

# Las Plumas

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Spring 2007



*General View of SIERRA VALLEY, from Beckwourth's Pass.*

*Sierra Valley as viewed from Beckwourth Pass about 1860. Courtesy Plumas County Museum.*

## *Lost & Found - A Sierra Valley Saga* By Betsy Schramel.

The sagebrush spread as far as the eye could see and the ripening grain stood tall, swaying in the warm late summer breeze. It was destined to be a memorable Sunday at the Odo and Josephine Grandi Ranch in Sierra Valley, California that September 8<sup>th</sup> 1913.

Odo Grandi was born in Breno, Switzerland in 1884 and, like many Swiss-Italians, had heard about and journeyed to the fertile valley in the northern Sierra mountains of California. He had come through Ellis Island, New York on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1903 and emigrated west to California. It was here in the Sierra Valley Odo met the lovely Josephine Guidici, born at nearby Last Chance Valley. They were married in 1908 in Reno, Nevada and purchased a ranch about eight miles north of Loyaltown in Sierra Valley. Here on the far eastern edge of Plumas County, they raised their brown Swiss cattle and their



feed.

It was a special occasion on that Sunday afternoon at the Grandi home; the table spread with a noon dinner in honor of Odo's two sisters, Theresa and Rosie Grandi. They had come to visit from Reno, Nevada where they had recently arrived from Switzerland.

Odo and Josephine, along with their children, five year-old Mabel, four year-old Clarence, two year-old Lydia, and baby Joseph 8 ½ months, were all enjoying the company.

Odo was especially proud of his grain fields and, after dinner, he led his sisters and two eldest children out to view the crops while mother Josephine stayed at home nursing baby Joseph. Little Lydia toddled behind ... well, not exactly...!

It was about three in the afternoon when Josephine went out to greet the returning party. She looked around and asked, "But where is little Lydia?"

Apparently, Lydia, along with her favorite baby milk bottle had roamed in the opposite direction through the sagebrush and vanished unnoticed.

Immediately, a valley alert system went into action. A message was sent into Loylton and the neighbors spread the word

on their telephone party lines. People raced out to the ranch to join the search parties with more coming after the baseball game. Even ranch helper, Old Jerry, who tried to help keep an eye on the little ones, was in tears.

The groups, totaling over one hundred people, searched through the night. Of particular concern was a field pond, but much looking in and around there turned up nothing.

It was the next day when an Indian man, famous in the area for his tracking ability, found her footprints and followed them to a large clump of sagebrush. There she stood, in brush taller than her head, still clutching her now empty milk bottle.

The message again flew by word of mouth and phone; even the Loylton lumber mill whistle blew to announce her rescue. It was seven in the evening – twenty-seven hours since her disappearance. The local doctor, who was there to check her over, said he couldn't even find any traces of tears on her face!

Nor was this to be the last disappearance. It was again reported and repeated to Lydia over the years that the next time she turned up missing she was found not far away. In fact, her detection this time was made possible by the sound of loud, sucking noises on the baby bottle coming from a nearby



Sept 9, 1913

*Lydia Grandi  
lost girl.*

ranch shed!

Lydia's parents finally resorted to an old home remedy to break her of the bottle habit. It seems Lydia didn't like cheese very much so they left cheese-filled bottle nipples strategically placed around the house. She tried a few sucks and threw them away – that did it!

The following year, Odo sold the ranch, known formerly as the Lathrop Ranch, and purchased the Raines Ranch about one mile west of Loyalton. Two more children, Leo and Alvina, joined their family. Both Odo and, later, his sons continued to add ranch land to their holdings, running the old Sierra Valley Creamery, which became the Grade-A-Dairy.

The years passed quickly as Lydia grew. After graduating from Loyalton High School, she went on to the University of Nevada-Reno, graduating in 1932. Lydia earned her California Teaching Credential at San Francisco State College and was called to her first teaching position in Crescent Mills, California in 1934.

It was here in Indian Valley Lydia met her soon-to-be husband, Irishman Clifford Sheehan. They married in 1937 in Loyalton at the Holy Rosary Church. Cliff served with the army in Alaska during

World War II. Following the war, they settled down in their pioneer brick ranch house overlooking Indian Valley. While raising their three children, Patrick, Terence and Marilyn, Cliff oversaw their ranch. He passed away in 1997. Lydia taught school in Crescent Mills and Greenville for thirty-three years.

