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CAPAY VALLEY

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greatercapayvalley.org

The Greater Capay Valley
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*Focusing on the
Greater Capay
Valley, including
towns and areas
surrounding and
leading to Cache
Creek and up the
Capay Valley*

Pictures, Stories and Research to reveal and celebrate a very special place.

To paraphrase Pulitzer prize winner Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings in her autobiographical novel *Cross Creek: Who owns Cache Creek? The scrub jays and magpies more than I...and she goes on to write: "And what of the land? It seems to me that the earth may be borrowed but not bought. It may be used, but not owned. It gives itself in response to love and tending, offers its seasonal flowering and fruiting. But we are tenants and not possessors, lovers and not masters." Cache Creek "belongs to the wind and the rain, to the sun and the seasons, to the cosmic secrecy of seed, and beyond all, to time."*

I have long loved that book and then the film--if you haven't read or seen either, I highly recommend you do so. Whether you be farmer or writer or recreational reader, it has something to say to you... "the cosmic secrecy of seed"? Dang, I wish I'd penned that!

As a writer/teacher/principal/parent/wife/home-owner leaving everything behind and taking a great risk to "make her dreams come true" back on Cache Creek in Hungry Hollow, the story of a similar woman-of-adventure has long inspired me. So, I re-watched the film

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Hungry Hollow Harvest Moon -- Jack-o-lantern faced and pumpkin orange -- lit up the sky in October 2011



Jack-o-Lanterns carved by visiting kids to the Hoes Down Festival at Full Belly Farm October 1-2, 2011



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Haunted house...?
www.000000000000



Continued from Front Page:

when I began to wonder at my sanity--and because I have an even greater appreciation for *the cosmic secrecy of seed*--and the farmers who tend them--after almost 2 years back out here. Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings also wrote in *Cross Creek*: "Thoreau went off to live in the woods alone, to find out what the world was like. Now a man may learn a deal of the general from studying the specific, whereas it is impossible to know the specific by studying the general. For that reason, our philosophers are usually the most unpractical of men, while very simple folk may have a great deal of wisdom."



Above, Dru Rivers, partner at Full Belly Farm, conducting a farm tour for *Hoes Down*, October 2, 2011.

Now, I know Marjorie did not mean anything demeaning in her term "simple folk" and I certainly do not intend to demean when I say I think of farmers when I read this passage--I come from a long line of farmers and ranchers! They study the land, they learn to be very intimate with the earth and become, as a result, sometimes very philosophical and wise about the greater world around them. There are plenty of jokes about "city folks" coming out to the farm and sneering at or trying to take advantage of the "simple" farmer--with the inevitable punch line favoring the farmer. In my many conversations recently with the "farmers" now in the greater Capay Valley, I heard numerous times how many of them were "city kids" who came out here to farm and knew nothing about what they were getting into. Some had studied agriculture at college--often UC Davis--but many had just decided in the 1970s or 1980s that they simply wanted something different for their lives, their kids. And many of the current farmers out here are descendants in a long line of farmers and ranchers, of course, and many have stayed on the land, while others have gone off to college and/or "city careers," only to come back to the land, like Jim Durst of Durst Organic Growers. Whichever the case, they work hard to keep this very special place in agriculture and they work closely together--whether organic or traditional in their approach--to do so. They work hard year-round, but take time to celebrate their efforts, the environment, and each other--often. Whether it's at the county fair or the Almond Festival, Taste of Capay, or Hoes Down, there is reason to celebrate all their hard effort and the glorious place they call home. [see videos on our new website at: greatercapayvalley.org]



Above, cherry tomatoes at the end of their season, about to be disked back into the soil to replenish it for next year.

Below, Chickens raised outdoors for their fertile, natural eggs; portable roosting trailers are a very successful high school FFA project by Dru's son, Rye Muller.

In this issue, I want to focus on and celebrate the growing trend toward organic and natural and/or sustainable farming in this area. I also want to share what I learned about the black walnut trees that grow wild along the creek and in stately rows along the roads all over Yolo County. And, of course, I want to share what I found when I reached back into our past and pulled forth names from our history as they tie to the farms and ranches thriving anew. And in keeping with the trend toward farming, I have a story from Sheriff "Sunny Jim" Monroe about Coxey's Army, highlighting the plight of farmworkers and others desperate for work of any kind--a topic timely in today's economy.





Of course, before the arrival of my ancestors in the mid-1800s, there were people farming and managing the land in the Capay Valley area—some claim as far back as 8000 years. But most of what we know comes from the European-descended pioneers arriving following the gold rush to California.

