



# Centerville School Bell

**Centerville**  
Recreation & Historical  
Association  
13548 Centerville Road

Nonprofit Org.  
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Permit #1609  
Chico, CA, 95928

**Postal Customer**  
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**Chico, CA 95928**

## July 2023

### Island Nite Barbecue

Saturday July 15th, 6pm to 9pm  
Colman Museum and Schoolhouse

### CALENDAR

#### Saturday September 16th Potluck

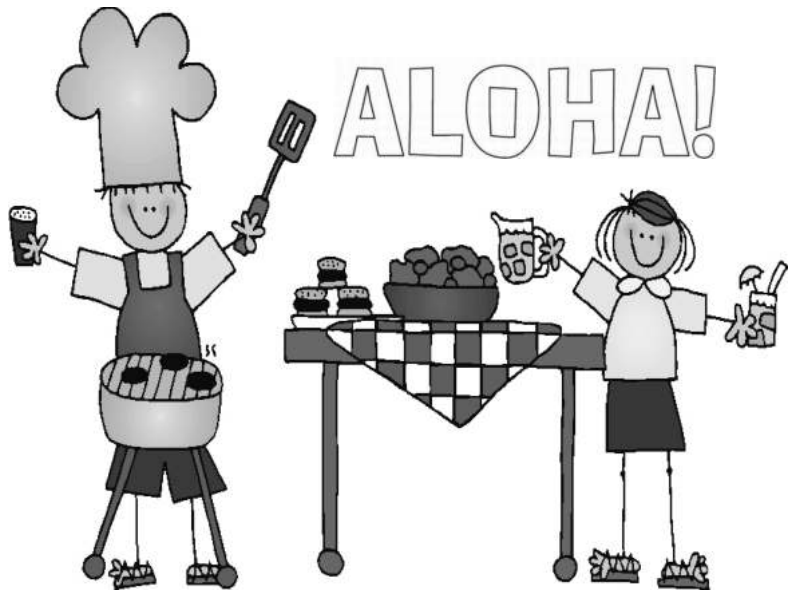
Bring a potluck dish to share  
and beverages if you like!  
6:30pm at the Schoolhouse

#### Saturday October 7th Canyon Clean Up

Meet at the turn-out before the  
Covered Bridge to help tidy up  
our canyon after a summer time  
of visitors.

We'll provide picker-uppers,  
trash bags, snacks, water,  
gloves.

8:30pm at the Covered Bridge



**Burgers, Hotdogs, & Vegan Served  
Until Gone!**

**Refreshments Provided**

**Sprinkler for the Kids**

**Optional Potluck - Salads & Desserts**

**Come Meet Your Friends!**

**Wear a Hawaiian Shirt**



Contact Bonnie Calhoon  
for more info. 530-965-0674

Bring your family and friends.  
**The Colman Museum is Open**  
**Saturdays & Sundays 1-4 pm**

# THE 54th ANNUAL FORTY NINER FAIR

The 54th annual Forty Niner Fair extravaganza was very successful! Thanks to all that contributed, especially the wonderful volunteers. It takes a small army to put on the fair- This year we counted almost 50 volunteers for the day of the fair.

**Gift Sale**, Thank you Emmi, Vince, Rachel, Vanessa and Gail. This is the heart of the fair. Thank you to the folks that donated all the great stuff and to the hard workers that ran the show!

**Plant Sale**, Thank you Liz, Cheryl, Giabella, Tracy, Bruce, and Connie. The Plant Sale is a mammoth effort to plant, gather, and set up. Master gardeners were on hand to give helpful guidance. The plants are a beautiful site to behold!

**Parking**, Thank you Huibert, Brad, Gordon and Mark Ford who donated the space. These guys are the fair's unsung heroes.

**Pioneer Demonstrations**, Thank you Linda and Boy Scouts. Rope making and dolls for young and old as well! We had weaving demonstrations too ...thank you Teresa and weaver's guild.

**Signs**, There are new signs on our upper-level implements- Thank you Chris!

**BBQ**, Thank you Dave, Luke, Terrence, and Courtney for keeping us well fed. Those hot dogs are delicious.

**Cold Drinks**, Thank you Glenn, Alice, Kathy, Joe, Kevin, and Joan who made sure we were hydrated...

Jim, Deborah and Stuart brought all the ice from town to keep it all cold!

**Pies**, Wow, did we have pie! Thank you, Jayne, Jane Yvonne, Wendy, Claudia, Jenny...

**Bar**, Thank you Tom, Judy, Claudia, and Steve...and Sierra Nevada who donated the nice cold beer.

**Vintage Junk**, Thank you Bonnie and Charlotte - they take our cast offs and find them great new homes.

**Raffle**, Thank you Tim- we all wanted to win that trip!

**MC**, Thank you Iain for keeping us informed.



**Gold Panning**, Thank you Steve and Brian for showing old and young alike how to gold pan. What fun!

**Country Provisions**, Thank you Sarah and Winter - they brought us homemade delights, beautiful cut flowers and fresh produce!

