

MONO LAKE

N E W S L E T T E R

F a l l 2 0 0 1

It's fall. Crisp morning air, the changing colors in aspen groves, and millions of Eared Grebes on the lake soothe our summer-worn spirits. As the leaves fall we are left with the bare bones—the white bark of aspens, the prickly masses of wild rose bushes, the quiet trickle of ebbing streams. In the wake of the events of September 11th we are also left with much sadness and many difficult questions. We find ourselves relying on the solace of the natural world more heavily these days. Maybe it is time to come to Mono for a visit?

Hopefully you've already noticed the changes in this edition of the *Mono Lake Newsletter*. Improvements in both the look and environmental responsibility standards of the *Newsletter* have been in the works for some time now—the details are on page 14. The *Newsletter* will continue to bring you up-to-date reports on everything from political challenges to natural wonders throughout the Mono Basin. We sincerely hope you continue to enjoy it.

Come get lost in the pages that follow. Go to pages 4–5 for an update on Caltrans' Mono Lake Highway Widening project. You'll find exciting news about the Outdoor Experiences program on pages 6–7. There's a thoughtful essay on page 8 and a special announcement of a new winter photography seminar on page 9. Make sure not to miss the fun updates from Lee Vining on page 17. And check out the new selections in the Fall Catalog on pages 18–25.

If you do decide to come for a visit, stop by the Information Center and Bookstore to say hello—it gets pretty quiet this time of year, and we'd love to see you!

—Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director



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COVER PHOTO BY GEOFFREY MCQUILKIN

PHOTO BY BARTSHÉ MILLER



This Catbird—a rare sighting for the Mono Basin—was spotted, and heard meowing, from the boardwalk at County Park. This lucky image was taken through a spotting scope. See www.monolake.org/birds for other interesting bird sightings.

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 on the environment of excessive water use, and promoting cooperative solutions that protect Mono Lake and meet real water needs without transferring environmental problems to other areas.

State Parks Director Visits Mono Lake

No Possibility of Eliminating State Reserve

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

In September, California Department of Parks and Recreation Director Rusty Areias paid a visit to Mono Lake at the urging of the owners of Tioga Lodge and another property adjacent to the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve. Areias reviewed State Reserve facilities—including the new County Park boardwalk—and held a meeting to discuss Reserve management with property owners, elected officials, and Committee representatives.

The theme of the visit centered on the concept of a State Reserve management plan. While the Reserve was specifically exempted by the legislature from creating such a plan (due to the lack of any permanent structures on its land), everyone generally agreed that a plan could help avoid miscommunication and contention about use of Reserve land.

It is the details of such a plan that are the likely ground of future debates over commercial use or other development on Reserve land.

Any plan would need statewide public review and would need to be consistent with the guiding purpose of State Reserves within the State Park system: "The purpose of a state reserve is to preserve its native ecological associations, unique faunal or floral characteristics, geological features, and scenic qualities in a condition of undisturbed integrity."

Director Offers No Support For Eliminating State Reserve

Areias was asked several pointed questions about the future existence of the Reserve. Might the Reserve be abandoned as part of State budget cutting? No, answered Areias, pointing

out past fiascos of parkland abandonment. Might routine interagency lease procedures scheduled for 2002 eliminate the Reserve? No, Areias answered. The State legislature created the Reserve, and interagency activity won't change that.

If Triggered, Water Quality Regulations Would Cap Motorized Recreation

Accompanying Areias were former State Water Board member Marc Del Piero and former Congressman Richard Lehman—both with extensive Mono Lake experience through, respectively, the Water Board decision and the creation of the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area.

Del Piero described the decision in 1994 to designate Mono Lake an Outstanding National Resource Water as "what saved" the brine shrimp harvesting operation at Mono Lake. The designation, which provides the highest level of water quality

"The [Outstanding National Resource Water] designation does not preclude boats but it clearly places limits on certain types of boats."

Continued on page 18

A Moment of Silence

The Mono Lake Committee and staff are saddened by the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., and we extend our deepest sympathy to all those affected by these events. You have no doubt already responded to the tragedy from your heart; here in Lee Vining, Committee staff have donated blood, supported organizations like the American Red Cross, and made contact with families that have been directly affected.

The Committee is also doing its part as an organization. We sit on an advisory panel for the State Department of Water Resources, and one of our tasks is to look at how water delivery would be affected by catastrophic events, including terrorism. Our advice: what will keep our cities hydrated in the wake of a catastrophe is *local self-sufficiency* through water conservation and water recycling—the same strategies we helped initiate in Los Angeles in order to prevent excessive water diversions from the Mono Basin.

In times of conflict as well as times of peace, Mono Lake, its millions of birds, and its unique landscape offer solace, solitude, and a chance to gain perspective on world events. Committee staff will continue to enrich the lives of all Americans in these difficult times by working to assure the good health of this ecological treasure.

Shoreline Highway Construction Still Looms Large

Federal Law Requires Better Planning

by Lisa Cutting & Geoffrey McQuilkin

As this Newsletter was going to press the Committee received notification that the Draft Environmental Impact Report release date has been delayed until January 2003. The reasons are not yet clear, but the extra time clearly allows for addressing the concerns outlined below.

As plans grind forward for highway widening along the shores of Mono Lake, the standard to which Caltrans must rise remains clear: any highway work must be consistent with the protection plans in place for Mono Lake and be in accordance with the State's clean water laws.

To date, the plans for the 2.9 mile-long project do not meet that standard.

Nonetheless, in September Caltrans requested and received a \$5.5 million

budget increase, indicating the agency's intent to proceed.

Precedents for Concern

When Caltrans embarked on the now halfway-completed "Rush Creek" four-lane project in the south Mono Basin, the plans appeared reasonable. Expanding the number of lanes addressed a significant safety issue; with the death of David Gaines as a result of incomplete road widening in 1988 the Committee knows the importance of building safe roads in the Eastern Sierra.

Yet significant problems emerged when the project was put on the ground. Poor management and sloppy execution led to water quality violations on both Rush and Lee Vining creeks—severe enough for fines totaling \$20,500 to be imposed. The area of disturbance, planned for 80 acres in project documents, has spread to 120 acres with no additional review. Cut slopes, identified at a maximum height of six feet

in project documents, have stretched up to 80 feet. In one particularly egregious departure from the plans, the edge of an entire hillside at the intersection of highways 395 and 120—the gateway to Yosemite—was removed. Caltrans has reviewed and confirmed these and other "inconsistencies" in a letter sent to Mono County on December 5, 2000.

Numerous Problems With Shoreline Highway Construction

Now Caltrans is planning road widening along 2.9 miles of Highway 395 along the west shoreline of Mono Lake. The current project alternatives contain design features that include impacts such as cut and fill slopes very close to the lake and retaining walls on both sides of the highway up to 30 feet high. Valuable near-shore wetland areas will be impacted, and movement of deer and other wildlife will be impaired. Highway realignment will increase traffic speed through this highly scenic area.

A detailed letter from the US Forest Service (USFS) describes the project's failure to comply with federal law, which requires study of all alternatives to impacting public recreational lands, and requests that environmentally sound alternatives be developed (see sidebar).

Many from the community have called for a balanced project that addresses safety while maintaining the qualities of Mono Lake that people travel to experience.



Wetlands between the highway and Mono Lake such as these will be negatively impacted by the highway project as currently proposed.

A review of Caltrans' approach to this issue reveals a failure to develop a plan that is consistent with the protection requirements in place today at Mono Lake.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board has also commented, requesting that all alternatives that relocate the highway closer to the lake be abandoned for water quality reasons. Many from the community have called for a balanced project that addresses safety while maintaining the qualities of Mono Lake that people travel to experience.

Committee Concerns & Solutions

The Mono Lake Committee has raised the following specific concerns about the project:

- **Compliance with 4(f) requirements.** (See sidebar)
- **Impacts to wetlands and riparian areas.** The west shore of Mono Lake includes many wetland and riparian areas that are highly productive for wildlife.
- **Impacts to wildlife.** High retaining walls and traffic speed increases will likely lead to more wildlife deaths.
- **Impacts to upland habitat.** The soil in the project area has proven very difficult to revegetate.
- **Impacts to visual resources.** Any new cut slopes, fill slopes, retaining walls, guardrails, or rock-fall netting will have a tremendous visual impact on the visitor experience.
- **Social/economic impacts.** Increasing the design speed from 55 to 60 miles per hour will detract from the unique, tranquil, rural experience that characterizes Mono Lake.
- **Potential public controversy.** Many members of the general public have expressed concern, and a large

number of Mono Lake Committee members — 1,895 to be exact — submitted signed letters of concern.

These concerns can be met by a modified, balanced project that addresses key safety issues and key environmental concerns. The variable width shoulders that currently exist are an effective way of making the highway fit with the shoreline landscape. Certainly one solution is to continue the use of variable width shoulders within the project, particularly where the concerns above are strongest. Clearly identifying specific sites of safety concern will be important for solution-oriented discussion to move forward.

There have been extensive efforts to raise these concerns and solutions within the Caltrans planning process. Caltrans has held many meetings and said that problems would be resolved, but only one change — the inclusion of a vista point near Cemetery Road — has resulted, leaving the balance of the ecological and community concerns in limbo. After repeated meetings, including participating in a Project Development Team of agency representatives and interested parties for the last year, the Committee has now been told that these many concerns would be addressed only in the *Final EIR*, after public review and comment is complete. Recently Caltrans indicated that the Draft EIR alternatives remain unchanged.

Out of Line with Mono Lake Protections

The State Reserve, Forest Service Scenic Area, and the State Water Board's Mono Lake decision in 1994 were all responsive to public concern about protecting Mono Lake and came about as the result of significant time and effort from the public and many agencies, including the Department of Fish and Game, State Parks, State Lands Commission, US EPA, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the State Water Board. Caltrans' unilateral actions undermine the multi-agency protection plans in place by planning damage to the very public trust resources the Water Board decision and management agencies are seeking to

Continued on page 18

Section 4(f) Basics

What is section 4(f)?

Section 4(f) is the common reference to federal law governing the Department of Transportation. The section requires thorough environmental review if a highway project requires the use of publicly owned land that is a park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance. When a Caltrans highway project depends on federal dollars, section 4(f) imposes substantial duties on Caltrans in its planning.

How is section 4(f) engaged?

The responsible land manager of the affected park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge must assert its jurisdictional authority and alert Caltrans to the section 4(f) applicability to the project.

What happens once a project is determined to fall under the section 4(f) requirement?

Ideally, the section 4(f) determination triggers an increased level of dialogue between Caltrans and the responsible agency(s) to do "all possible planning to minimize harm" to the resource. Alternatives should "include measures to maintain or enhance the natural beauty of the lands traversed." These alternatives should be detailed in the EIS/EIR.

How has the section 4(f) affected the Mono Lake Widening Project?

In a letter dated August 3, 2001 the Inyo National Forest submitted a letter to Caltrans asserting the applicability of section 4(f) requirement to this project. Specifically, "additional alternatives need to be developed to the greatest extent possible that would minimize environmental and visual impacts of the highway-widening proposal while maintaining the natural integrity of the Scenic Area."



