



Ridge Route Communities
MUSEUM
 & Historical Society
 Frazier Park, California

Summer 2012

The Ridge Route Rambler

We're nuts  about history.

MEMBERSHIP



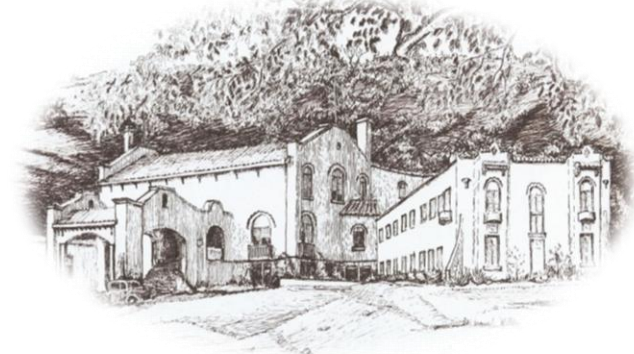
Bill Bice
 IT Professional
 (661) 245-0100
 wmbice@gmail.com

Many thanks to Bill Bice of PC Pal Computer Services and Jeff Prescott of Fox Advertising, for volunteering their time and talent in creating a new look for the Museum. We now have a wonderful new logo (see above), stationary and Membership Card that we're very excited about, and a new tagline that perfectly fits our passion for history – “We're Nuts About History!” Bill and Jeff also coordinated and created all the materials needed for our Business

Membership Drive at no cost and saved the Museum a considerable amount of money on printing. We thank them very much for their generous support of the Museum and the Community! Check out page 8 to see local businesses that have taken advantage of advertising in our newsletter as a perk of being a Business Member.

RAFFLE

Stapled to your newsletter this issue should be 6 raffle tickets, with an envelope to return the filled-out “Ticket” half of each ticket you purchase, and your money. Ticket prices are \$1 each, or six tickets for \$5. The drawings for the prizes will be held at the Museum Craft Faire on November 3, 2012. The **two** prizes this year will be an original quilt in the Shenandoah pattern stitched by Alice Chitwood of Pine Mountain Club, and a one-of-a-kind woodcut of the Lebec Hotel by local artisan John Grubb,



Above: John Grubb with his Car Show woodcut; his drawing of the Lebec Hotel from which the raffle woodcut will be made. (C Mead photo)

Left: Alice Chitwood and the “Shenandoah” quilt she made for the raffle (D. Billesbach photo)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from Susan Amon

As we move forward with our Business Membership drive and roll out our new motto, "We're Nuts About History", I've also been giving some thought to other ways our members and our community can contribute to the Museum's efforts to stay afloat.

While shopping at our local Ace Hardware store in Frazier Park, I confirmed with management that anyone can donate their **Ace Reward Points** to the Ridge Route Communities Museum's account, simply by letting the cashier know each time you make a purchase. By doing so, the Museum can build reward money to use when we need light bulbs, nails, screws, building supplies, etc. We also can use your active Ace Reward Cards, which you can drop off at the Museum during hours we are open.

The Museum also has an account at Staples in Santa Clarita, where you can turn in **used printer ink cartridges** that help us buy office supplies. These you can also drop off at the Museum.

Some other ways you might be able to help the Museum:

If you're upgrading your **vacuum cleaner** and your old one still works, the Museum could use a vacuum cleaner.

If you have a **heavy-duty dolly** that you're not using, the Museum could use one to help move our tables and chairs to our outside amphitheater, and help set up our booth at various events. (Our volunteers are "young at heart" but not always "young in body.") We could also use a **heavy duty weed whip**.

The Museum could really use someone who can engineer, design, and organize volunteers to help complete **construction** on our outdoor **amphitheater**.

If you are a realtor, don't forget the Museum has **Gift Certificates** and local history books for that Welcome Basket. We need docents who can **volunteer** a minimum of 4-5 hours a month to keep our Museum open to the public. No knowledge of local history is needed or experience. We train all throughout the year. Call the Museum and leave your name and number and we can get you started. It's a fun way of meeting new people and getting to hear great stories.

MANY THANKS TO ELOISE RICHER

After more than 16 years of service to the Museum, Eloise Richer has recently resigned her Museum duties. Over the years she has served on the Museum Board of Directors, as Secretary, as Editor of the newsletter, and as a docent. We really appreciate all that she has done.



