

February 2023

PRICE \$5.00

FALLON

MAGAZINE



Industry Edition



FALLON MAGAZINE

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Meet the Staff



Rachel Dahl is a 1987 grad of Churchill County High School and received her BA from the University of Nevada. She continued on, receiving her MA in Political Science, and has served the Fallon community as a city councilwoman, and director of economic development. She taught high school and middle school English as well as Core Humanities at the University of Nevada, and Political Science at WNC. She is mother of three and grandmother of one.



Leanna Lehman is a Fallon girl, born and raised. She started writing for The Fallon Post in February 2019. Her first novel was published in 2015 and she has had articles featured in First for Woman and Women's World Magazines, PopSugar, Chick Lit Central, and Chispa Magazine. Leanna is a lover of all things Western Nevada as is working on a Nevada photography collection as well as new fiction and non-fiction projects.



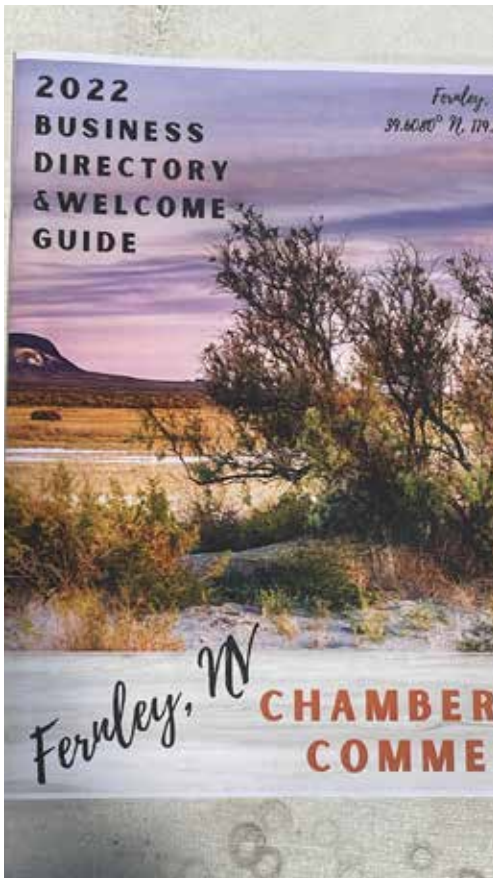
Jo Petteruti moved to Fallon from Rhode Island in 2007 after a successful 25-year career in Information Technology. She is the original owner/builder/designer of Jo's Stillwater Tea Room and is now retired from that endeavor. She is an avid football fan and even worked as a security person for the New England Patriots for one season. She now spends her time volunteering in many capacities around town, including in her new role as a reporter for *The Fallon Post*.

Watch for our next edition of the Fallon Magazine with planned issues focusing on:

- March - Agriculture
- April - Local Talent
- May - Construction
- June - Transportation
- July - Service Organizations



Subscriptions to the Fallon Magazine are available online at www.TheFallonPost.org and can be purchased by the month or the year.



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Reintroducing the Magazine...

When we started this printing expedition just over two years ago, we figured the only way to really make a go of it was to not rely on someone in a big corporation somewhere to do our printing. Turns out on that account we were right, the only press left in the state at the time was the old Nevada Appeal press in Carson where all the northern Nevada papers were printed except the Elko Daily Free Press which was printed in Twin Falls.

Almost exactly a year ago that thinking proved accurate when the press in Carson was sold and there was a scramble for local newspapers to find a printer. As it worked out, the Pacific Publishing products, including the Lahontan Valley News are all printed in Tracy, California and the Reno-Gazette Journal is now printed in Chico.

So even though we aren't technically printed on "newsprint" we do produce our own local, community paper every week right here in Fallon on our own digital, production printer, who we affectionately refer to as, Becky.

Having Becky here means we have the ability to print for you any time we need to, and although we aren't technically conspiracy theorists, (you know what the difference is between a conspiracy theory and truth is? Six months), she's here if we need her, not over the Sierras in Tracy.

The problem is, printing is expensive no matter how you look at it and this type of production machine is ridiculously so. We were pretty sure in order to make a go of it financially and stay in a position to keep bringing your local news we would have to print more than just a weekly paper to keep our heads above water. We try to do special sections whenever we can – Back to School, Graduation, Cantaloupe Festival, Soroptimists Home and Garden Show, and those have wonderfully helpful.

In addition, one of our ideas was to take all the really cool stories about our community that we couldn't necessarily fit all the time in the paper and once a month produce a community magazine based around a theme. We started out with this in 2021 with our first magazine focused on the military, the second was around health and wellness. And then we ran up against our own limitations – time mostly but also the manpower and the will to keep running on three-hour nights.

But the time has come. We are resurrecting the magazine, and this first copy features many of our local industries. Next month we will feature Agriculture, the following month Local Talent, then Transportation, and we will continue with a beautiful product of which we can all be proud. Let me also thank you to all of you who purchased that extra add-on in your subscription and have been waiting all this time, we'll make it up to you as we roll this thing out.

Of course there will be plenty of advertising opportunities, just call Bill. That's our new catch phrase now around the shop... "Let's Call Bill." Bill Post has come to our aid and taken over the advertising for which there is no way to express proper gratitude.

We also have Leanna and Jo on task doing their in-depths features, Marie Nygren will be doing local art, Marc Fredrick is reviving some of our recent history, Teresa Walden will do a regular column on health, we'll be featuring our many talented growers in a gardening column, and we will get back to the "Where are they now" features starting in the next edition.

As always, we love your ideas and hope you will join us and be a part of our community magazine. If you have a great idea and want to jump in, come on.

Thank you for your support, we can't do this without you.

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Churchill County is a Hot Bed for Renewable Energy

By Rachel Dahl with Monte Morrison

There are seven major geothermal projects located in Churchill County that provide jobs and tax revenue to the county, while also directly providing the community with 100% green energy. Electricity generated at each plant is sold on contract to specific municipalities or power companies, not just the local grid. The NV Energy grid does allow for the electricity to make its way to the contracted buyers through what can be called a series of overflowing buckets. The country and the county's electric grid mean the reality that most of the electrons that are produced in the Lahontan Valley between the hydroelectric plants at Lahontan Dam, the solar plants, and the geothermal plants stay here for all of us to use. This community is a direct beneficiary of renewable energy on several levels, practically and economically.