Outdoor Experiences Marks Its Seventh Year

by Bartshé Miller

The Mono Lake Committee's Outdoor Experiences (OE) program concluded another busy season in October. This year brought some exciting new changes—a hint of those to come in the years ahead.

With the adept help of this year's two OE Coordinators Carrie Simmons and Santiago Escruceria, night prowls, South Tufa walks, and canyon hikes continued in great OE tradition. 2001 saw the addition of two new groups to OE. Both Roosevelt High School (Los Angeles) and Westlake Middle School (Oakland) studied the Mono Lake ecosystem, its water issues, and watered newly-planted pine trees along Lee Vining Creek. Other OE participants returned for another year. Groups like Mothers of East Los Angeles, Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Multnomah School, and others returned for more environmental education programs, restoration activities, hiking, and canoeing.

Bird banding with the Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO) was one of this year's OE highlights. Early in the season Westlake Middle School

was able to observe bird banding along lower Lee Vining Creek. The banding along the creek was an important part of the Eastern Sierra Riparian Songbird Survey. Students were able to see birds up close in the hands of capable researchers.

A Willow Flycatcher and Green-tailed Towhee with a visible brood patch astonished young students.

PRBO bird banding added a new dimension of experience for several participating OE groups, and the survey work is expected to continue next year.

Each year more young people will come to Mono Lake and see the lake rise, the streams recover, and they will understand why. Their homes will be less disconnected, their backyards bigger, and their experiences richer.

Another new development in OE includes the possibility of a new home for the OE program. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) has generously allowed the Committee to use a house at the Cain Ranch property (west of Hwy 395 near the north end of the June Lake Loop/Hwy 158). That may be changing in the coming years as DWP has indicated that it will need the current site to house a caretaker for the Cain Ranch facility. DWP's generosity will not end however. The Department has offered a new site near Parker Creek, with willows and

cottonwoods, adjacent to a vast meadow system unfolding to unobstructed views of the Eastern Sierra escarpment. The program move may happen in the next 2–3 years. The newly proposed OE site will require some investment and work in order to comfortably accommodate groups for camping. Look for updates on OE plans in future newsletters. The changes are exciting, and OE promises to be better than ever!

2001 Program Support

In 2001 the Committee also worked specifically to increase outreach efforts in the Bay Area through a Youth In Wilderness grant. The overwhelming majority of OE participants are from Southern California. However, OE also has a lot to offer youth from other parts of the state. Outreach efforts in the Bay Area were supported principally by Youth in Wilderness, a joint project of the Sierra Club and The Sierra Club Foundation. With this grant the Committee was able to network with new schools and community groups in the greater Bay Area and make plans for future OE trips. The Youth In Wilderness grant also helped fund program time for Westlake Middle

School from Oakland. Program support also came from Elsa Lopez and Mothers of East Los Angeles Santa Isabel, Joan Barker, and Mono Lake Committee members!

After seven years the OE program has hosted young people from all over California, and even a few places in Nevada. The program has brought the history and cultural wealth of the largest urban areas of California and mixed them with Mono Lake. The history of Mono Lake, the birds, the creeks, and the restoration of an ecosystem are blending gradually, and steadily, with the experience of a young generation in Los Angeles. Each year more young people will come to Mono Lake and see the lake rise, the streams recover, and they will understand why. Their homes will be less disconnected, their backyards bigger, and their experiences richer. And perhaps, the future health of Mono Lake and other waters in California will be more certain. ❖

Bartshé Miller is the Committee's Education Director. He has been living off yummy local apples all fall.

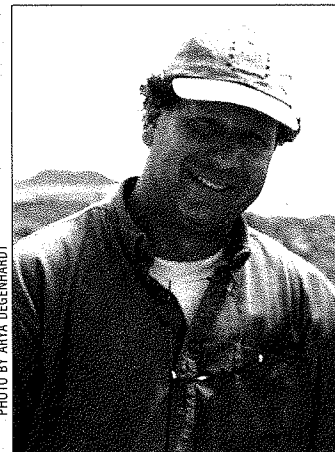


PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

A Colombiano Joins the Education Team

The Outdoor Experiences (OE) program is maturing and growing, and so is its program workload. This year the Committee was fortunate to hire Santiago Escruceria full-time as the new Assistant Education Director. Santiago is a native of Colombia and a three-year veteran of the OE program. He holds a BA in Anthropology and Environmental Studies from Sonoma State University.

Santiago has a wealth of experience in the field of environmental education in addition to his experience as a mentor to troubled teens. As the new Assistant Education Director, he will be able to take a more active role in shaping the program's future success. Santiago will be doing outreach in Southern California and the Bay Area this winter, coordinating next year's OE season, and then leading the program on the ground during the spring, summer, and fall. All the OE participants and Committee staff have become accustomed to Santiago's application of unusual nicknames, and we hope to have a few new ones for him as he grows into his new position. But we're sorry Santiago, it's not really called monkey lake.



PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

Outdoor Experiences shares an appreciation of the Mono Basin through hiking, canoeing, restoration activities, and environmental education programs with participating groups.

Patterns of Reflection

by Gary Nelson

Mono Lake is often depicted in words and photographs like a mirror, reflecting tufa and other surrounding features with a clarity that adds a stunning visual effect to an already awesome scene.

For those lucky enough to be paddling on the lake during a perfectly calm day, the size and detail of these images transcends the realm of reflection to become a separate, if usually hidden, dimension of reality.

However, perfectly calm days are the rare exception at Mono Lake. Its surface usually displays a mosaic of wave patterns resulting from the interaction of the heavy, saline water with unpredictable winds.

My observations of the wind during the canoe tour season are most often made from a short, squat rock at the end of a gravelly berm which is all that remains of the Navy Beach pier. From atop this rock I can be seen intently observing the patterns of the wind, rather like an archaeologist trying to interpret the meaning of obscure hieroglyphics. Morning often finds Mono's waters calm and light blue in color. But inevitably the wind makes its appearance known upon the lake with darker, wind ruffled patches. Sometimes local winds funnel down the steep drainages above Mono's western shore, sending long feathery dark plumes of rippled water stretching eastward, often presaging stronger winds.

One of our tour guests, who proclaimed himself a yachtsman, once told me a common name for some of Mono's most common wind patterns: "cat's paws." And I must admit that if a gigantic, invisible, lighter-than-air cat were to step

ever so gingerly upon the surface of the lake it might well leave the oval shaped rippled patches that are seen so often upon the surface of the lake.

Occasionally one of these cat's paws will appear a short distance from my canoe, causing passengers to ask why the water is ruffled only 20 feet away from us when there is no perceptible wind. Barring the timely flyby of an osprey, or other reason to change the subject, I usually have to admit the truth: I just don't know why.

I don't know why dark blue wind-ruffled linear patches alternate with calm water, reflecting Paoha's white color, to produce enormous blue and white stripes upon the lake.

I don't know why the wind changes direction 360 degrees in a minute's time when it's a clear day and not a cloud in the sky.

I don't know why acre-sized masses of lake water pass each other like adjacent rivers flowing in opposite directions.

I guess that I shouldn't feel too bad since meteorologists still can't accurately predict the local weather that occurs when intricately layered air masses interact with the radically complex topography of the Eastern Sierra. In spite of all the scientific work done on Mono Lake, many aspects of its natural processes remain like the wind upon its waters, unknown patterns created by unseen forces. ❖

Gary Nelson is the Committee's Canoe Program Supervisor. He is wondering if the school bus will fit the increasing number of Committee offspring in Mono City.



PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

PHOTO BY RICHARD KNEPP



The Forgotten Season

A Winter Photography Seminar at Mono Lake

Winter in the Mono Basin is a season of silence, of starkly beautiful shoreline, of bare trees gilded in the lacy ice, of morning poconip fog, of craters shouldering a cloak of snow. It is truly a magical season for photography.

After years of anticipation, we are pleased to announce a brand new Mono Lake Committee winter photography field seminar. This seminar to be held March 1-3, 2002 will take place both in the field and indoors. It will begin late Friday afternoon and continue through Sunday afternoon. There will be ample time spent in the field on Saturday and Sunday taking advantage of the Mono Basin winter landscape and light.

The seminar will be led by Richard Knepp, past Committee staff member and long-time photographer whose autumn seminars have sold out four years running. Knepp has studied with master printers John Sexton and Jim

Stimson, teaches photography and darkroom techniques, and directs and assists at workshops around the Southwest. His work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions, and is represented in public and private

collections throughout the West. Rick is a veteran of Mono winters and his experience will allow the class to take advantage of the many winter photographic opportunities.

Come prepared for the cold and mystical winter landscapes. This seminar will take place regardless of weather. Be prepared for the possibility of driving in snow, or the

extra driving that may be required when Sierra passes are either closed for the winter or closed temporarily due to snow. There will be no refunds due to weather.

For registration or more information on this unique winter photography seminar, contact Education Director Bartshe Miller (bartshe@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595.

MARCH 1-3, 2002

\$175 for MLC members

\$195 for non-members

Rush Creek Return Ditch Rehabilitation Underway

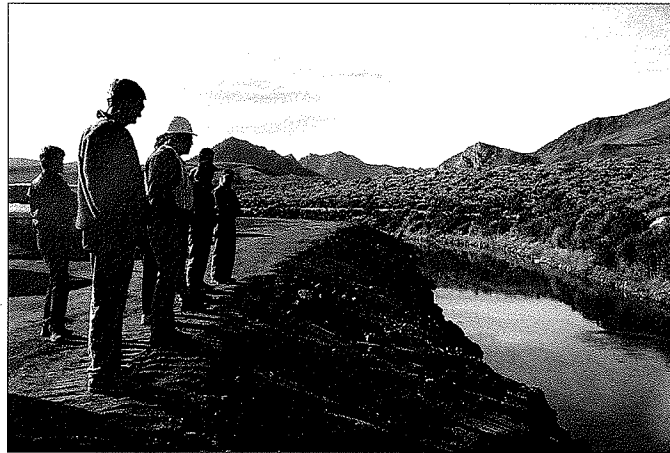
The Promise of Peak Flows in 2002

by Geoffrey McQuilkin

The rehabilitation of the Rush Creek return ditch—the source of water for lower Rush Creek—proceeded extremely well this year, with phase one wrapping up in October. An enthusiastic work crew of up to 38 paid careful attention to both engineering and environmental needs on the 1.5 mile-long project.

The goal of the project is to eliminate seepage and strengthen the ditch wall to allow the transport of more water. Water in the return ditch is the source of Rush Creek flows below Grant Dam and in recent years ditch limitations have resulted in a failure to deliver Water Board-ordered springtime creek flows.

The work crew, led by supervisor Carlos Gomez, worked 12 hours a day, 6 days a week, for three months. While broadening and compacting the ditch wall, the crew successfully minimized water quality and dust disturbance. Disturbed topsoil was stored separately and returned to the banks of the ditch wall, which have been revegetated with native plant seeds from the Mono Basin. Two previously impacted areas were used for equipment and material storage



Committee and DWP staff out at the Rush Creek return ditch. Peak flows are expected to raise the water level five feet above the level in this photograph—necessitating the rehabilitation project.

and, in the end, they too will be fully revegetated.

