November 21, 1854

Montez in a Whipping Fury

The famous Madame Lola Montez created a pleasant sensation here today when she tried to assault Mr. Shipley, editor of the *Grass Valley Telegraph*.

Apparently unhappy with the paper’s coverage, the noted dancer rushed in a rage through Mill Street to Main Street wielding a riding whip in one hand and a copy of the newspaper in the other.

She met up with the editor at the Golden Gate Saloon and struck at him with her whip while giving him a shrill tongue-lashing.

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*I wish the Easter days were now like
Those that once I knew*

*When Jenny wore the bonnet plain,*
*with ribbon-bows of blue;*
*When we walked to Sunday meetin’*—
*o’er the meadows green and sweet,*
*Where lilies waved in welcome,*
*with violets at our feet*

It aint’ the fancy fixin’s—
I mind so much — the bills.
For birds an’ fluffy feathers —
all the fine new fangled frills;
For I know that fashion changes —
that it rules the world complete;
But the old-time Easter bonnet was so simple and so sweet!
Its ribbons matched the color of the sky overhead.

An’ the lips that smiled beneath it seemed to mean the words they said!
The lips that smiled so so sweetly —
never knowin’ any art. —
An’ the eyes whose sunny glances made a light around your heart!
I’ve nothin’ ’gainst the fashions —
they’ve got to have their day;
But I love the simple bonnets of the far an’ far away;
An’ thinkin’ how she looked in ‘em —
there, in the long ago.
I sigh, an’ praise the Lord from whom all blessin’s used to flo

*An Old Easter Bonnet*

I wish the Easter days were now like
Those that once I knew
When Jenny wore the bonnet plain,
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When we walked to Sunday meetin’
o’er the meadows green and sweet;
Where lilies waved in welcome,
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In February, 1856, she earned further notoriety in Ballarat, Australia when, after reading a bad review in *The Ballarat Times*, she tried to whip editor, Mr. Henry Seekamp.
**President’s Perspective**

The March Board Meeting provided an opportunity for State Parks, E Clampus Vitus Chapter 10 and MDPA to discuss co-operative endeavors that would benefit and hopefully perpetuate the future of Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park.

Possible project work was considered, that may be feasible with limited state park staff available to coordinate and oversee such commitments.

The first, of hopefully many ventures, saw the renovation of the ELP site. (see Ranger Report).

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**Alternatives Sought**

By Monica Miller, Lobbyist

February 18 was the deadline for the introduction of bills in the state legislature. The failure of Proposition 21 last November revealed an obvious need for state park alternatives. Assembly Member Jared Huffman (Dem. Marin) has introduced AB 42 which would establish guidelines for private/public partnerships, in order to help keep open a few state parks which would otherwise be subject to closure.

It is critical that creative opportunities for public/private partnerships be explored and encouraged in order to minimize the impacts to parks and, where possible, maintain public access to park resources.

Currently there are 86 non-profit co-operating associations that provide varying levels of support for individual state park units. If AB 42 is enacted it would allow some qualified ($$$ ed.) non-profits to potentially provide greater negotiated assistance to the operations of state park units.

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**ECV 10 Humbug Mark Sellards**

presented MDPA with a check for $1000 as the proceeds from 2010 Humbug Day food sales. MDPA President Wes Nelson noted; “such monetary support is essential if we are to continue to fund a variety of needed services and projects without being forced to put all of our revenue eggs into one basket.”
Sacred Traditions and Holidays in the Gold Rush

Tradition says that the word “holiday” has its origin long ago in “holy day”. Down through the ages the word has evolved to include historical events and other “excuses” to celebrate. This latter effect was not lost on those who experienced the gold rush decades.

This winter’s almost perpetual storms are finally giving way to the bloom of spring and a whole series of opportunities or “excuses” to celebrate just as folks would have 100-150 years ago.

From 1840s Germany, the Otschter Haws (Easter Bunny legend) hopped, or immigrated to America. Easter Baskets with colored eggs and chocolates went west with the Gold Rush pioneers. About the same time, the first commercial Easter Cards appeared in England and this fashion also crossed to the former “colonies”. An advertisement in Omaha, Nebraska in 1887, made available to passing wagon-trains, “Unique and elaborate Easter Cards, representing purity and hope, ranging from .20 cents to $3.50”

From mining camps to small towns, or blossoming cities, depending on your circumstances, folks gathered in churches, tents or in the open for Easter Sunday services. To the joy of some and the consternation of others, rigid tradition often eased to allow for bunny and basket festivities. Respectability was attained in 1877 when President Rutherford B. Hayes ordered the gates to the White House grounds opened and throngs of children admitted for an Easter Egg Hunt. Another tradition was born.

