NEVADA COUNTY RANCHER Spring 2023

THE STORIES BEHIND OUR LOCAL FOOD

BUENA VISTA, BARKER, AND THE WHITE RANCH SIERRA ROSE ALPACAS-LIVING THE ALPACA DREAM 3-COUNTY LIVESTOCK PASS PROGRAM HELPS RANCHERS CARE FOR LIVESTOCK DURING EMERGENCIES





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Photo by AM Ranch

One of AM Ranch's pigs.

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Support through the Generations

At Hooper & Weaver Mortuary, we're honored to have long supported generations of our agricultural community, including the farmers and ranchers who have helped build such a solid foundation for our community. We are pleased to have supported you through 4-H, FFA, and the Nevada County Fair—and also during those difficult times when you needed us most. We thank you for your commitment to our community and for honoring us as your mortuary of choice for more than 80 years.

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BUENA VISTA, BARKER, AND THE WHITE RANCH

NEVADA COUNTY'S RICH HISTORY IN THE LAND

By Maria E. Brower

Before explorers or mountain men walked the hills and valleys of what would later become Nevada County in 1851, the original inhabitants of the area were the Nisenan, Native-American Indians. They lived a peaceful life on the land that was rich with fertile soil and with lakes, rivers, and streams where they hunted and fished in an almost paradise setting. The vegetation, flora, and fauna were abundant, with trees, plants, and herbs that were vital to their way of life. The land was also rich with gold. Without the discovery of gold in California and for our particular interest—the discovery of gold in Nevada County, the history here would have been very different. But this story isn't about gold, except for the fact that it played a major part in bringing a great number of the early pioneers, mostly men, and later their wives, families, and friends to what became Nevada County.

The early pioneers who settled and bought land named their ranches and farms usually after themselves but sometiwmes gave them a fanciful name. It was common in most instances for the names of these ranches and farms to be changed by a new owner, some not.

BUENA VISTA AND BEN TAYLOR

The original Buena Vista ranch house was said to be the oldest between Grass Valley and Colfax. The pioneer who was responsible for naming it Buena Vista was Benjamin Franklin Taylor, (Ben) who arrived in California with a party of Mexican War Veterans from Missouri. They left Missouri on May 9, 1849 and arrived in what became Nevada County in August or September. They camped in a meadow in the present Peardale area and it was said they found a little gold in a creek there before going on to Grass Valley. Taylor and his companions are credited as being the first settlers in the area. Taylor soon discovered that he was more suited for farming and horse breeding than mining. He went back to the area where he and his companions had camped near the road on the way to Grass Valley. Taylor is credited with naming his land the Buena Vista Ranch from the Mexican war battle he had earlier participated in. Taylor later sold the ranch to Rueben Leech, and purchased another property on the Bear River, adjacent to the today's present Taylor Crossing that was named for him. Taylor was very resourceful and appeared to find opportunity wherever he went. He raised remount horses for the U.S. Calvary, among other enterprises he



Photo believed to be of the White Ranch showing the process of thoroughly pulverizing and dragging the ground, leaving surface smooth for planting an orchard. A process used in Nevada County orchards in 1915 (Author's collection).

was involved in. Later Leech sold the Buena Vista Ranch to the Coleman brothers, John and Edward Coleman.

In the early days it was claimed that the "nucleus for the former orchard community was the Buena Vista Ranch, also the Barker spread below it that was later renamed the White Ranchi" in the Peardale/ Chicago Park area of Grass Valley. Born in New Hampshire, the first two Barker brothers arrived early in California; Charles arrived on August 31, 1849 crossing the plains leaving from Alton, Illinois in a company of forty wagons. The wagon train split up shortly after starting, due to an unknown disagreement, and the two wagons belonging to the Barker party went off by themselves. This was a dangerous decision considering the many potential ills that could befall wagons traveling alone. Barker's family was said to be the first to take the cut-off to Soda Springs, apparently to save the bend of the Bear River, thus adding five days to the long trek; they came by the Lassen Trail and the Indians were exceedingly troublesome at different stages of the journey, driving off cattle and otherwise hindering and

frightening the pioneers. After arriving in California, Charles Barker first mined at Bidwell's Bar on the Feather River and in 1850 he opened a trading post on Nelson Creek (Plumas County) and in the same year he opened a store in Nevada (City). The store was destroyed in the first fire there on March 11, 1851 that burned Nevada (City) to the ground. In 1852, Barker settled on land adjoining the Buena Vista Ranch and became a pioneer fruit grower. He continued both farming and mining, being a shareholder in the Bunker Hill Quartz Mining Company and by 1855 he was tunneling with other miners into a rich hill at Buena Vista diggings.