While many tried their hands in the gold fields, most quickly turned to the land to sustain them in a different way: farming and ranching. For some the real “gold” was in crops and for others it was livestock--and for many it was both. Soon the railroads came to make their lives even more profitable and promising--though their task was never an easy one. In the beginning, everyone of them was an “organic” farmer or rancher. It was natural methods, tried and true, that got them through, and only with the easier availability of chemicals for pest control and fertilization did many turn to this method to make them a greater profit and their lot easier. But with time, many turned away from the chemical approach due to its negative side effects, and the “organic movement” became a “new” way to farm--again! So, for many farmers, we have simply come full circle to the natural ways of our ancestors. And while organic farming is still only a small percentage of our crop/livestock yield, it is a growing trend with a growing respect and support structure--even fertilizer companies like Agriform and Tremont have special advisors for organic farmers today. And then there are ag groups specifically focused on helping small organic farms, like Peaceful Valley Farm Supply in Grass Valley. And due to the new trend toward eating locally and supporting your local farmers, Farmers’ Markets and Co-ops have become more plentiful. As have CSAs, Community Supported Agriculture groups, wherein people pay an annual fee in exchange for weekly deliveries of local in-season crops year-round--a very symbiotic relationship, supporting the farmer in advance and getting fresh produce delivered at a cost often comparable to the supermarkets. Then there is even a movement afoot to try to keep current organic farms in organics in perpetuity, such as Good Humus Farm of Hungry Hollow’s attempts through their Farm Preservation Project; since it takes years to purify the soil to earn the organic certification, this is a sensible solution. And then there is the cooperative support the farms lend one another: **Capay Valley Grown** is a logo-label shared by 25-30 local farms in support of one another and the area.

Farming in the Greater Capay Valley: Then and Now



Pictured above left: the first traction engine used by a farmer in Yolo County in 1894, owned by brothers John D. and George D. Stephens outside Madison and Esparto.

Above right: turn-of-the-century tractor on the Wyatt G. Duncan ranch in Hungry Hollow.

Useful HTTPs:

www.tremontag.com/

Peaceful Valley Farms at:

www.groworganic.com/

Good Humus Farm’s

preservation project at:

www.goodhumus.com/Pages/preservation_project1.htm

Capay Valley Grown at:

www.capayvalleygrown.com/

and

capayvalleyfarmshop.com



“Capay Valley Grown is a partnership of farmers and ranchers who are all committed to growing the very freshest and tastiest of foods. Capay Valley Grown products, many certified organic, offer the delicious flavor that comes only from locally grown food. By dedicating themselves to sustainable production of cherished land, these farmers and ranchers have also dedicated themselves to your long-term satisfaction.” —a quote from their website at: capayvalleygrown.com

This Land is Your Land......thus starts a familiar folk song and a recent article in *Time Magazine's* October 24, 2011 issue--very timely for this volume's focus! It featured Joel Salatin, a “one-man symbol of an alternative food system,” very familiar to those who shop at local farmers' markets and know what a CSA is. His views are expressed often and quite clearly, but most recently in his new book, *Folks, This Ain't Normal*. Having just interviewed several local farmers for this volume, reading this article reminded me very much of the attitude and practices, of many. He may seem extreme in his views to many others, but his real focus is to encourage sustainable farming and a move back to the land and eating locally-grown. “He wants us to be full citizens of the food system, like Jeffersonian citizen-farmers who founded the country,” according to the *Time* article. Some farmers I have spoken to just consider him another *crazy liberal*, but his ideas are also very much about the freedom to farm without some government agency or bureaucracy telling you what to do. Sustainability means moving away from the grid and into self-sustainment--a pretty typically *conservative* view, really. He believes freedom begins with something as basic as our food and “the security of knowing where your food comes from.”

Which brings us to another burning issue when you talk to the local farmers--who will the next farmers be? As the *Time* article points out, “There are about 2 million farms in the US, down from nearly 7 million in 1935. Less than 2% of Americans farm for a living.” One refrain I heard often, from Sacramento's *Soil Born Farms* to the organic-natural-sustainable farms in the greater Capay Valley, was: If we do not do something to entice more people back to farming, who will feed us tomorrow? And so there is a growing push to offer educational programs through the organic farms--we will look closely at just such a program at our own Capay Valley's *Full Belly Farm*.

And what of our unemployment rates? If it is true that “Industrial agriculture is no different from any other modern manufacturing process: machines and chemical energy have replaced human hands,” as the article states, Salatin responds, “Yes, it will take more hands, but we've got plenty of them around.” Jefferson would be so proud if we turned more people back to the honorable profession of farmer!



Capay Organic's reservoir above and strawberry field below; at bottom, Full Belly Farm's pomegranate hedgerow.





Capay Organic Farm -- the Oldest *New Organic Farm* in the Capay Valley

When Kathleen Barsotti and Martin Barnes bought their first 20 acres in the Capay Valley in 1976, they had small children in tow, great hopes for raising them in the country, very little actual farming experience and a fallow *sticker patch* to start with. But today, their children and their own young families own over 350 acres, offer farm tours and education in organic farming and sustainability; and operate the CSA **Farm Fresh to You**, delivering fresh produce to over 40,000 customers around the state; and operate the *Kathleen Barsotti Non-profit for Sustainable Agriculture*, giving an annual scholarship to a high school senior “planning on pursuing a field related to sustainable agriculture.”





“90 miles northeast of San Francisco and 30 minutes northwest of Sacramento” on Highway 16 at the mouth of the beautiful Capay Valley, the farm is easily accessible and is now offering itself as an event center for the many activities commonly held in this agricultural paradise we call home.