On a tour of the return ditch with DWP biologist Dave Martin, equipment operator Jeff James, truck driver John Smith, and mechanic Gary Whinnery, the crew's attention to detail was readily apparent. "I've been coming here 20 years and want to see these resources protected as much as anyone else. We've taken special care to protect the environment including the fish, existing vegetation, and wildlife

habitat, and hope to be the crew that finishes the job next summer," said Gomez.

Work will continue in 2002, but the ditch is expected to carry new higher flows in the spring both as a test and to deliver the long missing peak flows that Rush Creek restoration needs. ♦

Geoffrey McQuilkin is the Committee's Executive Director of Operations. He is enjoying his new role as a father and is wondering why other people need so much sleep.

Recognition for the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve

The Mono Lake Committee presented Janet Carle and Brad Sturdivant of the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve with a framed resolution during Restoration Days. The resolution, which was passed by the Committee Board of Directors, commended the State Reserve staff for their continued outstanding service to the Mono Basin, especially their education efforts and hard work in the field.



COMMITTEE AWARDS RECOGNIZE Defenders of the Trust

by Jeff Darlington

The Mono Lake Committee awarded CalTrout and Stan Eller with the annual Defender of the Trust award at Restoration Days this year, recognizing their extraordinary efforts to champion Mono Lake and its tributary streams.

In 1984, CalTrout spearheaded a lawsuit against the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) charging that Rush Creek diversions violated California Fish and Game codes 5937 and 5946, which require that enough water be allowed to flow past dams to keep fisheries in good condition. CalTrout took the lead in the legal battle to enforce this code at Rush Creek when, in the winter of 1984, DWP planned to once again dewater the creek.

Stan Eller (then Assistant District Attorney for Mono County) turned the legal argument into action on the ground. In keeping with efforts to enforce the Fish and Game codes at Rush Creek, he informed DWP that if their employees made a move to shut down the creek, he

would take those employees into custody. As a result DWP left water in Rush Creek, the legal case proceeded successfully, and Rush Creek has been flowing ever since.

Accepting the award for CalTrout was Executive Director Mark Bergstrom.

"We're honored to accept this award from the Mono Lake Committee," he said, "and we hope to continue to work in partnership with the Committee to see this great area restored."

Stan Eller echoed the importance of cooperation, adding, "Every time I drive by Rush Creek I remember the winter of 1984 and the important actions all of us took to protect this beautiful stream."

For a list of past Defender of the Trust recipients, see www.monolake.org/committee/defender. ♦

Jeff Darlington is the Committee's Office Director. He still loves the Mono Basin, even after his vacation in Idaho.

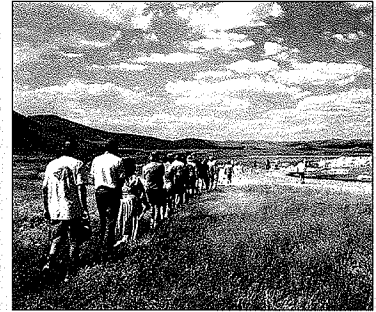


PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

Restoration Days: The Celebration Continues

by Jeff Darlington

Restoration Days 2001 was a fun weekend filled with old and new friends gathering in the Mono Basin to celebrate ongoing restoration efforts.

This year's focus was on Mono Basin streams and riparian habitat. CalTrout Conservation Director Jim Edmondson, research scientist Dave Herbst, Committee staff, and other experts led a field trip to Rush Creek, where participants learned about the recovery of this magnificent stream through study of invertebrate and fish life. The Committee's Policy Director Heidi Hopkins led a workshop on native plants and coordinated the removal of non-native tamarisk from sensitive riparian areas.

Thanks to all who participated—it was great seeing you! Special thanks to all those who helped make this year's event a success, including Bob Madgic, Lucy Parker, Jim Lewis, Deborah Hawk, Janet Carle, CalTrout, TreePeople, and Friends of the Cosumnes River.

For more details about this year's Restoration Days events, see www.monolake.org/events/restdays.



PHOTOS BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

Committee Board Member Martha Davis presented the Defender of the Trust award to Mark Bergstrom of CalTrout who spoke about the importance of partnerships in environmental protection.



Stan Eller, holding the Defender of the Trust award, recalled his fateful phone conversation in 1984, warning DWP not to turn off the flows to Rush Creek.

Driest Year Since the Water Board Decision

by Greg Reis

From the Author: Along with the environmental and design upgrades to the Newsletter, we're adding a new Streamwatch article, offering a spot to discuss and report on Mono's recovering tributaries. Of course, the hydrologic cycle of the Mono Basin connects everything: the weather affects the snowpack, which affects the streams, which affect the groundwater, and all of the above affect the lake, with the lake in turn affecting the groundwater and weather—wow! I will also make an effort to discuss more of the non-hydrology science of the lake and streams to convey a bigger picture of the events surrounding them. If you have an idea for an aspect of the lake or streams you would like to see explained here, or any feedback about these articles, please send me an email at greg@monolake.org.

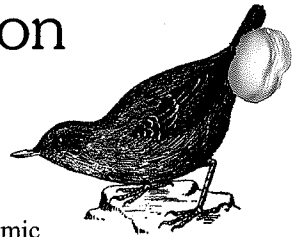
This year peak flows critical for restoration on the streams came earlier and were sharper than forecasted. Coincidentally, early and sharp peak flows are one of the predicted effects of global warming. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) real time data Website, despite its glitches, was very useful for keeping track of what was happening during the peak flow season (see link at www.monobasinresearch.org).

Lee Vining Creek peaked at about 236 cubic feet per second (cfs) in mid-May. Lower Rush Creek had a peak of about 200 cfs that lasted for about four days in late May, three days less than required. This year marked the end of six years in a row of Grant Lake Reservoir spills—it was the first year since 1994 without a spill. All of Rush Creek's flow passed through the return ditch, which is

currently being upgraded to handle higher flows and seismic forces.

Thanks to some vigorous thunderstorms early in July and August, brief rises in streamflow and lake level were seen. Lee Vining had two 1/8 inch rainstorms in July and a 1/2 inch one in August. All of these events caused murky runoff to enter Lee Vining Creek, and the August event caused mudslides in Lee Vining Canyon that closed Tioga Road for several days.

Most of the Sierra snowpack is now gone and with fall come the lowest stream flows of the year. We'll be doing our snow dances here in Lee Vining and hoping for a wet year ahead. ❖



Lakewatch

Lake Level Drops as Predicted

by Greg Reis

Mono Lake dropped at the rate of about 0.1 foot per week in September and now, at the end of October, stands at 6382.7 feet above sea level—the lowest level since March 1998.

Back then the lake was rising rapidly due to an El Niño winter, and DWP installed a new lake level gauge to keep up with the rising water. A year ago that gauge was left stranded high and dry, and the

Committee encouraged DWP to install a new lower one. In July a new lake level gauge was installed. Already the new gauge has less than a foot left on it, or maybe another year left if conditions remain dry.

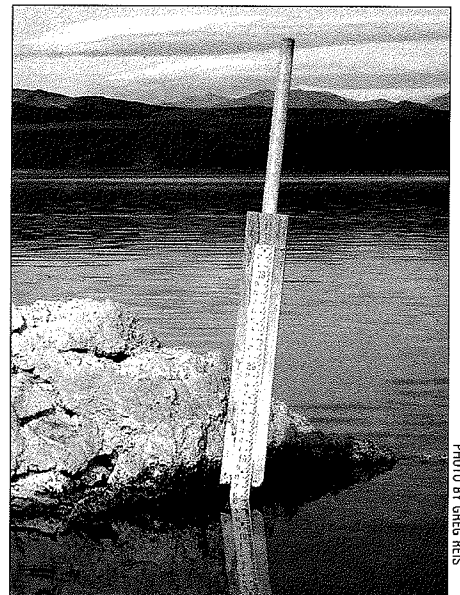
If the lake follows predictions, it will rise several inches through the winter to 6383.2. Looking back in history, today's level is the same as that of 1974 and almost 11 feet above the lake's lowest point, reached in 1982.

This winter the Committee will be doing some supplemental lake level forecasting and model checking to review the current lake level predictions. Watch for a report in the spring! ❖

Greg Reis is the Committee's Information

6417'
6392'
6383'
6372'

Prediversion lake level, 1941
Target lake level
Current lake level
Historic low, 1982



The lake level gauge in late October, 2001.

Specialist. His home solar panels combined with energy conservation have allowed him to achieve no net use of electricity generated from fossil fuels or nuclear power.

Mono Basin Journal

A Roundup of Quiet Happenings at Mono Lake

by Geoffrey McQuilkin



PHOTO BY GEOFFREY MCQUILKIN

Apples have been the talk of the town as a bumper crop weighs down branches throughout the Mono Basin. The standard springtime routine—fruit trees blossom, skies cloud over, snow flies, wind blows, blossoms freeze and fall—got skipped this year. Apple pies all winter will be the harvest's history, offering memories of warm days as the snow falls.

Autumn drifted casually into the Mono Basin this year—no September freezes, no snow dusting Dana, Warren, or San Joaquin, just the sudden moment when everyone is talking of yellow leaves rustling among the aspens. Except for one windy day that knocked over signs, lawn furniture, and entire trees, the fall colors have been undisturbed as they put on their annual show. With everyone smiling about the nice weather, early fall colors became regular fall colors and held on to become late fall colors, pleasing many a leaf looker.

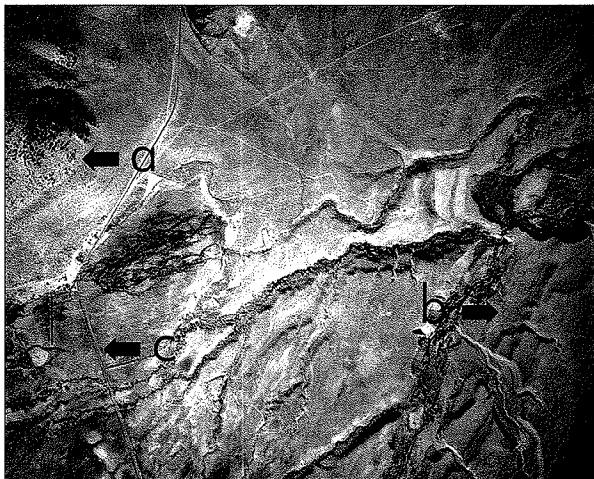
Be the weather nice or ferocious, the days still shorten and the leaves still fall; yellow and orange streaks spill down the mountainsides as the season descends, a thousand feet at a time, to the lake's edge. When winter tires of visiting the basin, the fresh green of spring will regain this same ground in reverse order, rising upward to the mountain peaks.

And out there on the water the day of unstoppable wind whipped froth off the lake and tore the tops off whitecaps. But mostly the air has been calm, the lake resting quietly. One evening as cumulus clouds captured sunset colors overhead, you would have thought the lake would be mirror-flat and reflective. A closer look revealed grebes diving in the twilight, casting radiating circles of silver from their paths, thousands upon tens of thousands upon hundreds of thousands out across the salty waters. ❖

Benchmarks



COPY FROM THE FAIRCHILD COLLECTION COURTESY OF MCSAIN & TRISH



1929 aerial of Parker, Walker, and Rush creeks above the Rush Creek Narrows. Note: a. the relatively small number of piñon pines on the slopes of Williams Butte and the lack of the aqueduct road, b. the absence of the gravel mine, and c. old Hwy 395.