An early Nevada County newspaper, the *Nevada Democrat*, reported on June 4, 1861 that the Barker's ranch was a fashionable resort and was serving strawberries and ice cream to ladies and gentlemen from Grass Valley and Nevada City.

In 1862, Charles Barker sold the ranch to his brother David Milton Barker and went to Mexico on a mining venture visiting Lower California, Sonora, Chihuahua, and other southern places of interest. He and his family moved to Grass Valley in 1865 and he was elected tax collector of Nevada County. On November 21, 1867, Charles married Gertrude Lea Taylor, daughter of William Taylor, who brought his family to California across the plains from Mississippi. Their three children were sons: Charles Herbert, William Henry, and Edgar Earl.

In April of 1868, Barker bought the Montgomery Ranch in Penn Valley and went into partnership with Thomas Othet but sold his interest on June 4, 1870 in the feed business to Othet.

Charles Barker moved to a twelve acre ranch he purchased in 1869 at Henderson St. and Colfax Avenue in the heart of Grass Valley, which is now the site of Memorial Park. Barker developed a fruit orchard and packed his own fruits, apples being his chief crop, and walnuts. One large walnut tree, which he dug up on the banks of the Sacramento River and planted on his property in Grass Valley, yielded from 300 to 400 pounds of nuts. Charles Barker died on October 28, 1908. His widow later married Bennett A. Penhall of Grass Valley.

Charles' older brother David Milton Barker was born in Keene, New Hampshire in 1824 and the family moved to Vermont between 1833 and 1835. Like all rural families with children, he became involved in stockraising at a young age. He arrived in California via Central America in 1853 and began farming at the Buena Vista ranch. David apparently made several trips back East in the early years. He married Clara "Carrie" W. Dyer in Rutland, Vermont before coming back to California with his wife. They had two children, Frank Dyer Baker the oldest was born in Winten, Merced, CA in 1861 and Lucy A. born in Nevada County in 1874. David Milton was residing in Santa Clara, California by 1888. He died on June 25, 1907 in San Jose, Santa Clara County, California.

It is known that a third Barker brother, Harvey Barker, came to California but unknown if he actually ever lived in Nevada County, but he most likely visited since his two brothers were residents. He reputedly died in Lakeport, Lake County in 1907 but it hasn't been proven that the man who died in Lakeport was the brother of Charles and David Milton Barker.

TWO MORE BROTHERS

The Coleman brothers were two of the movers and shakers of the day in Nevada County. Before coming to Nevada County the brothers mined in El Dorado County. John Crisp Coleman and his younger brother Edward bought an interest in the Helvetia & Lafayette mine at Grass Valley in 1860 and renamed it the North Star. In April of 1865 the Colman brothers bought an interest in the Idaho mine. The Coleman brothers sold their interest in the North Star in 1867, increased their share in the Idaho mine and reorganized the company, with John as president and Edward as superintendent. The next year, the Coleman brothers acquired the Mohawk and Sierra lumber companies. It took quite a lot of timber to shore up a mine, and constantly replacing rotting timber. Charles Leech, (one of two brothers that arrived in California in the mid-1850s from Massachusetts) sold his interest in the lumber company and 660 acre ranch, formerly owned by Simmon P. Storms, to his brother Reuben who became partners with the Coleman brothers in the lumber business.

In 1874, Edward and John became directors of the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad (NCNGRR). John served as president from1875 to 1884 resigned in 1884 and sold his stock in the NCNGRR along with his brother. Edward was treasurer from 1874 to 1878. Edward was elected vice president of the NCNGRR and was president and superintendent of the Idaho mine. The Coleman's sold their Idaho mine stock and contributed a large sum of money to build a new Congregational church at Grass Valley before moving to San Francisco.

The Nevada County Narrow Gage Railroad is long gone, as is the rich mining industry that made Nevada County the most prosperous mining area in the state.

Today it is the land that is the new "gold rush" that is bringing in new pioneers and a boom in agriculture in Nevada County. Small and large farms and ranches county-wide are again making Nevada County a great agricultural endeavor.

