

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **September 23 & 24:**
Museum Open House
- **October 28 & 29:**
Museum Open House

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**JOHN DEWITT
MUSEUM**

**2116 TAVERN ROAD
ALPINE, CA 91901**

**Open 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
last weekend of each month**

**Tom & Judy Myers, Editors
619-885-8063**

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAM — SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2023 — 1:30 P.M.

FALCONRY — RAPTOR BIOLOGY — CONSERVATION

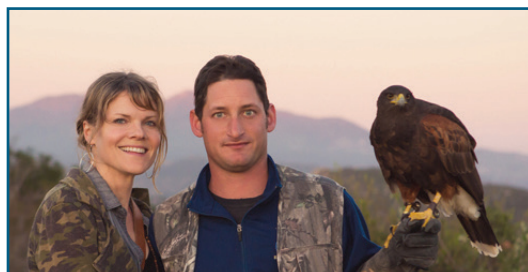
Sky Falconry, Southern California's premier falconry school, offers the rare opportunity to glove up and free fly trained birds of prey. The school is located on a private, 40 acre historic ranch on the side of Mt. Viejas, surrounded by Cleveland National Forest, in Alpine. Offering falconry for everyone, they have a variety of experiences, which all include an educational component on the ancient art of falconry, raptor biology and conservation. Kirk and Denise are Master Falconers and hold both state and federal permits to work with birds of prey and the public. Their birds include hawks,



falcons and a Great Horned owl, all of which are trained to fly to the glove, giving the unparalleled thrill of partnering with a bird of prey in the wilds of the San Diego's backcountry.

The ranch offers meadows with old growth oak trees along with breath-taking views of the mountains and ocean. It is a perfect environment to experience birds of prey flying free in a natural and pristine setting.

Kirk Sellinger and Denise Disharoon, owners of Sky Falconry, came together through their shared passion for birds of prey and falconry. Kirk developed a love for birds while working as a videographer in eco-tourism,



traveling the world filming wildlife with National Geographic/Lindblad



expeditions. As a paraglider pilot, his personal love for flight sparked the desire to work intimately with raptors and to fly and hunt with them. Thus, he began pursuing falconry in 2010 and shortly thereafter met Denise, whose passion for raptors is rooted in her childhood and a life-long love of animals. Together they opened Sky Falconry in 2012.

To experience Sky Falconry, they invite you to visit their website, www.skyfalconry.com. There you can learn more and book your experience directly. As an extra bonus, guests taking the Hawk Walk or Private Experiences get to tour the ruins of the homestead from the late 1800's that still exists on the property and hear the story of the ranch's history.

Program is held at the Alpine Woman's Club, 2156 Alpine Blvd., Alpine

*Admission is **FREE** (donations appreciated) but seating is limited, so please make a reservation by calling Corinne at (619) 417-1306 or send an email to info@alpinehistory.org*

Meet Rorie, Our Silent Docent



Our silent docent, **Rorie the Gorilla**, is a long-time resident in Alpine. He first appeared in the 1960's on the roof of the **Log Cabin Café**, where he kept watch over all that happened along Alpine Blvd.

Rorie was produced right here in Alpine in the 1960's by Jim and Mildred Rorie at their business called "**The Fiberglass Menagerie**". Rorie lived on the roof of the Log Cabin restaurant until 1987 when the building was demolished. Because he had nowhere to go, Brian and Mike McCall took him home, and he lived in their garage for about 10 years. When the John DeWitt Museum opened in 1997, Brian donated the fiberglass gorilla to forever preserve this icon of Alpine.

Rorie is mounted on a moveable platform so he can make frequent appearances at Alpine events and festivals. He will be dressed up for Trick or Treat at the John DeWitt Museum from 2 to 4 pm on October 28 and 29. This will be a great time to bring your kids or grandkids for "**Selfies with Rorie**", a photo treasure that will last a lifetime.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

A Big Welcome to Our New Life Members: Janet & Bill Peyton

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members: Alyssa Wolven & Cole Newkirk

A Grateful Thank You to Our Renewing Members: Jerry & Terri Hartman, Barbara & Gregory McCurtis, Gary Mitrovich

Many thanks to the following for their generous financial donations: Jerry & Terri Hartman, Tom & Judy Myers

