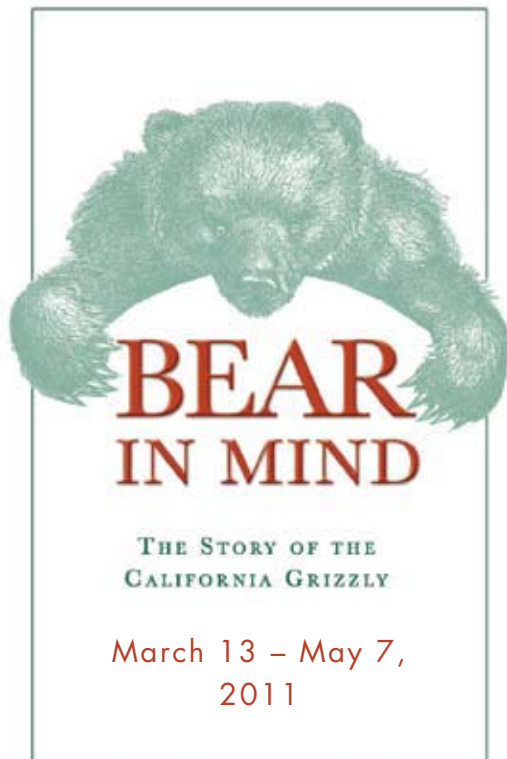


The Branch Line

Newsletter of the Museum of the San Ramon Valley in the Depot

Spring 2011

BEAR IN MIND COMES TO THE MUSEUM



California grizzly bears captured the imagination of Californians hundreds of years ago. Bay Miwok Indian people feared and revered them. Spanish vaqueros lassoed them for sport, and settlers arriving in California vied with them for living space. While the grizzly topped the pyramid of predators as the largest animal in California, by 1924 the last one in California was shot near Sequoia National Park. In this 21st Century we live in a "California where only the ghosts of grizzlies roam." Still the grizzly lives on gracing our state flag and seal. It is the mascot of the University of California and its image has adorned countless commercial product labels from fruit boxes to banks.

The *Bear in Mind* exhibit zeroes in on our fascination with the grizzly with its large impact on our history and the scientific implications of its demise. The San Ramon Valley once reverberated with its growls and its tracks wore paths in our soil. Why did the grizzly disappear? How did our pioneer ancestors interact with this huge animal? Was it really a man-eating menace? Is it the true embodiment of California's "untamed wilderness?" Why was it used as a symbol of freedom and power in the Bear Flag Rebellion? All these questions and more provide the framework for this special exhibit.

When you visit *Bear in Mind* you will find myriads of pictures, artifacts, DVD's, children's activities and endless stories about the grizzly in California and the San Ramon Valley. You can touch artifacts. A real mounted grizzly will awe you. Then you can use your imagination to identify the food they ate and the tools they used to do so. A variety of interpreters will inform and engage you in your contemplation about this magnificent animal. Come see for yourself!

Bear in Mind Special Events

Sunday, March 13, 3 pm - *Member's Opening Event*

Monday, March 21, Family Day

Sunday Afternoon Bear Interpreters, Noon - 3 pm

March 20 Cal Bears Day with Oski the Bear

March 27 Interact with Laura Cunningham author of *A State of Change: Forgotten Landscapes of California*

April 3 Meet Susan Snyder, author of *Bear in Mind*

April 10 Bank of the West Bear Day, Free, Stuffed Bears given to young children, bear stories and snacks

April 17 Learn about Bay Miwok Bear Legends and Myths from Indian expert Craig Miller

May 1 Park Ranger and Filmmaker (*Bears of Sequoia*) Steve Bumgardner talks about Black Bears in the Sierras





I glanced around the room as I stood to host the Museum volunteer party in January. My first official act as the Steering Committee Chair consisted of highlighting the volunteerism of an enthusiastic amalgam of greeters, docents, committee and board members, spouses and others.

The Museum, as we began 2011, was healthy in volunteer numbers and on its balance sheet. Four hundred members produce about 250 volunteers. Seventy five were here this evening. It was about all we could squeeze into the freight room.

I'd been volunteering with the Museum for the past nine years, primarily in the financial end of Museum operations. Despite being a Board Member for six years, this was to be a whole new experience. I had a lot to learn – the details about exhibits, educational programs, collections, and the daily tasks that go with the position.

Much of my 30 year military background focused on long range planning and current operations in the human resource area. After the Air Force I got into the federal and state income tax business, both as a paid preparer and later as a volunteer. So I bring to this position some background which leads me to focus on the "sustainability" of the Museum.