SIERRA ROSE ALPACAS

LIVING THE ALPACA DREAM

By Cynthia Kuhlmann

ack in 2007 we could never have imagined how these five little words would so profoundly change our life path: "Cynthia, I want to retire!" Howard proclaimed this simple idea as he walked in the door after another day at work as a Safety and HazMat Trainer in the Bay Area.

"OK, so what do you want to do in your retirement?" was my reply. You see, doing nothing in retirement was not an option.

So we discussed our dreams and where we wanted to live, and what we wanted to do in the next phase of our lives. We knew we wanted to "get back to the land" as we already did the city thing—me being from San Francisco, Howard from San Jose—and were living in the Bay Area suburbs at that time, both working full time jobs. I saw an article in a magazine about the alpaca lifestyle, and it appealed to me. I showed it to Howard, he read it and then said, "I'm not raising livestock!" I asked him to keep an open mind, as it would perhaps give us a source of retirement income, while allowing us to live closer to nature—gardening, growing veggies, flowers, and living the dream. He did keep an open mind, and we researched where we wanted to live, and what we wanted to do. After about 1.5 years of research, we bought a few alpacas and boarded them (agisting is the term used in the alpaca world) near us until we could all move to our new home, once built, in Grass Valley. We chose Grass Valley over other areas (the coast, Oregon) because of the beauty here, the weather, and the great community and charming towns. I also have some family history here, where my great-grandfather came over from Cornwall, as one of the original gold miners. My grandparents met and fell in love here, and as a child, my family and I would visit Aunt Ruby (Martin) in the summer.

It took us three years to develop our 20 acres, and put a home and fencing for the alpacas on it. Then, in 2010, Sierra Rose Alpacas was born and we moved onto our property with eight alpacas.

Now Howard quips he gets paid less and works harder, longer hours than before he "retired", and loves (almost) every minute of it. Every rancher knows there is a harder side to this life. It is a 24/7 lifestyle where animal care/husbandry must be done no matter what else is going on. We went to classes, workshops, symposiums, and read books (and real life situations) to learn as much as we could about alpacas. The learning never stops.

Continued to page 6



Photo submitted by Sierra Rose Alpacas | Howard with naturally-dyed yarn made from their alpacas.

FREE Manure Exchange Program



The Nevada County Resource Conservation District (NCRCD) Manure Exchange Program helps connect farmers, gardeners, and landowners searching for sources of local manure/compost with livestock owners and managers who have excess fresh and/or composted manure.

LIST IT OR FIND IT HERE:

www.ncrcd.org/resources-and-links/manure-exchange-program/

Nevada County Resource Conservation District 113 Presley Way, Suite 1, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (530) 798-5529

We are now going on our 13th year living the dream as Sierra Rose Alpacas. We started out small, and have continued to change and navigate through learning different aspects of alpacas, and what we love to do, while dropping that which no longer is feasible. One of our favorite things has been breeding alpacas, and enjoying the sweetness of baby alpacas (cria), and watching them grow.

When we are expecting a cria to be born, there are signs the dam (pregnant alpaca) may make to indicate birth is on it's way in the next few days, hours, minutes, or "now!" These are often very subtle signs, so we will go on "cria watch" to make sure everything goes as hoped and that dam and cria survive and get off to a good start together. Birthing is a dangerous time for both mother and cria, but luckily 90% of the time it goes with no help from us. But then to keep cria and dam healthy, we must step in and do some husbandry. Crias cannot regulate their body temperature for the first two weeks of life, so they are particularly vulnerable to hot and cold weather. Thus, births are generally planned for spring or fall, though alpacas can get pregnant any time of the year. We spent many a watchful day waiting for the birthing process to start, and provide help if/when needed. We are proud that we never lost a cria or dam at birthing time—or to predators. Most of our visitors are shocked to find out that dogs (yes just neighborhood dogs!) are the number one killer of alpacas. And yes, mountain lions will go after alpacas too, especially if it is easy for the lion to get to them. Thus the need for really good fencing (among other things) is imperative!