In addition to the well-developed geothermal resources, two of the local companies have built solar plants in their facilities. This allows for a hybrid production that sees solar production during the day, which complements geothermal and maximizes the base load production.

According to Sherry Weideman, Comptroller for Churchill County, geothermal industries pay real and personal property taxes to the county, a percentage of which goes to the school district. In addition, geothermal industries also pay royalties to the State of Nevada, and some of these royalties are returned to the county. For Fiscal Year 2021-22, Churchill County received \$1,273,342 in geothermal royalties.

Ormat, a US-based company, with ties to the parent company in Israel, owns the plants at Dixie Valley, Desert Peak, and Brady Hot Springs. It was established in 1965 and is primarily known as a pioneer of proprietary turbine designs. It focused on manufacturing power generation equipment in its early years. In the 1970s, Ormat expanded technology and expertise in the Remote Power Unit sector, providing reliable power generation equipment for clients in remote operating conditions, like the Trans-Alaska Pipeline project.

Over the years Ormat focused on growing its renewable expertise in the geothermal industry with its first Nevada plant located at Wabuska, just southwest of Fallon, which led to plant

acquisitions and developments across Nevada, California, and Hawaii. The company became the second-largest US geothermal power producer, through the use of technology that allowed them to maximize the efficiencies of lower-temperature resources. The company also pioneered experimental projects in solar production and Recovered Energy Generation which utilizes waste heat to create power.

Ormat is a public company headquartered in Reno, Nevada, and currently has projects across the globe, including some of the largest renewable power plants providing sustainable energy to power millions of homes. With over 1,400 employees worldwide, Ormat produces 1.1 gigawatts of electricity across the globe, 123.3



MW of that power in Churchill County.

Enel has two plants in Churchill County, at Stillwater and Salt Wells, both producing geothermal energy, and Stillwater also produces solar electricity at two plants, with a combined production of 71 MW.

One of the largest power companies in the world, Enel was founded in 1962 as the national entity for electricity in Italy, bringing together more than a thousand small energy producers. The company began with hydroelectric power, modernizing and extending the national grid, and then connecting to the European network.

The energy crisis of the 1970s led Enel to explore alternative sources of power, including nuclear, and they pioneered several renewable energy plants including one of the largest hydroelectric plants, the first grid-connected solar installation, and Italy's first wind farm. The company eventually became a private company and began expanding, first to Spain, then Latin America,



and finally to the U.S., where according to the Enel website, the company bought the first North American renewable energy plant.

Enel as a company has great pride as an innovator of the latest technology and designed and installed the first smart meters. Today they continue to focus on the latest technology, stepping up investments in digitalization, e-mobility, circular economy, and decarbonization.

Enel can be found in 30 countries across the world, has 2.3 million kilometers of power lines in the distribution network, and a total capacity to produce 92.7 gigawatts of electricity. And last but not least, Cyrq Energy operates two plants in Churchill County, Soda Lake, just northeast of its namesake, and Patua near Hazen for a total of 74.5 MW. Patua is also a solar hybrid plant to supplement its technology to improve the success of the plant despite a lower temperature geothermal resource. Cyrq is based in Salt Lake City, Utah with plants across the western U.S., generating green power around the clock with geothermal plants located in California, New Mexico, Utah, and also near Winnemucca, Nevada. Its production portfolio is currently at 203.6 MW with an estimated 200 MW of new-generation projects being developed.

“When you turn on the lights in Churchill County,” said Monte Morrison, a local geothermal expert, “you are using elec-

Soda Lake Geothermal, at left and top, both photos by Greg Champneys. The cover photo was shot by Kelly McClanahan.

tricity generated by geothermal, hydroelectric, or solar energy. We are truly renewable here, a model of green energy, since the 1990s. Very few residents know that Churchill has been exclusively using carbon-free electricity for decades.”



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Gold Diggin' in the Silver State

Mining for Metal, Minerals, and Money

By Leanna Lehman

The western Utah Territory, now known as the state of Nevada, made its way into the Union in 1864 during the Civil War, shortly after the Nevada Constitution was telegraphed to Congress. That telegraph was the longest and most expensive ever sent. But worry not, there was enough money to pay for it. Aptly dubbed the Silver State, the newly battle-born state would contribute to the Union war efforts. With its sparse population, only 1,200 men could be mustered to aid the Union Army. However, Nevada could send \$400 million in silver - silver mined from deep within its hardscrabble, rocky mountains.

With silver production second only to Alaska and gold production ranking first nationwide, mining has proven to be one of the state's most reliable and profitable industries with Nevada being home to three of the top ten gold-producing mines in the U.S.

The Nevada State Commission on Mineral Resources reported that in 2018, Nevada mines produced 5.58 million troy ounces of gold, contributing 83% of the total gold production nationwide. But the hardscrabble desert ground is rich in more than just precious metals. Like many Nevada regions, central and western Nevada abounds in other minerals, including tungsten, copper, lead, iron, zinc, manganese, and others.

Historically, most settlers heading west for the California gold rush trekked through Nevada and were anxious to leave the hot, dry, and inhospitable terrain of Churchill County's Humboldt and Carson Sinks behind them. As such, many of the rich mineral deposits remained undiscovered for years. A few prospectors found what they were looking for at Silver Hill, Mountain Well, and Clan Alpine in the early 1860s, but no significant production was ever recorded. It was not until after discoveries were made in Nye and Esmeralda Counties in 1900 that prospectors expanded their search for their pot of gold to Churchill County.

After over a century of mining, Nevada mines continue to produce. While the state still produces more silver than gold, gold production is steadily increasing and approaching silver production levels. According to the Nevada Division of Minerals, the state's gold mines produced 4.63 million ounces of gold, and 6.13 million ounces of silver were processed in 2020.

Gold is proving more valuable over time, not just in dollar value but for its continually expanding use. Prices continue to skyrocket - hovering around \$1,938 per ounce. And for good reason. With the majority of gold's uses discovered in the last

two decades, it is considered the metal of the future. In addition to traditional jewelry and bullion production, gold is a common element used in electronics and computer equipment, aerospace, manufacturing, dentistry, medicine, and more.

