with him. He was telling us about his intention of preserving and restoring Mono Lake. Like everyone else we told him that he couldn't take on LADWP and succeed. How wrong we were! We have been supporters by mail and check ever since.

Congratulations on your amazing success!

—Kenneth C. Smith, M.D., South Lake Tahoe

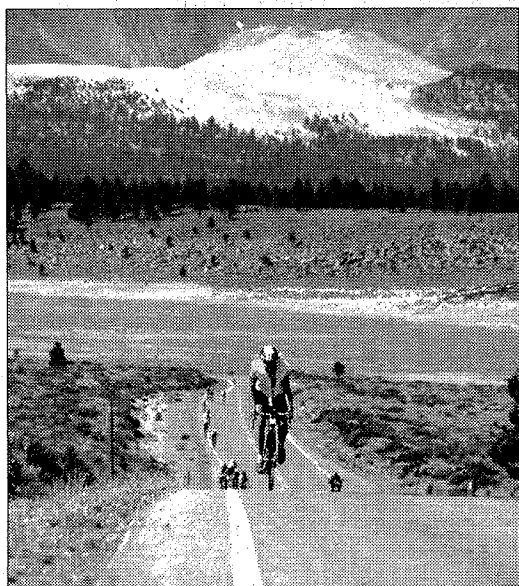
Thanks

We also send thanks to Mrs. **John Cain** and to **David Wimpfheimer** for recommending the Committee for grants from the California Community Foundation and Jewish Communal Fund, respectively.

Member **Katherine Merriman** made a contribution in honor of scientist **Dave Shuford's** work and dedication.

Thanks go to the **Cabrillo and Irvine Sea and Sage Audubon chapters** for their annual contributions!

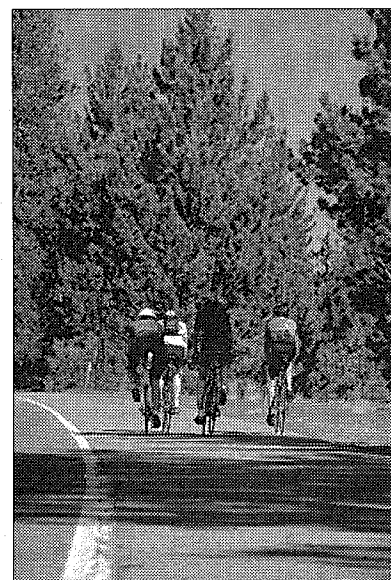
Thanks also go to Lee Vining local **Martin Strelneck** for donating flowers for the front of the Information Center.



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- **Saturday, September 12, 1998**
- **A scenic, unforgettable ride with great views of Mono Lake**
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