We currently own 26 alpacas, and agist 10 alpacas for others. Our ranch has had as many as 48 alpacas. We used to show alpacas, bring them to the fair, do a lot of outreach, and that was always fun. Our focus today is on offering tours to people who want to meet alpacas and learn about these amazing creatures. We also sell products made from our alpacas at our onsite farm store or at seasonal venues around town. After all, alpacas are raised for their unique fiber qualities; their fiber is very fine and soft, has a natural luster to it, is as strong as wool, but lighter than wool. It comes in over 22 natural colors, feels luxurious, is water repellent, stain resistant, fire resistant, and is considered hypoallergenic by most people. It tends to not itch, while adding comfortable, breathable warmth to clothing, knitted wear, blankets, socks, beanies, etc. Since my knitting is pretty bad, we have local knitters and crocheters make lovely items for us from our fleece we have processed into yarns. Our alpaca cooperative makes socks, beanies, and more from fiber we send them, which in turn we sell.

Howard has discovered he loves using his chemistry and botany background, and love of color, to dye our yarn and fiber using natural plant dyes from our garden. We now grow flowers and plants that he uses to dye our alpaca yarn into amazing natural colors. He has learned



Photo submitted by Sierra Rose Alpacas

to spin fiber into yarn, knit, and dye. If someone told him 15 years ago that he would love doing all the things he does here—raising alpacas, dying yarn, knitting, etc., he would have laughed and said "No way!" Yet, now he can't imagine doing anything else!

Through our inherent values of revering nature and the seasons, living as close to "local" as possible, led us to Fibershed, an organization which values products and lifestyles which use local fiber, local dye, local labor to improve our world on many levels. Our farming techniques improve the soil, which (who knew!) lead us to be considered as a Climate Beneficial Transitional Farm (through UC Davis and Fibershed) meaning that through our farming practices, and testing and tracking, find we sequester carbon in our soil thus helping our planet.

When the pandemic broke out we had to alter plans just like every other business. Once it was okay to do, instead of having Open Farm Days (due to the need to social distance), we offered private tours (following all Covid protocols) and found people really loved having their own special time with the alpacas. Thus we have decided to continue offering private tours. We still offer Alpaca Open Farm Days—a free day to come visit alpacas—about once a month on Sundays.

If you want to find out more about us and our alpaca farm, you can visit www.SierraRoseAlpacas.com, or Facebook www.facebook. com/SierraRoseAlpacas or call (530) 272-1218. We are always closed Saturdays. But if we are not open on a day you would like to take a private tour (except Saturday), reach out to Cynthia at Cynthia@ SierraRoseAlpacas.com or call her to see if they are available when you are interested. We hope to see you at the Ranch!

AM RANCH THE STORIES BEHIND OUR LOCAL FOOD

By Dora Scott

any of us carry out our daily lives without a second thought about where our food comes from. For those with a keen eye—or tastebuds—you would notice the great products that local ranchers and farmers provide the community. AM Ranch in Penn Valley is one of them. You might have seen their products at the farmer's market, on a plate at Three Forks Bakery & Brewing Co., or even in the meat section at BriarPatch Co-op.

What we often don't recognize is all the hard work and care that goes into these meat products. In an interview with Ciara Shapiro, who runs AM Ranch with her husband Michael Shapiro, I was able to see just that—the passion and unique struggles that come from being a rancher in Nevada County.

In 2012, when the Shapiro's (Michael's parents) bought 70-something acres in Penn Valley, they originally started growing row crops due to Michael's background in biodynamic farming. Ciara explained how after she met Michael in 2014, they leased the property from Michael's family and fell into ranching. She elaborated, "My dad was managing a local feed store at the time and he had a few pigs that nobody was buying. And so, he was like, 'Hey, do you guys want these few pigs to raise and finish?' And then just from there it kind of blossomed."

What started off as just a few Berkshire pigs, soon expanded to a breeding program with four different types of pigs: Berkshire, Large Black, Old Spot, and Wattle—which they then started crossbreeding, improving the quality of the meat. From pigs, they eventually added cattle and lamb, and also kept a few chickens for personal use.

When asked what the hardest aspect of running a ranch is,

All of our animals have to be processed in a USDA-inspected facility, and there is none near here. And it's been a situation that's been going on for years, and it's really something that we need locally.



Photo courtesy of AM Ranch

Ciara replied, "The biggest challenge is processing, like the actual processing of the animals since we sell to restaurants and grocery stores. All of our animals have to be processed in a USDA-inspected facility, and there is none near here. And it's been a situation that's been going on for years, and it's really something that we need locally."

