

# Colfax Connections

## New Owner Of Colfax Hotel Lays Out Development Plan For Council

By [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net)

**September 8, 2021 City Council Meeting** – After more than 30 years of sitting vacant in various states of partial construction, while being passed from one failed owner to the next, it now appears the historic Colfax Hotel at 10 E. Grass Valley St. may finally have an owner with a realistic plan to re-open its doors.

Leif Lowery, owner of Vintage Development, the Dutch Flat Hotel and Miner's Camp in Foresthill, has purchased the property.

"This is the first viable owner we've had in years, and they have a rock-solid plan," said councilman Joe Fatula during an information workshop on the new owner and the hotel's future.

Lowery said that his intent is to renovate and, to the extent practical, restore the historic character of the building. Because interior framing for a prior senior housing proposal by previous owners is mostly complete on the second and third floors, however, he said that he will be limited as to what he can do on those floors. Plumbing wastewater and vent lines are also installed in much of the second and third floor and much of the plumbing for the fire suppression system is also installed.



The council expressed enthusiastic support for the proposal, but no action was taken as this was an information item to receive council and public input.

The meeting's final piece of council business dealt with the city leasing the vacant lot at 101 Railroad St. from Union Pacific (UP). The city initially approached UP in 2018 about leasing the property, but opted not to after the railroad set the price at \$9,000 per year. Earlier this year the city re-opened negotiations and got the price whittled down to \$5,000.

Control of the property will give the city extra downtown parking and will allow abatement of the ongoing nuisance the weedy, dusty lot poses. The council voted unanimously to seal the deal.

The council's second meeting in September was cancelled. The next scheduled council meeting will be October 13, 2021.

**August 25, 2021 City Council Meeting** – Thirty minutes gavel to gavel may not be the shortest city council meeting on record, but it definitely puts the August 25 meeting in the running. A slim agenda and having only three members – Lomen, Fatula and Mendoza – present helped speed

**continued on page 2**

## City Council From Page 1

things along.

During agency reports Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce president Sally Laughlin announced that all Chamber events would be postponed until after Railroad Days ( Sept. 18-19) because “the COVID wave is getting pretty big.”

The council passed the Consent Agenda on two votes after councilmember Fatula pulled the minutes of the previous meeting to adjust the wording of a quote attributed to him.

There was no public comment.

The night’s one item of council business dealt with the River Fire Emergency Lodging Reimbursement Funding Program, for Colfax residents that were included in the mandatory evacuation order on August 4-6.

City manager Wes Heathcock explained that those residents were forced to leave their homes and seek shelter elsewhere. Because Placer County’s evacuation center has restrictions on housing animals and residents with COVID-19, some Colfax residents sought shelter in local lodging facilities. That in turn placed many of them under an unexpected financial hardship.

The city manager’s response was to implement

the River Fire Emergency Lodging Reimbursement funding program to give those residents some financial relief.

To be eligible, residents must meet the following conditions:

- your residence is within the red mandatory evacuation area and your property is within Colfax City limits.
- you incurred temporary shelter/lodging expenses during the evacuation period of August 4 –6th.
- verification of expense receipts is required.
- \$500 maximum benefit per household.
- the program will not exceed \$10,000.
- applications will be accepted until 8/31/21 or until the funding is exhausted.

Councilmember Fatula moved to increase the program funding amount to \$20,000, and requested food reimbursement for displaced residents during the mandatory evacuation. After councilmember Mendoza clarified that members of the council could not participate in the program, the council approved the program on a 3-0 vote.

**City Council meetings in October are scheduled for 10/13 and 10/27.**

## Computer Crash Temporarily Derails Colfax Connections

By [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net)

I was a couple of photo captions away from finishing the September Colfax Connections issue and sending it to city council members for corrections and comments on August 27, when the laptop computer I was using to design the newsletter crashed, destroying the hard drive and everything on it.

That left me scrambling to re-

place not only the machine but also the older design software that made producing the city’s newsletter possible. Matching a computer operating system with a compatible design software version on a limited budget, using older equipment and software, proved to be a far more frustrating experience than I’d anticipated.

But after a month of researching all of the various machine capa-

bilities, Apple operating systems and available older design software versions that would run on somewhat older equipment – and having the amazing good fortune of finding someone in upstate New York who had the design software I needed, but couldn’t find anywhere else – I’m up and running again with a combined Sept./Oct. issue to bring readers up to date and get Colfax Connections back on track.