**Music**, Thank you CW, Mark and Darlene, The Pub Scouts, and the young fiddlers with their fearless leader Pam...The Music was fantastic!!

**Museum**, Thank you to the presenters Gordy and Tim! The docents Claudia, Margarete, Tim, Maureen, and Mike. We are blessed to have such a great little museum.

**Signage**, Judy makes all our great signs- Thank you.

**Volunteers**, Thank you, Sheriff STARS Volunteers, Butte Creek Volunteer Fire Fighters and PRPD Shuttle service - your presence is a gift.

On the back of this newsletter, you will notice the many sponsors that help us... please use their products and services when you can.

# BIG SHOUT OUT TO OUR 49'er FAIRE VENDORS!

Our June faire hosted a variety of vendors again this year. We had metal work, silver and stained glass jewelry, ceramic pots and plates, beautiful paintings, mosaics and lotions, sewn items, purses, and native American art and crafts. We're lucky to have so many wonderful artists sell their products at our yearly faire!

## DEFENSIBLE SPACE

The Butte County Fire Safe Council has been awarded a FEMA grant to reduce hazardous fuels and create defensible space around eligible homesites that reside within the unincorporated areas of Butte County and are within 500 feet of a main evacuation route.



If your property lies within 500 feet of an officially designated evacuation route, you may be eligible for work to create a 100-foot defensible space around your home and/or removal of hazardous trees from your property. In Phase 1 of this project, we will perform defensible space inspections and identify hazardous trees for removal.

Please respond by filling out our FEMA Right of Entry-Defensible Space and Hazard Tree Removal Intake Form:

<https://formstack.io/C3EFA>

If you need assistance, call us at 530-877-0984.



## MUSEUM NEWS

Our museum is open each Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 for anyone wanting a cool place to visit this summer. In addition to the wonderful displays about Butte Creek Canyon history, the exhibits feature the Native Americans, the Gold Rush, the Chinese miners and pioneer families, early hydroelectric power and much more.

We still have copies of Tailings of Butte Creek Canyon available for sale. This book is about the exciting history of Butte Creek Canyon from 1833 to 1971. It's a wonderful resource for the gold rush activity in our canyon. This limited edition is available for \$49 and all proceeds go to the Centerville Recreation and Historical Association. We also have Michele Shover's California Standoff book for sale, too. It tells the story of miners, Indians, and farmers at war from 1850 to 1865 with references to Butte Creek Canyon. It's available for \$20 in our museum.


Our display highlighting the interests and talents of community members continues through the end of the year.

## DOCENT NEEDED

For the 4th Saturday of each month.  
Contact Julia for more info: 530-521-8563

### Support Our Fire Company

Tax deductible donations can be made to:

 BCCVFC 26  
PO Box 3171  
Chico, CA 95927

# STORY OF THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD ON BUTTE CREEK

as reported in 1897 by Pres. Longley, Canyon Miner & Poet

## OHIO ENTERPRISE

FRIDAY EVENING, SEPT. 17, 1897.

### INCIDENTS OF EARLY DAYS

#### OLD MINING CAMPS OF BUTTE COUNTY.

First Discovery of Gold on Butte Creek  
Claims Which Paid on an Average  
Of \$16 Per Day to the Man.

After General Bidwell discovered gold on Feather river, many prospectors precipitated themselves along the foothills of Butte county, following up the rivers, and ravines to their sources.

John Cox, who left the "back woods" of Missouri, in 1849, came across the plains with his wife and one child; he drove his team to the mouth of Butte canyon, in a destitute condition, and wintered in his covered wagon, receiving beef and flour from Sam Neal to feed himself and family; but when the glorious spring of the year dawned upon him, he took his pick, pan and shovel and started up Butte creek in search of gold, and after going up the creek about ten miles above where the old Watson flouring mill now stands, he found rich deposits of gold in the flats and benches along the stream. He located a claim on what is known as Cox's Flat. The gold was of a coarse quality, pieces ranging from one cent up to fifty dollars, and paid on an average sixteen dollars per day to the man. The news of this discovery was soon voiced through other mining camps, and hundreds of men rushed in from other localities and located claims above and below him.

When Cox walked up the stream in the lovely springtime the country was at its best—he said it looked like a paradise, and he was lost in wonder and astonishment at the beauty of the scene; tall gray mountains towered up into the sky on each side of the little river, as it bubbled in crystalline murmurs on its winding way to the sea. The mountains stood about one mile and a half apart, and the sloping ground that stretched down from their time worn feet was treeless and covered with bright verdure, intermingled with gay colored flowers, the violet, golden cup, and the mountain lily, displayed their unrivaled beauties to the eyes. He found the place inhabited by the Shamshew tribe of Indians, an innocent and indolent people who lived on the bountiful gifts of nature, and dreamed not that the pale faces would drive them from their happy homes and occupy their hunting ground, and his grasshopper. Soft, gentle breezes dallied with the tall grass, and flowering shrubbery that grew on the margin of the stream.