RECOGNITION OF OUR CURRENT LIFETIME MEMBERS

Carlette Anderson • Deborah Anderson • George Anderson • Mark L. Anderson • Willa Athey
 Franklin R. Ball • David Carey • Lisa & Dave Celeste • Ted Christensen • James H. Cleland
 James David • Rita David • Peggy & Jim Easterling • Beverly Falor • Katie & Brian Ford
 Vincent Fritts • Paul Gonya • Janet M. Harris • Lindy Harshberger • Ann Hill • Hilde Hinchcliff
 Leslie Holben • Ken & Denise Hujing • Ben Johnson • Bill & Diane Keltner • Jill & Shawn Killion
 John Krempp • Barbara Lea LaForce • J. Clayburn LaForce • Carylyn Landt • Joanne & Martin Marugg
 Cheryl Minshew • Carol Morrison • Tom & Judy Myers • Janet & Bill Peyton • Ann & John Pierce
 Bob & Carmen Ring • Kurt Scherbaum • Kevin & Alejandra Schumacher • Albert Simonson
 Donna Sisson • Virginia Sisson • Rodney & Guille Tuttle • Paul & Carol Walker • Joan Waterworth

RECOGNITION OF OUR LIFETIME BUSINESS MEMBERS

Brabazon Alpine Paving and Trucking • Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians
 Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians • RGT Charitable Trust • Rock Canyon Animal Rescue Foundation
 Turvey Granite Pit • Chris Wiley—Primary Residential Mortgage

CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS: Life ~ 52, Complimentary ~ 39, Current ~ 80, Members up for Renewal ~ 16

HALLOWEEN — THEN AND NOW

The October 24, 1958, issue of *Alpine Echo* newspaper seemed a bit obsessed with Halloween. For starters, the first page had a headline promoting the **HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL**, to be held at the Youth Center which promised to be a real whing-ding. There would be lots of fun for adults as well as the small fry. The different Alpine organizations came up with some very original ideas in their various booths. Some of these included: a dish breaking booth; throwing rings around pegs; a fishpond; throwing darts at balloons; trying to hit floating candles with a squirt gun; and tossing golf balls into muffin tins. There would be dancing,

and the Scouts would present free movies.

On the next page we learned more about the origins and traditions of the season under the headline: **HALLOWEEN—TIME FOR HARVEST FESTIVAL**.

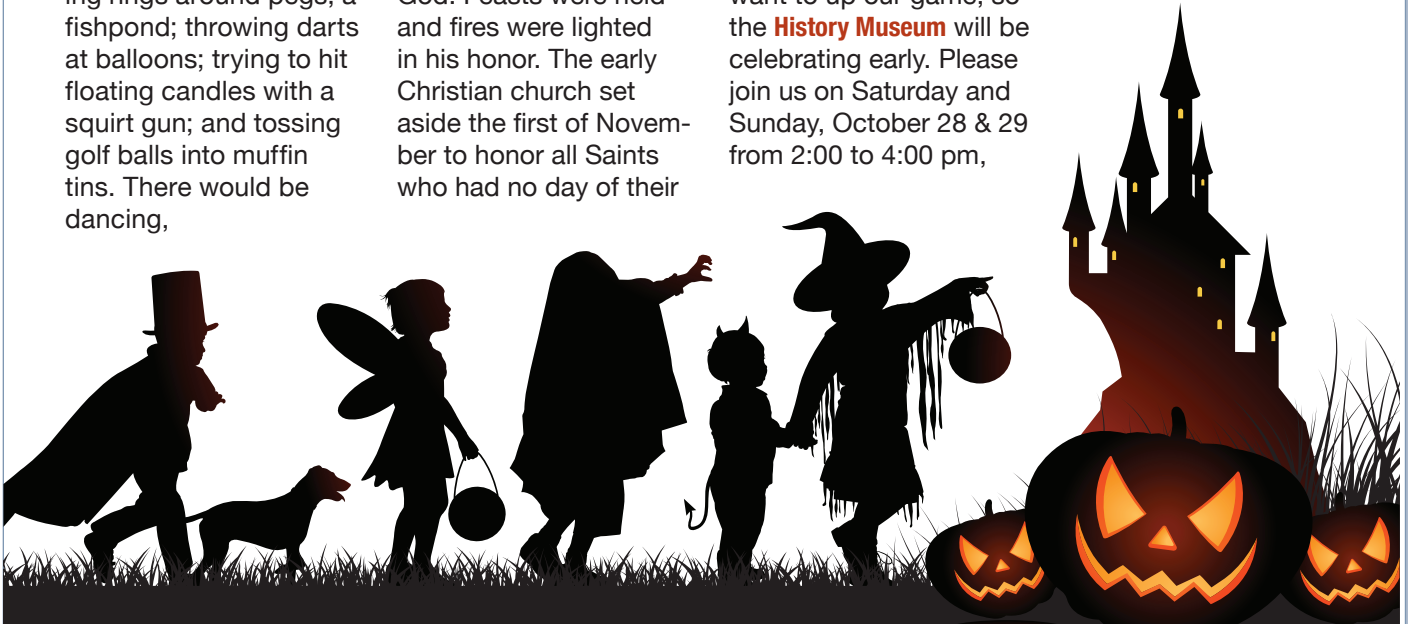
Traditionally, Halloween was a harvest festival, originating among the Celts, centuries before the Christian era. Druid priests celebrated the beginning of the new year on the Eve of Samhain, or Summers End. This coincides with our October 31. It was also the festival of their Sun God. Feasts were held and fires were lighted in his honor. The early Christian church set aside the first of November to honor all Saints who had no day of their

own. They called it **All Saints Day**. The evening before was called **All Hallows' Even** which was eventually shortened to present form—**Halloween**. This was the time of year the “trick or treat” set took over, and it also meant family fun, an opportune time for a party. There’s such a variety of games, food and decorations that fit the occasion. The article suggests serving Taffy Apples and doughnuts.