## Update From Supervisor Cindy Gustafson



Sutter Roseville Medical Center recently experienced its busiest day in the Center's history, driven by the surge in Covid-19 cases. Placer County's Director of Health and Human Services Dr. Rob Oldham provided the Board with an update indicating the situation from hospital executives in the region is "dire".

The surge is very real here in Placer County. When Board-Chair Robert Weygandt and I toured Sutter Roseville Medical Center with their entire management team, we saw the lobby and hallways were full of non-critical patients waiting to be seen because all their rooms were full to capacity with Covid-19 patients.

The Delta variant is very different, much more contagious and our hospitals are seeing younger patients admitted. The staff indicated that nearly 90% of those currently hospitalized with COVID are unvaccinated. If you are not already vaccinated I encourage you to schedule a vaccination appointment today.

And wear a mask to not only protect yourself - but your family, friends, and our entire Placer community.

## Contents Sept./Oct 2021



**Cover** - New Owner Of Colfax Hotel Lays Out His Development Plan For City Council

**Page 2** - Computer Crash Derails Colfax Connections

**Page 3** - Update From District 5 Supervisor

**Page 4** - Business Briefs: What's New At Mar-Val Sierra Market

**Page 6-7** - Railroad Days Photos

**Page 8** - Chamber Notes and Events

**Page 10** - Roundabout Sign Nearing Completion

**Page 12** - River Fire Stopped By Massive Response

**Page 16** - American Legion Post October Dinner

*Colfax Connections* is a monthly city publication edited by Will Stockwin, who can be contacted via e-mail at [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net). All submissions are welcome, the earlier the better.

**Deadline is the 20th of the previous month.**

### STAFF

**Photography – Alan Shuttleworth**  
**Proofreading – LindaLou Haines**

**Hard Copies of Colfax Connections can be found at City Hall, the Colfax Library, Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce, Colfax Heritage Museum.**

**Digital copies can also be found on the Chamber's Website at ([www.ColfaxChamber.com](http://www.ColfaxChamber.com)) and on the City's Website at ([www.colfax-ca.gov](http://www.colfax-ca.gov)).**



## Business Briefs . . . . . . with LindaLou Haines

What's new at **Mar-Val Sierra Market**, 575 S. Auburn St? A whole cold room full of beer. Over 100 brands of beer, of which about 60 are craft beers. The Beer Box. What a treat in hot weather.

Store Manager Jeremy Rogers says the Beer Box has the "coldest and freshest beer in town." And, since it opened in February, the Box has become very successful. As a matter of fact, it is so welcoming, the door opens itself for you to walk on in and look around.

A recent comment from a store visitor said the store had the feeling of a neighborhood "mom and pop store." That's the kind of comment that Jeremy loves to hear.

His goals include: **1-** Customer service, making everyone feel welcome in the store. He wants customers treated just as he would like to be treated. **2-** Take care of the community, as they take care of us by shopping here. **3-** An enormous generator now that keeps everything cold and operational when the power goes out. The

generator kicks on automatically when there is a drop off in PG&E power.

Jeremy Rogers has been the Colfax store manager for five years, and he's been with Mar-Val for about seven or eight years. The family-oriented Mar-Val stores had their debut in 1952.

Mark Kidd and Steve Rodacker are the co-owners of the eight Mar-Val Food Stores: Valley Springs, Groveland, Prather, Escalon, Nice, Willows, Georgetown and Colfax. More information about any of the Mar-Val stores is on the website, [Mar-ValFoodStores.com](http://Mar-ValFoodStores.com).

As for our Colfax store, you can call 346-8338 for information, including hours, which are 7:00 am to 9:00 pm.

A personal note about prices at Mar-Val Sierra Market: I have done comparative price checking at Sierra Market and at Safeway in Auburn. The prices are comparable. So, there is no reason to drive to Auburn for groceries because you think the prices are lower at a big, national store. Stay home, save on gas and shop locally at Mar-Val Sierra Market. I do.

Remember to share your Colfax business news with me, [lindalouhaines14@gmail.com](mailto:lindalouhaines14@gmail.com).

**Mar-Val Sierra Market manager, Jeremy Rogers, showing off the store's 'Beer Box' beverage cooler.**

**Photo by LindaLou Haines**





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# SCARECROW DECORATING CONTEST

## Sunday, October 31st

Place completed scarecrow, labeled with business/non-profit name by any of the wooden posts along Main Street by 4:30 pm. Voting will be via Facebook the night of. 1st place Winner will be announced at conclusion of Trunk or Treat event and will receive a special prize!!!