In 1992 Kathleen Barsotti still saw a need to get organic produce to the public more effectively, even after she had helped start the Davis Farmers’ Market to provide a venue for Capay Organic and other organic farms. So, in ’92 she founded **Farm Fresh to You**--perhaps the largest CSA (community supported agriculture) delivery service in the country today. Her goal was to bring organic produce directly from the farm to the customers’ homes. Today, her sons, Noah, Thaddeus, and Freeman, and their extended families continue the tradition, selling to individuals and to wholesalers, restaurants, grocery stores, and at farmers’ markets.

And this all from the initial 20-acre *sticker patch*, which at one time had been part of the Ben Franklin Duncan estate. Their 350 acres today embrace several parcels which had been given to Ben Duncan’s children in the 1800s as they married and started their own families.

Farm Fresh To You





Organic Produce Delivered
Fresh From The Farm



Making farm fresh meals
possible by delivering
local, organic produce
to your door

Farming in the Capay
Valley since 1976



Sign Up For Home Delivery
800.796.6009
www.farmfresh toyou.com



Above, a view of the Capay Hills across Cache Creek, with the farm's tractor tour tram; to the right, the Barsotti and Barnes families enjoy the 2011 *Taste of Capay* event on their site



Capay Organic Farm features “the old Zentner place,” commonly referring to the home, tank house, and other out buildings of the home once owned by Hugo Zentner and his bride, Bertha Duncan, and later his second wife, Edna. An adjacent parcel was owned by Bertha’s sister Hester and her husband Coy Lines. Other pieces of the farm were part of the John Wirth property. The west side of the farm abuts what was Bertha and Hester’s brothers’ farms: Iverson, who married Irene Wood, and Wyatt, who married May Wood. Ben Franklin Duncan was a younger brother of the earliest Duncan pioneers to Capay Valley, Wyatt “Doc” Godfrey and William, but Ben died early of appendicitis in 1895, leaving his eight children and his wife, Atlanta, with property on the north side of Highway 16, much of which is now Capay Organic Farm, and a lovely home on the hill on the south side, offering “Lant” a view of the homes of her children for the rest of her life. After Ben’s death, his eldest brother Wyatt, [their brother Bill had also died in 1895] bought much of the land from “Lant” and through the years the property was divided and sold off. Today, the only significant structures remaining are from the Zentner home, seen in the picture at the left and below, taken in October 2011.





Hugo Zentner



Above: turn-of-the-century picture of Hugo Zentner is courtesy of another "cousin" through the Duncan clan, Jim Hiatt, of the Hungry Hollow Goodnow family. We are ALL related!!



Zentner grandchildren of Hugo and Bertha include Sandy at far left and Val at far right, pictured in the 1950s with three of their Monroe cousins, Tommy, Cathy and Betsy, on the Burnell and Micki Zentner place, once part of the old Duncan-Monroe Ranch on County Road 85. Not pictured here are son Burnell and daughter Joanie, who, like their mother and Val, still live in the greater Capay Valley. Their mother, former local Justice of the Peace, still lives in the home where Burnell first proposed.

She tells the story as though it happened yesterday: Born in Oklahoma, Sarah Myrtle Burns moved to California with her widowed mother and her older sister, Caesarine, at 8 years old. Working as cook at a family hunting camp in Lassen County, she met the Leslie Button family and they invited her to spend some time with them at their home in Hungry Hollow before she went home to her mother one summer. What she did not know was that they thought she should meet their ranch manager, Burnell Zentner, so they sent him to meet her at the bus station...and his proposal came before her next bus home. They were able to buy the Button place later and raise their 4 children there.



The Burnell and Micki Zentner home above was built on a parcel carved out of the original Wyatt Godfrey and Bill Duncan Ranch; the house was built in the 1920s by a Duncan, but later sold to Leslie Button. The tall pine to the left was annually decorated with Christmas lights each December by Burnell Zentner to the very tip top--much to the delight of people from all over Yolo County.



How the Barsotti-Barnes family came to own the old Duncan-Zentner and Duncan-Lines places reveals a lot about how old ranches and farms changed hands within the valley. After Hugo's death in the 1960's, his second wife, Edna, sold 121 acres to John and Judy Wirth in January, 1975. In April of 1975, John Wirth sold the same property to Street & Hinds, and on the same day these RE agents sold some portion of the property to Barsotti-Barnes. So, Kathleen Barsotti and Martin Barnes initially owned a small parcel and leased adjacent parcels to farm, including from Marlow and Lazaro. When Kathleen passed away in 2000, and their father now living in Paris, their sons bought more property, some from John Wirth's estate, managed by his executor, local real estate broker Jim Wirth. Some of that property was from the Duncan-Lines family.

And if that isn't cross-pollinated enough for you, it would appear that Kathleen's father, architect Frank Barsotti, bought the home site on the hill across highway 16 from their new farm--the original home site of Ben Franklin Duncan, overlooking his children, just as Frank Barsotti would do later. Though the home known for its viewing porch was long gone, the view remained.



Above: red-roofed office of Capay Organic Farm, designed after the carriage house pictured below, as it can still be seen today on County Road 85 in Hungry Hollow, north of Capay.