The little girl lost tale has been told and retold over nearly a century and there are still folks in Sierra and Plumas counties who share this adventure story with Lydia. Sometime in 1940s, Lydia and Cliff were fishing up at Crystal Lake above Taylorsville and started a conversation with another angler there. He said he was a long time Quincy resident and, somehow, the conversation turned to getting lost.



The stranger recollected how years ago he'd been called to go with a search party from Quincy to Sierra Valley where they helped look for a little lost girl!

"If I told you that I was that two year-old girl, would you believe me?" exclaimed Lydia! "I'm so thankful all of you found me."

In the summer of 2005, Lydia was invited to return to the old Sierra Valley ranch site, now a part of the Roberti Ranch holdings. The ladies, Alice Guidici and Elia Roberti Miles, walked with Lydia all the way out to that memorable pond site. She was given a photo of that priceless moment ... hugging her bottle in the sagebrush!

At this writing, Lydia Grandi Sheehan, born July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1911, is a spry, active ninety-five years young. She still takes part in numerous church and community activities and, now living with her daughter, Marilynn, in Greenville still retains her Post Office Box 1 and ranch home in Crescent Mills.

When you see her out and about, hiking the streets of Greenville daily, be sure to call "hello" and do ask her about her beloved Giants baseball team!

Lydia Sheehan and Betsy Schramel have been friends and neighbors for some forty-seven years. They have long shared membership in several Indian Valley women's groups including the Greenville Sierra Study Club. This club, which continues today, was founded in 1939, with Lydia as a charter member. Betsy is a life member of the Plumas County Museum Association, and Lydia is a past trustee of the Museum, having served from 1986 to 1994. Thank you to Lydia Sheehan and her

# Memorial Donations

When a Memorial Donation is made in a loved one's name, a Museum Memorial card is sent to the family, the person's name and biography is entered into the Perpetual Memorial Volumes, and the donor's name is added to the Memorial. Since the last newsletter, donations have been given to the museum in memory of the following

Richard Barnum, *Etna, CA*; Marilee Edson Bellamy, *Missoula, MT*; Albano Bresciani, *Quincy*; Delton Clifton, *Taylorville*; Norma Jean Carr, *Quincy/Graeagle*; Norma Fahey, *Quincy*; Connie Foster, *Quincy*; John Frazier Sr., *Quincy*; Preston Glover, *Quincy*; Robert Goff, *Graeagle*; Francis Hall, *Oroville*; Tracy, Hall, *Quincy*; Greg Hockenson, *Reno, NV*; Merlin Kohler, *Quincy*; Glynn B. Lee, *Portola*; Ernie Leonhardt, *Quincy*; Ruby Lewis, *Quincy*; June Margason, *Quincy*; Jeanne McClard, *Quincy*; Dorothy McDonald, *Quincy*; Bill Mikesell, *Quincy*; Margaret Mitchell, *Quincy*; Hazel Mitchem, *Quincy*; Barbara Moon, *Quincy*; Barbara Norman, *Quincy*; Marjorie McKee Orr, *Clayton*; Marnell Orr, *Quincy*; Phyllis Payne, *Quincy*; Don Penland, *Quincy*; Kennon Shea, *Quincy*; Doris Gray Seibold, *Quincy*; Dorathy Skow, *Quincy*; Raynelle Slaten, *Quincy*; Ed Smith, *Quincy*; Dave Story, *Graeagle*; Alan Henry Thieler, *Quincy*; David Whitney, *Twain*; Jesse Wallace, *Quincy*; Penny Yingling, *Quincy*.

## The 14th Annual History & Archaeology Night

will be held Tuesday, May 22nd in Portola at the Holy Family Church hall, Wednesday, May 23rd at the LDS Church in Quincy, and Thursday, May 24th at the Memorial Hall in Chester. All shows are from 7 to 9 p.m. This year's program is titled:

### “Sawpits to Skylines, a History of the Timber Industry in Plumas County.”

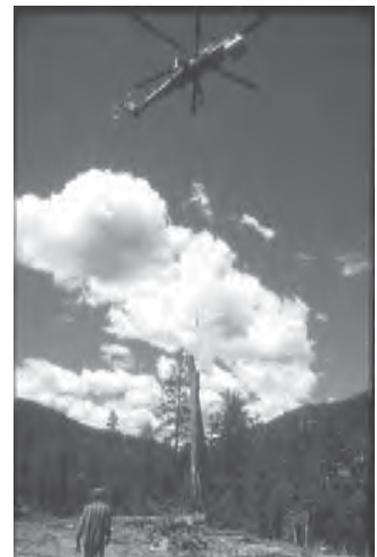
This collection of vintage photographs of early-day logging and lumbering will take this time-honored tradition from its earliest days to the modern age.