This year, **Halloween** falls on Tuesday, October 31, but these stories from the past make us want to up our game, so the **History Museum** will be celebrating early. Please join us on Saturday and Sunday, October 28 & 29 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm,

for our **Halloween Open House** at the John DeWitt Museum. It will be decorated for the event, Rory the gorilla will be decked out in his costume for “trick-or-treat” and we will have **treats** to share with young and old alike. Of course, the museum exhibits will also be open and the firetruck and Walker buggy will be on display.

We are still working on additional events, so watch for our upcoming announcements. It will be great fun and a perfect way to begin the holiday season!



ALPINE HISTORICAL & CONSERVATION SOCIETY

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Bob Ring

1st Vice President, Programs: Corinne Lewis

2nd Vice President, Membership: Carmen Ring

3rd Vice President, Property: Marty Cochran

Secretary: Barbara McCurtis

Treasurer: Lisa Celeste

Director, Archivist: Carol Morrison

Director, Vintage Autos: Norm Kling

Director: Janet Harris

Newsletter Co-Editors: Tom & Judy Myers

Webmaster: Pene Manale

Caretakers: Baltazar & Laura Marquez

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the *Alpine Historical & Conservation Society* is to encourage the community in an effort to retain structures and sites of historical significance, conserve natural resources and parkland, make available the visible evidence of the history of our community, and develop historical programs which emphasize the contributions of the various cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups that comprise the Alpine area.

FIRE SEASON IS HERE . . .

This declaration comes as no surprise to most of our readers. In fact, many of you were here in Alpine or nearby in Descanso, Crest, Dehesa, or Blossom Valley during some of the worst wildfires in California history. A few examples:

- **LAGUNA FIRE** — September 1970. Burned 175,425 acres, 382 homes, 8 deaths.
- **CEDAR FIRE** — October 2003. Burned 280,278 acres, 2232 homes, 15 deaths.
- **WITCH FIRE** — October 2007. Burned 197,990 acres, 1040 homes, 2 deaths.
- **HARRIS FIRE** — October 2007. Burned 90,440 acres, 206 homes, 5 deaths.
- **VALLEY FIRE** — September 2020. Burned 16,390 acres, 32 homes, 0 deaths.

At one time, the first four wildfires listed above were all among the top 10 wildfires ever experienced in California. Now only the **Cedar Fire** ranks in the top 10 and the total acres burned in these five wildfires combined is less than either of the two biggest California wildfires of recent years.

While fires around the state are getting bigger, Alpine fires are becoming less destructive. We can credit much of Alpine's progress to two organizations. First, the local **Fire Department** with their up-to-date equipment, excellent training for battling



wildfires, and reciprocal agreements with other departments within and external to California. Much of the credit also goes to the **Greater Alpine Fire Safe Council**. Founded in 2006, the non-profit GAFSC has worked tirelessly to create fuel breaks, educate homeowners about defensible space, provide free curbside chipping, and develop evacuation plans, maps, and signage for Alpine residents.

During the summer of 2023, we experienced the longest spell of hot dry weather on record, which created perhaps the most fire prone landscapes of all time. Luckily, this hot spell was broken by the first tropical storm to hit the area since September 1939. Unfortunately, the respite may only be temporary. But, if we follow the advice and guidelines set up by the Fire Department and GAFSC, we may be able to get through another fire season without a major event.

OUR FIRETRUCK NEEDS A GARAGE!

Alpine HS President, **Bob Ring**, and Property Manager, **Marty Cochran**, continue to work diligently to maintain our fully restored **1942 GMC FIRETRUCK**. Their task is made more difficult because this 81-year-old vehi-



cle is not housed in a garage. It is currently protected by a light-weight canvas canopy. We were very concerned for its safety when *Tropical Storm Hilary* blew through in August. Although we have grand plans to exhibit the firetruck throughout the community at parades, festivals, and special events, we are tangled up in red tape.

You see, to get a classic vehicle license plate (much cheaper than a regular plate) we need to have liability insurance, but all insurance companies require classic vehicles to be housed in a "garage". So, we really need to

build a garage. We estimate that we need about \$15,000 to build the required structure. So, we are asking our members and supporters to help us raise funds for this project. So far, we have received donations of nearly \$3,000.