Frank Barsotti would help the young couple with their dream in many ways, one of which was to design a barn for his daughter Kathleen along the same lines as a building that inspired her: the pictures to the right show the former barn, now Capay Organic Farm's red-topped offices, designed to look like the carriage house below, which sits to this day as it did for over a century on the Wyatt and Bill Duncan Ranch on County Road 85 in Hungry Hollow--though Kathleen surely did not know the familial relationship between the farm she bought and the ranch with the carriage house.





About the same time the Barsotti-Barnes family began organic farming in the Capay Valley, Jim Durst, a fourth generation Hungry Hollow native, brought his wife Deborah back home to farming. With their first 5 acres, they began farming organic crops

in the early 1980s, growing vegetables and melons in 1988. First founding *James Durst Farming*, they marketed under the name *Hungry Hollow*, “slowly adding acres to grow field crops as well as fresh market crops.” By the turn of this last century, they incorporated and became *Durst Organic Growers, Inc.*, distributing organic produce under the brand name *Durst Organic Growers*. They believed strongly

in “farming techniques that build soil fertility while balancing wildlife and insect ecology,” according to their own promo releases. Their farm “practices organic methods that include cover cropping, crop rotation, maintaining balanced soils through amendments, and paying close attention to the needs of microbiological fauna that inhabits our soil,” according to Jim. *Durst Organic Growers, Inc.*, is now a “mid-sized farm marketing into the wholesale and retail market place, committed to growing the best tasting and most nutritious produce, and to promoting a healthier environment for everyone.” Their “micro-climate and good soils in Hungry Hollow” allow them to grow “delicious asparagus, to-die-for melons [the Dursts always had *y’all come pick ‘em melons* I well remember from my childhood as their nearest neighbor!] as well as watermelons, cherry and heirloom tomatoes, peppers, peas, and winter squash.” The crops are generally “picked in the cool morning hours and immediately refrigerated, removing residual heat--and it can get *HOT* in Hungry Hollow!--then packed for the market for that ‘just picked’ flavor” delivered to the customers. They also grow organic barley and alfalfa as part of their rotation, sold only into the organic dairy and livestock markets.



www.durstorganicgrowers.com



also in Hungry Hollow:

Jeff and Annie Main’s
Good Humus Produce at:
humus@cal.net
 and for schools, go to:

[http://goodhumus.com/
 Pages/Farm%20to
 %20School.htm](http://goodhumus.com/Pages/Farm%20to%20School.htm)

Full Belly Farm is celebrating its

27th year, the second oldest “new” Organic Farm in the Capay Valley. Situated outside of Guinda, it is over 250 acres, 110 of which is their original purchase, what is locally recalled as “the old Gladney place.”

In 1984, four partners, Andrew Brait, Paul Muller, Dru Rivers, and Judith Redmond, bought the farm from a man who had bought from the Shadrack Gladney family, and had let it sit fallow for about 10 years. Those ten years actually helped the partners “rest” the land before turning it to certified organic.

Like the other Capay Valley organic farms, Full Belly works cooperatively with the other farmers--Jim Durst would say they all started about the same time and were friends and supporters from the beginning. Not all of them offer a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) delivery program, but those who do, work cooperatively to lessen direct competition. They sell to different farmers’ markets, and some do door-to-door delivery, while others drop off at convenient locales for customers to pick up, and still others specialize in wholesale or restaurants and businesses, for instance. Several are members of **Capay Valley Farm Shop**, a cooperative designed to further get Capay Valley products to the greater public, and the passion of Thomas Nelson, married to Full Belly Farm partner Judith Redmond.

When Full Belly started selling its organic produce, there were few farmers’ markets and even less CSAs. Today, their CSA business is 25% of their profit. And since a CSA by its nature assures the farmer advance financial support, there is a built in safety net for small farmers--a fact Dru Rivers is happy to point out on her farm tour, always encouraging more people to become farmers! When asked on one tour what was the most cost-effective crop, Dru proudly answered their dried flowers and animals--her own personal favorites! Dru dried flowers and made wreaths from the very beginning, selling to the public. Food crops are labor intensive, especially in organics, while drying flowers is not.

Like each of the organic farms, certain features make *Full Belly Farm* unique. Perhaps most is the annual **Hoes Down Harvest Festival**.



Capay Valley CSAs:

info@capayvalleyfarmshop.com •
530.383.9022

[http://riverdogfarm.com/
veggiebox.htm](http://riverdogfarm.com/veggiebox.htm)

humus@cal.net

www.FullBellyFarm.com

Hoes Down Harvest Festival

An annual on-farm fundraising festival held on the first weekend in October, it is a 2-day event including optional over-night camping in the orchards, music, food, dancing, farm tours and workshops all along the Cache Creek and throughout the farm.

The focus is on celebrating the harvest time, but it is really a way to educate and inspire future farmers and their supporters.

www.hoesdown.org

Other unique features of Full Belly Farm:

50 full-time, fully-benefitted employees and 10-15 summer employees--but their goal is to employ everyone full-time, year-round.

A live-in apprenticeship program for 5 future farmers per year; 1 full-year minimum req'd.

Sleep-over/camp-out Summer Kids' Camps



Left, the Western Scrub Jay—most common locally—and at right is the less common locally, a true Blue Jay. Go to the Cornell Lab site and click on their birdsong audio—you will recognize our local fellow!