Nevada is one of the few states with large active goldmines and remains one of the most reliable regions for gold production worldwide. The Goldstrike mine near Carlin is the largest gold mine in North America, owned by the world's largest gold mining company, Barrick Gold.

The Denton Rawhide Mine, located in the Rawhide-Regent Mining District, is owned, and operated by Rawhide Mine, LLC, and is situated southeast of Fallon just below the Churchill-Mineral County Line. Rawhide is currently one of Fallon's largest private employers. Another major Nevada gold producer, Rawhide employs over 130 people, mainly from Churchill County, and

has remained in continuous operation since 1990. Reporting production of 35,000 GEO (gold equivalent ounces per year), they plan to expand their operation to 45,000 GEOs annually and employ another 20 people in the near future.

According to Rawhide, they are currently in the processing phase of the mining process. Extracting and refining is no small part of gold and silver production, requiring great skill and acumen. Generally executed by master refiners, the gold must be separated from the ore. Soluble in mercury, gold

must be brought into contact with the mercury, wetted, and dissolved, which results in the alloy amalgam. The exacting process is time-consuming and precise. Requiring temperatures that can exceed 1,000° F. Additionally, refiners are continually at high risk for mercury poisoning. Like other large gold producers, Rawhide has strict safety protocols to prevent mercury poisoning and minimize the hazards associated with refining and mining processes.

Premier Magnesia, LLC, another area mining company, is considered a global market leader in magnesia-based products, contributes to the local economy, and is a medium-scale area employer. According to Premier Magnesia, the Gabb's based open-pit mine has been in operation for over 50 years. It offers the only domestically-mined source of magnesia ore in the United States.

Premier's magnesia-based products are widely used in environmental and agriculture applications, and they are considered one of the world's largest manufacturers of purity calcined magnesium oxide and magnesium hydroxide products. Premier reports that magnesium is the 8th most abundant compound in the earth's crust and is a "universal neutralizer," making it an





Above, Rawhide Pit; left, Orr from the Rawhide mine. Photos courtesy of Denton Rawhide LLC.

integral part of pH neutralization and safety in environmental, industrial, and spill response applications. Additionally, magnesium sulfate heptahydrate, also known as Epsom salt, has been used as a soaking treatment for aching muscles and joints for over three centuries and has widespread use worldwide.

Diatomaceous Earth

The EPA describes diatomaceous earth (DE) as a “chalky, sedimentary rock consisting mainly of an accumulation of skeletons remaining from prehistoric diatoms, which are single-celled, microscopic aquatic plants.” DE deposits are generally found on or near the ground’s surface and are mined by open pit methods or quarrying. EP Minerals, now a division of U.S. Silica, located between Fallon, Fernley, and Lovelock on I-80, about 15 miles east of Fernley, has been in continuous operation since 1988. According to EP, diatomaceous earth is used in a variety of applications, including paint and plastics, oil absorbents, pharmaceuticals, and the purification of wastewater and petrochemicals. DE is used widely in food and beverage filtration applications like winemaking and brewing. Additionally, their granular clay absorbent products are used in environmental remediation, oil spill removal,

soil amendments for sports fields, and cat litter. EP now reports DE production of approximately 50,000 tons annually.

Salt

Huck Salt, owned by the Huckaby Family, lies about 25 miles east of Fallon on Highway 50. The salt plant was constructed in the 1920s and continues to be a family-owned operation. The surface-mined flat is geographically the lowest point in the Lahontan Basin. Even though Huck Salt is technically considered a mining operation, its salt is not mined in the traditional sense. Instead, mud and water evaporate and leave behind salt deposits that can be cleaned and refined. The method used to remove salt from the ground is similar to crop harvesting. Salt grows in anaerobic mud underwater, rises to the surface as the water evaporates, and is picked up by a harvester, akin to crop harvesting. At one point, Elmer Huckaby, who started the mine, estimated there could be salt deposits up to 70 feet thick. With a claim of 700 acres that leaves a lot of salt still in the ground.

Continued on page 10...



MINING from page 9...

*Another angle of the pit at the Rawhide Mine.
Courtesy of Denton Rawhide, LLC.*

Huck Salt is less isolated than it appears. Situated in the middle of BLM territory, the Navy has a claim on lands encircling the mine. Chinese researchers testing for lithium deposits nearby, nearly encroaching on the Huck Salt flat, as the soft silvery-white alkali lithium metal is often found near large salt deposits. However, nothing came of their research. Huck Salt remains surrounded on three sides by other mining claims, but no one else is actively mining the area.

Presently, there are no lithium mines in Churchill County. However, Nevada is home to the Albemarle Silver Peak mine, the only lithium mine operating in the country. Approximately 98% of lithium is mined outside the U.S. However, exploration for the rare earth mineral has exploded as lithium has become essential in producing nearly all batteries, including those in electric vehicles. Lithium supplies are expected to increase by over 300% - from 500,000 metric tons in 2021 to 3-4 million metric tons in 2030.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), as of last November, there are 1,800 active, filed, and submitted placer claims in Nevada for lithium or lithium brine. Churchill County could eventually be home to a lithium mine. The alkali metal is often found near geothermal wells and in or near clay and salt deposits.

Mining continues to be a prominent industry in and around the Fallon area, providing well-paying local jobs and consistently contributing to the area's economy. The future of any sizeable industry is susceptible to the whims of politicians and environmentalists, and mining is no exception. Despite increasing scrutiny and even opposition, metal and mineral production remain strong. With gold topping the list of Nevada exports (unwrought gold valued at US\$2.3 billion and 21.7% of Nevada's total exports, according to www.worldstopexports.com), it's unlikely that the industry will decline as long as the earth continues to share her bounty.

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Dairy Farmers of America – Creating Value in the Community



By Jo Petteruti

In 2011, Churchill County and the City of Fallon began looking at a proposal for the development of a state-of-the-art dairy processing plant that would be sited in the New River Business Park. The proposal, submitted by the Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), indicated that the Fallon location was optimal due to the available land, utilities, and proximity to the West Coast.

DFA is a dairy cooperative that is owned by over 11,500 participating family farmers. As a corporation, it has 46 manufacturing facilities across the country, including Fallon, that make a wide variety of dairy products - milk, cheese, butter, ice cream, and dairy ingredients just to name a few. With investments across the entire dairy supply chain, DFA can create value for their farm families which in turn increases the farms' milk sales.

