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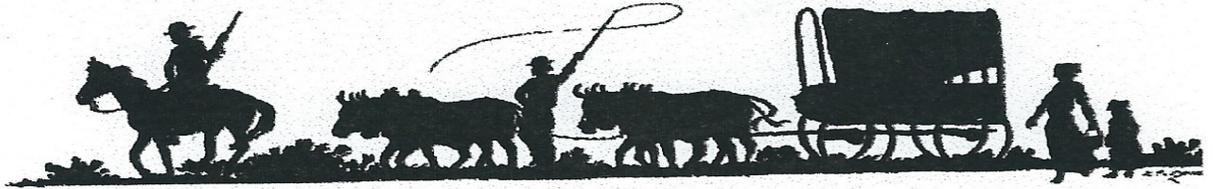
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The Pick and Shovel

Official Newsletter of the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers

"Chartered by the State Their Parents Founded"

Fall 2022

Butte Conference

The Butte Conference was a complete success. From the opening of the conference with Speaker, Miss Montana, Jessica Picker, also singing the National Anthem, to the Awarding of the Montana Heritage Guardian Award by Director Molly Kruckenberg, Montana Historical Society, to the tour guide Chris Fisk, (who also won the History Teacher of the Year Award in 2003) to the guest speaker at our Saturday evening Dinner, Pat Munday, who spoke on the Chinese History of Butte.

The History of Butte was fantastic to learn. So much information was given to this conference that I would imagine most Montanan's didn't even know, I know I didn't.

We also had an outstanding number of new members and annual members switching to Life Time Member status. 19 new members.

New Directors were also voted into Office by President Mike Collins. New Directors were, Taegan Walker of Helena, Janis Hand of Bozeman, and our new Secretary Becky Jo Roan of Savage, MT. Welcome aboard to all. Steve Hardt was also re-elected to his position as a Director.



VIRGINIA CITY CONFERENCE

2023
AUGUST 4 - 5

History of Alder Gulch

As taken from Montana Department of Commerce

Virginia City and Nevada City lie along Alder Gulch, the site of the richest placer gold strike in the Rocky Mountains with an estimated total value of 100 million dollars throughout the 18th and 19th century. In the early 1860s, during the first three seasons, an estimated \$30 million worth of gold was removed from the gulch.

In the following years, gold was extracted from placer as well as lode mines.

From 1848 through the 1860s Alder Gulch was part of a broad expansion of mining from California into many parts of Western North America. The western gold rushes of the 1860s led Congress to create five new territories.

Experienced miners traveled to the successive mining frontiers, bringing with them mining technology and social traditions. Alder Gulch was in Idaho Territory until May 1864, when the Montana Territory was created. Bannack was the site of the first placer gold strike within the Montana territory in 1862 and shortly thereafter became the first territorial capital.

On May 26, 1863, Barney Hughes, Thomas Cover, Henry Rodgers, William Fairweather, Henry Edgar and Bill Sweeney camped along a small stream fringed with alder trees. Fairweather and Edgar went to prospect a place of rimrock. Fairweather dug the dirt, filled a pan and told Edgar to wash the pan in the hope of getting enough gold to buy tobacco. When the first pan turned up \$2.40, they knew the gulch had great potential.

Word spread like wildfire. Miners covered the hillsides with tents, brush shelters and crude log cabins. On June 16, the Varina Town Company platted the town. Supporters of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy, intended to name the new town after Jefferson Davis' wife, Varina. However, Dr. G. G. Bissell, the newly elected miners' court judge, was an equally stubborn Unionist. When it came time to file the official documents, he submitted the name Virginia instead.

Virginia City was designated as the new territorial capital of Montana in 1865 when Alder Gulch had gathered most of Montana's population. At its peak, 10,000 people flooded the area named "Fourteen-mile City" for the numerous settlements that lined the gulch. Virginia City became the largest settlement with an estimated population of 5,000 by mid-1864. It rapidly became the territory's first social center and transportation hub.

SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON PLACES TO STAY WHILE IN VIRGINIA CITY IN AUGUST. www.sonsanddaughtersmontanapioneers.com or on facebook



HISTORY TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Eric Chaon, teacher at Great Falls High School in Great Falls, Montana is winner of the Montana Statehood Centennial Bell Award honoring the Montana History Teacher of the Year at the 7th-12th grade level for 2021-2022.

Eric Chaon, Sophomore teacher at Great Falls High School in Great Falls, Mt. is the winner of the Montana Statehood Centennial Bell Award honoring the Montana History Teacher of the Year for 2021-2022.

Chosen by a panel of Montana History advocates, Eric is the 33rd winner of the award. Montana History teachers at the 7th- 12th grade level are chosen on even numbered years. Montana History teachers at the 4th-6th grade levels are chosen on uneven years.

Born and raised in Great Falls, Mt., Eric is a 2006 graduate of Great Falls High School and a 2010 graduate of Montana State University in Bozeman with a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education, a Social Studies Broadfield and a minor in History. In 2016 he received a master of education Degree in curriculum and instruction from MSU. He is married to Hayley Chaon and they have two children, a daughter Lola, and a son Bryson. Eric enjoys camping, fishing, skiing, sports events and spending time with family across Montana.

His teaching experience includes Middle School and High School Social Studies at Augusta, Mt. 2011-2013 and at Great Falls High School , world history and Montana history, 2013-present. He is the current Social Studies Department head at GFHS.

In his approach to teaching Montana history, Eric said, "I immerse students in analyzing images, letters, broadsides and other primary sources from Montana history. I also use class competitions, online challenges, and games to encourage student interest and engagement."

In his support letter for Eric, Jerry Hopkins, Librarian at GFHS said, "I was able to fully see the dedication Eric brings to not only his classroom but to the relationships he builds with his students. Mr. Chaon's classroom persona is loud, animated and humorous. This combination of passion for education makes his students want to attend his class and look forward to what each lesson will bring."

From his student support letter, Cale Gundlach, senior at GFHS said, "Mr. Chaon is deserving of this prestigious award because of the connection he makes with his students, the engaging way in which he teaches and his love for bettering the growth of his students."

As the winner of this year's Montana History Teacher of the Year Award, Eric will receive a plaque and \$4,500 from three sponsors, the Montana Television Network, the Montana History Foundation and the Sons & Daughters of Montana Pioneers.

Other partners are the Montana Historical Society and the 1889 Coffee House in Helena. Additional gifts of \$100 in gold Sacajawea dollars are given to the student who writes the letter of support for the winning teacher from Judy Wohlfrom of Woodland, Ca., one gold Sacajawea dollar for each of the students who accompanies the winning teacher from Mike Collins, President of the SDMP and his wife Connie of Helena.

These gifts will be given to Eric and his students at a ceremony at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov 9, 2022 near the Statehood Centennial Bell on the east balcony overlooking the rotunda in the State Capitol. Highlight of the ceremony attended by State Dignitaries, GFHS officials, sponsors and students will be the ringing of the Statehood Centennial Bell by Eric and his students at 10:40 a.m., the exact minute Montana became the 41st State in 1889.

For more information about this event Contact Norma Ashby Smith of Great Falls, Mt., Award Coordinator, 406-590-6798 or at ashby7@charter.net

Accommodations for Virginia City and Ennis

***This list is quite extensive and the Committee has done an excellent job listing these places for you.
It is highly recommended to MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY—BEFORE APRIL
Virginia City is a very active Tourist Attraction and will book up fast. Cut off date for held rooms
is April.***

Virginia City Accommodations: Contact is Patti (406)843-5377

Fairweather Inn:

6 bedrooms with full sized beds to accommodate two people, each with private bathroom
3 bedrooms with full sized beds to accommodate two people with a shared bathroom
4 bedrooms with queen sized beds to accommodate two guests, each with private bathroom
1 bedroom with one twin bed for one person, with a shared bathroom

Nevada City Cabins:

4 cabins that have 2 Full beds – occupancy for four
2 cabins with 2 queens beds + 1 Twin Bed
5 cabins have 2 queen beds – occupancy for four
3 cabins with 1 queen bed for double occupancy
1 cabins with 1 full bed for double occupancy

Each Unit is \$205.00 plus tax plus she said that she would not charge extra for extra people.