Pests?! Depends on your viewpoint...

[All About Birds, The Cornell Lab of Ornithology](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/blue_jay/id)

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/blue_jay/id

As I always maintain, history is all about viewpoint. I was researching the Capay Valley Gladney family in relation to the Full Belly Farm for this volume's feature on organic farming, and I came across an interesting "story" about the first Gladney pioneer to the Capay Valley: S. Gladney [he never used his given name, Shadrack, just "S"—but everyone called him *Rack*. See volume 18 for more on the family].

In a prior issue, I mentioned the importance of our local Western Scrub Jays in spreading the oak tree acorns and how delightful I found their screeching song. But not everyone found them so useful or charming, it seems! Ironically, I had just been listening to Dru Rivers of *Full Belly Farm* talk about the "pests" they deal with on their farm, so this story created even more intrigue.

According to "All About Birds" on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology site, "This common, large songbird is familiar to many people, with its perky crest; blue, white, and black plumage; and noisy calls. Blue Jays are known for their intelligence and complex social systems with tight family bonds. Their fondness for acorns is credited with helping spread oak trees after the last glacial period." This describes both the local Scrub Jay and the other Blue Jays throughout the land, but it does not tell of their "pest" designation.

Apparently, the Almond Growers Association in Capay Valley paid farmers five cents a jay once upon a time to protect the valuable almond crops. Upper Capay Valley's S. Gladney wrote, "I have often lost one half ton of almonds from blue jays in one season, which would be worth from \$125 to \$150." California woodpeckers, the red-shafted flicker, and the crow, often seen as pests, have also been trouble for almond growers, but since they are not as plentiful, they are not the problem the jays are. Some farmers tried mosquito netting, but it was far less practical than just shooting the jays out of the air!

Another beautiful and useful bird, the robin, is a "pest" to the olive growers during migration time—but isn't it as big a sin to kill a robin as a mockingbird?!

Cashmere Colony, a Capay Valley ghost town, today.

According to Ada Merhoff's *Capay Valley The Land & The People*, S. Gladney and his wife, Josephine Daly from Antelope, were "the only purchasers of Cashmere Colony Tract land to remain as long-time residents in the area; later associated with the post office, they would be ever-important to the Guinda Community."

Arriving in Capay Valley about 1891, Rack brought his new wife to join him in 1895. Their first child, Roy, came in 1899, at which time they purchased the creekside parcel that would become Full Belly Farm. (see volume 18 for more on the Gladney Family)

Local Color: Sheriff “Sunny Jim” Monroe

excerpts from the Memoir of James William Monroe, Sheriff of Yolo County from 1911 until 1939
on the 100 year anniversary of his becoming sheriff for 28 years.

OCCUPY THE CAPITOLS? NOT A NEW IDEA!

Having recently visited Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, as well as Wall Street in New York, and even Vancouver, BC, Canada, and walked through the peaceful and well-organized “Occupy” camps, I have been thinking about social unrest and our economic hard times--and how those who don't feel “heard” get their point across.



A sign in “Occupy Portland”

It reminded me of a section in my grandfather's memoir about another “strange ‘army’...marching across the face of California, it's watchword, ‘Storm the Capitol!’” While this

army never made its way to western Yolo and the greater Capay Valley, it is interesting and timely enough to share here, I think. As taken from Sheriff James Monroe's Memoir:

“Coxey's Army” was formed during the lean year of 1913. Nearly as bad as the '29 crash, the earlier depression left men hungry and unemployed.

So thousands of these men formed themselves into an army of irregulars. Divided into companies, they selected their commanders and started for Washington, determined to force a showdown with the President.

The size of the northern unit of the army intimidated Oakland. That city furnished the marchers with railroad tickets to Sacramento, handing an acute problem outright to the state capital.

Sacramento met the army with a more spirited defense. When tickets were demanded

to Reno, the capital city authorities bluntly refused to come across.

Seven hundred angry marchers were driven from their camp. Scores of Sacramentans were deputized secretly. Armed with pick handles and accompanied by the city's fire trucks, they pounced on the dejected army...which retreated under the blows of clubs and the forceful streams of water from the fire hose.

The army's line of retreat lay across the bridges into Broderick. They arrived, a wet, furious lot...and plenty dangerous.

Food Soothes

Their spirit crushed by their treatment at the hands of Sacramento citizens, Coxey's Army came into Yolo County in no gentle mood. Hunger gnawed at their stomachs, and their dispositions were correspondingly bad.



Yolo County obviously had not the force to deal with them as Sacramento had done. Nor did it have the wealth to treat them in the manner chosen by Oakland.

I knew that the only thing that would keep them peaceable was food. I sorta wanted to feed them anyway. Anyone who has been hungry--and all miners know what hunger is--can appreciate how I felt towards those poor fellows.

I drove out and had a talk with them. They were sullen and wary. I knew they were estimating the pitiful forces which I had at my command.

Jobless Cheer

“But before we talk any more,” I shouted, “I’m going to FEED you! You look powerful hungry to me!”

Suddenly they cheered me. Their faces grew eager and even friendly.