Wayne Swearingen, Director of Operations for the Fallon facility, said, "We chose Fallon because of its proximity to the local dairy sources, the California ports, and with global production in mind for exports beyond the US."

Kim O'Brien, Media Relations for Corporate Communications added, "Everything that we do is about providing value to these farm families and preserving the tradition of family dairy farming for years to come. One of our most important responsibilities is picking up our farms' raw milk at the farm. We pay the farm a competitive price for their milk, deliver the milk to the plant for processing then sell it to customers all over the world."

The Fallon processing facility went online in 2014, receiving

daily milk deliveries from many of the 22 local dairy farms that combined produce almost 620 million pounds of milk annually. The facility can process 2 million pounds of milk daily using industry-standard evaporation and drying technology. Evaporation methods are employed to remove the majority of excess water from the liquid mix before it goes into the Tall Draft Drying process, methods and processes used in many other industries beyond dairy-based concerns.

The Fallon DFA plant has formed partnerships with local equipment vendors that keep the facility's equipment in tip-top shape. They also use local contractors and vendors to support the more general needs of the facility, such as servicing their boilers and ammonia systems, and who provide electrical and other repair services. Most of the plant's processing equipment was brought in from California and Wisconsin as it was not available locally.

According to Swearingen, "The domestic consumption market continues to grow, with different opportunities and markets continuing to open up globally. Milk products made in Fallon are now shipping to Peru, Ecuador, and Singapore, just three of the more recent countries buying from the Fallon plant. We actually export milk products to over 50 countries around the world today."

While the Fallon facility focuses on converting liquid to powdered milk, there are numerous other DFA divisions in the U.S. producing other dairy-based products such as cheese plants that specialize in Mozzarella and Parmesan, specialty taste and flavor

facilities that create value-added products such as flavored milk, a foods division that specializes in organic products, fluid milk, and ice cream plants. DFA produces regional brands in certain market areas too, such as Alta Dena Dairy in California, Kemp's Ice Cream in Minneapolis, Cache Valley Creamery in Utah, Friendly's Ice Cream which is popular on the East Coast, Borden Cheese, and Plugrá Butter, two nationally known products. The 86 plants are organized across seven areas nationwide: Central, Midwest, Mountain, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, and the Western area where Fallon is the only Nevada plant and the only milk-to-powder plant.

O'Brien said, "Our Ingredients Solutions business manufactures a variety of food components and dairy-based ingredients used in food service and the creation of numerous well-known brands and products. They also provide a lean protein for global markets that are seeking dairy in a non-traditional powder form." She also said they continue to expand market opportunities for their farm families' milk by growing and cultivating the corporation's global relationships, and by developing new products including for Fallon.

Swearingen explained the importance of the facility here, saying, "Fallon is key in our global strategy. The products sourced in Fallon are literally feeding the world." O'Brien added, "And the investments made in product development and in the facilities provide extended value to the core cooperative farm families." O'Brien and Swearingen both thought having the DFA plant in Fallon was positive for the community. Rather than shipping and exporting locally produced milk and feed, Fallon has become a market destination for agriculture and dairy producers, helping the dairy farmers and their families. Plant employees and their families contribute to the local economy by living, shopping, and socializing here. The plant itself contributes to the community through its reliance on local services and support. Back in 2011, the county and city were evaluating the DFA proposal which noted the facility would create 50 new jobs at the plant, and hundreds of ancillary and support jobs would be added to the community as well. It was also expected that the plant's presence would double the need for dairy milk, thereby increasing the demand for feed, hay, and other associated supplies and services.

According to the Fallon DFA facility profile at <https://www.foodprocessing-technology.com/projects/dairy-farmers-america-ingredient-manufacturing-fallon/>, "The new facility is built on a 31.5-acre site bought from the City of Fallon in March 2012. The total floor space of the facility is approximately 110,000 sq ft including a 30,000 sq ft whole milk dryer facility, a dryer and packaging area, a 40,000sq ft warehouse, and 5,000 sq ft of office space. The facility provides jobs to 45 people. It has also increased employment opportunities in member farms and agriculture support industries. The estimated investment for the construction was \$85 million." Further information about the DFA corporation can be found on their website, <https://www.dfamilk.com/>.

*Above left: The DFA plant on New River Parkway in Fallon.
Photo by Jo Petteruti.*



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New Millennium – Every Joist Has a Destination

By Jo Petteruti

Steel joists in stacks at New Millennium's facility on Reno Highway, each one has been custom designed and built for a specific project. There is no stockpiling going on there, these joists are not commodity-based products. Every joist that can be seen from the highway and far more that cannot has a destination all waiting to be loaded onto their transport truck and sent on their way.

New Millennium Building Systems (NMBS) is the nation's second-largest producer of steel building components. The facility, located seven miles west of downtown Fallon, builds custom steel joists, girders and trusses, and steel decking for commercial, industrial, and government buildings. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Steel Dynamics Inc. (SDI), a publicly traded corporation with multiple facilities in the United States whose shares trade on the NASDAQ stock exchange under the ticker symbol STLD.

NMBS General Manager Kelly Robins was the Sales Manager before taking on the management of the plant. Before coming to Fallon, he was the District Sales Manager for the Houston territory of SDI for six years. Since coming to the Fallon facility over five years ago, Robins said, "I've seen us grow from producing 30,000 tons of steel products per year to producing 60,000 tons in 2021. That's a 100% increase and our target production continues to grow. Much of the increased need for production is stemming from growth in the warehouse industry, especially with companies like Amazon."

When asked if they are receiving any business from the developments around USA Parkway and Fernley, Robins said, "Absolutely, Northern Nevada is going strong. All of the land tract development deals of late are spawning new projects."

Robins explained that today's local market is advantageous for providing and selling products, but it also provides a great learning experience for the employees there. Some projects are located in Seattle, California, and Oregon. But when NMBS does

a project here, Robins said, "We can do site visits and the employees can see where their work is going, and how it's being used. They get to see what the structure looks like once their work is installed, they can see the full process. The visuals of being able to see their building components being installed are a real-life tool for employees to understand how the New Millennium products are assembled and used. It also inspires pride in their work. They can look at the local projects they've built joists for and say, 'We did that one, and that one, and that one.'"