Refreshments will be served at the intermission. Please call ahead to ensure your seat as well as give us an idea of the amount of cobbles we need to make.

There is a donation asked of \$5 from Museum members and \$7 from the general public to help defray our costs.

Call 283-6320 Tuesday - Saturday



# 2007 Museum Bus Field Trips

## SCHEDULE

- July 28**      **Oroville via Beckwourth Trail, return Feather River Canyon:**  
Travel the historic 1851 Beckwourth Emigrant Trail via Bucks Lake to Oroville  
then back to Quincy up the spectacular Feather River Canyon. Historic sites,  
wagon ruts, rock walls, tunnels, and beautiful scenery abound on this trip!
- Aug 18**      **Indian Valley Tour of Ranches, Cemeteries & Towns:**  
Historic working ranches, quaint towns, serene cemeteries, plus railroad history,  
Native American landmarks, the Peter Lassen monument, a visit to the Indian  
Valley Museum, and wonderful scenery make this a trip you won't want to  
miss.
- Sept. 22**      **La Porte via Nelson Point, Onion Valley and Gibsonville:**  
Now paved, this historic wagon route was built in 1867 from American Valley to  
La Porte. The gold rush-era camps of Nelson Point, Onion Valley, Gibsonville,  
and more will bring to your imagination the gold miners of  
old. This is a winding, steep road and not for the faint of heart! The quaint  
mining town of La Porte, deep in the heart of the "The Lost Sierra,"  
will be our destination for lunch, a locally guided walking tour, and a visit  
to the Frank C. Reilly Museum. Time-permitting, we will return via Little Grass  
Valley Reservoir.
- Oct. 20**      **Sierra Valley Ranches: Ramelli, Goss, Dotta and Guidici ranches.**  
This tour will focus on four or more historic ranches in the northern section of  
the Sierra Valley, with historic sites along the way such as Spring Garden,  
Cromberg, Mohawk Valley, Williams' House Museum, Jim Beckwourth Cabin  
Museum, and Chilcoot. Most of these ranches are in the same families they have  
been in for 100 years or more.

Please be sure to sign up as soon as possible for these trips as seating on the busses is limited! Tickets are \$45 per person and include a snack, water, lunch, local museum admission fees, and round-trip transportation from the Plumas County Museum.

**Terms:** Due to the expense incurred in offering these trips, we must have full payment by July 6 for the Oroville trip, August 3 for the Indian Valley trip, September 7 for the La Porte trip, and October 5 for the Sierra Valley trip. We reserve the right to cancel any trip if we do not receive adequate reservations by the payment deadline. In the event of a cancellation, all reservations