For ten days Yolo County provided those fellows with food and fuel. It gave them a chance to rest their blistered feet and to fill out the hollows in their cheekbones. With mulligan in their bellies and

warmth for their bodies, they were willing to listen to me.

“You fellows know that the county can’t keep feeding you,” I told them. “We’re glad to give you a hand...sure. But...”

Reason Wins

I saw the men were nodding and whispering. And I knew they were going to be OK. They saw my side of the question all right enough.

“Besides that,” I continued, “There’s danger of typhus infection...both to you and to this entire community. Your camp here has no sanitary facilities. It’ll be a pestilence hole if you stay in it much longer.”

On the March

They were darn decent about it. Without a complaint, they gathered up their scant belongings and went...all except about 150 stragglers. These were mostly IWW radicals, the worst of the lot. There wasn’t any use wasting sympathy and reason on them. I issued an ultimatum, assuring them that we would outfit them with provisions and not molest them.

I said earlier the stragglers weren’t worth any sympathy. But I changed my mind when I saw those poor fellows, with their blistered feet, drop to the side of the road out of sheer fatigue.

So I loaded my car with five or six at a time and hauled them out of Yolo County.

Labor Grateful

Labor unions were not ungrateful for this. The office here got dozens of letters from various unions. All commended us on the “humane” way we handled the situation. To this day, labor organizations have been friendly to Yolo County [written in 1938].



Top Right: communal kitchen; Bottom Right: community garden at “Occupy Portland” Oregon; police wandered peacefully around, chatting with occupiers.



The Cranes are here!!!

It's early November and the beautiful Sandhill Cranes are making their migratory visit to the area—mostly near Lodi. They will spread their 7-foot wings over the Delta area, thousands landing at the Cosumnes River Preserve, but with 5 million using the Central Valley as a flyway, en route to the party Lodi throws them each year, the *Sandhill Crane Festival*—but some always stray off and land in our local fields--be on the look out!

Sandhill Cranes photographed by Douglas Nareau



Cranes as art: to the right, these birds watch over the pond at the Taber Ranch Vineyards and Event Center.

We are treated to the sight of Blue Herons and White Egrets all year, and have been seeing a sharp increase in the last month of heavy harvest--they are out there turning up bugs and other exposed delights with all the plowing and harvesting going on--but the Sandhill Crane is a much rarer sight. Curious about the difference, I recently did some research and found that they are not all some species of Crane as I had assumed; while they look very similar, they are very different in some ways. They are the three tallest Swan birds distinguished in these ways:

Cranes are tall with heavy bodies; have long legs and necks; extend their wings in flight; and lay two eggs at a time. Some, like the Whooping Crane, are extremely rare, only about 50 in the world!

Hérons come in two basic colors: Great White Heron and Great Blue Heron, very closely related; yellowish bills; fly slowly with heads up and drawn back; known for their statue-like stillness while waiting patiently for prey to foolishly move, they have the nickname, "Spirit of the Pond."

Egrets are often mistaken for herons because they fly in the same way and have the same yellowish beak. The best way to tell them apart is by size, the egret being the smaller of the two--and coming only in basic white. In the greater Capay Valley area you will often see them companionably sharing a field or irrigation canal, or the creeks or ponds.



Above: Davis Farmers Market logo from their website

Ol' Aggie that I am, I was delighted to find that so many of the Capay Valley Organic Farmers are also UCD Aggies, and were instrumental in starting Yolo County's state-of-the-art farmers' market in Davis. So, while I have not seen Davis as a part of the "greater Capay Valley," per se, obviously the ties between the UC and Capay Valley are very strong--sooooo, I felt it was a good idea to make sure you all knew about this market and all their doings.

First, of course, is the fact that they are a year-round market (see details at the right) featuring wholesome foods and other products from Yolo County farmers and craftspeople. Also, they are involved in the *Picnic in the Park* and the *The Village Feast* Event/Fundraiser for *Davis Farm to School Connection* program. According to their website, it "supports school gardens, second-grade farm field trips to local organic farmers that sell to the school district's National School Lunch Program, and the forager position provided to the school district through the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF)." The event is presented by *Slow Food Yolo* and sponsored by *Slow Food USA*.

In addition, the Davis Farmers' Market recently decided that the market and related events needed to do more to tackle waste with a recycling and composting program. As of the summer of 2010, in an article by Shelly Keller in *edible SACRAMENTO* Magazine, the market had gone from a diversion-from-landfill rate of only 9.8% to an impressive 83%--and their goal was 90% for 2010! They worked with *Waste Busters* and have a *Zero Waste Plan* in place; by April 21 of last year, they had contributed "150 pounds of compost to *Jepson Prairie Organics* composting facility which supplies Sacramento Valley farmers with compost to enrich their farmland." This is important because "Food scraps destined for the landfill contribute significantly...to greenhouse gas emissions...landfills are the single largest human source of methane." But "when composted, these same materials create nutrient-rich fertilizer, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers, while greatly improving soil quality"--helping not just organic farmers, but all of us!

Market Hours

Sat: 8-1, year-round, rain or shine!