To put this into perspective and to help customers understand the gap in the system, Ciara explained that even though their ranch is only about 10 miles from town and the farmers market, "it took literally 500 miles of driving to get a package of bacon to the farmers market."

To try and ease the burden of driving back and forth to different processing facilities, ranches often try to help each other. Ciara explained, "We actually work together as much as we can with other farms. We will haul together that way instead of doing double-duty,



Photo courtesy of AM Ranch

we'll haul our friends' steers to the processor as well as ours at the same time so that it's one trip instead of two trips."

There are a number of factors that complicate the journey locallyraised meat makes to our plates. To sell retail, after the animal is slaughtered the meat is sent to a butcher to get cut and wrapped. Booking a butcher, Ciara explained, "has to be booked out so far. It got very, very expensive for us, so we decided it would be best if we just focused on wholesale this past summer."

To understand the consequences of having to book a butcher a year in advance, Ciara explained, "Our pigs take about six months

to finish from birth to when they are ready to go to processing. A sow is pregnant for about three and a half months, so we are literally booking appointments for pigs that don't even exist in any way, shape, or form."

In 2019 going into 2020, AM Ranch had set its sights on wholesale to remove the butcher from the equation. "We were going into the year with four new wholesale accounts and they were all restaurants and the plan was to focus on that," She explained. However, the pandemic struck, leaving restaurants nearly nonexistent, and AM

Ranch had to shift its whole business plan towards retail, selling at farmers markets and online.

Luckily, now that restaurants have opened back up, wholesale has become an option again, and AM Ranch has opened new accounts with businesses like Three Forks and BriarPatch.

An advantage to selling wholesale is that less of the animal gets wasted. Ciara explained, "When you take it to the butcher, you lose the bones, the offal, and the fat that the butcher will cut off. Whereas BriarPatch and Three Forks use everything, and so that feels really good that the whole animal is actually going to use instead of anything going to waste."

Three Forks not only buys local meat products but participates in the life of the animals by sending spent beer grain to AM Ranch to feed their steers.

Throughout the interview, I could tell ranching is more than just a profession—it's a lifestyle. At the center, family and community seem to be the pillars that keep the local meat industry afloat amidst all the obstacles.

Ciara mentioned how AM Ranch neighbors two other ranches, who they buy their calves from, and that "have helped us learn so much, and when we need a hand with something they are there to help and vice-versa."

To Ciara, the most rewarding aspect of running a ranch is "that we get to do it together as a family and provide the community that means so much to us with our product that we've worked so hard and put all the love and care into, and that feels really good for us to be able to do."

When I asked Ciara what her favorite memories on the ranch were, she responded, "My husband proposed to me on the ranch, we got married on the ranch, and we announced that we were pregnant with my son on the ranch."

So that package of local bacon has far more behind it than even the 500 miles it took to get to you. Behind it are the lives and stories of local ranching families that raised their animals with the utmost care.

For more information about AM Ranch, visit their website at amranchca.com.



Photo courtesy of AM Ranch

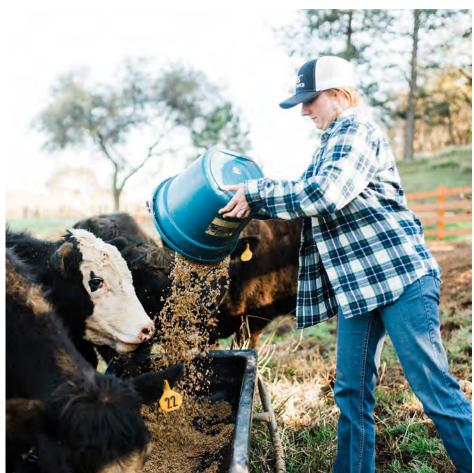


Photo courtesy of AM Ranch

3-COUNTY LIVESTOCK PASS PROGRAM HELPS RANCHERS CARE FOR LIVESTOCK DURING EMERGENCIES

By Dan Macon, Livestock & Natural Resources Advisor UC Cooperative Extension – Placer-Nevada-Sutter-Yuba

he Nevada-Placer-Yuba Disaster Livestock Access Pass Program operated for its second year in 2022. This program, available to commercial livestock producers in the three counties, is the first (and so far, only) multi-county program in California. The program is managed by UC Cooperative Extension and the Nevada, Placer, and Yuba Agriculture Departments, in partnership with CALFIRE and local law enforcement and emergency management agencies.