Projects in Churchill County that have been built with components from NMBS include the Fox Peak Theater and a NAS Fallon fire station. Other projects in the vicinity include commercial and industrial buildings in Minden, Reno, and in Northern Nevada business parks. Their steel joists have also been used in elementary schools in Reno, and junior high schools in Sparks. Malls, casinos, and any structure that requires larger commercial or industrial roofs are perfect candidates for their steel products. The plant's production line is considered vertically integrated, and with SDI being one of the largest steel producers in America, New Millennium is insulated from rising steel costs. Robins said, "We are fortunate, especially because steel costs are escalating due to the demand from other economic sectors such as the auto industry, construction trades, and infrastructure." He said steel can be hard to come by, but because NMBS is owned by a steel company, their supply is never a problem. They can also buy steel from other producers if pricing is better. Robins went on to say, "The plant is working toward becoming their own profit center for Steel Dynamics, so they are very flexible on how we achieve profitability for the corporation."

Steel is shipped to Fallon from SDI steel plants in Indiana, Mississippi, or Virginia. SDI has also been constructing a new flat-roll steel mill in Sinton, Texas which is expected to produce 3 million tons per year. Carbon steel is SDI's primary steel product and is in either rolled coil or merchant bar form when it arrives at New Millennium. Rolled coils consist of flat sheet widths that





range from 36 to 76 inches in width, with thicknesses ranging from $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch down to .042-inch. Merchant bars can be used in light commercial construction, joist manufacturing, and industrial and commercial fabrication. The stock comes in equal and unequal angles ranging from 1-4 inches thick needed for longer pieces of steel with large required angles.

Building the joists takes the least amount of time in New Millennium's overall process. When the steel arrives at the Fallon plant, it is first cut to size for the specific project's needs. The fabrication line rings it, meaning the stock is put into a mold, then welded, inspected, and painted before being ready to ship. Robins said the most intensive part of any project however is the engineering time because every joist has to be built to withstand the live loading of snow and earthquakes. "We have engineers here in Fallon, plus a Technical Center in Reno where engineers and detailers further scrutinize the designs, go over the layouts, and incorporate loading requirements on all project plans." He discussed the importance of the time taken for designing, acquiring structural engineering, and city/county reviews and approvals, all to ensure that the building project will be safe and secure for future occupants. Live load is the term used to correctly identify the type of joist product to build.

Automation technology is being incorporated into the production lines to reduce the number of times the steel is touched, thereby increasing safety on the lines. It also increases the employee's skill level, as each employee is sent to training classes for every piece of automation equipment. They also learn computer and PLC systems. Robins encourages their feedback too, saying, "The best ideas come from those doing the job and better ideas come from well-trained employees. As NMBS employees become more professionally skilled, they are also kept safer." The Fallon plant currently had been running three physical production lines,

each with its day shift and a fourth line had been planned. The workforce has grown from about 200 employees in 2021 to close to 280 now.

New Millennium may be the farthest west company in the corporate family, but they have the benefit of a corporate relationship while keeping the feel of being an independent business. Employee benefits offered by SDI include medical, dental, and prescription insurance, vision and hearing coverage, flexible spending and health savings accounts, profit sharing, retirement savings, stock benefits, educational assistance, dependent child scholarships, paid vacations, and holidays. Robins said, "SDI invests in their employees' education to encourage the employee to continue to grow, and in turn that helps the company grow. It's a positive circular motion that challenges and invests in each employee."

Robins closed by saying that corporate initiatives such as investments in plant technology and its people further strengthen NMBS's position as a preferred employer in the community. New Millennium and its employees are also generous donors to numerous local causes. Refer to "The Fallon Post" website, <https://www.thefallonpost.org/news/5310,new-millennium-community-donations> for a recent story about their donations. Further information about NMBS can be found on their website <https://newmill.com/> where a search for careers in Fallon can also be done. Information about Steel Dynamics is available on the corporate website <https://stld.steeldynamics.com/>.

*The New Millennium facility on Reno Highway, left. Above: The New Millennium family culture is strong with employees holding many fundraising events and donations every year.
Photos by Jo Petteruti.*

Another Fallon First at 11S LD 450 712

By Tiffany Picotte

The Grid Brewpub and Restaurant is already well-known for having great food and being a chill place to hang out, but soon it will also be known as Fallon's first-ever brewery. They are expanding and the new location at 2030 Reno Hwy will be called The Grid Market and Brewery. The building known as the old pawn shop among many other identities is just finishing getting a complete makeover and will be opening this spring to the public.

While the original Grid will remain the same with menu and hours, the new location will have a variety of offerings. The brewery will be located at the back of the building but will have giant windows to allow the public to view all the exciting happenings. At first, it will house a very small operation of just a one-barrel system but this will allow them to begin brewing three initial beers for both The Grid Brewpub and The Grid Market to sell. Eventually, the plan is to make up to six trademark beers with seasonal and collaboration recipes with the possibility of distribution. 40 Mile Malt will help supply the barley which keeps the ingredients coming directly from the valley.

Situated right in front of the brewery will be a taproom with a full bar that will sell The Grid beer, along with other locally produced microbrews and all the favorite mixed drinks. Promoting a place to come hang out, there will also be some pinball machines, a few video games, shuffleboard, and pool.

There will also be several retail spots located within the building. The Grid is opening a Poke Bowl retail spot in one of them. A poke bowl is a classic Hawaiian dish most notably served with raw tuna or salmon over a bed of rice although some more nontraditional options will also be available such as teriyaki chicken. Along with a variety of toppings and sauces, it is basically deconstructed sushi. Another retail spot called Whiskey and Wine will be focusing on offering high-end whiskeys and specialty wines once again focusing on locally sourced options.

Rounding out the building will be open seating to hang out and watch the games on the wall of TVs or just visit with friends. The entire front of the building will be shaded by a pergola constructed of materials saved from the demo and there will be inside seating along the front windows. This large 7000-square-foot venue will be the perfect setting to host both large and small gatherings. Plans include an outdoor patio area with fire pits and room for cornhole. With some shade sail covering, this will hopefully be an area to enjoy for at least three seasons.