ACQUISITIONS:

We recently acquired an ink-on-cloth portrait of "Tuekakas", known to the Western world as Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce, who was the grandfather of Margaret Cuddy. Margaret was the wife of John Fletcher Cuddy, founder of the local Cuddy clan. The donor was Lee Ellis, a descendant of Chief Joseph through the Cuddy's.



THE FOLLOWING NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS ALSO SUPPORT OUR MUSEUM:

Alpine Ready Mix
Arnie's Auto Repair & Tires
California Towcat
All Seasons Realty
Moose Lodge #2364
Star Cycle USA
US Mountains Properties

EVENTS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED:

May 5, 2012 - Cleanup Day

Docents, Board members and families showed up to clean up the grounds. Some much needed weed whacking was done, as well as laying down mulch on our driveway to the sheds in the back.



C. Mead photo

May 24th - "Night Talks" presented "Lions, Coyotes and Bears, Oh My!, the people and wildlife of Hungry Valley". Michelle Hofmann, State Park Interpreter for Hungry Valley SVRA, entertained us with pictures of wildlife known to be present in our mountain communities, and her collection of animal poop! She shared the history of how animals have been used to sustain the lives of early settlers and native peoples in our mountains.

May 26, 2012 - Frazier Park Car Show

The Museum once again participated in the car show with a booth and books for sale, including our new book "Growing up in Wheeler Ridge" by Robert M. Dorsey.

June 2nd - Car Tour of Hungry Valley

Michelle Hofmann, State Park Interpreter for Hungry Valley SVRA, conducted a car tour through parts of Hungry Valley and talked about the native grasses, flowers, oaks and wildlife in the Park. She also discussed resource management in the Park. The tour had the added bonus of a visit from Bob Dorsey (now of Klamath Falls, OR) whose wife grew up on Kinsey Ranch, which is now on Park land. Participants enjoyed a picnic lunch at one of the Park's campgrounds.

June 19th - Chamber of Commerce Mixer

The Museum hosted the Mountain Communities Chamber of Commerce Mixer, where members mingled with local business owners and the Museum Board.

June 28th - "Night Talks" presented David K. Lynch, geologist, astronomer, and author of "Color and Light in Nature". His talk covered questions like: "What is a rainbow? Why is the sky blue? Why is the setting sun red and flattened? What is a mirage? Why are there rays or spokes coming from the setting sun? What is the green flash? Can it be photographed? Why does the moon look so big on the horizon? Why do stars twinkle? What is an aurora borealis? Is it really darkest before dawn? Why are wet spots dark? What is that ring around the Sun? Why can water appear so many different colors?"



David Lynch "Color & Light in Nature" (D. Billesach photo)

June 30th - Michi's Magic Bookshelf

Michi Knight had books and activities based upon blue jeans and the miners that wore them. The children below got to try their hand at gold panning. (B. Kane photo)



July 13th - Town Hall Meeting

Bonnie Ketterl-Kane, the Museum Historian, presented a talk on "The First People" at the Pine Mountain Clubhouse. Ms. Kane reviewed the history of the local First Nation peoples and individuals, and their decline.

July 21st - Annual Picnic

Hot dogs and hamburgers were provided by the Museum, while desserts and side dishes were

brought to share. Entertainment was provided by Ron & Barbara Edsall and friends with their Celtic folk music. Local artists Susan Sjoberg, Roberta Owen and John Grubb's works were displayed.



H. Nelson photo

July 26th – “Night Talks” Bonnie Ketterl-Kane, presented “Ask the Historian” at our first Night Talk outdoors at the Museum. She answered questions such as: What’s with those rock houses in Frazier Park? How did the town of Lebec get its name? For that matter, how did the town of Frazier Park get its name? What Native American tribes hunted around the mountain communities? Where is the exact location of the Old Lebec Hotel? What is Deadman’s Curve? What about a stage coach route that went through the mountains? Was there really a lake in Lake of the Woods? Was there a Native American village in Pine Mountain Club? Admission and refreshments are free.

EVENTS TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR:

August 3-5, 2012 – Fiesta Days

Come check out our displays and books for sale, only a block from Fiesta Days at the Park.

August 10th – Town Hall Meeting

Bonnie Kane, the Museum Historian, will present “The Founding of the Mountain Communities” at the Condor Room in the Pine Mountain Clubhouse at 7:00 p.m. The cost is free and everyone is welcome.