Simultaneously, the former Pagan Festival of May Day was taken up in various parts of the country with children and college girls celebrating by dancing around decorative May Poles. In just a few decades, behavior that would have been taboo in most “Christian” society had gained acceptance and become traditional. Hard working miners with few outlets for pleasure put a premium on musicians, actors and companies that would produce almost any kind of entertainment. Local Brass Bands were common in the Mother Lode, with the larger Burgs often boasting an orchestra. Traditional Holy Days and historically recent Holidays such as Decoration Day (Memorial Day) and the 4th of July provided not only an occasion to commemorate the Day but to burst out in full celebration with food, drink, dancing, games and perhaps a parade.

Even in these meager times, Malakoff Diggins SHP can still draw a crowd to celebrate, play some games and perhaps dance to a tune or two.

Thanks to the efforts of staff and state park volunteers, MDSHP offers a fun-filled Kid’s Fishing Derby on May 7, then on June 11, our traditional park holiday, Humbug Day.

Revelers are cautioned to heed the poignant words from Mark Twain:

“The first day of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year.”
Independence Day on the Prairie
From the Diary of Wm. Henry Hart (1829-1888)
Emigrating by wagon train from Quincy, Ill. to California

**July 4, 1852** The ladies brought out a handsome flag composed of red, white, & blue stripes and patches taken from sundry garments supposed to form parts of female wearing apparel. A line had been rigged, out of various cords of various sizes in use about the train, and the Stars and Stripes floated in the breeze amidst the cheers and waving handkerchiefs of the entire party. A Tin Pan Gong sounded the call to dinner and we found there a fine set out of Antelope, roasted & stewed Prairie Fowl Smoked Beef Bacon fried & boiled dried apples & peaches, rice beans bread & crackers with an ample supply of tea & coffee and Bean Soup. The brandy brought out. All passed up their glasses (which as well as all the plates & dishes were of pure tin) and received their allowance. “The Day” the “President” the “Union” the “Ladies” &c&c were each toasted & cheered in all due formality. At sunset a national salute of 100 guns (more or less) ended our Fourth of July and as pleasant a one as ever I spent.” (Circumstances determined one’s perspective. Many diaries were less enthusiastic. “July 4 crossed river in rain.” “July 4, made only 6 miles.” ed.)

**Memorial Day 1884**

Memorial Day was properly observed in Grass Valley. The procession was an impressive one. Some six car locals of people came down from Nevada City. The Knights of Pythias looked splendid in their beautiful uniforms, their metallic and plumed helmets glistening “like the crescent on a Turks Pavilion”.

Nevada Light Guard also made a fine appearance, and the firemen, as usual, added much to the numbers and beauty of the throng. Many thousand people were present at the cemetery where the graves of the dead heroes were appropriately decorated with flags, evergreens and flowers, etc., showing they had not been forgotten. The address was short, but well suited to the occasion.

Memorial Day 1924 with the Ledus and Gaus’ Charle Gaus is at lower right. Behind him is Han Yu Hing who lived in NBF for 50 years. Died at 71 in 1935. His remains were sent home to China in keeping with tradition.

The North Bloomfield Brass Band was available for holidays and other special occasions.
I know it’s spring at Malakoff when the first Winter Wren sings its melodious song near Blair Lake. Although snow still covers the upper elevations of the park, the birds, plants and visitors tell us that a very long winter is about to end!

We are excited this year to have our Senior Park Aide Debbie Pfanner back for a 5th season. She is an outstanding employee who adds so much to each and every visitor’s experience at Malakoff. In addition, all of our annual events are planned and coming together as scheduled.

The annual Malakoff Kids Fishing Derby is set for May 7, 2011 at Blair Lake. Again, generous donations totaling over $1000 have enabled us to plant trophy rainbow trout in addition to 300 pounds of smaller fish from The California Department of Fish and Game. We have 100 excited children signed up and volunteer Debbie Dajas has once again gathered donations form across the globe! Her efforts toward this event are heroic.

Humbug Days at Malakoff is June 11, and we have ordered the event posters, banners, planned all of the entertainment and volunteer assignments, and scheduled radio advertising and announcements. We expect a great crowd with wagon rides, live music, town tours, gold panning, root beer floats, a parade and firing of the water canon!