# Artifacts Donat-



*We would like to thank the following people for their generous donations:*

**Ann Arrowsmith:** 35 law books from her father the late Honorable Alan Henry Thieler's law firm. **Sandra Brown:** Two baby rattles, one picture from the S.F. Examiner July 15, 1906 of earthquake damage, one christening dress. **Ray Cayot:** 16 maps, U.S. Forest Service Lassen and Tahoe National forests, Plumas National Forest, and four of Oroville and the South Fork Project, dated 1952. **Don Clark:** Certificate for 87 shares of Topas-Centennial Gold Mining Co. of Plumas County for Victor Challen. **Sandy Coats:** Journal box oiler circa 1965. **Bill Dore:** Montana State Board of Optometry Diploma certified to William E. Dore. **Daniel Elliott:** Pint milk bottle etched by hand "E.C. Kelsey." Kelsey Dairy was in Quincy, circa 1930s. **Betty Folchi:** 2 books and two manuscripts, one on the Feather River Fish Hatchery in Clio with nine photos of same for the years 1937-1940, and one on the Campbell Family of Sierra Valley. **Karen Gimbel:** Pamphlet "How to use your Ironrite – Automatic Ironer" dated 1948. **Don Johns:** Cabinet card photo of a woman inscribed on the back "To Mrs. Mary Hefren from Tillie Gates." **April Keenan and Faye Boquist:** Portable Singer sewing machine with wooden cover, hand crank operation, beautifully detailed with colorful raised painted flowers and fronds. **Elise Kroeber:** Blue and white coverlet with a floral and squirrels and pheasants pattern throughout entire coverlet. Bottom corner is sewn "A.D. 1852" and "W.H. Cole 1852." **Diane Lawson:** Supreme Lodge Knights of Pythias Pin and membership card from Mt. Keddie Lodge No. 345. Card was made out to S.V. Fisher, the donor's grandfather. Pocket-sized German Bible that belonged to Wilhelm Stampfli; the great-uncle of the donor, book entitled "Longer English Poems." **Earl and Joy Lemm:** 7 books dated 1880- 1954, one inscribed "CA Fruit Exchange." **Bob Lowrey:** Cherry wood étagère, postcard of Arch Rock on the Feather River Highway, and postcard of a California Zephyr locomotive crossing the Clio viaduct. **Calla Marshall:** 55 Valentine cards that belonged to her mother, Ruth Marshall. One leather purse, two gold oval framed photos, and a 1941 photo of Billie Marshall. **Dan Martynn:** Geological Atlas, Truckee Folio 1897, one Land & Water Inventory, Plumas County 1952. **Donna McElroy:** 3 photos of Gopher Hill Mine, one of Quincy Ball Team, one of Belden in 1929, one of Charles Mead, logger. **Sherry McKee:** Souvenir plate from the wedding of Bob and Barbara Moon, August 6, 1967. **Orphie Pierson:** Large post vise for the Museum's blacksmith shop. **John Probst:** DVD of excerpts from Feather River College musical productions directed by the donor between 1975-1994. **Ruth Reid:** 15 letters and documents pertaining to property in Meadow Valley. One of them is a hand-drawn map, circa 1870s. **Robert Ridley:** Book titled The World's Encyclopedia of Wonders and Curiosities of Nature and Art, Science and Literature. **Bruce Robbins:** One Boy Scouts of America photo plaque from 1957, three "Camporee" ribbons from 1959-1961, all found at the Quincy Veteran's Hall. **Susan Howell Sargeant:** Collection of photos and postcards of Frank Redkey, logging, Pioneer School Faculty 1950-1951, Ethel Howell; Pioneer teacher, with her class of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders, Tug of War Team at the opening of the Feather River Canyon, etc. **Ran Slaten:** Marble and brass plaque commemorating 24 years of service to the County (1965-1979) by his mother, Raynelle Slaten. The marble is from the Courthouse. **Freda (Guidici) and Milt Smith:** Booklets and letters relating to the Plumas County Historical Society, Board of Supervisors, Plumas County Planning Commission, and various other County documents pertaining to the Ramelli's, Guidici's and other Chilcoot residents dating 1925 to 1973. **Diane Uchytel:** Four pieces of a carved soapstone bowl made by Native Americans in prehistoric times. **Walt Wiley:** Underwood Model 6 typewriter from the Plumas County Auditor's Office in perfect working condition. **Midge Wilson:** Can of Johnson's Paste Wax that the donor bought 50 years ago.



## About the Museum...

The *14th Annual History & Archaeology Night* program will be *From Sawpits to Skylines, The History of the Timber Industry in Plumas County* and will be held in Portola on May 22, Quincy on May 23, and Chester on May 14. Daniel Elliott, PNF Beckwourth District Archaeologist, and Scott Lawson, Plumas County Museum Director will present hundreds of vintage and current images to depict the history of the timber industry in Plumas County and the Feather River watershed. Delicious homemade fruit cobblers will be served at the intermission. Please call the museum at 283-6320 for information.

The *Annual 4th Grade Living History Days* are one of our most popular programs with the schools. This year is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we can use all the help we can get. 4th grade classes from all around the county will make candles, pan gold, launder clothes with a washboard, and bake biscuits on a wood-fired cook stove. These heritage crafts will be held at the 1875 Hall-Lawry Home, the 1878 Variel Home, the 1890 Gifford Cabin, the 1888 Peppard Cabin and the 1857 Pioneer School, the latter two being at the county fairgrounds. Museum Trustee Ginger Gramm, Museum Assistant Director Lori Simpson, and Registrar Laure Gage oversee the program with help from docents and parents.