Please consider sending your tax-deductible contribution to the Alpine Historical Society and designate your donation for the **"Firetruck Garage"**. Contributions of \$500 or more earn recognition in the *Tattered Tidbits* newsletter and donations of \$1,000 or more are rewarded with a ride in the firetruck (after we build our garage and get our vehicle insured).

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Here is a story we found in our archives, published March 29, 1962. We regret that the “young mother” did not provide her name – some of you may have known her and would enjoy the memories. What is historically important about this story is the snippets of culture and customs of the times. As historians, it is helpful for us to know that by 1943, homes in the Alpine area did not have electric service. If folks had no electricity, they also had no refrigerator, no TV, no video games, or electric lights. So, the children played outside for amusement and were able to discover their world by sight, sound, touch, and smell – often wandering off to explore as did this youngster who figured out how to cross the stream without falling in. (Not recommended for children reading this newsletter!)

Young Mother Recalls Alpine Childhood

Our family moved to Alpine in the spring of 1943. I was six years old the day before we arrived, but I still remember vividly the ranch where we lived and the experiences we shared within the security of our isolated family. I have set down many of these lovely memories for my own daughter, who has just turned six herself.

When we lived in Dehesa our family had lots of good times doing things together. We didn't have electricity and just a battery radio which we couldn't use too much so we had to make up all our own amusements. One quiet, warm spring evening we all decided it might be fun to blow soap bubbles, but bubbles the like of which no one had ever blown before. Most children today are familiar with the soap bubbles bought in the 5 and 10 cents stores with their little plastic hoops to blow the bubbles through. We didn't want to blow little bubbles, we wanted big ones, so dad bent a piece of bailing wire in a huge hoop and mom mixed up a large pan of thick laundry soap suds for

us. We all went up on the broad, flat roof and blew our bubbles through the bailing wire loop.

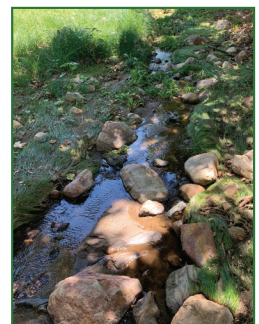
We created bubbles so big they looked like basketballs and then shook them off into the air. The easy wind picked them up and sailed them right out across the pasture. They sailed so far we could hardly see them and would finally disappear. It was a quiet time, a beautiful time, just watching those shimmering bubbles blowing away into the soft colors of the evening.

We had come from Topeka, Kansas, and being a city child, I had never lived so close to nature before. At first it was very terrible and frightening but gradually it came to become serene and lovely.

Looking out the studio window we could see the huge cascade that spilled down over the edge of the canyon above the valley. During the summer the creek ran just enough to keep the moss green on the steep rocks, but in the winter it was different. When the rains came the falls were beautiful. The creek would run

two feet deep and the red adobe soil would wash away from the banks. The red water would churn and dance down the cascade and it looked for all the world like a woman combing her long red hair. We could hear the roar and rumble of the water as it hit the broad flat rocks below the falls and crowd its way through the culvert beneath the bridge.

I used to put on my brother's tall rubber boots and try to walk across the creek down by the barn when the water was running away with the old leaves and debris but I had to hang on to the low willow branches or I would have been swept away too. The heavy rains never lasted very long at a time and soon the creek would sink back into a little trickle. Then we children would repair our dams and the water bugs would return to skate across the still pools.



The Alpine Historical Society archives have many stories like this one of early life in Alpine. Most are written before the 1970's. Sadly, we have very little information about Alpine life after 1970, so we are missing 50 years of personal stories on the culture and customs of our community. Please help us fill in the gaps! We want to hear YOUR story. All you need to do is call our president, Bob Ring, at 619-246-7708 and he will arrange for a volunteer to interview you at your own convenience, then transcribe the session for our archives. It's easy and painless and will help enormously to document Alpine history over the last half century.

Alpine Historical & Conservation Society
PO Box 382
Alpine, CA 91903-0382

Address Service Requested

ALPINE
HISTORICAL &
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY

P. O. Box 382
Alpine, CA 91903-0382

619-485-0625

E-mail: info@alpinehistory.org

We're on the Web!
www.alpinehistory.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Date: _____

Street Address/P.O. Box: _____

City/ST/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Send Newsletters via: E-mail U.S. Mail

Membership Category (Please check one):

- Student \$5 Individual \$25 Nonprofit \$30 Business \$50
 Senior (1) \$15 Family \$35 Nonprofit Life \$600 Business Life \$1,000
 Senior (2) \$20 Life \$500

Amount Enclosed:

Membership \$ _____

Donation \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Museum Open Houses History Day
 Programs & Events Oral Histories
 Exhibit Development Archival Data Entry
 Garden Maintenance Other _____

Please complete this form and include your check made payable to the Alpine Historical Society, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.