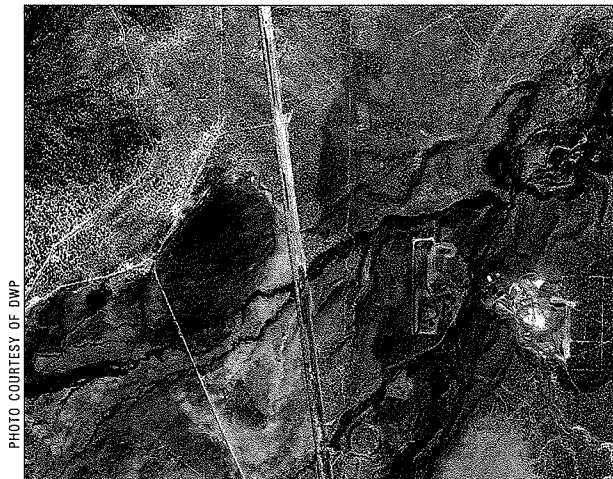


PHOTO COURTESY OF DWP

The same area in 2001. The number of piñon pines has increased, and the aqueduct road, gravel mine, and Hwy 395 complete with highway widening are visible.

Re-Committing to Responsibility

Greening Resolution Passed by Committee Board of Directors

by Jeff Darlington

On the heels of the California power crisis last summer, the Committee re-affirmed its commitment to energy conservation and environmentally sound—or green—business practices.

In July the Committee Board of Directors unanimously adopted a resolution that states the Committee “will, to the greatest extent practicable, seek to use and promote environmentally friendly products, with a special emphasis on water and energy efficiency.”

Committee Board member and Director at Pacific Gas and Electric Company in San Francisco Guillermo Rodriguez Jr. is taking the lead on having the Committee join the “Flex Your Power Non-Profit Initiative” (www.flexyourpower.ca.gov) that calls for such steps as setting thermostats for minimal heating/cooling, reducing lighting levels, closing blinds and shades, and turning off appliances when not in active use.

“Certainly, the effort to be environmentally responsible is not new to the Committee, but it is one that we are formally affirming through this greening resolution,” says Executive Director of Operations Geoff McQuilkin. “Here in the Lee Vining office we use compact fluorescent lights, monitor and conserve our energy use, and use passive heating and cooling as

much as possible.”

Plans for the upcoming remodel of the Lee Vining office incorporate even stronger green energy use practices. Solar and wind power, passive heating and lighting, better insulation, and an interpretive display about renewable energy are all components of the planned remodel.

“I do my part in the Committee Bookstore too,” says Retail and Wholesale Operations Manager Ramona Robbins-Clark. “We carry clothing made of organic cotton and soy-based inks, water conservation products, and products made of recycled materials.” See the organic cotton T-shirts on page 22.

Another thing the Committee is doing to stay green is seeking out partnerships with businesses such as Planet, Inc. (see below) to ensure we’re using and promoting green products. In fact, the newsletter you’re holding right now is another example of our green business practices (see sidebar)!

To see the ways the Committee is working to protect the environment in its business practices see www.monolake.org/committee/green. ♦

Jeff Darlington is the Committee's Office Director. He's calculating how many hours of winter sun his shady home location will allow in.

A Responsible Newsletter Upgrade

The *Mono Lake Newsletter* has been an integral part of the Mono Lake Committee from the very beginning. David Gaines produced Volume 1 Number 1 on a typewriter in the spring of 1978. Since inception it has kept members, visitors, citizens, and politicians abreast of Mono Lake environmental threats, scientific reports, and educational opportunities.

With the Committee's renewed commitment to environmental responsibility came a close examination of the components of the Newsletter. At the same time we have updated the design of the Newsletter—for the first time in over 10 years!

The environmental responsibility upgrades are:

1. The new paper is acid-free, 100% recycled with 30% post-consumer fiber, and recyclable.
2. The new inks are vegetable based.
3. The new printer incorporates printing, complete recycling, list preparation, and mailing all in one place. Address data is transferred electronically and transportation is minimized.

If you have any questions about the Newsletter please contact Arya Degenhardt (arya@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595.

Planet Inc. Helps Keep the Committee Green and Clean

Planet, Inc., a leading name in environmentally friendly cleaning products, has agreed to provide the Mono Lake Committee with free cleaning materials for the office and Information Center.

Planet products are certified biodegradable by Scientific Certification

Systems—meaning their products break down quickly into carbon dioxide, basic minerals, and water. Along with a high level of environmental responsibility, Planet products perform as well as non-biodegradable products, and are comparable in price.

Thank you to Planet for helping the Committee be more environmen-

tally responsible! For details about Planet's commitment to the environment, see www.planetinc.com, and for more details on Planet's donation to the Mono Lake Committee, see www.monolake.org/committee/green.



High Sierra



Fall Century

High Sierra Fall Century, 2001

A Ride With a Purpose

by Shelly Backlar

"Is the Century ride on for this weekend?"

The calls started pouring in after the jarring events on September 11, as the High Sierra Fall Century was scheduled for Saturday, September 15. Because the Century is such a positive event with over 650 riders pre-registered to attend, the Sierra Cycling Foundation and the Mono Lake Committee agreed to go forward with the ride.

"I'm glad you're still having the ride, this will be good for me," was the typical response.

Over 850 did in fact travel to the Eastern Sierra to ride either the 30-mile, 48-mile, or 100-mile course. Riders came from near and far, from California and around the West. They came for many reasons—to challenge themselves physically, to enjoy the scenic surroundings, to get away for perspective, and to remember the most important aspects of their lives.

The High Sierra Fall Century raises funds for the Sierra Cycling Foundation and the Mono Lake Committee while raising awareness of both organizations' programs. The event is a labor of love, involving numerous volunteers who come together to see that the cyclists have the best possible cycling experience. Five rest stops with a plethora of food and drink are positioned along the course where sandwiches are made, fruit cut up and chilled, and water and sports drinks poured.

The 100-mile course took riders along the spectacular east side of the Sierra and into the quiet beauty of the Mono Basin with awesome views of Mono Lake and the White Mountains. Clear sunny skies beckoned cyclists to brave the cool temperatures and begin riding, some as early as 7:00AM. Men and women of all ages rode, even families with children as young as nine years old. Seeing a young man about 12 years old with flags on the handles of his bicycle and a grin on his face brought tears to those who worked behind the scenes to put on this event.

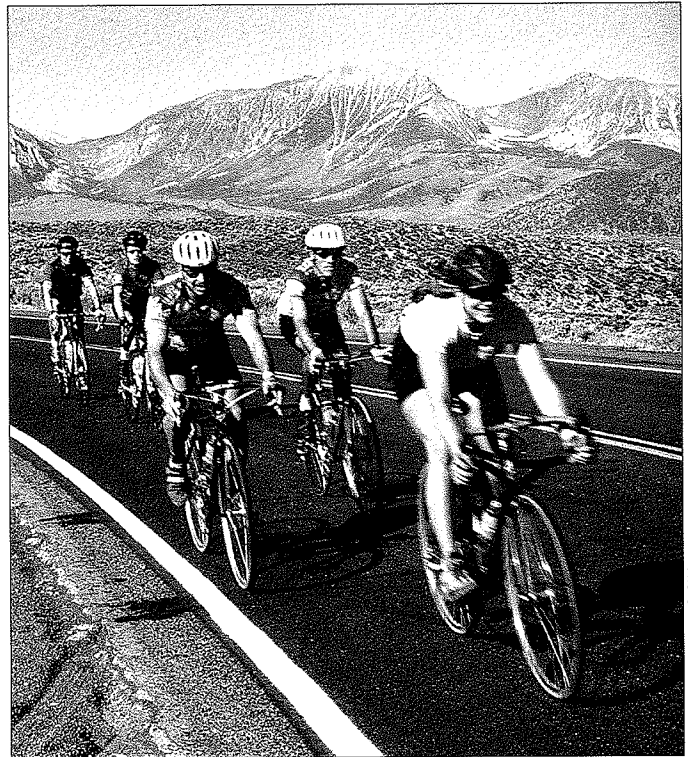


PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

Century cyclists at mile 30 riding along Mono Lake on Hwy 120 with the Sierra in the background and not a cloud in the sky.

The event could not have happened without the help of sponsors who helped defray the costs of the event and provided crucial volunteer support before, during, and after the ride. ❖

Shelly Backlar is the Committee's Development Director. She and her family vacationed for a week of hiking, fishing, and sight-seeing in the Mono Basin this year!

Thank You Century Sponsors!

Platinum Sponsors:

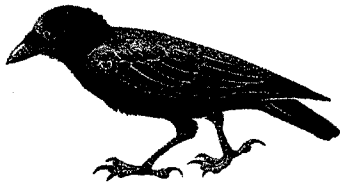
**Mammoth California
Union Bank
Intrawest
The Mono Inn at Mono Lake
Footloose Sports
Los Angeles Department of
Water and Power
Base Camp Café**

Sponsors:

**ClifBar
Vons
The Mono Market
Designs Unlimited
Erick Schat's Bakery
Nicely's Restaurant
Barkley Meats**

**Mammoth Sporting Goods
Lions Club of Lee Vining
Mammoth Rotary
Whiskey Creek
Friends of the Inyo
Mono Basin Scenic Area
Visitor Center
Photocrazy**

—From the Mono Lake Committee and the Sierra Cycling Foundation



Naturalist Notes



July: a Ring-billed Gull caught cavorting with the California Gulls out at the rookery ... a third Willow Flycatcher nest is found on Rush Creek ... in the night sky it looks like the constellation of Scorpio has two hearts as Mars creeps towards its red rival Antares ... a Redhead, Willet, Western Kingbird, Cinnamon Teals, and Black-necked Stilts spotted out at DeChambeau Ponds ... the young of many bird species have hatched and are spotted being particularly cute down at the end of the boardwalk at County Park.

August: the natural disasters begin ... after weeks of smoke from Yosemite wildfires and dreams of clear skies and rain, it came ... the rain started and it just didn't stop, causing multiple mud and rockslides on Highway 120 on the way up to Tioga Pass ... and a few days and many thunderbolts later a wildfire started in the Jeffrey Pine forest behind the Mono Craters and burnt its way past the historic Mono Mills site and out towards the lake, with billowing clouds during the day and a hot red line of glowing flames and embers at dusk ... a White Pelican spotted at Navy Beach ... and a Golden Eagle seen catching a California Gull in midair out by Black Point.

September: a Greater White-fronted Goose seen out at DeChambeau Ponds ... an immature Ferruginous Hawk spotted out at the County Ponds ... clear skies for the equinox ... over at County Park a Northern Harrier, Prairie Falcon, Common Yellowthroat, a flock of 50 Pinyon Jays, ten Wilson's Phalaropes still around, a Virginia Rail, and a multitude of Least and Western Sandpipers seen from the boardwalk.