Many of today's most active volunteers helped create the Museum and worked hard to raise funds to move and restore the Depot. Many more volunteers have come along since then and we thank all of them for their hard work. Today we should be thinking about volunteer sustainability. Who will replace us? Who will keep this wonderful organization moving forward? The Steering Committee will be exploring volunteer sustainability during the year.

The other half of the sustainability equation is the long term financial health of the organization. In 2009 we initiated an endowment program with about \$62,000 which we invested with the East Bay Community Foundation. Today, thanks to continuing memorial donations and some legacy gifts, plus favorable market conditions, our fund is over \$100,000. But we're ambitious. The Board set a goal of \$2.5 million for the fund by 2025. We're hoping the earnings from that amount will provide for about half of our annual operating expenses. This will give us a strong financial position in the out years. I believe we can achieve this goal with continued help from our membership and others in the San Ramon valley.

I look forward to a continuing strong operation this coming year. With all of our wonderful volunteers, how can we miss?

Don Metz
Steering Committee Chair



Jack Hamel (1926-2011)

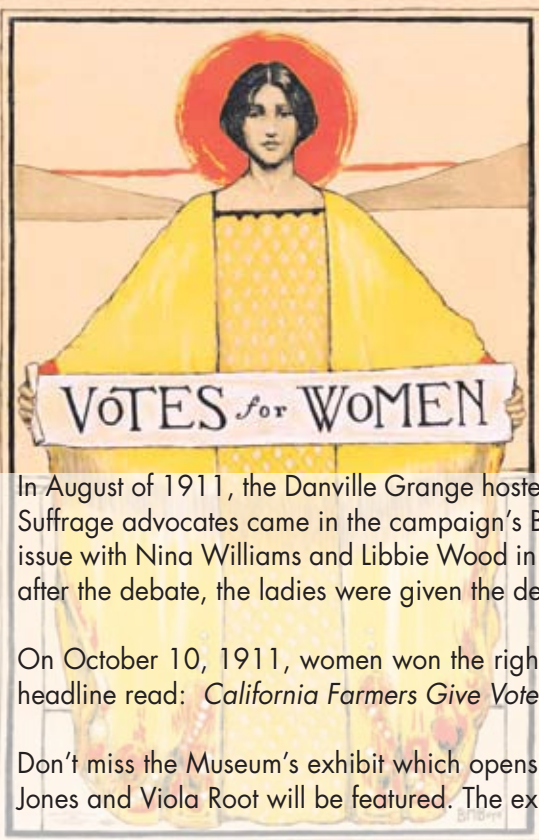
Jack Hamel, a valued Museum volunteer for nearly 20 years, passed away in January. A talented artist, Jack began by designing the annual Museum exhibits and logos upstairs at the Village Theatre in the 1990s. He took two full years to research, design, and produce the San Ramon Valley history frieze now in the freight room, truly an exceptional legacy achievement.

He designed many other memorable exhibits, including *Christmas Memories* and my favorite, *The Sword and the Cross* with its stunning illuminated signage and the logo produced in wood by Carlo Borlandelli. In today's permanent exhibit, visitors also admire his well-researched drawings of the Amador adobe, the Union Academy, and the original Grange Hall. A remarkable, talented original, Jack is greatly missed.

The Sword and the Cross logo, designed by Jack Hamel and produced in wood by Carlo Borlandelli.

Beverly Lane
Museum Curator





Votes for Women! Today we see that as normal, but in 1911 the idea challenged many of society's expectations for women. California voters had turned down women voting in 1896, led by the liquor interests in San Francisco. However, in the 20th century, more women were educated and the state population was more broadly distributed. A vigorous campaign was mounted statewide to make California the sixth (and largest) Western state to give women the vote. Many of California's campaign techniques set the stage for national woman suffrage in 1920.

By July 11, 1911, the *Concord Transcript* opined: *Intelligent and fair minded men everywhere are rallying to their (women's) support. They are beginning to think that the onus is resting pretty heavily upon them of having their mothers, wives and sweethearts rated along with...idiots and insane persons when it comes to voting.*

In August of 1911, the Danville Grange hosted a Saturday meeting on Equal Suffrage which drew people from around the countryside. Suffrage advocates came in the campaign's Blue Liner 7-passenger touring car to promote a "yes" vote. Grange members debated the issue with Nina Williams and Libbie Wood in the affirmative and Will Stewart and Rev. C. Woodward in the negative. In a "rising vote" after the debate, the ladies were given the decision.