August 11th – Lebec to Ft. Tejon Tour

Bonnie Kane will lead the tour starting at the Lebec exit and ending at Peter Lebeck’s gravesite at Fort Tejon. Parties should meet at 10:00 at the historic marker just west of the Lebec exit off I-5 and expect it to last until 1:00. Bring your own picnic lunch and drinks, as well as \$5 per person. Call the museum to reserve your spot (245-7747). Possible “guest appearance” by Peter Lebeck!

August 18th - “Michi’s Magic Bookshelf

Michi Knight will have oldtime washboard activities & games based on the book “Mrs. McNosh Hangs Up the Wash”. Begins at 10:00 a.m. at the Museum. Free.

August 23rd – “Night Talks”

presents the biologist Lynn Stafford, who will speak on “The Varied Birdlife of our Greater Frazier Mountain Area”. It will be outdoors at the Museum at 6:00 p.m. Come early and enjoy the Museum. Cost is free and refreshments will be served.

Sat. (only) August 25th, 2012 – Barn Sale Fundraiser; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Come check out our goods for sale and help the Museum out with your purchases. If you have goods you’d like to donate, please call the Museum.

September 14th - Town Hall Meeting

Bonnie Ketterl-Kane, Museum Historian presents “The Ranchos” at the Pine Mountain Clubhouse-Condor Room at 7:00pm. The cost is free and everyone is welcome.

September 2012 - NatureFest

The Museum will have a booth with books for sale and an interactive display. Time & date TBA

September 22nd – “Michi’s Magic Bookshelf”

Families that are not going on the Fault Tour at 8:30 a.m. can bring their children to enjoy Story Time & Crafts by Michi Knight on a Native American theme. Begins at 10:00 at the Museum. The cost is free.

September 22nd - San Andreas Fault Car Tour

Our tour guide will be Tim Elam, geologist from the Buena Vista Museum of Natural History. We will meet at Museum at 8:30 a.m. and follow the Fault through the Mountain Communities by car, ending about 1:30 pm. Cost will be \$5.00 per person. No children under the age of 12; please call the Museum to reserve a spot.

September 27th - “Night Talks”

Topic/Presenter: Jim Lowery, local author and teacher of Earth Skills. It will be outdoors at the Museum.

Time: 6:00 pm Cost: Free Refreshments served

October 27th - Reading of local Ghost Stories

Location: The Museum Time: 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.
Cost: Free Refreshments served



MOVIES ON THE MOUNTAIN

Compiled by Chandra Sargent Mead from articles by Roni Bishop Geurs and others

The temperature rises, the cooler goes on, and in goes a tape or DVD. Did you know that there is a good chance you might be watching scenes filmed in your own backyard? The rotating display prepared by Donna Turner is sharing small reminders of just some of the movies and TV series that were filmed in the greater Frazier Mountain area. Here are some examples:

Film companies used the **Lebec** Hotel, opened in 1921, and surrounding areas to shoot additional footage for their motion pictures. Some of the Hollywood crowd who enjoyed the mountain setting included Clara Bow, Carole Lombard, Clark Gable, comedian Jerry Colona, "Fatty" Arbuckle and his wife. A waitress remembered Bing Crosby entering the coffee shop sporting a wicked looking black eye. Long before T.V. and the 6 o'clock news, Movietone Shorts filmed snow-stranded motorists coming to the safe haven of Lebec Hotel.

On the **Grapevine** highway, James Dean was given a speeding ticket just two hours before he would die in a car crash in 1955.

In the 1960's episodes of "The FBI" were filmed in **Frazier Park**. Local residents were hired as extras and stand-ins. Even their vehicles were rented. In the 70's the town and park became Gideon, CO. in "Doc Elliot", who was played by James Franciscus. Reviews of the day and comments in TV archives said the real stars were the rustic charm of Frazier Park and the pristine beauty of its neighboring communities. The FBI returned in "America's Most Wanted", filmed at Brit's Mountain Inn (now La Sierra's Restaurant). The first episode of "JAG" was filmed at the building that is now the Coffee Cantina. In 2010 "Criminal Minds" filmed an episode

in town, using Alpine Plaza (Caveman Cavey's), the Assembly of God Church, Big John's, Sue's Tavern, the Mountain Enterprise office, and several homes.