October: a male Red Crossbill singing from the top of a lodgepole pine near Sagehen Summit ... a shooting star family is born ... and then a new variety of bean is located in the Mono Basin ... both omens of many cute immature *Homo sapiens* sightings in the future ❖

COMMON NAME: EARED GREBE

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Podicipediformes
Family: Podicipedidae
Genus: Podiceps
Species: nigricollis

THE EARED GREBE

Mono Lake is a stopover for approximately 1.6 million Eared Grebes on their migration from Canada to the Salton Sea and the Gulf of California. From September through November Eared Grebes can be spotted in astounding numbers on Mono Lake. Here are some fun facts about this fascinating bird.

- Eared Grebes are diving waterbirds, so they both swim and fly but do not walk on land. They dive and swim gracefully underwater using their feet like propellers to move through the water as they forage.
- Their diet (while at Mono Lake) of approximately 90% brine shrimp provides the energy they need to molt worn feathers, grow new ones, and fatten in preparation for the next leg of their migration.
- They feast on brine shrimp by using their relatively large tongues to squeeze out the salty water. During their stay at Mono Lake they rarely leave the lake, obtaining fresh water entirely from the bodies of the shrimp.
- Some become so fat they cannot fly, and have to diet back into shape before departing for wintering areas.
- Eared Grebes generally migrate in large flocks at night and have been tracked on radar flying at 60 miles per hour.
- Eared Grebes don't have a notable real ear; rather, their breeding plumage makes them look as though they have a large golden ear.
- The locals in Lee Vining used to call the Eared Grebes "helldivers." And it is said that if you pick up an Eared Grebe stranded on land you must keep it away from your face—they instinctively peck at your eyes in self defense!

Eared Grebe identification for fall at Mono Lake

- Length: 12½ inches (32cm)
- Dark gray to black body with white and light gray on neck
- Throat is variably dusky, cheek dark, and whitish plumage on chin extends up as a crescent behind eye
- Head triangular, with a peak towards the center of the head
- Black bill, red eye
- White secondaries show as a patch on trailing edge of wing
- Feet set far back on body and trail awkwardly behind body in flight
- Sexes similar




Only in Lee Vining

... where the entire town turns out for a farewell party

Unlocated Grave of the Unknown Miner

The grave of the unknown miner—or sometimes the lost fisherman—a local legend, communal shrine, an eclectic mass of travel paraphernalia and humor ... has gone underground. The grave's previous home at the intersection of highways 395 and 120 east is in the midst of the massive highway widening project. But fear not, unlike much of the sagebrush in the construction zone, this ode to kitsch and lore has been lovingly preserved by the local chapter of E Clampus Vitus and is waiting patiently to be resurrected when the project is completed. Keep your eye out for the resurrection soon!



Sage Grouse Mania at Mono Lake Committee

Over the summer the Committee commissioned Mammoth High grad Nick Carle to "do something" to spruce up the Committee's old sheds on the back side of the Lee Vining store. Nick decided to paint Sage Grouse. "They're funny," said the dreadlocked artist. "They're so weird compared to other birds, all puffed out like that." Nick was referring to the ritual puffing, strutting, and booming that male sage grouse engage in to attract females.

Nick is locally known for his art, including the comic strip "Nick & Speedy," which formerly ran in the Review-Herald, and for murals at Navy Beach at Mono Lake. He's currently a freshman at Humboldt State University, where he's majoring in... art! Thanks Nick!

Sidewalks Not Down the Drain

As many a summer visitor noticed, you can now walk the streets of Lee Vining in style! Continuous concrete sidewalks—a novelty in these parts—were installed in the spring thanks to much work from community members and the Mono County Planning Department. As with all newfangled things, a problem was found when the first rainstorm drained almost entirely into the Mono Cone parking lot, but the experts at local Construction Specialty fixed it all up in advance of winter.

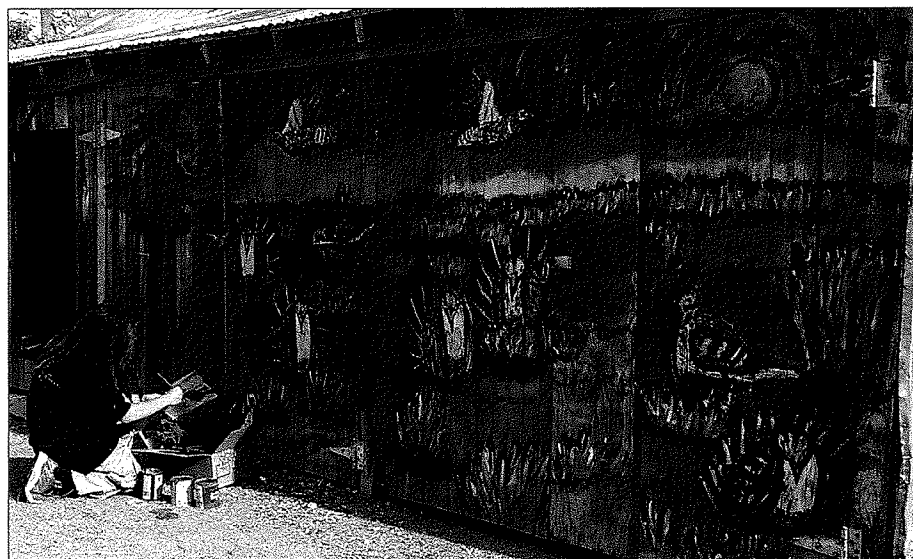


Lee Vining Throws Quite a Party

It takes an awful special occasion, but it can be done in Lee Vining—close to the entire town came out to bid farewell to community members Floyd "Griff" Griffin and Heidi Hess Griffin. Hun-

dreds of family members and friends expressed their thanks and appreciation at the going away party in Hess Park on September 22, 2001. Griff retired as superintendent of Lee Vining operations for U.S. Pumice after thirty-three years. Heidi and Griff have donated countless hours to the Mono Basin community. Among other things, Griff and Heidi have supported the Lee Vining Fire Department, June Lake/Lee Vining Lion's Club, Lee Vining Elementary and High Schools, Mono Basin Historical Society, People for Mono Basin Preservation, E Clampus Vitus, Sorority, Lee Vining Auxiliary, Order of Eastern Star, Panum Pantry Food Co-op, and the Mono Lake Kutzadika^a Indian Community. Phew! As you can imagine, their experience, generosity, and kindness will be missed by all. Best wishes to them in their new home in Smith Valley, Nevada. ❖

—Arya Degenhardt, Heidi Hopkins, Geoffrey McQuilkin, and Lauren Davis.



Nick Carle painting Sage Grouse Mania on the side of the Mono Lake Committee building.

State Parks Director Visit – from page 3

protection possible, avoided the Federal listing of *Artemia monica*, Mono's endemic brine shrimp, as an endangered species.

The upshot of the designation is this: right now, local residents and adventurous visitors are free to recreate on the lake as they wish because activity on the lake is at such a low level that the regulatory authorities have not been engaged. But pushing the boundaries of use would trigger immediate, strict water quality regulations.

"The designation does not preclude boats," Del Piero reminded the group, "but it clearly places limits on certain types of boats."

Lake Tahoe is the only other Outstanding National Resource Water in California, and it has strong, detailed water quality protections that protect the lake from hydrocarbon pollution originating with motorized activity.

Scenic Area Management Plan Seen As a Model

The Forest Service's Scenic Area Management Plan was frequently referred to in the meeting as the type of comprehensive, clear plan that could help resolve concerns involving the State Reserve. Developing such documents requires time, commitment from stakeholders, and funding. In the case of the Reserve, all three may come together next year to get a discussion process off the ground. ❖

Geoffrey McQuilkin is the Committee's Co-Executive Director. His new favorite thing is to have his daughter Caelen fall asleep on his chest.

Caltrans – from page 5

protect. A review of Caltrans' approach to this issue reveals a failure to develop a plan that is consistent with the protection requirements in place today at

Mono Lake. This behavior would not be acceptable from any of the parties in the Mono Lake case; it is not acceptable from Caltrans.

The Committee remains committed to working on developing a project that improves safety to the extent possible while maintaining Mono Lake's stunning views and lakeshore habitat. Safety improvements can be made without creating the severe visual and environmental impacts currently in the plans.

Public Comment Will Be Critical

Public comment will be critical when a suitable Draft Environmental Impact Report is released—which is currently planned for January 2003. News of the DEIR release will be on the Mono Lake Website www.monolake.org or join the direct alert list by contacting Lisa Cutting (lisa@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595. ❖

North Basin Stream Stays Wet

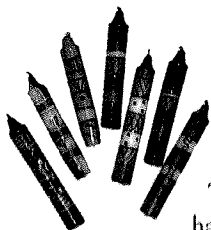
As summers go these days, it was a good one for Mill Creek, Mono Lake's third largest tributary. Water flowed down the stream channel and reached the lake throughout the entire summer season. Mill Creek has run dry frequently in previous years, despite being the only year-round Mono Basin stream not diverted into the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The reason? Little attention has been paid to the creek while water has been diverted for hydropower, irrigation, fish rearing, and Wilson Creek flows. Ongoing discussions about the management of water in the North Mono Basin offer the potential for a well-planned, water-efficient solution to competing water demands that respects both Mill and Wilson creeks while providing for multiple uses associated with water rights.



PHOTO BY ARYA DEGENHARDT

THE FALL CATALOG

from the Mono Lake Committee Bookstore



HAND-PAINTED CANDLES

These beautiful candles were designed and hand painted by a women's organization in Southern Africa and are a beautiful artistic addition to any room. We will select the best colors to go with your candle holders (see below), or you can request tones of blue, green, or brown. Sizes and colors may vary slightly.

Mini candle, measures approximately 5" x 1": \$4.95 each (#3446)

Large taper, measures approximately 10" x 1": \$6.95 each (#3447)



HAND-THROWN POTTERY

BY LOCAL ARTIST JACK TREFRY

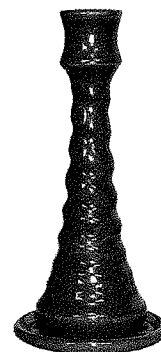
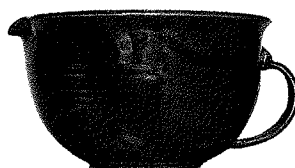
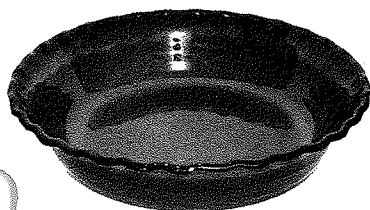
Co-Executive Director Geoffrey McQuilkin, his wife Sarah, and daughter (still on the way at the time) were happy to show off supporter Jack Trefry's pie dish and batter bowl. Jack Trefry has been a potter for over 25 years, gracing the Eastern Sierra with his fine pottery for over 10 years. Jack's work speaks for itself. The pottery is oven and microwave safe, and the glazes are high gloss for beauty and easy cleaning. Color and size may vary. Please specify blue, green, cream, or brown tones.