On a dour note, due to budget shortfalls, our park will be closed Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays starting after Humbug Day. This will impact camping and day use as well as the park museum hours.

On April 9th, we had a volunteer work party at Malakoff to spruce up the Environmental Living Program (ELP) site and clear wood and debris from the park. ECV Chapter 10 as well as other State Park Volunteers provided a huge boost in this effort and we were able to build porches for all of the five tent structures, paint the tent frames and floors, clear downed wood, rebuild the lean-to (thanks Paul Moore), and sand and weather seal all of the benches and cooking tables. In addition ECV split wood for the upcoming ELP season. The camp is now in tip-top shape awaiting this years influx of eager student-pioneers.
Nature knows no indecencies; man invents them.
Mark Twain’s Notebook

“There was a church with a puncheon floor and slab benches. A puncheon floor is made of logs whose upper surfaces have been chipped flat with an adz. The cracks between the logs were not filled; there was no carpet; consequently, if you dropped anything smaller than a peach it was likely to go through. The church was perched upon short sections of logs, which elevated it two or three feet from the ground. Hogs slept under there, and whenever the dogs got after them during services the minister had to wait till the disturbance was over. In winter there was always a refreshing breeze up through the puncheon floor; in summer there were fleas enough for all.”

Florida, Missouri 1840s

“I spent some part of every year at my uncle’s farm until I was twelve or thirteen years old. I can call back the solemn twilight and mystery of the deep woods, the earthly smells, the faint odors of the wild flowers, the sheen of rainwashed foliage, the rattling clatter of drops when the wind shook the trees, the far-off hammering of woodpeckers and the muffled drumming of wood pheasants in the remoteness of the forest, the snapshot glimpses of disturbed wild creatures scurrying through the grass - I can call it all back and make it as real as it ever was, and as blessed.”

“I can see the woods in their autumn dress, the oaks purple, the hickories washed with gold, the maples and sumacs luminous with crimson fires, and I can hear the rustle made by the fallen leaves as we plowed through them. I can see the blue clusters of wild grapes hanging among the foliage of the saplings, and I remember the taste of them and the smell. I know how the wild blackberries looked and how they tasted, and the same with the pawpaws, the hazlenuts, and the persimmons, and I can feel the thumping rain upon my head, of hickory nuts and walnuts when we were out in the frosty dawn to scramble for them with the pigs, and the gusts of wind loosed them and sent them down.”

“I remember the squirrel hunts and the wild turkey hunts and all that; and how we turned out, mornings, while it was still dark, to go on these expeditions, and how dismal it was, and how often I regretted that I was well enough to go. A toot of a horn brought twice as many dogs as were needed, and in their happiness they raced and scampered about, and knocked small people down and made no end of unnecessary noise. At the word they vanished toward the woods, and we drifted silently after them in the melancholy gloom. But presently the gray dawn stole over the world, the birds piped up, then the sun rose and poured light and comfort all around, everything was fresh and dewy and fragrant, and life was a boon again. After three hours of tramping we arrived back wholesomely tired, overladen with game, very hungry, and just in time for breakfast.”

from: The Autobiography of Mark Twain, edited by Charles Neider, 2010 (enchanting)
The pawpaw was first documented in 1557 by a Portuguese narrator, traveling with DeSoto during his expedition in the Mississippi Valley in 1541 who reported encountering aboriginal American tribes that cultivated the fruit. In 1736, Quaker botanists John Bartram and Peter Collinson arranged for specimens to be sent to England for its delicious yellow pulp. The pawpaw was instrumental for the survival of western moving pioneers during the 18th and 19th centuries. (Pawpaw may come from the Spanish: Papaya. ed.)

“We can never realize what a great blessing the pawpaw was to the first settlers while they were clearing the great natural forest and preparing to build cabins. Planting fruit trees was rather an experiment for a number of years. The pawpaws, and a few other wild fruits of less value, were all their dependence so far as fruit is concerned. Well do I remember sixty or more years ago my father would take his gun and basket and go to the woods and return in the evening loaded with pawpaws, young squirrels and sometimes mushrooms of which he was very fond. But there will never be a recurrence of those days which were the happiest of my life.”