### Sign up here to participate:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0445aeac2fa6fb6-scarecrow>

Sponsored by:



## Railroad Days Returns To Colfax With Successful 2-Day Event

On September 18 & 19, the streets of Colfax were transformed from modern-day to the olden days of the 1860s, back to the days of the construction of the transcontinental railway.

Colfax's colorful history and its link to the railway were celebrated at this two-day, family-friendly event, with all that you have come to expect at Railroad Days plus new vendors, new entertainment and new music.

Over the two-day event visitors were able to experience life as it was in the bygone days of campfires, saloons, bank robbers, snake oil salesmen and of course trains.

Full-size trains, model trains, people-mover trains, and toy trains. And through it all the Black Flag Gang and all their cohorts roamed the streets, giving the event an atmosphere of life in the 1860s.



Left to right - Melodie Harrison,, Pam Rex-Small and Cynthia Eisenhut at the Soroptimist Mexican Food Stand.



Photo by Alan Shuttleworth

**All photos by Alan Shuttleworth**



Colfax Area Chamber President, Sally Laughlin, looking very 1885.



Josh Alpine (foreground) and Brian Houck at the Lions Club hamburger grill.

Below - That's Colfax City Manager, Wes Heathcock, wearing the engineer's hat and driving the kids' train.



Left - Are Black Flag Gang members Darin Angelinovich and Austin Ballard taking councilwoman Marnie Mendoza hostage?



## Chamber of Commerce Notes and Events

By Sally Laughlin

Summer is quickly coming to a close. And, now that we've seen the first rains, we are all looking forward to cooler weather and, hopefully, a speedy end to the fire season.



There has been a lot going on in Colfax in September, beginning with a very successful Patriot's Day on 9/11, complete with live music, children's activities and vendors. Over \$8,000 was raised, and all proceeds are going to the Colfax Fire Fighter's Association for those who lost their houses in the River Fire. Many thanks to Andrea Harrison and Green Machine for putting this together.

RAILROAD DAYS was a great success! The Black Flag gang staged shootouts. Miniature train rides ran all day (driven by our City Manager, Wes Heathcock). We had lots of craft vendors and food vendors, the all new dance party and loads of entertainment for the whole family. Thanks again Fred and Renee Abbott for putting this on once again!

The Auburn Chamber of Commerce has been receiving ongoing donations for all River Fire survivors, coming from many places, including Dutch Brother's Coffee's fundraiser, the River Fire Relief Fundraiser (a collaborative effort by the Auburn hair salons), corporate and individual donations. The Auburn and Colfax Chambers have issued checks to many fire survivors from this fund.

It has been a pleasure delivering some of these checks to those who lost their houses, amidst tears of gratitude from the recipients. Thank you, Jackie Weston and the staff at the Auburn Chamber for the hours put into sorting and approving those applications.

The Firefighters Fund is still accepting donations for those who suffered the loss of their homes. Go to our Colfax Chamber website [www.colfax-](http://www.colfax-)

[chamber.com](http://chamber.com) and click on 'River Resources' to donate.

October will bring back our business centered events. We are planning Coffee and Conversations on Wed. October 6th at 8:00am at the Visitors Center. Placer County's Nicole Hinkle will be speaking to our small business owners about all of the resources available to them to help attract and find employees.

We are resuming Ribbon Cuttings for our new members in October as well. Dates for these events will be posted soon on our website.

WINTERFEST is coming December 11th, and we are deep in the planning stages. We are looking for corporate sponsors to help us make this happen. We would love to make this the biggest, happiest celebration of the year with a little help from our community.



**Sally Laughlin, CACC President**  
Colfax Area  
Chamber of Commerce  
[colfaxareachamber@gmail.com](mailto:colfaxareachamber@gmail.com)  
[colfaxchamber.com](http://colfaxchamber.com)  
(530) 346-8888



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3rd Annual

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Or

# TREAT

HARVEST FESTIVAL, HOSTED BY  
COLFAX BAPTIST CHURCH  
4-7 PM MAIN STREET

FREE COMMUNITY  
HAUNTED HOUSE 5-9 PM,  
34 W. CHURCH ST.