Pie Dish, approximately 10" in diameter and 3" deep: \$26.00 (#2550)

Batter Bowl, approximately 8" in diameter, 5" deep with handle and spout: \$40.00 (#3385)

Candleholder with handle, approximately 3" tall, a 5" base w/ handle: \$11.95 (#2534)

Candleholder, tall, approximately 7" tall with a 3½" base: \$12.95 (#2535)



HUMMINGBIRD WINDOW OR GARDEN HANGING BY DESIGNS IN COPPER

This copper and glass hanging is a beautiful addition to any window.

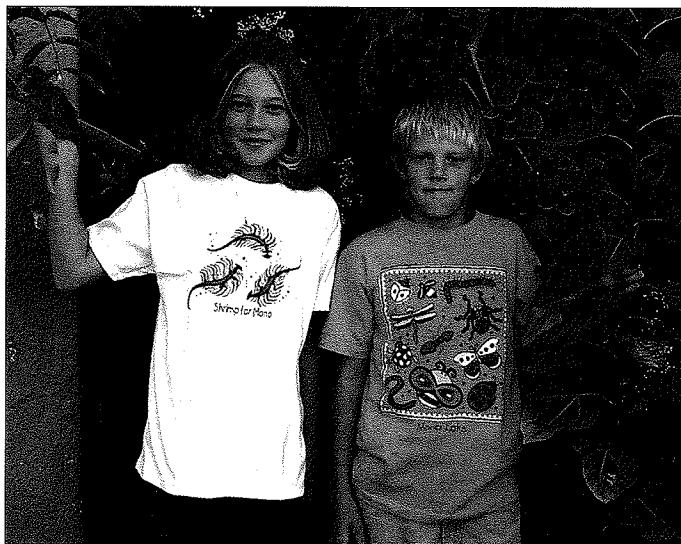
Because of its copper and glass construction, it can also be hung outside and become more beautiful as it acquires a patina finish.

Hummingbird hanging, measures approximately 8½" x 6½": \$26.00 (#3428)



Call (760) 647-6595 to order

❖ The Fall Catalog ❖



SHRIMP FOR MONO T-SHIRT

Neighborhood friend Hanna is modeling the popular Shrimp for Mono shirt. This colorful kids' shirt is printed on a 100% pre-shrunk cotton Hanes Beefy-T. Three colorful brine shrimp circle the center of this white shirt in support of Mono Lake.

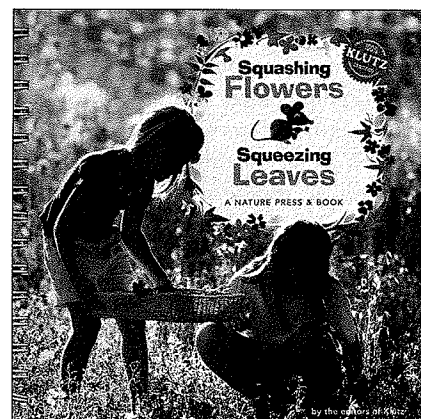
Shrimp for Mono shirt, size 2-4 (#3744), 6-8 (#3745), 14-16 (#3747): \$10.95



THIS SHIRT IS BUGGED!

Colorful ladybugs, dragonflies, butterflies, worms, ants, spiders, and bees crawl around on the front of this orange shirt worn by our buddy Bodie. This shirt is very colorful and looks great on any boy or girl.

This Shirt is Bugged, size 2-4 (#3545), 6-8 (#3546), 10-12 (#3547): \$14.00



SQUASHING FLOWERS AND SQUEEZING LEAVES: A NATURE PRESS & BOOK

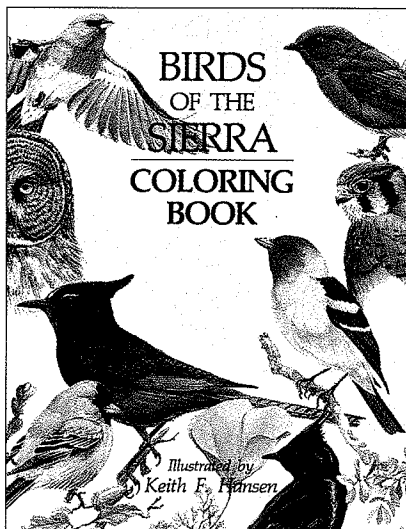
This book gives full instructions for drying flowers and leaves. It's an easy to use rubber-banded and fold-up nature press. Complete with illustrated ideas for candles, lampshades, magnets, placemats, and more! This book has tons of ideas for the creative child or adult.

Squashing Flowers and Squeezing Leaves: measures 8" x 8", hard cover spiral bound: \$19.95 (#565)

BIRDS OF THE SIERRA COLORING BOOK ILLUSTRATED BY KEITH HANSEN

Complete with color plates and bird and status charts, this 24-page coloring book is great for learning your bird colors. It is hard to determine if we sell more of them to children or adults!

Birds of the Sierra Coloring Book, measures 11" x 8½": \$3.95 (#85)



ART SCHOOL SET

What better way to fill in your *Birds of the Sierra Coloring Book* then with this 68-piece art set! This briefcase-style student edition set includes broad-tip markers, colored pencils, crayons, oil pastels, white glue, pencil sharpener, eraser, pencil, paintbrush, ruler, and watercolor paints in a durable vinyl case.

Art School Set, measures 12½" x 8½" x 1½": \$8.95 (#3882)

Call (760) 647-6595 to order

❖ The Fall Catalog ❖



LIVE BUTTERFLY GARDEN: WATCH THEM GROW AND LET THEM GO!

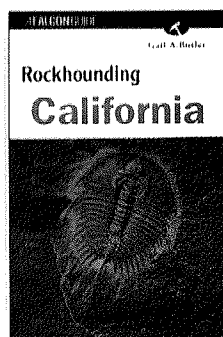
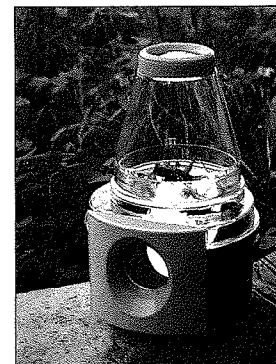
This habitat and discovery kit is great for the home or classroom to teach kids about butterfly metamorphosis. Included is a butterfly feeding kit, a guide with butterfly facts, and a certificate for five painted lady caterpillars. Watch them grow in your home or classroom, then let them go in your garden. Caterpillars can only be shipped within the continental USA and to the European Union.

Live Butterfly Garden, kit measures 17" x 13": \$19.95 (#2606)

CREATURE PEEPER: THE OVER AND UNDER INSECT WONDER

This kid and bug friendly viewer lets kids study their catches up close from two views. Peep at ladybugs, crickets, worms, or brine shrimp. The watertight viewing chamber will even keep tadpoles and small fish safe during inspections. Constructed of durable plastic, the 3x magnifier is perfect for show-and-tell, field trips, and insect excursions. One plastic bug included. Recommended for ages 4 and up.

Creature Peeper, measures 6" x 4": \$7.95 (#2607)



ROCKHOUNDING CALIFORNIA

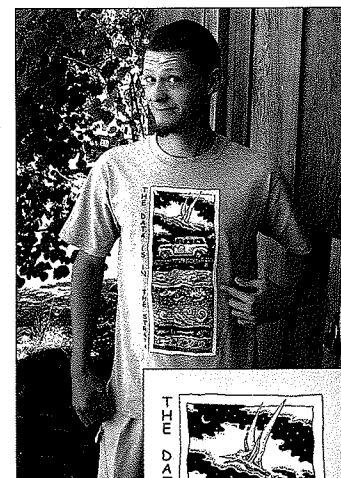
Explore the mineral-rich desert regions, comb beaches for jade, and prospect in the mountains and hills for gold, copper, and other minerals. This book describes 75 of the state's best rock hounding sites, and covers numerous little-known sites. This guide describes how to collect specimens responsibly, includes maps and directions to sites, and lists rockhounding clubs around the state.

Rockhounding California, Falcon Press, soft cover, measures 9" x 6": \$12.95 (#1524)

THE DATA IS IN THE STRATA T-SHIRT

This shirt is the perfect gift for the geologist, archeologist, or scientist who has everything. Intern Nathan Bomer, who is always excited to be here, is pointing out the fun layers on this 90% cotton, 10% polyester preshrunk cotton T-shirt.

The design is in black and white on a dark gray shirt.
The Data is in the Strata, sizes M (#3663), L (#3664), XL (#3665): \$16.95



PICNIC TIME!

Lightweight, easy to carry, and fully insulated, this backpack is perfect for any hike, beach, or gift-giving occasion. Available in picnic-for-two or picnic-for-four—each comes with silverware (stainless steel knives, forks, and spoons), plates (melamine 9"), wine glasses (acrylic), cork screw (waiter style), set of salt and pepper shakers, cotton 14" x 14" napkin, wooden 6" x 6" cutting board, cheese knife (stainless w/ wood handle), and a detachable wine bottle duffel. The picnic-for-four comes with the above in a place setting for four, with a 60" x 60" 100% acrylic blanket.

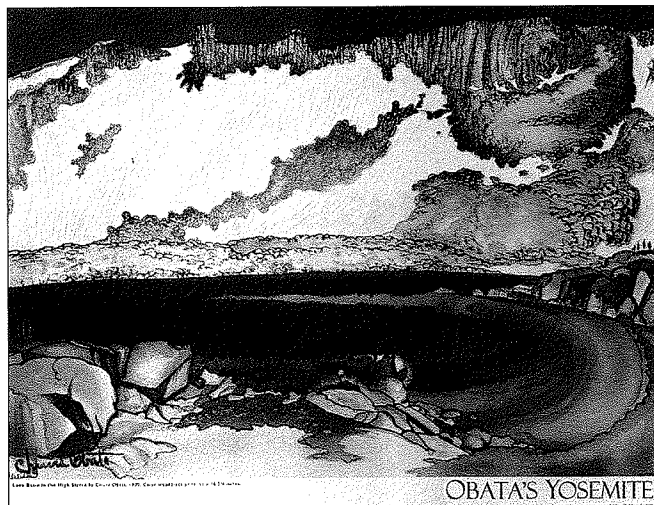
Please specify colors: Yukon (green with grape napkins), Safari (brown with plaid napkins), or Sierra (blue with plaid napkins). Can't choose? Let us send you the best-selling color!

Picnic-for-two, backpack measures 17" x 15" x 6" when zipped: \$79.00 (#2202)

Picnic-for-four, backpack measures 17" x 16" x 6" when zipped: \$102.00 (#2609)

Call (760) 647-6595 to order

❖ The Fall Catalog ❖



Lake Basin in the High Sierra, 1930

OBATA'S YOSEMITE POSTER

A total of 107 cherrywood block impressions were used to complete this beautiful masterpiece by Chiura Obata. Inspired by a color wood block original by Chiura Obata, this is the only Obata image available in poster form. Poster colors are predominantly blue and green.