Heritage Accommodations:

<https://www.heritageaccommodations.com/>

Contact is Kaytlin: 406-843-5333

The Bonanza Inn:

7 Private Rooms each with private bathroom and AC and all are ADA accommodating
\$90-\$105/night

Room #1: Full Bed Shower/Bathtub

Room #2: Queen Bed with Shower/Bathtub

Room #3: Queen Bed with Shower/Bathtub

Room #4: Queen Bed with Shower

Room #5: Queen Bed with Shower

Room #6: Full Bed with Shower

Room #7: Full Bed with Shower

Governor Meagher Cabin: 1 Queen Bed + Rollaway available (with AC) : \$181/night

Harding Cabin: 3 Bedrooms – 2 Queen Beds + 1 Full bed (with AC) – 1 room is ADA accessible \$161/night

Daems & Corbett House sleep 7 in 3 bedrooms (with AC) : \$161/night

Room #1: 1 Queen Bed

Room#2: 1 Twin bed

Room #3: 2 Queen Beds

Elling House 404 East Idaho Street in Virginia City

CONTACT 406-843-5508 – Toni

Spend a night in an 1876 gothic revival stone mansion in historic Virginia City. Rest in a large room with private bath. Relax in peace in the lovely gardens. Enjoy a continental breakfast in the sunroom. Walking distance to shops & attractions. \$140 per night including tax with double occupancy. Room is furnished with queen size bed. \$33 for additional guest with twin bed. Prices include room and private bath plus a continental breakfast.

The Stonehouse Inn B&B 404 E Idaho St.

Rumor is that this was bought and that the new owners are going to try and maintain it as a B&B.

Just an Experience B&B

<https://www.justanexperience.com/>

Cont'd on last page.....

Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers

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Return Service Requested

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A Word from our President Mike Collins

Hello Pioneer Family's

Just wanted to touch base with everyone and let you know what a wonderful, exciting and fun filled Convention we had in Butte America. The numbers speak to the enthusiasm and dedication of the Convention Committee, we had more attendees than I think I have ever seen at a Convention. I want to thank Larry Dobb, Charlot Orr, and Jeanette Larson for the initial setup of Contracts for Hotels, Caterer's, Speakers and Tours. I also would like to thank Mike Russell and Tim Sowa for tying up loose ends and getting things in a timely order. In Butte we elected some new board members that has kicked the level of enthusiasm up a notch, Virginia City here we come.

The board meeting on Oct 1 was very productive with new ideas of SDMP merchandise, membership applications and some updates on By-Laws and Policies and Procedures. More info to follow. And remember we have the Bell Ringer, History Teacher Award at the State Capitol on Wednesday Nov 9.

Enjoy the crisp Fall season and stay safe through the winter.

Your President Mike C

NEW LOGO

We are currently looking for ideas to make a new logo for the SDMP. If you have any creative talent and would like to submit an idea, we will embrace it. Any thing goes, new ideas, pictures with Sons and Daughters in the context, new designs, you name it, we will consider it.

Email: mrussell@sonsanddaughtersmontanapioneers.com

ENNIS HOTELS: 14 MILES AWAY

Sportsman Lodge: <https://www.sportsmanslodgemt.com/>

\$163/night

Red Bear Inn: <https://www.redbearinn.com/> - no online availability yet

406-682-5200 stay@redbearinn.com

Ennis Homestead: <https://ennishomestead.com/>

The Madison: Stays per Night Starting at \$299

One Private Bathroom

Two Bedrooms

Fireplace

Kitchen

Living Area

Maximum of 4 people

The Main House: Stays per Night Starting at \$399

Three Bathrooms

Three Bedrooms

Fireplace

Kitchen

Living Area

Maximum of 6 people