Colfax Connections

New Owner Of Colfax Hotel Lays Out Development Plan For Council

By 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

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 replace 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 capabilities, 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.** 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) and on the City's Website at (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, MarvalFoodStores.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.**

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

Photo by LindaLou Haines

hello Fall!

hello Fall!

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: Colfax Green Machine; Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce, California

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.colfaxchamber.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
colfaxchamber.com
(530) 346-8888

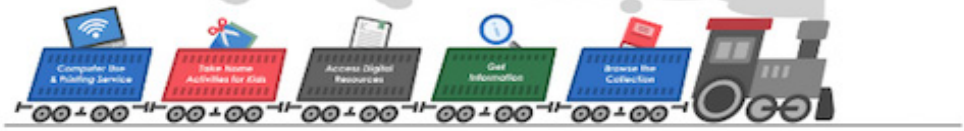
BROUGHT TO YOU BY
GREEN MACHINE
3rd Annual
TRUNK or TREAT
HARVEST FESTIVAL, HOSTED BY
COLFAX BAPTIST CHURCH
4-7 PM MAIN STREET
FREE COMMUNITY
HAUNTED HOUSE 5-9 PM,
34 W. CHURCH ST.
OCTOBER 31
4-7 PM
VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE SCARECROW AND DECORATED TRUNK
ADDRESS:
MAIN STREET
DOWNTOWN COLFAX
TO PASS OUT CANDY (BRING LOTS!) PLEASE SIGN UP HERE:
HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/30E0445AEAC2FA6FB6-TRUNK

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
Get information
Computers and printing available
Register for a library card
Free WiFi

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

County of Placer Library Services

PLACER FOOD BANK
Nourishing Communities
A Member of FEEDING AMERICA

FREE FARMERS MARKETS
MERCADO DE VEGETALES GRATIS

PLACER FOOD BANK 50 YEARS 1970-2020

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	5721 10 Street
Lincoln	McBean Park	65 McBean Park Drive
Rocklin	Johnson-Springview Park	5480 5th Street
Colfax	Sierra Vista Comm Center	55 School Street
Foresthill	Harrison Street Yard	24625 Harrison Street

Placerfoodbank.org **916.783.0481**

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

By 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 community 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 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: colfaxaog@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

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/content/colfax-garden-club

Colfax Lions Club
PO Box 664, Colfax, CA 95713
530-477-2533
Website: 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

3rd 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

New menu every month