Wed. 2-6 pm, Nov 2, 2011 thru Mar 14, 2012

Picnic in the Park:

Wed. 4:30-8:30 pm, Mar 21 thru Oct 24, 2012

Location

Central Park
4th and C Streets

ALSO:

UC Davis Farmers Market

Formerly known as the East Quad Market, the UC Davis Farmers Market re-opens Spring 2012 at a new location at the Silo Union:

<http://healthcenter.ucdavis.edu>

<http://www.davisfarmersmarket.org/slow-food-village-feast/>

<http://www.davisfarmersmarket.org>

and for a listing of California Farmers' Markets:

<http://cafarmersmarkets.com>

and see their own definition of a CFM (Certified Farmers' Market) below:

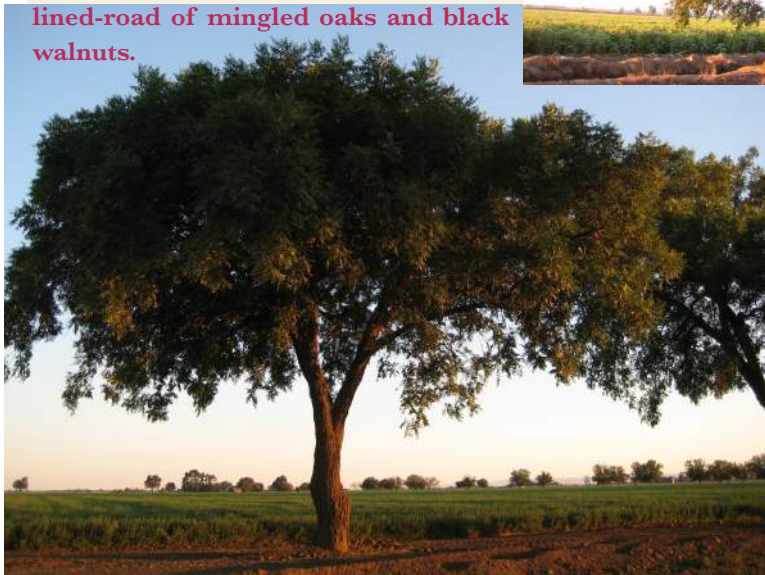
California Certified Farmers' Markets are the "Real Thing", places where the farmers sell their crops directly to the public. Before a farmer can sell at a "Certified" Farmers' Market, the government checks to make sure that the farmer grows the produce the farmer is selling. Elimination of packing, shipping and wholesale costs means both the farmer and consumer can save money. Safe, nutritious, vine and tree-ripened fruit and vegetables that are California-Grown and Certified by the State of California.



California's Black Walnuts, common enough in our area, but there is some confusion and mystery about their origin.



At top, at right and below, black walnut trees were planted along CR 14 from Zamora to Knight's Landing for many miles; to far right, 2 huge black walnuts at Best Ranch, north of Woodland; at bottom right, typical lined-road of mingled oaks and black walnuts.



Cache Creek, and the one used for root stock grafted to the now-common English Walnut trees, having a hardy root system adapted to Northern California. This *Hindsii*, or Northern California Black Walnut (see page 17 for example), is considered rare in nature, but still appears in canyons and valleys like ours, and was sighted here at pre-Spanish Native American campsites. The much larger (Eastern) Black Walnut, or *Juglans nigra*, are those the pioneers brought with them from Missouri. We see them along our county roads, often mingled with the equally large Valley Oak, all intentionally planted for shade and wind breaks. The whole walnut family is *Juglandaceae*, of which we mostly have the two above-mentioned. Six species are

Since several historical sources claim that pioneers brought eastern Black Walnut to plant along the roads for shade and to use the hard wood for gun stocks and furniture, I was curious about which black walnuts were native to our area. So I contacted Jeanette Wrynski at RCD (Yolo County Resource Conservation District), and using her excerpt from "The Jepson Manual, Higher Plants of California," James Hickman, Editor, I think I have a clearer picture. The Hind's Black Walnut is most likely the one commonly found along

native throughout the US and all are deciduous--as seen mingled with the leafless oaks at right.



Pioneer of Capay Valley, Robert Clooney, is one of many who helped plant the ubiquitous Black Walnuts along our county roads. In an interview recently re-published in the Woodland Record, Mr. Clooney tells many a great tale. The original article appeared in an interview with Mr. Clooney in the July 10, 1931 issue of the *Esparto Exponent*, "The Newspaper for Western Yolo County".

As explained in the introduction to this story of our local black walnut trees, the appearance of huge black walnuts mixed with native oaks along many of our county roads is the work of pioneer labor in the 1800s. Several of the "old-timers" I asked claim these trees were wind breaks as well as shade for the long buggy rides on those new, slow-going, dirt roads. The black walnuts brought from the East were also used for lumber, as our native black walnut trees were often too small and the wood less hard.

As the article points out, Robert Clooney worked on different farms throughout this area and helped establish some of the landmarks still standing today. He helped plant the Osage Oranges that still line the south side of Hwy 16 between Esparto and Madison. And at one point he worked on the Wyatt and Bill Duncan ranch north of Capay and "helped plant the row of huge walnut trees that still line the west side of the road leading to the home of Mrs. M.E. Duncan."

