

Dear Friends,

Greetings from **Eagle Lake, California.**

### **Happy 4th of July**

Please recall that the 4th of July is the celebration of our **independence from England**. Independence Day is more than a chance for family and friends throughout the country to gather for barbecues and fireworks displays, it is an annual celebration to commemorate the courage and faith of our founding fathers in their pursuit of liberty. Independence Day in the U.S. is an annual holiday commemorating the formal adoption by the Continental Congress of the **Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia**. Our founding fathers understood only too well that large government can become a tyranny capable of stealing the freedoms of its citizens. They hoped to head off this possibility by drafting two brilliant documents. The Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. Within the Constitution, the Bill of Rights gives even further protection to our citizens. Today, these freedoms are under attack and there is no better time than today to rededicate ourselves to freedom, individual rights, and personal responsibility.

But let's get back to where we left off in Great Escape #74.

### **Pahrump, Nevada**

Recall that Pahrump is about a one hour drive into the mountains west of Las Vegas. We have come to really enjoy this unique town. If we ever settle down again or even partially settle down, don't be surprised if our hometown becomes Pahrump. Well, what's so special about Pahrump? In a word, **freedom**. That may sound a little odd at first. Generally speaking, people who live in the United States naively believe that we live in a free country. Well, yes, I am proud to say that we are freer than the citizens of many countries. But it is also fair to say that our freedoms are being eroded at a very rapid rate. The socialist party no longer feels that it is necessary for them to elect a socialist president in order to accomplish their goals. Both Republicans and Democrats are continually moving America away from free enterprise and self reliance and toward a socialist state. But the principles of free enterprise and self reliance vary by state, and even by county. In general, Nevada is one of the states that favors individual freedoms. Moreover, Nye County, Nevada, where Pahrump is located is even freer than Nevada at large.

As an example, Pahrump did not even have a building department until the year 2000. If you owned the land, you could build whatever you wanted. Prostitution is legal in Nye County. It is legal to carry a loaded firearm on your hip as long as it is in plain sight. Yep, you can walk into WalMart wearing a six shooter. You can apply for a concealed weapons permit and you'll probably get it. Nevada is a "shall issue" state. That is, you will get a permit unless they can find something wrong. California, by comparison, only issues concealed permits if the local sheriff approves and many, such as Orange County, flat won't do it. In most of Pahrump, you can run a business out of your home. If you want to park a backhoe and a dump truck in your yard, no problem. If you would

like to run an off-road vehicle into the desert, go ahead. The sale and use of personal fireworks is legal in Pahrump, and in fact, you can buy fireworks all year long. Gambling is also legal in Pahrump. Well, you're probably getting the idea. **There is a lot of spirit of the Old West left in Pahrump.**

Housing is cheap in Pahrump. A real fixer upper that you can live in while you work on it can be had for between \$35,000 and \$50,000, and that's on a quarter of an acre or more. For \$150,000, you can buy a brand new palace on an acre. Eating out is cheap in Pahrump. The casinos provide food cheaper than you can prepare at home. The climate is cooler than Las Vegas and is really quite nice nine months of the year. But this is high desert and the summers are hot. Still, a nice climate with clean air nine out of twelve months is still better than most places you can live.

### **China Date Ranch, Tecopa, California**

You have already read about our fun motorcycle ride to Death Valley, Rhyolite, Beatty, and Crystal. But there is so much more to tell you about. The next motorcycle ride with **Tim** from Pahrump was to the China Date Ranch.



**Road to China Date Ranch.**

The China Date Ranch is an actual date ranch located in an isolated valley with a true oasis. It's almost unbelievable as it is in some of the driest, most desolate terrain you could ever imagine. The ranch is near Tecopa, California. The **Shoshone** and **Paiute Indians** knew of this incredible valley and used it as a stopover as early as 1,000 A.D. This valley became part of the original **Spanish Trail**, which was the route from Santa Fe, New Mexico to the Spanish settlements in California. Sometime prior to 1900, a Chinaman named either Quon Sing or Ah Foo came to this canyon after many years of work in the Death Valley borax mines. He developed the water, planted fruits and vegetables, and raised meat for the local mining camps. It became known as Chinaman's Ranch. Sometime in 1900, a man named Morrison appeared, and, as the story goes, he ran the Chinese farmer off at gun point and claimed the Ranch for his own. (Even today, it makes sense to be able to protect and preserve what we have earned.) Morrison eventually sold out, but the name had stuck. Since then the canyon has had many owners and worn many different faces, including a fig farm, cattle ranch, hog farm, alfalfa farm, and others. In 1970, the property was purchased by Charles Brown Jr. and Bernice Sorrells, the son and daughter of area pioneer and long time State Senator Charles Brown of Shoshone. It remains in these families today. The date grove was planted from seed in the early 1920's by Vonola Modine, youngest daughter of Death Valley area pioneer, R.J. Fairbanks.



**China Date Ranch.**

Today the date ranch is a very interesting and historical stop. There is a gift shop, a bakery, and you can also buy a variety of potted cactus and date trees. You can also buy a cold drink or a great date shake. If you get anywhere near Pahrump or Death Valley, be sure to visit the China Date Ranch.



**China Date Ranch with blooming cactus.**

### **Pahrump, Nevada Museum**

If you get to Pahrump, we suggest you pay a visit to the Pahrump Museum. It's small and will only take about an hour of your time, but will give you a much better idea of the history of Pahrump.

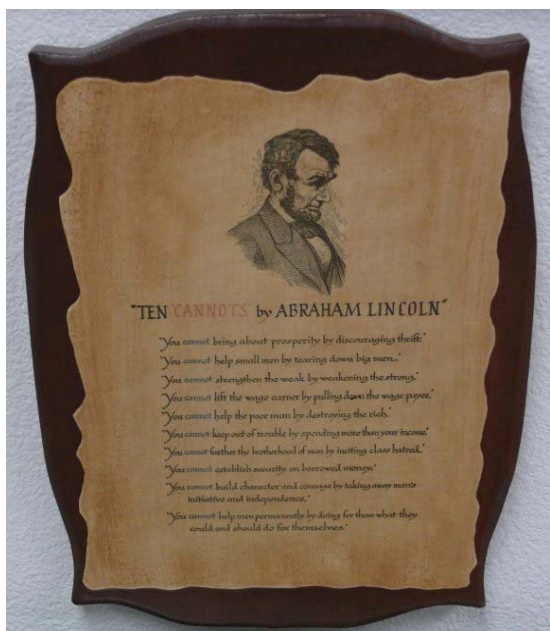


**Early Pahrump General Store.**



**Restored Pahrump one room pioneer cabin.**

The museum has a large and comprehensive Abraham Lincoln collection. While looking through the room dedicated to "Honest Abe," Chuck was captivated by a plaque. It was entitled "Ten 'Cannots' by Abraham Lincoln." Abe had a pretty good understanding of democracy and freedom and we wish this understanding were more prevalent today.



"Ten 'Cannots' by Abraham Lincoln."

"You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift."

"You cannot help small men by tearing down big men."

"You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong."

"You cannot lift the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer."

"You cannot help the poor man by destroying the rich."

"You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than your income."

"You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred."

"You cannot establish security on borrowed money."

"You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence."

"You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves."

Well, perhaps this is a perfect place to end travelogue #77. We are sending it out on Independence Day and much of it is devoted to freedom and independence. On this day of all days, we wish you freedom, liberty, independence, and the courage to fashion a life based upon your own talents and beliefs.

Until next time, home is where we park it.

Chuck & Donna  
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