The TV series "Star Trek: Voyager" was filmed by Paramount in the high wide **Lockwood Valley**. Walt Disney shot the racing scenes in "Herbie the Love Bug" here in 1969. Also in 1969, "Easy Rider", with Peter Fonda, Jack Nicholson and Dennis Hopper, motorcycled through the Valley. In 1991, "Thelma and Louise" (with Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon) was shot in Lockwood Valley, as well as the Stumble Inn in Lake of the Woods, and the Caravan Motor Inn in Gorman.

In **Cuddy Valley** near Mt. Pinos, several movies and TV shows were made. "Planet of the Apes" production company filmed it's second unit shots there. It became the Colorado Rockies for TV series "'Doc Elliot". "The Waltons" series was launched by the movie "The Homecoming - A Christmas Story" in 1971. They called Cuddy Valley their Blue Ridge Mountain home for nine years during the series run from 1972 to 1981. The Culbertson Homestead, owned then by Julia & Wesley Darling, became a cabin in "Doc Elliot". Cuddy Valley Road became an eerie Transylvania forest in the 2003 movie "Van Helsing" with Hugh Jackman. In 2008, Cuddy Valley, Lebec and other mountain locations doubled as the hills of Hebron in the TBN movie, "Book of Ruth".

The sweeping panoramas of land on and beyond the Grapevine, known as **Tejon Ranch**, is 270,000 acres of beautiful, varied landscapes often appearing as places like Spain, Ireland, Australia and the Big Sky expanses of Montana. The Ranch has also frequently been seen in television series, music videos, commercials and still photography. Star Trek's Captain Kirk and Scotty were filmed on a Tejon plateau. For "Wild Bill", a movie about Buffalo Bill Cody filmed in 1995, the plains and mountains of Tejon Ranch became the Dakotas of the 1800's. Some scenes in the 2003 movie "Seabiscuit" were shot on the Ranch.

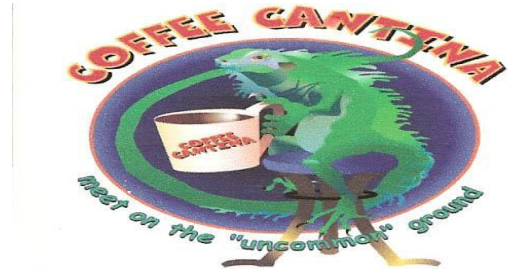
Gorman was a common stagecoach stop in many early Westerns. Television's "Highway Patrol", in the 1950's, had scenes shot in Gorman. Star Broderick Crawford often had coffee at the Gorman Coffee Shop. The former Kinsey Ranch, now on Hungry Valley Off-Road Park land, was the setting for the racetrack and corrals in the 1944 movie "National Velvet". The Kinsey Mansion, on Highway 138 opposite Quail Lake, is easily recognizable as "Tara Plantation" in the 1939 film "Gone with the Wind".

Below **Mt. Pinos**, in a deep canyon of pines, lies the Pine Mountain Club where its awesome beauty has attracted film companies. A log cabin portrayed a Minnesota vacation home for the "Unsolved Mysteries" series. Another home was "lit up" for the 1989 movie "Communion". Mt. Pinos's big trees provided the background for Ben Cartwright's Ponderosa Ranch in "Bonanza" from 1959 to 1973. In 1964 and 1967 Mt. Pinos was used in episodes of "Daniel Boone". In 1998 both "City of Angels" and "Deep Impact" used scenes shot on Mt. Pinos. Additional films shot in the area were "The Virginian", "Alf", Robin Williams' "Toys" and "Poetic Justice" with Tupac Shakur and Janet Jackson. Michael Jackson used the trees and mountains of the area in two of his music videos: "Thriller" and "Childhood".

Local directors, writers, actors and cinematographers are being remembered as well. Dalton Trumbo, Hollywood screenwriter of such movies as Spartacus and Papillon, who was blackballed by the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947, had his "Lazy T" Ranch in Lockwood Valley. Frank Butler and Claude Binyon, both directors and writers, each successively owned Mesa Valley Farm (next to the Flying J). Both Dom DeLuise and Jamie Farr (of "Mash") owned property in Pine Mountain Club at one time. Lucille Ball is rumored to have had a place up on the shady side of Frazier Park. Dennis Fimple, character actor in films such as "Centennial" & "King Kong" called Frazier Park home. Al Fleming of Lake of the Woods, played "Buffalo Man" in the series "The

Magnificent Seven". Our own Don Eubank played Sheriff Don in "Visable Scars". John Schneider, who played Duke in the "Dukes of Hazzard", once lived up O'Neill Canyon in Lebec.