Well, those trees were still there on my great grandparents' ranch when we were young—as seen in the center photo at right taken in 1963. Those Black Walnuts seen lining the road behind us "Duncan descendants" with the pony cart were an annual source of Christmas shopping money for all of us--the same ones planted by Mr. Clooney 100 years before. Most of those grand trees have been "harvested" in recent years by subsequent owners of the ranch, but the impressive one in the top photo still stands nearby, and the one below shows how tenacious they are when felled. The picture at the bottom right is of the more rare, native *Hindsii* Black Walnut typically near Cache Creek, with the multi-branched, shorter stature.



Sources:
 "Varieties of
 Black Walnuts" at
<http://www.ehow.com>
 and *The Jepson Manual, Higher
 Plants of California*





Hungry?! While running my errands in town [when you live and write out in Hungry Hollow, the nearest “up town” is Capay or Esparto] I usually am *starving*, so I’m grateful that there are ever-increasing choices for a meal. One such place is the little “Taco Truck” *Tacos Jesus Maria* parked at the corner of Woodland and Fremont streets, in the parking lot of *Esparto Grab n Go Market*. OK, I admit I am actually *addicted* to pollo tacos with extra cilantro! The owner-chef--and I do mean *CHEF!!*--is Ramiro Murillo, who does his initial prep work at El Pollo Restaurant at 7 Purity Plaza, Ste A in Woodland, but happily for us can be found every day in Esparto in his shiny,



Sadly, the ice cream truck seen above is no more--or is it safely in other hands?! Somebody tell me!! When originators, the ever-busy Heather Echarte and her son Joseph, were not serving up ice cream from this delightful flash from the past, she could be found helping her husband Nick with one of their other businesses, Little Nick Echarte's Squeeze Service, wherein Nick loads local hay for delivery to dairy's in the Petaluma area--which he has been doing for over 19 years self-employed, and 4 years before that with his dad. Or she is selling jewelry at private hostess-parties--give her a call to host an event! [I'm told there are new owners and that Heather and Son are on to other ventures!]

*Heather Echarte, Cookie Lee Jewelry
WWW.Cookielee.biz/Heatherecharte
(530)787-4332 [ask who the new owners are!]*



appetizing truck. I am often in Woodland and Knights Landing and stop at similar trucks there, too--always asking in my limited Spanish for “dos pollo tacos con mucho cilantro”--but have to admit that Ramiro’s have won me over! Curious, as always, I asked one of his two part-time helpers, Monica (Guadalupe was off duty) about Ramiro and the name *Tacos Jesus Maria*, and found that the chef hails from Jalisco, Mexico. I also found that neither of them realized how close they were sitting to the former land grant named *Rancho Rio de Jesus Maria*, along Cache Creek not far from Madison, where Ramiro now lives. They didn’t know that *Rancho Rio de Jesus Maria* had been a 26,637-acre Mexican land grant and that the name refers to *Rio de Jesús María*, now known as Cache Creek. The grant, north of Woodland, extended along Cache Creek, from Rancho Quesisosi (Madison area) on the east to the Sacramento River.

Get your fill of amazing tacos and other delights, which are available M-Sat. 10-7:30 and Sun. 8-3.



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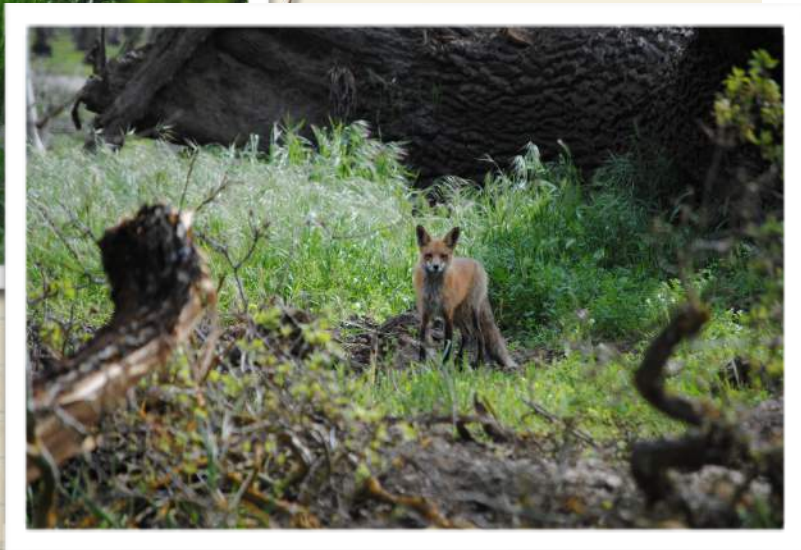
email: pscpa@pacbell.net

Ah, entrepreneurs! --do you have your bookkeeping affairs in order? Local boy, Pat Scribner, CPA, can help--individuals and small business owners, take note!



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 HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Common in California, the Red Fox--a rare and lucky sighting! She may be someone's "pest," but is magical to the rest of us!!

Fox and coyote photos by Douglas Nareau

The California Coyote--not so much! Ranchers shoot to kill and often hang them on fences to warn others away--like the one at right!