Obata's Yosemite Poster, measures approximately 19½" x 25": \$7.95 (#3435)

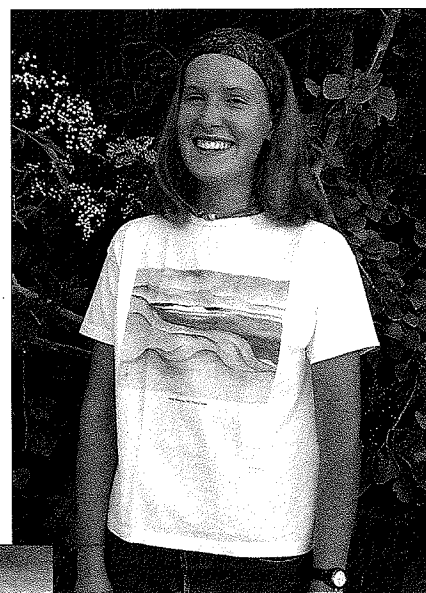
100% Organic
cotton



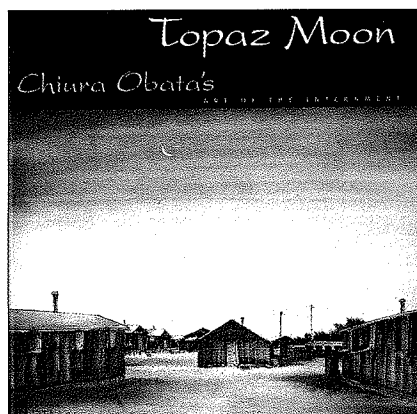
ALONG MONO LAKE T-SHIRT

The latest in our series of four Chiura Obata shirts, the Along Mono Lake shirt is a mild scoop neck shirt designed for women by Patagonia. Intern Lori Bowermaster sure is comfortable in this organic cotton shirt with a full front 7½" x 11" design. Inks are water-based for comfort and breathability. Sizes run loose and generous.

Along Mono Lake, S (#3928) M (#3929) L (#3930, XL (#3931): \$19.00



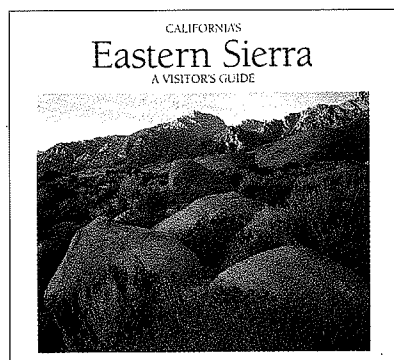
Along Mono Lake, 1927



TOPAZ MOON: CHIURA OBATA'S ART OF THE INTERNMENT

Topaz Moon presents more than 100 of Obata's sketches, sumi paintings, and watercolors from his internment in Topaz. Lovingly collected and edited by his granddaughter, Mono Lake Committee friend Kimi Kodani Hill, and movingly augmented by letters and interviews.

Topaz Moon, Heyday Books, soft cover, measures 8¼" x 8¼": \$22.50 (#1728)



CALIFORNIA'S EASTERN SIERRA: A VISITOR'S GUIDE

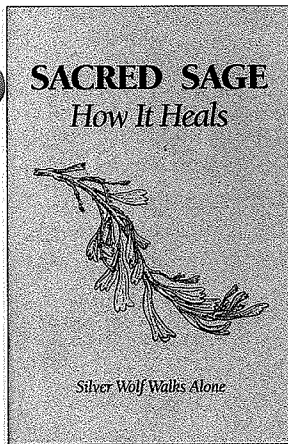
BY SUE IRWIN

This local guide explores the natural and human history of the Eastern Sierra. Included in its pages are the Lone Pine, Independence, White Mountain, Bishop, Mammoth and Mono Lake regions. Not only a beautiful coffee table book, this complete reference can also be a car guide to inspire stops on a drive along the east side!

California's Eastern Sierra, soft cover, Cachuma Press, 144 pages, book measures 8" x 8¾": \$18.95 (#346)

Call (760) 647-6595 to order

The Fall Catalog



SACRED SAGE: HOW IT HEALS BY SILVER WOLF WALKS ALONE

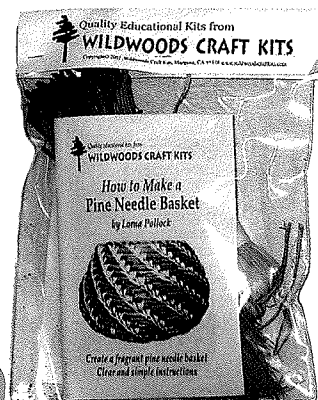
This easy to read book guides you through smudging ceremonies, how to gather sage, medicinal uses, and spiritual healing practices with sacred sage. This unique book would be a meaningful gift to any sage lover.

Sacred Sage: How it Heals, soft cover, self published, 29 pages, book measures 8½" x 5½": \$4.95 (#1045)

WEAVERS OF TRADITION & BEAUTY: BASKETMAKERS OF THE GREAT BASIN

This book contains information on contemporary Native American basketry of the Great Basin from the viewpoint of the weavers themselves. Authors Mary Lee Fulkerson and Kathleen Curtis traveled throughout the Great Basin, accompanying weavers as they gathered and prepared willow, dyed bracken fern root, and wove their baskets. This beautiful book is full of poignant text with color and black and white photography.

Weavers of Tradition & Beauty, University of Nevada Press, soft cover, 138 pages, book measures 8" x 10": \$19.95 (#1376)

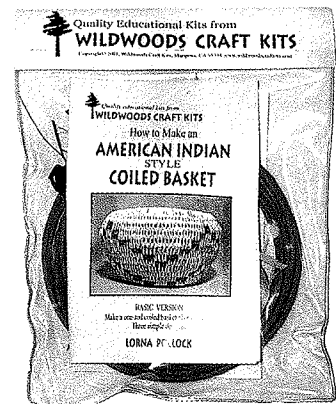


WILDWOODS CRAFT KITS

These basket-making kits come with all the materials and instructions you will need to make your own Native American basket. Local traditional basket weaver Lucy Parker says that the instructions are easy to understand for any beginner. These kits will inspire individual creative expression and encourage further exploration in the craft of basket making.

Pine Needle Basket Kit, makes a 4" x 4" basket, plastic pouch measures 9" x 12": \$18.95 (#3394)

Coiled Basket kit, makes a 4" wide coil basket, plastic pouch measures 9" x 12": \$15.95 (#2852)



SACRED SAGE HAND AND BODY LOTION

White sage and cedar have been used for thousands of years to purify living areas, ceremonial spaces, and healing rooms. This lotion is organic, not tested on animals, and is soothing to the soul. Also available in massage oil.

Sacred Sage Lotion, 8oz plastic bottle: \$12.00 (#3940)

SACRED SAGE SMOKELESS MIST

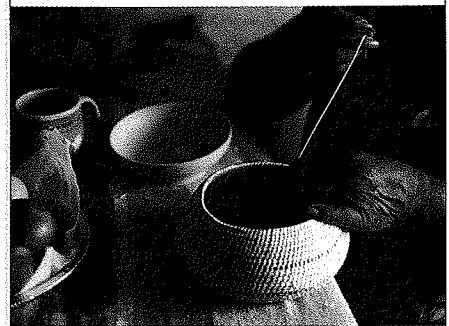
Bring the scent of the Sierra to your home! Spray this long-lasting scent in your living room, bathroom, or office to soothe and freshen your work and living spaces.

Sacred Sage Smokeless Mist, 4oz glass pump bottle: \$14.00 (#3942)



WEAVERS OF TRADITION & BEAUTY

BASKETMAKERS OF THE GREAT BASIN



TEXT BY MARY LEE FULKERSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHLEEN CURTIS
FOREWORD BY CATHERINE S. POWERS

Call (760) 647-6595 to order

❧ The Fall Catalog ❧

2002



FEATHERS 2002 CALENDAR

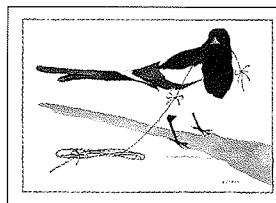
Now you can enjoy the art of Committee supporter Wendy Morgan all year long! This calendar has won awards for both design and artwork. Each month boasts a different bird species with species information, holidays, and moon phases. Calendars are printed in the USA on recycled, acid-free paper.

2002 Feathers Calendar, measures 9" x 12": \$13.95 (#2164)

HOLIDAY NOTECARDS

These whimsical holiday notecards have the inside message: "May you have a Happy Holiday and a Joyous New Year." Each card is printed on recycled, acid-free paper with matching envelopes. Each style is sold in a packet of one dozen. Please specify design.

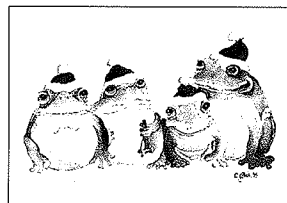
One dozen Holiday Notecards with matching envelopes, measures 6¼" x 4½": \$18.00 (#2098)



Gift of the Magpie



Stuffed Sockeye



Four Frogs a Croaking



HAND-PAINTED MONO LAKE CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

Committee supporter Wendy Rismeyer paints these ornaments by hand.

Each globe is such a unique oil painting that you could hang it all year round! Scenes include avocets, herons, and lupine along Mono Lake.

Ornaments are painted with vibrant oils on a porcelain-white glass bulb.

Because of their uniqueness each Mono

Lake scene may vary.

Hand-painted Mono Lake Christmas Ornament, measures 3¼" in diameter: \$14.95 (#2241)

WILDLIFE MAGNETS

It is hard to capture the beauty of these magnets on paper.

Each magnet is constructed of two-layer laser-cut board. Its 3-D relief gives life to each magnet! Is it time to update your refrigerator to fit your personality?

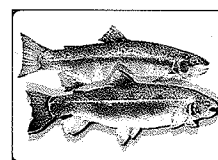
Wildlife Magnet, please specify Chickadees, Hummingbirds, Trout, Owls, Sanderlings, Wood Ducks, Bear, Dragonfly, or Ravens, measures 3¼" x 2¼": \$4.95 (#3699)



Chickadees



Hummingbirds



Trout



Owls



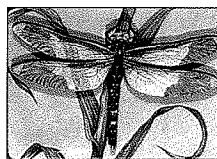
Sanderlings



Wood Ducks



Bear



Dragonfly



Raven

Call (760) 647-6595 to order

❁ The Fall Catalog ❁

2002 MONO LAKE CALENDAR

The 2002 Mono Lake Calendar is full of striking color images of Mono Lake and the Mono Basin. From volcanoes to tufa towers, and snow capped peaks to rushing creeks, this 12-month calendar captures the magic of this vast and ancient inland sea. Each monthly image is accompanied by inset images of native birds, wildflowers, insects, and panoramic views. The

2002 Mono Lake Calendar is a great way to bring the awe-inspiring beauty of the seasons at Mono Lake to your home or office all year long. Printed in the USA on recycled paper.