The eagle sailed far in the calm azure sky,  
Gazing down on the earth with his fierce flashing eye;  
Little birds flitting lightly anon the green trees  
While nature's soft music was filling the breeze.  
The river still hummed its perpetual tune,  
With accents enhancing the glories of June.  
Sublime seemed all nature, and cool balmy airs  
Breathed the Shamshew, who had neither labor or cares,  
To attract his dull mind from a grasshopper feast  
As he rolled under trees like another wild beast:  
But the miner came there with his noise and his din  
Invading the places where quiet had been.  
When Cox first commenced to dig gold on the flat  
A digger approached, minus clothing and hat,  
And told him that place was not subject to worms;  
But he would sell him some hoppers on very cheap terms.

The Indian evidently supposed Cox was hungry and wanted some worms for his dinner, so he invited him to his wigwam, where his "Mahala" was baking some bread on the rocks, and it looked so tempting that he devoured a large piece of it, and said it was about the finest thing he ever tasted in the shape of bread; he finally asked what the bread was made of, the Indian told him it was made of acorns, worms, grasshoppers and crickets. Mr. Cox went out and vomited.

Mr. Reeves found a very rich claim about one mile above Cox's bar and took out nearly a horse load of gold from it, and left for his home back East. The same bar and bench has been worked every year since that time, and several men have claims to day. In '52 an Englishman put up the first store on the creek, on "Whisky Flat" that was then paying well, his name was Booker, and when he left the diggings he went to San Francisco, and was English Consul there for many years. In the following year three or four stores were started at Diamondville, Centreville and Helltown. Dr. J. R. Brotherton and D. B. Coleman had stores at Centreville, James Desolmer had a store at Helltown and sold out to W. N. Nesbit.

Ben Harbor and John Summers put in a large ditch from Butte creek to cover the diggings at Centreville, Diamondville, and all the country below, then commenced the golden harvest. Diamondville had two or three stores, as many saloons, a big hotel, several boarding houses and a daily stage to Oroville. Centreville had two stores, a hotel and two saloons, wages in the mines was then three dollars per day. Some of the most prominent miners on the creek at this time, were Andrew Hallet, Harry Hallet, Peter Bowers, W. N. Nesbit, Brum Decker, Sam McClellan, Col. Ed Lewis, Eb McKinney, Hank Evers Reeves, cook, a negro that struck Cook's Flat, Graham, Bob Stewart, a Scotchman who struck Whisky Flat, Ben Harbor, an Arkansas man who struck Arkansas Flat, Longmore, Jack Jenkins, Frank Johnson, with a store, J. R. Brotherton, store, Sluckhammer, Steve Harvey, Jake Smith, et al.

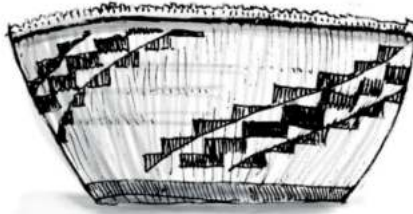
PRES LONGLEY.

#### Editor's Note

Soon after the discovery, mining camps came to life up and down the creek. By the early part of the 20th century, hundreds of millions of dollars in gold had been mined in the canyon. In 1850, \$16 of gold per man, per day would be approximately \$1600 at today's prices. As a testament to the harsh living conditions of the early days on Butte Creek, John's wife, Elisabeth Mary Cox, and their two children died within the first six years living on Cox's Flat and were buried there. John lived on, mining in Butte Creek Canyon for many years and was buried in a now unmarked grave in the Centerville Cemetery along with many of the pioneer Argonauts of 1849.

Stop by the Colman Museum weekends 1 - 4pm to explore more of our Canyon's rich history.

# Butte Creek Canyon



Honey Run Covered Bridge ■ Colman Museum ■ Centerville Schoolhouse

CRHA is truly grateful for the generous support of our sponsors.



Friends of Butte Creek  
[www.buttecreek.org](http://www.buttecreek.org)

Working to save the last, best run of the spring run Chinook salmon in California.



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The Tree Guy in Magalia  
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## ENTERPRISE-RECORD

Public Benefit Charity 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Corporations. All donations are tax deductible. CRHA 13548 Centerville Rd. Chico, CA

**Museum Website:** [CentervilleMuseum.com](http://CentervilleMuseum.com) **Bridge Website:** [hrccoveredbridge.org](http://hrccoveredbridge.org)

**Phone:** (530) 893-9667 **Facebook:** @Centerville Schoolhouse @HRCBA