There are still a couple of retail spots available for businesses to rent that fit into the vibe. If interested, please email The Grid at thegridfallon@gmail.com.

The Grid would like to share a very special thanks to all the contractors who have worked so hard to make this new dream a reality. J Built Construction, Stillwater Homes, Just In Time Heating and Air Conditioning, McFadden Electric, J&J Robinson Plumbing, Bradwall Drywall, Fallon Sign and Glass, Lambert Construction, Hiskett and Sons, and GEM Drafting make this truly a locally sourced project.



*Paul and Tiffany Picotte of the Grid and the Grid Brewpub.
Photo courtesy Tiffany Picotte.*

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Howard Ashman

Music by
Alan Menken

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Originally produced at the Orphen Theatre, New York City by the WPA Theatre,
David Geffen, Cameron Mackintosh, and the Shubert Organization

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March 23 at 4:00

in the CCHS Auditorium

\$10 General Admission

\$7 CCHS Staff & Students

at www.onthestage.tickets/churchill-county-high-school or scan the QR Code



Little Shop of Horrors is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

Cartwheel Robotics, a Cutting-Edge Company in Fallon

By Rachel Dahl

While the rest of the world is looking for talented, skilled employees, and team members who are as dedicated to the company as those who founded it, so is one of Fallon's newest businesses. Cartwheel Robotics is as different as can be from most Fallon businesses, a treasure hidden away in the back of another surprising company tucked in off the Reno Highway. Scott LaValley is the founder and CEO of Cartwheel who came to Fallon a year ago. He is a problem solver who has spent two decades in the robotics field and is a leader in the robotics revolution. Remotely. From Fallon.

He has led some of the world's most famous robotics projects from the Atlas robots pioneered by Boston Dynamics to the development of the free-roaming, walking bipedal robot character that became Disney's Baby Groot. Scott left Disney to found Cartwheel Robotics just over a year ago with the core members of the hardware team that brought the Baby Groot to life. There is a YouTube Video on their website that shows Scott and his team at work on the project: cartwheelrobotics.com/about-us/ that you don't want to miss.

I found Scott in the hallway of his shop one day last week, playing with what looked like a remote-controlled dog. Honestly, I didn't know if it was going to bite me or if I was supposed to pet it. "The idea is really to tear it apart and learn as much as we can about how they were able to make that thing cost \$3,000 because most quadruped platforms like that are in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range." He got the Australian Shepard-sized "platform" from China.

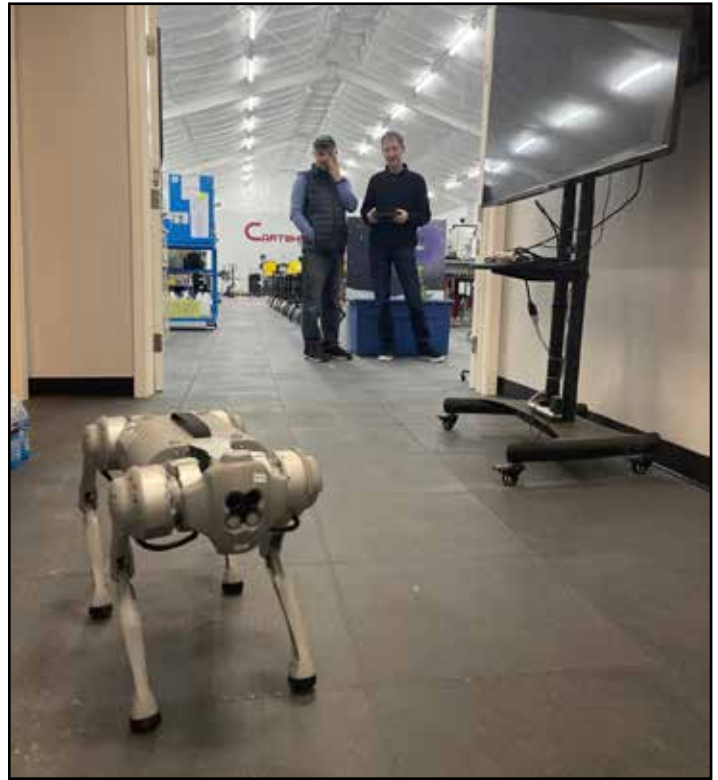
Scott talks in a language that requires a Rosetta Stone to decipher. "This is the direction a lot of legged platforms are going where they're using more of a direct-drive approach to actuation, where they're not going through a bunch of gear reductions, it's motor-to-joint to move it. They use motors with six to one (6:1) planetary gears and that enables them, by measuring current, to basically know how much force they're exerting without having to use an expensive torque sensor."

An actuator, it turns out, is a motor with a gearbox on it.

Originally hired by Disney to work on a quadruped project, Scott said. "There aren't a lot of Disney assets that are quadruped," he said, "most Disney assets are small, two-legged characters," think, Yoda. So the original pitch for the next Disney project didn't materialize, but that pitch evolved into a character study that led to the Groot project.

"The whole point of this project is to bring characters to life at their actual scale." He said most Disney characters are not kid-size, and when young kids are meeting those characters for the first time, they're scared. "Mickey is intimidating and huge when he should be eye to eye with a child."

That was the whole premise of Scott's proposal, to bring actual characters to life at their actual scale and free them from being bolted to the ground like the Disney physical hydraulic animated figures that are so antiquated like in the old favorite park



attractions like Pirates of the Caribbean. "The old A100 hydraulic figures could be replaced with electric figures put in front of guests in a way that's never been seen before," said Scott. "Imagine these characters free roaming the park. If you're in line for an hour and a half waiting for a ride, what if the characters are just roaming around? With technology, you could track 10 Mickeys as long as there is no line of sight, and that way more kids get face time with the characters."

The journey to his own company was an inspired and interesting one. Scott said laughing that he did graduate from high school and went to a junior college for a semester. "But instead of going to class I stayed in my dorm room and programmed C," which is a computer programming language. His parents weren't having that for too long. "They weren't appreciating that I was not going to class and flunking out or that I was programming and teaching myself." He said he was lost, trying to figure out what he wanted to be in life. "I think that's what's so silly about picking a degree in high school, you don't know what the hell you want to do. That's why I feel like trade schools and other options are good. We give kids a bunch of experience and then let them decide.