We are still in the process of building a set of wagon sheds on our new lot behind the 1878 Variel Home. These are needed to provide protection for our sleigh, water wagon, and hearse, as well as a number of ranching and farming artifacts. Any donations of sound lumber, timbers, plywood, construction materials, or cash will be greatly appreciated. The plan for the new lot will allow visitors to enter some sheds, as well as walk a pleasant pathway around the buildings. Picnic tables will be available for lunches and other functions.

Arthur Thompson of Meadow Valley had a great exhibit of local and regional color photographs on the Mezzanine Gallery in February and March. Rattana Ros is currently showing her Impressionistic style paintings through May and for June and July will be Peggy Smith with her penciled art depicting old-time logging scenes. In August and September Timothy will show his sculptures, taxidermy, basketry and other artwork. See our schedule on page 12 for a complete listing of artists for 2007.

There have been many great changes lately at the Museum so be sure to bring your friends and relatives for a visit soon!

### *New Members*

**Thank you to all our new and renewing members!**

**Individuals: David Brown, Chico**

**Patron: Grant, Cindy & Abby Edwards, Quincy**

# Monetary Donations

We would like to thank these generous people for donating to the Museum's monetary fund:

Lois Alexander, Andy & Gayle Anderson, Robert & Judy Baalman, Phyllis Baldwin, Linda Batson, Dorris Beck, Jim & Billie Bequette, Mildred Bloom, Sharleen Bloom, Carol Bordeaux, Glenn & Ruth Broadwell, David Brown, Millie Burris, William Burroughs, Richard & Ann Castaldini, Stanley & Marjorie Chan, Chevron Matching Gift Program, Haworth A. Clover, Pat and Jan Cook, Marc Coventry, Carlo De Ferrari Family, Marilyn DeMain, Jay & Nancy Dembosz, Ray & Martha Donnenwirth, Bob & Mary Edwards, John Ellison, Tati Erickson, Wallace Eshleman, John & Ardith Farris, Ruth B. Gage, Jack Gibson, Diane Giller, Robert & Karen Gimbel, Charles & Margaret Goodart, Steve & Mary Habeck, Clifford & Ruth Helme, Joan & Betty Hollenbeck, Marianna Hoolhorst, Ted & Betty Hoskins, Marilyn Johnson, Thomas & Alice King, Stuart Kirk, Elise Kroeber, Pat Kurtz, Lenore Laufer, Stan & Patricia Lebow, Patrick and Camille Leonhardt, Arthur and Oradelle Lizer, McLean Family, Diane McCombs, Guy McNett, Rita Marshall, Raymond & Mary Ann Mathes, Bill & Della Miller, Marge & John Murray, David Myrick, Richard & Carol Neville, Thelma Olson, Carol Paoli, Charles & Helga Petkovich, Orphie & Kay Pierson Sr., Dorothy Pool Family, Roger Powell, Ann Rainey Family, Don & Nancy Ray, Ruth Reid, Shirley Richardson, Robert & Inez Robbins, Dale & Marjory Salhus, Ilene Sanson, Marvin & Norberta Schmidt, Mary Etta Segerstrom, Norman Shelton, James & Rhonda Skow, Raynelle Slaten, Kent & Elena Stokes, Zola Stokes, Ruth Van Gilder, Valerie Vann, Joe F. Viera Family, Stanley & Louise Young, Arthur R. Watson, John & Mary Weddle, Cora B. White, Harvey & Shirley West, Jim Wilcox, Linda Wilder.

Your donations help further the Museum's mission and programs related to the preservation and presentation of Plumas County history.

Your gift is tax-deductible and will really make you feel GOOD to give it!

Please join these wonderful people by sending your donation today. Thanks!

# Director's Dialogue

I'm not positive, but this past winter seemed like it should rank as one of the driest on record. During January we were able to sort through our extensive archival collection and repack and shelve the materials so that they will be easier to access. This inventory and cataloging has not been done since the museum opened in 1968! I would like to give a big thank you to Assistant Director Lori Simpson, Registrar Laure Gage, JoAnn Filippi and volunteers George Yeager, Regina Newman, Gaye Porter and Bob Lowrey.