On October 10, 1911, women won the right to vote by 2% statewide and by 21 votes in Contra Costa County. The *New York Times* headline read: *California Farmers Give Vote to Women.*

Don't miss the Museum's exhibit which opens on May 14. Local women such as Charlotte Wood, Anita and Loretta Glass, Flora Stone Jones and Viola Root will be featured. The exhibit celebrates the Centennial of women's franchise in California.

Beverly Lane, Museum Curator

Member's Opening Event for *Bear in Mind*, Sunday, March 13, 2011, 3:00 p.m.

Museum members are given the exclusive opportunity of visiting the *Bear in Mind* exhibit before it is open to the general public. Join us on Sunday, March 13 at 3:00 p.m. Erica Herron, the Supervising Naturalist at the East Bay Regional Park District's Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness, will introduce us to the grizzly. Regularly working with park visitors, she shares her wealth of grizzly information in a wonderful and warm way. *Refreshments will be served.*

Family Day on Monday, March 21, 2011

San Ramon Valley schools are closed on Monday, March 21, so the Museum is inviting families to visit *Bear in Mind*. Elementary school children can attend one of the several special sessions offered that day to tour the exhibit and enjoy *Bear Games*, hear *Bear Stories*, watch *Bear Cartoons*, and eat *Bear Food*. Local teenagers who will also be out of school will work with Museum Docents to help the children. Family Day programs will run from 9:30 – 11 a.m.; 11 – 12:30 p.m.; and 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. The normal admission fee of \$1.00 per child and \$3.00 per adult apply. To register for a shift families may call the Museum at 837 3750 or register online at srvmuseum@sbcglobal.net



George Mihalik (1924-2011)

We would like to pay tribute to George Mihalik, a long time volunteer who helped maintain

the Museum and its contents, and who died January 14 at the age of 86. Thank you, George, for the many things you kept running or fixed at the Museum over the years. We know George would have loved our recent exhibit, *Honoring Valley Veterans*, as he was in WWII aboard the USS San Diego, which was the first ship to enter Tokyo Bay when the Japanese surrendered. We thank his family for allowing George to share his many talents with the Museum volunteers.

Dale Haulkland



The exhibit *Honoring Valley Veterans: Heroes in Defense of Freedom*, which ran from January 18 through March 5, was a tremendous success. A special thanks to Bob and Linda Sada, who chaired this exhibit, and to the many veterans and volunteers who helped share this important history with our community.





The Museum of the San Ramon Valley in the Depot

P.O. Box 39 - 205 Railroad Avenue
Danville, California 94526
(925) 837-3750

Visit www.museumsvr.org
Email: SRVMuseum@sbcglobal.net

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MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesdays-Fridays, 1-4
Saturdays, 10-1
Sundays for Special Events

Editor: Candace Andersen
Edit: Marillyn Cozine
Layout: Fishworks Design

2011 MUSEUM SCHEDULE

- March 13-May 7 **Bear in Mind Exhibit**
- March 13 *Member's Opening Event, 3 pm*
- March 20 *Cal Bears Day with Oski the Bear, Noon-3*
- March 21 *Family Day at Bear in Mind Exhibit*
- March 27 *Author Laura Cunningham, A State of Change: Forgotten Landscapes of California, Noon-3*
- April 3 *Meet Susan Snyder, author of Bear in Mind, Noon-3*
- April 10 *Bank of the West Day, Free Admission, Bear Give-Away to Children, Noon-3*
- April 17 *Miwok Bear Legends and Myths with Indian Expert Craig Miller, Noon-3*
- April 15 **Friday Evening Walking Tours of Historic Danville** with Mayor Karen Stepper resume, 3rd Fridays, thru October, Village Theatre (233 Front Street), 6:15 pm
- April 30 **Alamo Cemetery Tour**, 10 am
- May 14 - July 16 **Remember the Ladies - 100th Anniversary of Women's Right to Vote Exhibit** *Member's Opening Event, Friday, May 13, 7 pm*
- May 14 **Saturday Morning Walking Tours of Historic Danville** resume, 2nd Saturdays, thru October, Museum, 10 am
- July 26-Aug 21 **Trains - Toonerville Trolley**
- August-Sept **Quilts** Exhibit
- Oct 1 **Tri Valley Heritage Celebration**
- Oct 29 **Alamo Cemetery Tour**, 10 am
- Oct 3-Nov 15 **Indian Life Exhibit**
- Nov- Dec **Christmas Memories Exhibit**



The Bear in Mind exhibit is funded by the Leshler Foundation. It is produced and toured by the California Exhibition Resource Alliance (CERA) in concert with Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley and Heydey Books, and is made possible by generous grants from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Bank of the West, and the James Irvine Foundation. Private tours for groups and school classes can be arranged by contacting the Museum.