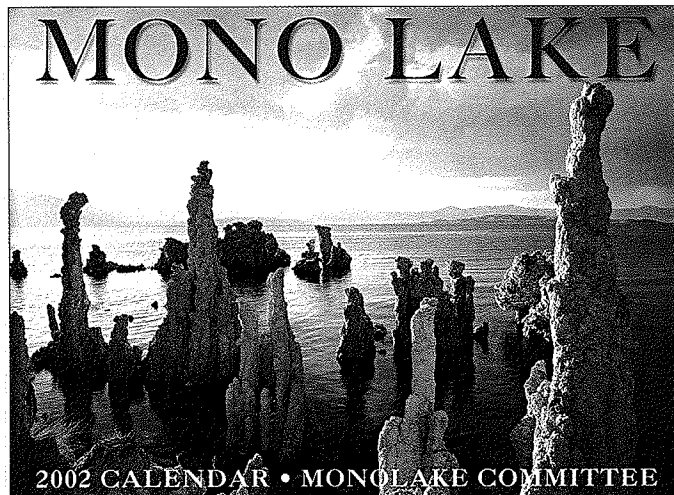
2002 Mono Lake Calendar, measures 13¼" by 9¼": \$10.95 (#2146)

VOLUME DISCOUNT

buy 2-4 calendars for \$9.95 each

5-9 calendars for \$8.95 each

10 or more calendars \$7.95 each



Want us to mail your holiday calendars with a mailer and gift card?
Send \$1.00 per additional mailing
and we will take care of it for you!



THE MONO LAKE STORY VIDEO

This beautifully photographed 30-minute video of the Mono Lake Story slideshow chronicles the natural and human history of Mono Lake. The video explores the geology, ecology, and recent struggles that have led to the protection of this ecologically irreplaceable saline lake. The Mono Lake Story summarizes the latest significant court decisions and political events that have led to Mono's current protection. Experience the beauty, wonder, and history of this unique environment through the stunning photography and beautiful narration of this video.

Mono Lake Story, 30-minute video available in both VHS and PAL format: \$15.95 (#1647)

Order by phone: (760) 647-6595, fax: (760) 647-6377, or email: bookstore@monolake.org

MONO LAKE COMMITTEE MAIL ORDER FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Daytime phone _____

☐ Check (to Mono Lake Committee) ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Discover

Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

SHIPPING & HANDLING

Up to \$25	\$5.00
\$26 - \$50	\$7.00
\$51 - \$150	\$9.00
Over \$150	Free!

Quan	Item #	Item	Size	Color	Price	Total

Shipping & Handling: use rates at left

Subtotal

CA residents-add 7% sales tax to subtotal

Total

California law requires us to charge sales tax on sales and shipping and handling for deliveries in California.

Phone: (760) 647-6595

Fax: (760) 647-6377

Mono Lake Committee P.O. Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541

Staff Migrations



DRAWING BY CARL DENNIS BUELL

After over 100 South Tufa tours, 250 Canoe tours, and many, many hours of information giving in the Bookstore, the summer season winds down. And just as the phalaropes begin to depart for destinations far afield, so do the summer staff. With fond memories of summer fun stored away for the winter we bid many farewells.

Many thanks to the hard work of interns Moss Templeton, Erin Massarelli, Lori Bowermaster, Allison Taylor, and Heather Barr. From leading interpretive tours to organizing the slide files, researching Great Basin hydrology, developing an education display board, and laying the groundwork for a hands-on herbarium, their work was invaluable.



PHOTO BY JEFF DARLINGTON

The summer 2001 interns from left to right: Jennifer Marshall, Moss Templeton, Heather Barr, Allison Taylor, Erin Massarelli, and Lori Bowermaster.

After her second season as Canoe Coordinator, Kirsten Brady has moved on to wetter pastures. She and her husband James and dog Kobe have moved to Portland, Oregon!

As things have quieted down in the store, Retail Assistant Heather Cleary has moved back down to a cozy house in Mammoth. Thanks Heather for making the summer go so smoothly. Store Assistants

Anna Scofield and Ryan Carle have dutifully gone back to their respective high schools in Mount Shasta and Mammoth for the year. And Store Assistant and local mural painter Nick Carle has successfully started his first year at Humboldt State. And on that note, Vireo Gaines stopped by

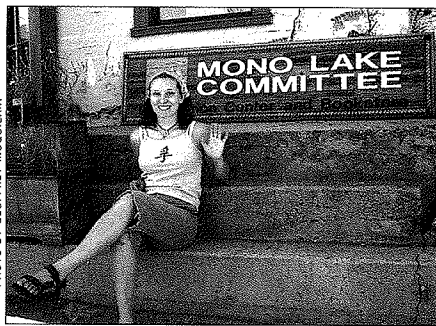


PHOTO BY GEOFFREY MCQUILKIN

Vireo Gaines on her way to UC Santa Cruz to begin her freshman year.

the Committee on her way over to the coast where she has started her first year at UC Santa Cruz!

Happily, intern Jennifer Marshall is sticking around to help out for the fall. Her research for the policy team continues to be extremely helpful. Back once more and excited about the Mono Basin as ever, former intern Nathan

Bomer is around through the spring of 2002 helping out with events planning and membership coordination.

As the Outdoor Experiences program finished up for the summer many good friends and memories dispersed in all directions. OE Coordinator Carrie Simmons has moved on after a memorable summer of hikes, tours, and campfires. Santiago Escruceria finished his third season as Outdoor Experiences Coordinator and after minimal persuasion has accepted a year-round position as Assistant Education Director. See pages 6-7 for more on the Outdoor Experiences program and Santiago's job.

And with great excitement and pride we welcome two new babies to the Mono Basin and the Mono Lake Committee family. Co-Executive Director Geoffrey McQuilkin and his wife Sarah Taylor welcomed Caelen Grimke Taylor into the world on October 8th. And Membership Coordinator Brett Pyle and Events Coordinator Shannon Nelson gave birth to Sabine Brielle Pyle on October 14th. We're all looking forward to helping raise these two new members! ❖

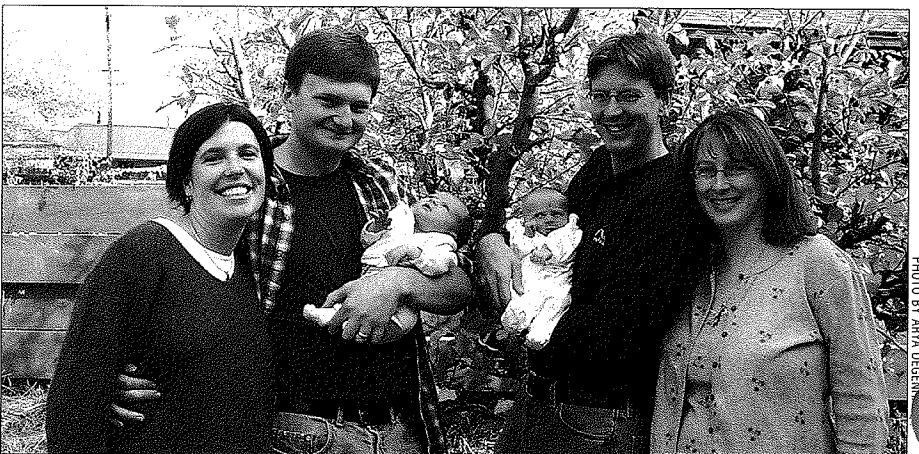


PHOTO BY ARYA DEGEN

New additions to the families from left to right: Sarah Taylor, Geoffrey McQuilkin, Caelen Grimke Taylor, Sabine Brielle Pyle, Brett Pyle, and Shannon Nelson.



From the Mailbag

News from Members and Friends

by Brett Pyle

We get a lot of interesting mail here at the Committee and there's no easy way to summarize the memories, suggestions, new ideas, and occasional rantings that fill our mailbag. Still, many recent letters have been testimonials to fun and achievement on the High Sierra Fall Century. "The climbs are grueling," wrote one cyclist, "the descents thrilling, and the scenery—nowhere better!" Another put it succinctly (and with double underlining, no less): "I just love it all!"

On a membership note, it is always amazing to remember that the Mono Lake Committee receives approximately 70% of its funding from member contributions. Your steady and generous support throughout the years has been an inspiration. The recent tragic incidents in this country remind us that there are causes in addition to our own that also deserve your support; we hope that you will join our staff in helping those affected by these terrible attacks.

Special Thanks

Thank you **Alexa Williams** of **Technical Glass** who has been designing and creating the beautiful Defender of the Trust awards since 1997; she out-did herself again this year. Thanks to **Michael S. Lico** with **USGS** in **Carson City** for donating a pH and conductivity meter for more accurate stream monitoring. And thanks to **Charles Richard Hoskins** for his donation of life vests for the canoe program.

A special thank you to the thoughtful people who donated all or part of their income tax refund. **Hildy Manley** of **Tiburon**, **Herb McGrew** of **Napa**, **Travis Silcox** of **Sacramento**, **Ted Schrieffer, Jr.** of **El Cajon**, and **Alice Steele** of **San Francisco** all took this opportunity to increase their donations. And thanks to the many others who donated portions of their refund and may not have told us about it.

In Celebration

The 50th wedding anniversary of **Jack and Dorothy Green** of **Los Angeles** was honored with a donation from **Mark and Judith Cohen** of **Moraga**. We would like to add congratulations and best wishes for many more happy years together.

Congratulations to Monophile **Craig Hansen** and wife **Jenny Ruhl** on the birth of baby **Calder**, who we understand likes being thrown into the sky.

In Memory

Janet Hardy made a generous donation in memory of her sister **Charlotte Cooper**. **Grace De Laet** of **Sausalito** also made a generous donation in Charlotte's honor as well. **Akikazu Ando** of **Funabashi, Japan** made a donation in memory of **Kuniko Iwaki**, who loved and visited Mono Lake. **Ida Henderson** of **Concord** made a contribution in memory of **Robert Mathews** of **Walnut Creek**. **Mike Osborne** and **Linda Eade** made a contribution in memory of **B. Weiss** of **Mariposa**. **Carol Broberg** of **Swall Meadows** made a donation in memory of **Nancy Whitmore**.

Mono Lake Website

After a couple of confusing months, the Member Section of the Mono Lake Website is back up and running. If you've had trouble signing on in the past, come on back and give it a try to get more weather data, more webcam images, and a sneak preview of the Newsletter online. First time visiting the section? Look for your member number printed on the back cover to gain access to the site! Many thanks to volunteer **Russell Bell** of **Lee Vining** for his expertise in Unix and server-issue matters, and his trouble-shooting tenacity. ♦

Brett Pyle is the Committee's Membership Coordinator. He is working on his parenting skills even as we speak. Has anyone seen his burping cloth?

In Memory of Mono Lake Committee Member Charlotte Cooper

A true friend of the Mono Lake Committee was lost in March when Charlotte Cooper passed away.

Charlotte was an accomplished artist who, in addition to her professional fashion design career, designed many cards, patches, and illustrations for the Committee. Introduced to the Committee by Emeritus Director Grace De Laet back in 1981, Charlotte frequently heard from David Gaines that she was the only one who could draw a "gull" properly.

Charlotte will be missed by all that knew her and her love for Mono Lake.



DRAWING BY CHARLOTTE COOPER



PHOTO BY BARTSHE MILLER

"Especially in autumn,

Eared Grebes pepper much of Mono Lake's surface.

Imagine walking across 13 miles of water stepping

from the back of one bird to the back of the next."

—David Gaines



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