Our *March is Women's History Month* program featured Lorraine Hanson presenting "*Lookout Life: Women Fire Lookouts.*" Her presentation sold out to over 70 people, and a wonderful lunch prepared by Cafe Le Coq was enjoyed by all. We have a number of other upcoming programs this summer and fall, so keep in touch with the museum so that you don't miss them. Our annual History & Archaeology Night will be on the history of the timber industry in Plumas County.

Over the years our docent pool for various reasons has declined. We rely extensively on these generous folks, so if you would like to volunteer at the museum, please call Lori Simpson at 283-6320 for information. We can always use help with the Exhibit Yard, Blacksmith Shop, construction of wagon sheds, indexing, etc. Speaking of volunteers, our railroad gang has restored our logging railroad locomotive to running condition! We hope to have a short section of track laid this spring so that we can run our small motorcar on it, and perhaps the engine as well.

We would like to also thank Lisa and Scott Hanna of Tande Draperies for their generosity in securing and installing a new retractable sunshade for our Mezzanine Gallery. It is a much needed and beneficial addition to the Museum. Diane McCombs of Genesee also generously donated her time and expertise to document and secure a California Archaeological Site Number for the 1864 Taylorsville School, making it an officially registered State Historic Building.

In closing, I would like wish everyone a great summer and invite you all to drop by for a visit to YOUR Museum!

**Scott J. Lawson, Director**

## TREASURER'S NOTES

Dennis Clemons has generously given of his time to keep the books for the Museum Association for the past year. Unfortunately he has too many other commitments and had to leave us at the end of March. We are currently searching for someone to keep our books. On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the Museum staff we give Dennis a big THANK YOU for a job very well done!

Enclosed in this newsletter you will find a slip of paper to use in renewing your membership and in making donations to the museum. We really need and value your support, any amount you can offer will be greatly appreciated and put to very good use. Thank you for supporting the Plumas County Museum!

**Bob Edwards, Treasurer**

Plumas County Museum Association, Inc.

## **The Spanish Peak Lumber Co. Railroad Locomotive is Alive!**

*As we noted in the Fall 2006 issue, the Spanish Peak Lumber Company No.2 Railroad project is still well on track. We can always use donations, so give freely and often!*



*Above left: SPLCo. No.2 chugs along. Right: The proud Engine Crew on the historic day. From left: Sandy Coots, Ken Myers, Jay Ricks, Clay Johnson, Chris Coen. Not shown are crew members Len Mosley, Jason Giroaurd, Greg Jewers, Sam Self, Ken Roller, Ray Evans, Dan Chapman, Forrest Prince, Jim Boyer, Arron Myers, and Dave Amos.*

## MUSEUM BOOK STORE



**Don't forget the Museum Book Store when you are looking for a gift. We have over 100 titles on local, regional, and natural history, as well as cookbooks, cards, and souvenirs. We also carry an extensive line of handcrafted gold jewelry created by Frank Augugliaro. Frank recovers the gold himself directly out of the frigid waters of Nelson Creek during the summer, then creates his fine jewelry during the winter. We also have local artwork for sale during most artist shows on our Mezzanine Gallery. Be sure to check us out on your next shopping expedition or visit our online store at [www.plumasmuseum.org](http://www.plumasmuseum.org)!**

# 2007 EXHIBITS on the Mezzanine

**Feb-Mar: Arthur Thompson, Local and Southwest Photographs.**

**Apr-May: Rattana Ros, "Media Mix-Up," color pencil, watercolor, oil, gouache.**

**Jun-Jul: Peggy Smith, "Old Time Logging." Scenes in pencil.**

**Aug-Sep: Timothy, "Creations Unlimited III." Mixed media, taxidermy, basketry.**

**Oct: Museum Collection, Local Historical Art.**

**Nov-Dec: Sally Yost, "40 Years of Art." Pastels, drawings, etchings, sketch books.**

**Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 8-5, closed Sundays and Mondays.**

## TRUSTEES:

Ken Barnard, Graeagle  
Charlie Brown, Quincy  
Don Clark, Graeagle  
Patrick Cook, Graeagle  
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Individual \$25, Family \$35, Patron \$100, Sustaining \$1000, Corporate \$150

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**Plumas County Museum Association, Inc.**

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