The program is available for commercial producers raising cattle, Continued to page 11



Courtesy photo | CALFIRE presentation at the 2022 Disaster Livestock Access Pass Training in Browns Valley, CA.



sheep, goats, poultry, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, and bees (commercial means the livestock are part of a business). To be eligible for the program, a producer must own 50 head of livestock (including in utero, e.g., 25 bred cows), 100 poultry or rabbits, or 50 beehives. The geographic area of the program matches CALFIRES Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit and reflects the on-the-ground reality that many commercial livestock producers operate in multiple counties.

The program is not an animal rescue or evacuation program; rather, the pass is designed to provide coordinated and safe access for producers with operations inside evacuation zones. Passholders work with UCCE and county agriculture departments to obtain permission from incident commanders to re-enter evacuation zones when it is safe to do so, **for the purpose of feeding and caring for livestock.**

In 2022, the program expanded by 68%—a total of 72 producers obtained passes. New producers participated in a 4-hour training session hosted by UCCE, local agriculture departments, CALFIRE, and local law enforcement/emergency management agencies at the UC Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center (with lunch generously sponsored by the Sutter-Yuba Farm Bureau). Renewing passholders participated in an online refresher training developed by UCCE. While passes were not formally used during the 2022 fire season, the pass program created positive working relationships between the ranching community and first responders. These relationships resulted in opportunities to help address producer and livestock safety during the Winding Fire in Yuba County, Rices Fire in Nevada County, and the Mosquito Fire in Placer County.

The California State Association of Counties recognized the Nevada-Placer-Yuba program with a 2022 Challenge Award in the Rural Disaster & Emergency Response category, citing the program's innovative tri-county partnership and proactive approach to addressing both public safety and livestock well-being.

Governor Newsom signed AB 1103 (sponsored by Assembly Woman Megan Dahle) in October 2021. This legislation creates a statewide livestock pass program, with new statewide training due out in 2023. Once this new curriculum is rolled out, we will be scheduling training for new and renewing passholders in all three counties! If you'd like updates on these training sessions, or the program in general, contact me at dmacon@ucanr.edu.

2022 PROGRAM STATISTICS

• 28% of passholders had operations in more than one county. On average, passholders operated on 2.4 individual properties.

• 35% had multiple species of livestock.

• 38% of passholders operated in Nevada County; 21% in Placer, 29% in Yuba, and 11% had operations outside of the 3-county region.

- Participation by livestock species:
 - Beef Cattle: 65%
 - Sheep: 32%
 - Goats: 19%
 - Poultry: 19%
 - Bees: 15%
 - Hogs: 8%
 - Rabbits: 7%
 - Dairy (Goats or Cattle): 6%
 - Other Livestock: 11%
- 86% were owners or family members of commercial operations; the balance were employees.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IS A COOPERATIVE PROGRAM BETWEEN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, AND THE COUNTIES WE SERVE. WE OFFER HANDS-ON EDUCATION AND APPLIED RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (THROUGH 4-H), AND ADULT AND YOUTH NUTRITION. FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO HTTPS://CEPLACER. UCANR.EDU/.

NEVADA COUNTY FARM BUREAU WINNERS OF THE 2022 PHOTO CONTEST

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he Nevada County Farm Bureau photo contest for 2022 was open to any amateur photographer who is a resident of Nevada County or a minor child residing in Nevada County. The intention of the contest is to showcase the variety of agriculture in Nevada County. The photos must have showcased Nevada County agriculture in one of these four categories. Photographers ages 16 and under are encouraged to enter in the Junior Photographer category. An entrant may submit up to five photos.

- Farm and Ranch Scenery
- Farm and Ranch People
- Fresh Local Food or Fiber Production
- AG Selfie Portrait



1st Photo by Cierssa Bell from Bakwrd CP Farm | Highlighting farm life and their Scottish highland cattle.



2nd Photo by Madison Easley from Dipper Valley Ranch | Highlighting a prescribed burn on the property.



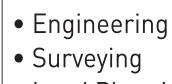
3rd Photo by Linda Miller | Highlighting Miller Ranch pasture raised lamb and beef.



4th Photo Sandra Boyd | Sierra Harvest Food Love Farm



5th Photo by Linda Miller | Miller Ranch



Nevada City

• Land Planning

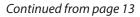
Engineering, Inc.