“We lived on the creek, and there was lots of pawpaws. And when they’d get ripe in the fall, we’d go pick buckets of them. They kind of taste a little like bananas. We didn’t have much in the way of fruit like that then, and my mother just really loved them. That was a big deal to go pawpaw hunting.” Thelma Bilyeu, b. 1915 Ozarks

It is usually a small tree seldom exceeding 8 inches in diameter and 30 feet in height. The wood is soft, greenish colored, and has no commercial use, though the fibrous inner bark was used by Native Americans to string fish and repair fish nets. The pawpaw resembles a deciduous magnolia, although its bold, lance-shaped leaves droop toward the ground, are alternate, borne simple on a short stalk, sometimes growing from 6 to 12 inches long and 3 to 5 inches wide. When crushed, the leaves have a pungent odor reminiscent of bell pepper. Two-inch wine-colored flowers appear briefly in spring just as the leaves are developing. The exotic flowers with six brown to maroon petals appear before the leaves and are one inch across when mature. They have an odor of fermenting grapes. The fruits, which ripen in the fall and range in length from 2 to 4 inches, are the largest edible fruit from any native North American tree.

Wildlife such as opossum, raccoon, fox, quail, turkey, and a variety of birds relish the pawpaw fruit. Also, the pawpaw is the only host plant for the Zebra Swallowtail, a fact well-known by butterfly gardeners.

The taste of the fruit varies from location to location giving the many descriptions of its flavor: “reminiscent of papaya with pineapple overtones, with bits of banana and mango”; “a complex combination of tropical fruit flavors”; “a creamy mixture of banana and pineapple”; “an acquired, smoky taste”; “simply awful”.

Horticulture: “worldwide connoisseurs chose the fruit as one of the six most delicious in the world.”
*Pawpaw* trees, bushes and patches are a part of many American folklore stories and legends. Locals claim they were used for protection against *Ozark Witches*:

Trepid Ozarkers employed several protective measures to thwart the efforts of witches. Great concern was given to protecting the home. Driving three nails into the outside of a door, in the form of a triangle, was said to prevent witches from entering a dwelling. Other prescribed means to guard the home against witches were painting the outside of a door blue, driving several tiny pegs of *pawpaw* wood into the doorsill, or nailing a horseshoe (open end upward) over the door.

And the tree was used in the powerful *Pawpaw Conjure*:

This charm could be employed if the witch master could obtain the witch’s nail parings, a lock of hair, a tooth, or a cloth with her blood on it. The hair, nail parings, or other personal effects were stuck to the end of a wooden peg with beeswax. The witch master took this peg out into the woods at midnight, bored a hole in the fork of a *pawpaw* tree, and drove the peg into the hole. The witch, and her powers, were expected to dwindle.  

*(Tommy-knockers would never fall for that! ed.)*

And true stories:

From *the Hatfields and McCoys*:

“Ellison, bleeding profusely from 26 stab wounds and a bullet in his back, was borne away. Anse and his kin quickly rounded up the three McCoys. Two days later Ellison died. The Hatfields tied the three boys, all sons of Ran’l, to *pawpaw* bushes on the Kentucky side of the river and pumped 50 bullets into them.”

And in old sayings:

“In the fall, Buck Run bananas are ripe - in the frost fall, a wise man takes a wife.” *(Buck Run banana is local slang for the fruit of the *pawpaw* tree, along with *Missouri* or *Ozark Banana*, etc., etc.)*

### *Pawpaw Chiffon Pie*

1/2 cup brown sugar  
1/2 tsp salt  
2/3 cup milk  
1 cup Pawpaw pulp  
Mix sugar, salt & gel in pan.  
Add milk and egg yolks.  
Bring to boil, stir in Pawpaw.  
Refrigerate to chill 20-30 min.  
Beat in egg whites w/adding 1/4 cup sugar; mix until stiff peaks.  
Fold into Pawpaw blend.  
Serve as pie or pudding.

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**Scientific classification**

Kingdom: *Plantae*  
(unranked): *Angiosperms*  
(unranked): *Magnoliids*  
Order: *Magnoliales*  
Family: *Annonaceae*  
Genus: *Asimin* Adans.  
Species: Triloba

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*from Wild Edibles of Missouri, by Jan Phillips*
9th Annual Park Advocacy Day

More than 160 state park supporters from throughout California gathered in Sacramento on March 22 to participate in CSPF’s 9th Annual Park Advocacy Day. Together they helped send a powerful message of support for California’s state parks that will be felt in Sacramento for months to come. Some of the highlights of this year’s event include:

- The attendance of park advocates at the Senate Natural Resources Committee and the Assembly Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee hearings. Advocates literally packed each of these committee rooms (and the halls) to testify in support of SB 580 (Wolk/Kehoe) and AB 42 (Huffman). The strong showing of support by park advocates made a difference – both bills passed out of those committees and now advance to the next stage of the legislative process.