THANKS TO THE COFFEE CANTINA FOR THE COOKIES PROVIDED AT OUR "NIGHT TALKS"!



3011 Mt Pinos Way Frazier Park, Ca 661 245-3166

THANKS TO TABATHA FOR CLEANING THE MUSEUM



SUMMERTIME – 1920's & 30's
by Bonnie Ketterl Kane

I recently did interviews with a brother and sister, Don and Mia Suverkrop, who lived in Frazier Park when it was first founded. It was a thrill to have the opportunity to hear some stories and be able to copy some photographs from those early days here.

Lew & Elizabeth Suverkrop moved to Taft in 1920 where Lew oversaw the building of an oilfield camp for the Bureau of Mines and then became an oilfield inspector. While there, three children were born to the couple – Bard in 1921, Mia in 1923 and Don in 1925. In the mid-1920's Lew began building a cabin, or shack as he called it,

on the north slope of Frazier Mountain, just above the new development of Frazier Mtn. Park – sixty feet up the mountain from South End Drive. The family would go to the cabin in the summer to escape the heat and smells of oil in the Taft area. Mia recalled that the cabin was just one large room with an outhouse up back, a small bedroom for their parents and beds on the screened in porch for the kids – "where we could look out at the stars and the moonlit mountain across the valley". Don added that "night-time illumination was provided by a hissing gasoline lantern and candles – inconveniences that encouraged turning in early".

The Suverkrop family became good friends with the Fife family, who owned and ran the first market and lumber yard in Frazier Park – where

you could also get gasoline and your mail. It was located in what is now the parking lot of the present Frazier Park Market. A four cylinder Kohler



The Suverkrop shack from above and looking towards the neighborhood between Elm & Walnut Trails, 1926

electric generating plant supplied power to the store and its freezers and was the only electric power in town. Don also remembered that there was a window on the east side of the store where you could get a nickel ice cream cone without going into the store. "One day I saw the Rudnick children, only ages 3 and 4, ride up bareback on a horse, dismount on the rock wall next to the building, get their ice cream cones and climb back on the horse by again using the stone wall (the area's first drive-in)."



The first Frazier Park market

The Fife children, also two boys and a girl – Bud, Mildred and James, the Suverkrop children, and others from the community would often explore the hills together. Mia remembered that "Mildred was like the 'Pied Piper' with the little kids, leading us on hikes and teaching us about nature".

There was another cabin near the Suverkrop's and Don remembered that the family would

come up in their touring car with their greyhound dogs riding in boxes on the running board. In 1930 the neighbor's cabin caught on fire – no one knew how, – sadly burning down the Suverkrop cabin as well. No one was home at either structure. The fire was no doubt fought by volunteers from the community and Forest Service workers. There was a bell tower across the road from the market that was rung to call out anyone available to help fight the fire and someone would have had to drive out to the Forest Service station to let them know.

By 1930 the Suverkrop family had moved from Taft to Bakersfield and had a home near the Fife's by Beale Park. The Fifes also had a home next to the market in Frazier Park. About 1931 Mildred Fife died as a young teen, devastating both families. Some years later – in the late 1930's when Mia was a teenager, she would ride the school bus up to Frazier to spend weekends with the Fifes, and in the summer spend weeks at a time with them to help run the store. Some of Mia's Frazier Park friends were Betty Castleman & her sister, and Lucille Lashley & her sister. They would swim in the newly built community pool (where the Frazier Park Post Office is now), play softball with others including some boys from the Gorman area: Roy Curtis, Glenn Ralphs and Frank White. The girls would sometimes walk the five miles down to Lebec to watch the local league baseball games. Mia recalled that once when the girls were walking back from Lebec there was a coiled up rattlesnake on the (then) dirt road. She managed to kill it by throwing rocks at it.

Summertime memories of long ago. . .



L-R Back row: Ben "Bud" Fife, Bard Suverkrop; Front: Mia Suverkrop, Don Suverkrop, James Fife
On the playground in front of the "clubhouse" at the park, 1928

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FROM OUR HISTORIAN, Bonnie Ketterl Kane . . .