OCTOBER  
4-7 PM

# 31

VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE  
SCARECROW AND  
DECORATED TRUNK

ADDRESS:

MAIN STREET  
DOWNTOWN COLFAX

TO PASS OUT CANDY (BRING LOTS!) PLEASE SIGN UP HERE:  
[HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/30E0445AEAC2FA6FB6-TRUNK](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0445AEAC2FA6FB6-TRUNK)



### Roundabout Sign Nearing Completion

Former Colfax mayor and current resident brick layer, Tom Parnham, works on a course of bricks that will form the base of the lighted city sign being erected in the center of the S. Auburn St. roundabout. City manager, Wes Heathcock, said he expects all of the work to be done by the end of October.

Photo by Will Stockwin

## PLACER COUNTY LIBRARY EXPRESS



Browse the collection  
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**Auburn, Colfax, Granite Bay, Rocklin**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

10:00 - 6:00

Friday & Saturday

10:00 - 5:00

**Foresthill, Kings Beach, Tahoe City**

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday

10:30 - 4:00

Wednesday

12:30 - 6:00

Online 24/7 [placer.ca.gov/library](http://placer.ca.gov/library)





# FREE FARMERS MARKETS MERCADO DE VEGETALES GRATIS



## 2021 Schedule – Placer County

**JANUARY**

8	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
11	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
22	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
25	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
29	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**FEBRUARY**

8	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
12	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
19	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
22	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
26	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**MARCH**

8	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
12	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
19	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
26	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
29	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**APRIL**

9	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
12	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
23	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
26	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
30	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**MAY**

10	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
14	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
21	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
24	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
28	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**JUNE**

11	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
14	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
18	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
25	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
28	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**JULY**

9	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
12	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
23	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
26	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
30	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**AUGUST**

9	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
13	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
20	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
27	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
30	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**SEPTEMBER**

10	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
13	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
17	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
24	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
27	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**OCTOBER**

8	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
11	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
22	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
25	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
29	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**NOVEMBER**

8	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
12	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
19	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
24	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
29	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**DECEMBER**

10	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
13	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
23	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
20	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
30	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**Sheridan** Celebration Family Worship  
**Lincoln** McBean Park  
**Rocklin** Johnson-Springview Park

5721 10 Street  
 65 McBean Park Drive  
 5480 5<sup>th</sup> Street

**Colfax** Sierra Vista Comm Center  
**Foresthill** Harrison Street Yard  
 55 School Street  
 24625 Harrison Street

[Placerfoodbank.org](http://Placerfoodbank.org) 916.783.0481

# The 'River Fire' Was Stopped By A Rapid, Massive Response

By [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net)

A week after the 'River Fire' exploded out of the Bear River campground just outside of Colfax, firefighters had achieved 85% containment with 2,619 acres burned.

Driven by strong afternoon winds on August 4 the fire grew so fast and so large original estimations of its eventual size ranged from 10,000 to 15,000 acres. That didn't happen because the original call-out brought in 68 engines, 30 water tenders, 22 hand crews, 18 bulldozers, 15 aircraft and 744 firefighters and support personnel.

"For several hours on August 4 this was the number one priority fire in California, drawing resources from as far away as CAL FIRE's Riverside Unit to the South and diverting resources from the Dixie Fire in the North," said Brian Eagan, CalFire Battalion Chief/Colfax, Alta Battalion.

At a public meeting in Colfax on August 7 fire officials said that the The 'River Fire' Was Stopped By A Rapid, Massive Response cost of suppressing the fire stood at \$7.3 million, and that air tankers had dropped 292,000 gallons of retardant on the blaze in the first six hours.

At the height of the fire, over 2,600 residents of Placer and Nevada Counties were evacuated, with all evacuation orders and warnings lifted by August 10.

After a complete damage assessment by August 11, 102 residential structures, one commercial structure and 39 other structures were destroyed. Another 21 structures were damaged in Placer and Nevada counties.

The fire was completely controlled on August 13. During the height of the River Fire on August 10 and 11, firefighters quickly snuffed two fires on Robbers Ravine Rd. near Cape Horn, and a larger fire in Yuba County known as the Glen Fire.

As tragic and as devastating to the com-

munity and environment as the fire was, the outcome could have been much, much worse. While on the verge of a record setting drought year with fuel conditions at critical levels for the weeks prior to the fires, there are success stories to be recognized.