Scott came to this philosophy honestly. One day his parents gave him a newspaper clipping about what he called "this robotic event" happening in San Francisco. He was living in Novato at the time, and it was the first annual Robot Wars hosted by prop maker Marc Thorpe, who worked for a model shop called Industrial Light Magic, a prop house that made all the props for Star Wars and was founded by George Lucas.

So, he decided to enter, and he built his first robot, DooLittle. “No one had a clue what we were doing,” he laughs, but that industry evolved into the show “BattleBots” where he continued his early start, “with these insane machines.”

The second iteration of Scott’s robot was called DooMore and is actually at the shop here in Fallon, complete with its pneumatic battering ram and missing spikes. DooMore went up against Jamie Hyneman of MythBusters fame, who also ran a model shop in San Francisco, and his robot Blendo in what Scott called, “a spectacular battle.” He said the spikes were torn off DooMore and flung across the arena and into the crowd. “We’re very lucky no one got hurt in those early days,” he said.

So now he’s come full circle and this team is wrapping up their latest client project as they work toward the next chapter for the company. The plan is to deliver the project to a large customer in the entertainment business in Los Angeles by the end of February.

“We’ve been a services company, providing engineering services, developing projects for someone else,” but now Scott says they want to pivot to product development.

And this is where we come back to the workforce issue. Scott got one of his first jobs landing a spot as a puppeteer working with Robin Williams in the movie “Flubber.” So he knows the value of stumbling into the spot that leads to the next learning experience and the next job.

He said as a hardware startup company, most of which fail in the first year, being in Fallon has been enabling in many ways because of the affordability of the overhead. “But it has been disadvantageous in not having access to talent this type of work requires,” he said.

Scott is hoping to tap into the local area and, “find those gems – capable but maybe not yet doing this type of work.” He said the skills needed include experience with software controls, inverse dynamics, motion planning, and hardware development.

“Finding that diamond in the rough, they exist in every community,” said Scott, “we’re looking for the raw, natural talents and an aptitude for robotics design. If we can find someone who could apprentice whom we could mentor, they don’t always know what



they’ve got, but if we can help them understand their talent and that they have a place to grow into, I didn’t know I wanted to do this until I started.”

Scott can be reached through the Cartwheel website at cartwheelrobotics.com.

Left: Scott LaValley and a coworker are trying out a quadruped robot made in China. Above: a still shot from the YouTube video of the process Scott’s team went through as they built that platform. Bottom left: The Cartwheel workshop here in Fallon. Below left: Scott’s progression as he continued to build and compete in the Robot Wars which led to his career in Robotics. Photos by Rachel Dahl and courtesy of Scott LaValley.



Robots

<p>mini-dooall birth date: 2003 weight: 55lbs dimensions: 14-1/2"W x 18"L x 4-3/4"H tread: 1/16" rolled hardened steel weapon: universal mount batteries: NiMH</p>	
<p>dooall birth date: 1996 weight: 300lbs dimensions: 25"W x 36"L x 9-1/2"H tread: 3/8" rolled hardened steel primary weapon: CO2 powered pneumatic ram batteries: NiMH</p>	
<p>doo-more birth date: 1995 weight: 180lbs dimensions: 50" Dia. x 18"H wheels: pneumatic rubber primary weapon: CO2 powered pneumatic ram batteries: lead acid gel cells</p>	
<p>doolittle birth date: 1994 weight: 110lbs dimensions: 16"W x 27"L x 10" tread: hardened A60 chain primary weapon: CO2 powered pneumatic cylinder batteries: lead acid gel cells</p>	

6 Portfolio of Scott Christopher LaValley

ARTISTS SPOTLIGHT

“Celebrate Us” Showing off our local artists

By Marie Nygren

After paying taxes in 2014, I strolled through the hallways of the Churchill County Administration Building, admiring the collection of fabulous art on the walls. A longing to have my photography included tugged at my thoughts, and I was compelled to stop and ask who was responsible for the art. It was Julie Guerrero-Goetsch. Under her guidance and strong belief in my work, a new art journey began, that of having a permanent art display. I became a participant in the “Celebrate Us” project.

Julie’s vision for “Celebrate Us” began alongside former Churchill County Manager Eleanor Lockwood. Eleanor visited a Lyon County building and saw local art displayed and wanted to bring the idea to Churchill County. The administration building, originally the old hospital, after being remodeled, only had some older black and white prints sporadically dispersed in a hallway and one room. The walls were sterile and white.

The “Celebrating Us” program was born with the focus being a provision of wall space and display cases for use of exhibiting the art of the many talented artists in our county. Then and now, the procedure is to contact Julie, the County Administrative Services Manager and “Celebrate Us” Coordinator, who requires a meeting to see samples of an artist’s work. Decisions are made for selection and sizes, a good fit of space, and a period for showing the pieces. There are permanent areas available, which require a commitment to maintaining rotations of new art, and spaces for temporary displays. Beginner and professional artists are welcome to showcase their artistic passions in all mediums: photography, painting, drawing, jewelry, weaving, pottery, and drawings, nothing is off limits. Providing a biography and business cards are encouraged, so the public can become familiar with you as an artist and make contact if needed.

The project, under Julie’s direction, encourages locals to share their talent with the community. The public is invited and encouraged to enjoy and be surprised by all the beautiful diverse work. It is truly the best “gallery” in the county.

During an interview with Julie, who has worked 19 years for this county, I asked for her thoughts about this project. She said “The most rewarding part of being involved is providing opportunities for artists. This is often a stepping stone to becoming well known, a springboard for future shows and sales, and a place to ‘put your toe in the water’ to build confidence and self-esteem. I love seeing a humble beginning and the growth of the participants. It is a sense of pride to provide a setting for our art community, for their art to be celebrated in a friendly, aesthetically pleasing government building. It is a place open to the public. I love seeing people stroll and enjoy themselves.”

The “Celebrate Art” project has expanded in various ways. Carol Lloyd, our Churchill County Library Director, also provides lovely space and maintains revolving art displays. When specials were taken away in the elementary schools, the project brought an Artist in Residence into school to teach painting, and then have the students experience their fancy art reception in the



Julie Guerrero-Goetsch at the Churchill County Admin building where the local artwork is displayed. Photo by Marie Nygren.