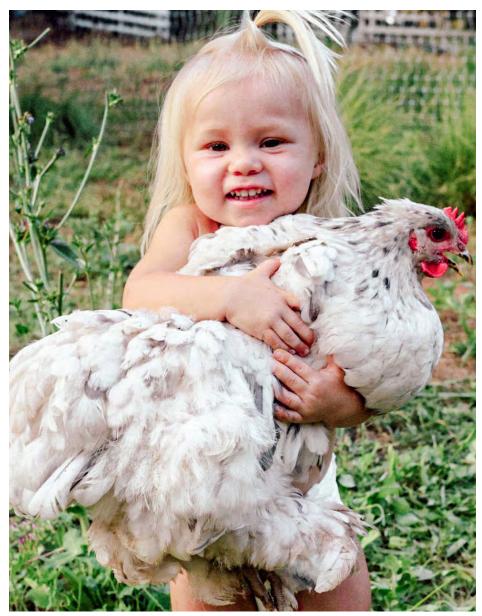
JOHN BAKER President

ANDREW CASSANO Land Surveyor Land Planner BOB ROURKE Civil Engineer

(530) 265-6911 505 Coyote Street • Suite B Nevada City, CA 95959







6th Photo by Melissa Herring | Homesteading in Nevada County.



7th Photo by Molly Fowler | Fowler Family Farm



Calling all businesses!

Vendor Application homegarden.theunion.com

Send application to Mlane@theunion.com **Questions? Call** (530) 913-1359 (530) 477-4241

Save the date! April 22 & 23, 2023 At the Nevada County Fairgrounds



NEVADA UNION DISTRICT CUT THE LOG ON AGRICULTURAL LEARNING SPACE

By Jennifer Nobles

tudents of the Nevada Joint Union High School District now have a new opportunity to learn. What district officials are calling "The Ranch" celebrated its opening at the end of 2022. With a log cutting (as opposed to a ribbon cutting) performed by school board member Jim Drew, the area was deemed ready for all students to exercise hands-on learning in an agricultural space.

"It's an 86-acre ranch (donated) to the district so it's pretty incredible," said Noah Levinson, director of Career and Tech for the Nevada Joint Union High School District. "It needed renovations to bring it up to a 21st century learning environment. The Jennings Foundation donated money to help with the ranch. We've had an outpouring of community support."

Levinson added that the Nevada County Resource Conservation District donated a wood mill to the property, the first of what organizers say they hope will be a series of contributions of equipment to enhance the property.

The location is meant mainly for agricultural students but is open to all attendees of the Nevada Union District's schools, whether for artistic or agricultural needs.

Jordan Kohler, Director of Facilities for the district, said: "(The land) was donated by a local family trust, and we officially received the title in March 2021. There has been a lot of clean-up, trying to get things safe."

The property lies equidistant from both Bear River and Nevada Union high schools, and is intended to offer students a place to hone their skills in raising and caring for animals. Some families, Kohler mentioned, might not have the available space on their property for students to learn their ways around husbandry.

"It's for agricultural and recreational education and natural resources," Kohler said. "It's for high school students first, but we have talked with 4-H about other possibilities. So, for high school, for sure, it's turnkey. If you need that resource and need a place to raise an animal, for sure."

Levinson said the future looks bright for the ranch with support flooding in from many sources throughout the community.

"It's still a work in progress," said Levinson. "They are bringing in animal pens so students can do projects. (Students) are excited to get out there. We want it to be a working ranch and learning lab. All the ecosystems of Nevada County seem to be there."

Levinson said one of the first visits to the ranch was quite profound.

"A cow had birthed a new calf, so the kids saw that. Then we had like 10 FFA kids looking," said Levinson. "The potential...is so much freedom out here. It's so cool for our students to see the heritage of Nevada County with this real working ranch. It's really a community hub."



Photo courtesy of NJUHSD

FREE Advisory Visit Program

CONSERVATION

This program offers landowners personalized guidance in the natural resources management of their property.

- Forest management
- Pond management
- Rural road maintenance
- Invasive pest management
- Drainage issues
- Soil identification
- Pasture management
- Erosion control
- Wildlife habitat improvement

Nevada County Resource Conservation District 113 Presley Way, Suite 1, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (530) 798-5529

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