One of the success stories is the low number of injuries and no loss of human life. Only two Fire Fighters and two Civilians suffered injuries through the course of the fire.

The routine Unified Command training of the Placer County Sherriff Office with CAL FIRE/ Placer County Fire Department provided the framework for local and regional first responders to initiate evacuation orders and warnings in both counties within the first 20 minutes of the River Fire's start.

"Our community members have an equal part in this success story as well," Eagan said. "If it had not been for their preparedness, calm and orderly evacuations first responders would have had to spend more time evacuating residents and less time fighting the fire."

**Billowing smoke seen from the Colfax 76 gas station. Photographer unknown**





**August 4, 2021, the “River Fire”, seen from across Rollins Lake, sets the Bear River canyon ablaze and threatens Colfax.**

**Photo by Eric Bookie**

**Opening May 26, 2021**

# Sierra Vista Center

- **Certified Farmers' Market at 55 School St. in Colfax.**

- **Every Wednesday, 4-7 p.m.  
May 26 – October 13, 2021**

- **Prepared food vendors welcome**



- **Contact Market Manager Will Stockwin at 530-210-4291 or [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net) for vendor applications and market rules.**

- **Preference will be given to Placer and Nevada County Growers.**

## Churches



Colfax Assembly of  
God Community  
Fellowship  
252 Culver St.,  
Colfax, CA 95713  
Email: colfaxesog@gmail.com  
Website: <http://www.colfaxagca.org/>

Colfax Baptist Church  
24850 Ben Taylor Rd., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8110  
Email: pastorgaryhoward@yahoo.com  
Website: <http://colfaxbaptist.com/>

Colfax United Methodist Church  
59 W. Church St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-2267  
Website: <https://www.colfaxumc.org/>

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah Witnesses  
944 Canyon Way, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-2525  
Website: <https://www.jw.org/en/>

St. Dominic's Catholic Church  
589 E. Oak St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-2286  
Website: [https://www.scd.org/parish/  
st-dominic-parish-colfax](https://www.scd.org/parish/st-dominic-parish-colfax)

Seventh Day Adventist  
454 Scholtz Ave., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8844  
Website: <https://www.colfaxsdachurch.com>

The Church of Jesus Christ of  
Latter-Day Saints  
1875 S. Auburn St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-7702  
Website: <https://www.lds.org/>

## Social Organizations

American Legion Post 192  
22 Sunset Dr., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-9433  
Website: <http://norwellpost192.org>

Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce  
99 S. Railroad St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8888  
Website: <http://colfaxchamber.com>

Colfax Area Historical Society  
Archives: PO Box 185, Colfax, CA 95713  
Museum 99 Railroad St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8599  
Website: <https://colfaxhistory.org>

Colfax Garden Club  
PO Box 1801, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-7474  
Website: [http://californiagardenclubs.com/con-  
tent/colfax-garden-club](http://californiagardenclubs.com/content/colfax-garden-club)

Colfax Lions Club  
PO Box 664, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-477-2533  
Website: [https://www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/col-  
faxca](https://www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/colfaxca)

Gold Country Lionesses  
PO Box 1852, Colfax, CA 95713

Illinoistown Clay-Mason Lodge #51 of Colfax  
14 N. Main St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-6627  
Website: <http://lodge51.freemason.org>

Sierra Vista Artists  
55 School St., Rm. C-4, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-320-0433

Sierra Vista Center  
55 School St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8726  
Website: <https://sierravistacolfax.wordpress.com>

Soroptimist International of Colfax  
PO Box 475, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-637-4878

VFW Post 2003  
22 Sunset Dr., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-7768  
<https://www.colfaxveterans.org/vfw.html>



# 10-21-2021 AMERICAN LEGION POST 192 COLFAX

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month veterans fundraising dinner at the Colfax Memorial hall.

Chicken Cacciatore with pasta, Italian salad, Focaccia bread and (TBA) dessert..

Nonalcoholic beverages served with dinner.



**\$15.00 per person, \$8.00 ages 7-13 and under 7 free**

**We have restarted our Monthly Thursday night dinners**

**Adult Social hour at 5PM, dinner served at 6PM**

**Even though county restrictions have been lifted we would appreciate that you call ahead for reservations.**

**Commander's cell  
916 216-8254**

**POST 192  
22 Sunset Circle,  
Colfax 95713**

[post192colfaxca.com](http://post192colfaxca.com)

**New menu every month**