- Canvassing the entire Capitol with support for state parks. Park advocates were assembled into thirty-two teams, each consisting of 3-6 park advocates. Each team followed a schedule of appointments throughout the day. By the end of the day, our park advocates collectively met with the offices of 119 policymakers, urging them support legislation to help protect California’s state parks, encouraging partnerships with nonprofits and continued volunteerism in state parks!

- Throughout the day, park advocates delivered over 7,000 letters to legislators and over 5,000 petitions to the Governor on behalf of Californians that were unable to attend Park Advocacy Day.

- To help highlight the message of Park Advocacy Day, CSPF staffed a display and information booth outside of the Capitol to help raise awareness to what could be lost in the event of park closures. CSPF staff collected petitions and distributed information to members of the public and capitol staff.

In addition to attending committee hearings and legislative meetings, participants of Park Advocacy Day also participated in a media panel and CSPF’s annual Afternoon Speakers Series. During the media panel, participants heard from The Sacramento Bee’s Marjorie Lundstrom and Matt Weiser, who authored a three-part series on state park issues last summer.

During the Afternoon Speakers Series, advocates heard from Secretary of Resources John Laird, Senators Christine Kehoe (San Diego) and Lois Wolk (Vacaville), Richard Gordon (Redwood City) and Assemblyman Roger Hernández (West Covina).

The busy day concluded with CSPF’s annual reception and awards where where CSPF presented to this year’s Grassroots Champion Award to recipients John Mott, and the California Travel and Tourism Industry Association More information on this year’s Grassroots Champions can be found here.

Thank you to everyone who participated and made the day a success! We hope you can join us for next year’s event!
Humbug Day at Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park

Saturday
June 11, 2011
11:00-5:00
$5 / Vehicle

“Humbug!” conjures up visions of Marley’s Ghost, Scrooge and Tiny Tim. Depart olde London for the California Gold Rush, c. 1850. “Humbug”, now connotes a worthless gold claim, specifically applied to the Malakoff Diggins in Nevada County, after the surface gold was collected. A need for new technology to retrieve the fine gold in the old river bed, led to the invention of Hydraulic Mining. The vast basin and hillsides, denuded of vegetation by the water cannons, stand in stark contrast to the Sierra Forest surrounding the site.

Commemorate California’s golden olden days on June 11 as park staff and volunteers in period costume; interpret our historic heritage at North Bloomfield, formerly Humbug, California, the state park’s semi-ghost town.

Many of the furnished Historic buildings, including a residence built in 1852, Drug Store, Barber Shop, General Store, Saloon, Black-Smith, Stable and the park museum / visitor center will be open for viewing and activities.

Other on-going attractions will comprise the world’s shortest parade, bluegrass, gold-panning, wagon-rides, tin-punching, candle-making, kid’s games, food and beverages, entertainment at the gazebo and of course, the discharging of a “monitor” water cannon.

Or folks may just “park” themselves and absorb the idyllic splendor of one of California’s most enchanting state parks.

Follow St. Hwy 49 north from Nevada City for 11 mi.
Turn right on Tyler-Foote Rd.
Follow the double-yellow lines for 15 miles to Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park.
530-265-1740
The Blair 1973

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DOINS

May 7    Fishing Derby  10am – 2pm
May 7    MDPA Board Meeting  3pm – 5pm
May 12-15  CALPA Conference
June 11  Humbug Day
July 9    MDPA Board Meeting  10am
Sept 4    Ice Cream Social  10am – 1pm
Oct 8     MDPA Annual Meeting / Elections
NAME: _______________________________________________________

MAILING ADDRESS: _____________________________________________

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: __________________________, ____ __________

EMAIL ADDRESS (PRIVATE): _____________________________________

PHONE: (____) ____________________________

MEMBERSHIP STATUS: New ____ Renewal ____

Please check the volunteer opportunities you may be interested in!

____ Docent        ____ Trail work        ____ Sales Center / Museum

____ Humbug Day        ____ Publicity        ____ Fundraising / Donor

Please send your completed application and check for $10.00 to:

MDPA Membership
23579 North Bloomfield Road
Nevada City, CA  95959
www.malakoffdiggins.org