In the last issue of the Rambler we featured an article on the oil pipelines being run through our mountains. In the article we included some pictures of an oil tank burning – pictures we had just located in an old Cuddy family photo album.

Well it seems that our photos coincided with a letter the West Kern Oil Museum (at Taft) printed in their newsletter, "The Pumper". This letter related an incident where an oil tank exploded blowing the top off it, from a welder's torch being lit!! We are in contact with the fellow whose grandfather survived the incident, and the Taft Museum for further information. If there is anyone in our readership who might remember hearing about a tank exploding, please let us know.

WHO'S DOING WHAT:

Here's a list of jobs and needs around the museum grounds (and we always need more volunteers!):

President: Susan Amon

Docents: Karen Anthony, Harry Nelson, C. Mead, D. Cuddy,

Vice President: David Goodkin

B. Kane, D. Turner, S. Amon

Secretary: Chandra Mead

Treasurer: Daisy Cuddy

Event Coordinator: Susan Amon

Rotating Exhibits: Donna Turner

Historian & Inside Curator: Bonnie Kane

Bookstore: Chandra Mead

Grants, & Grounds Curator: David Goodkin

Acquisitions: Curtis Newman

Membership: Jessie Jewell Jamar

Librarian: Karen Anthony

Computers & Web Site: Peter Mack

Newsletter: B. Kane, D. Cuddy, C. Mead

LOCAL BOOKS FOR SALE

The following titles that cover local history and/or were written by local authors, are available online through our website, in our store or at Base Camp in PMC:

The Art of Gathering & Making Elderberry Jam

Cuddy Cattle Drive

Dawn to Dusk (Poems of Florence Cuddy)

Growing Up in Wheeler Ridge

Heap of Eatin' Cookbook

Heap of Livin' (McKenzie family history)

Homesteaders Heyday (Lockwood Valley – 1920's)

Mines, Murders & Grizzlies (Lockwood Valley)

A View From the Ridge Route: Vol. I The First People

Vol. II The Fort Tejon Era

Vol. III The Ranchos

Vol. IV The Resources

Membership Form

Ridge Route Communities Museum & Historical Society

Mail to: PO Box 684, Frazier Park, CA 93225

New Member

Renewal

_____	_____	Individual Membership	\$20.00
_____	_____	Family Membership	\$30.00
_____	_____	Senior Membership	\$15.00
_____	_____	Student Membership	\$10.00
_____	_____	Business Membership	\$50.00
_____	_____	Lifetime Membership	\$300.00

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I would like to receive my newsletter by: _____ Email _____ US Mail

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**MANY THANKS TO TEJON
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NEWSLETTER!!!!**

HOW TO REACH US...

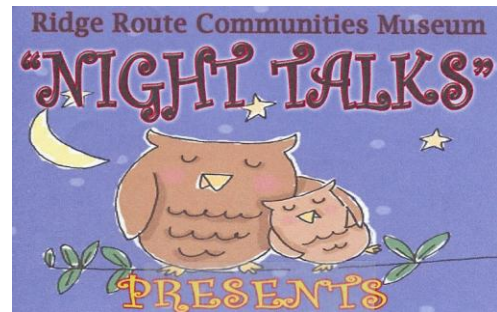
The Museum and Historical Society offices are located at 3515 Park Drive in Frazier Park – just east of the Post Office. Our hours are Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons, 12 noon to 4 p.m. (Summer 'til 5 p.m.)

For donations our tax I.D. # is 77-0431597

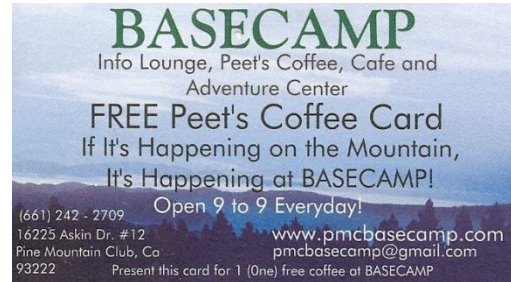
Museum phone: 661-245-RRHS (7747)

Web site: www.rrchs.org

Email: rrchs@frazmtn.com



An exciting speaker or program (see schedule pages 3 & 4) on the 4th Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. outdoors at the Museum Free admission and refreshments



Thanks to Base Camp for offering our books for sale

**CHECK YOUR LABEL FOR
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