Churchill County Administration Building. A reception was also held there to acknowledge and honor our county’s hard-working firefighters. The Churchill County Logo Contest emerged from this plan. It is truly a vision that stretches to celebrate us, the people, our heroes, creators, and art lovers, across the county.

That first moment of wanting to have my photography on display happened nine years ago. I was the beginner who put her toe in the water. I risked accepting a commitment to a permanent collection in a very long hallway. My life since has been one adventure after another in the art world. The opportunity that Julie afforded me has opened unbelievable doors.

I am now excitedly writing this monthly “Artist Spotlight” column for the Fallon Post. It is a place to introduce you to art in the city. It would be amiss if I did not personally dedicate my first article to Julie Guerrero, a person I celebrate for believing in me and my photography. From the beginning she has been a mentor, helping hang my art, judging pieces for contest entries, listening, and applauding my many visions and ideas, giving me credit and accolades in many ways, bringing my photos on board for projects, all with kindness and deep support.

If you would like to share your art and be part of the “Celebrate Us” story, contact Julie Guerrero at 775-423-5136.

If you would like to contact me about a person or event that could be in the “Artist Spotlight” contact me, Marie Nygren, at 775-423-7707.

Memories and Inquiries - Looking back at the 70s & 80s

By Marc Frederick

My hair is entirely gray, my knees bother me, and don't even get me started on my back. Much has happened since I left Fallon 35 years ago, with the town and with me.

My goal is that this column will stir some memories, and maybe renewed interest, in the events and people that made local headlines in the late '70s and '80s and explore how the current socioeconomic atmosphere affects the way we view the past today. Think Huell Howser, blending nostalgia with current reality and investigating the comparisons.

There will be some serious topics, and a good share of light ones too. Both will be treated with the same amount of respect, as thoroughly as possible.

If you were a Churchill County High School student in the 70s or 80s, you certainly remember late CCHS English teacher Ces Jacobsen. If I ever screwed up a story or a headline, Ces would be in that day to point out the mistake. Good-natured as the jabs were, they always contained truth. I never took her class, but she did help me to become a better writer and editor. She was a good friend, a staunch Democrat, and a "newspaperwoman" as she would refer to herself.

As we look back, we'll be reminded of the plans and promises that were kept and the ones that weren't. Did the school bond issues deliver what they promised?

There is so much news I want to catch up on. Things I've thought about over the years but never bothered to chase down. Serious stuff and fun stuff.

The stories I plan to explore cover many topics including the flood of 1983 when the Feds and TCID argued over whose responsibility it was to dredge the Carson River. Each decided it was the other one, so nothing got done. The result was a devastating flood that didn't have to happen.

Next to the Police Blotter, I'm convinced that the most read stories each week were written by several ladies reporting on the goings-on in their "districts." Goldie de Braga was the one who kept us up on life in Stillwater. Who came to visit, returned from a trip, hosted a party, and attended? And, always finished with, "A good time was had by all." Who misses those days? I want to talk to you and find out.

Decades of Jefferson/Jackson and Lincoln Day dinners have been reported in the paper. Unlike today, there was a time when Democrats and Republicans got along regardless of political ideology. Each party would hold an annual dinner event to discuss the party platform, hear from candidates for office, and from guest speakers that included US Senators and state Governors. So how did we get to this uncivil place we now find ourselves?

Stories of Fallon would not be complete without including agriculture. Everyone knows the best-known crop is Hearts 'O Gold cantaloupes. But they aren't the valley's only significant crop. So, what do we grow, and when did we start? I plan to spend time with local ranchers to discuss those lesser-known crops, their history, and their financial impact on the Valley.

We'll drill down on these stories and many more by conducting in-depth interviews with those who were there and involved or with friends and relatives who've survived them. People who are privy to inside information and who still carry the memories. I'll try to rekindle memories for some of you and provide a bit of a history lesson for those who don't remember.



I'll also be including some behind-the-scenes anecdotes about my time on the paper "back in the day." Before I wrap this first column up, I want to reflect on two people I had the honor of hiring and working with for several years. It breaks my heart that both are now gone. Anne Pershing and Anne Pifine.

These two ladies are two of the finest human beings I have ever known in my lifetime. Both were aggressive but fair reporters. They could be tough on politicians and show compassion for those in pain. Whomever they met immediately fell in love with their energetic personalities and learned to appreciate the two Anne's commitment to providing accurate and intelligent news coverage, with a special touch for fluffy, feel-good stories.

Anne Pifine moved on to the Carson City Appeal paper from the Lahontan Valley News. She went to work for Western Nevada College in 1986. In 2017 she retired as Special Assistant to the President for External Affairs. She loved to laugh and have fun. And she had great respect for everyone she covered, whether it was an early concert by the country group Alabama at the Churchill County Fair, a County Commissioners' meeting, or doing a story of a growing local library that worked hard to get more kids to read.

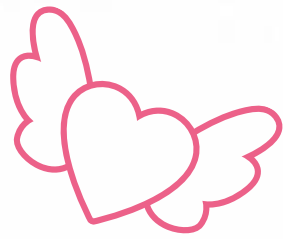
Anne Pershing. If you've been in the neighborhood since the 1980s, you know Anne. She went on to a prolific career as a reporter, editor, columnist, and General Manager. She was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in Public Service for her extensive work and coverage between 1999 and 2002 on the local leukemia cluster.

Upon Anne's death, her son Tim Pershing said that his mom was drawn to journalism because she wanted to help all people in the community. It was a principle that allowed her to stand firm when she took unpopular positions or was ahead of the times in a small town. He went on to say that she defaulted to support equal treatment of all.

We all have heroes in our lives. Anne was one of mine. She had gone back to school, received her degree in Journalism, and wanted to work at the local Fallon paper. And for more than a year, she made the commute daily from Carson City. She was special. I miss our talks.

Any stories or ideas for stories you'd like to share? I'd love to hear them - send the request to admin@thefallonpost.org.

February 2023 Calendar of events



HAPPY Valentine's DAY

6 pm Father/Daughter Dance
To support Grad Night 2023
Venturacci Gym

February 16
Great Basin Cow Dog Trial
3C Arena

February 17
Hot Iron Team Branding
3C Arena

5:30 Elk's Indian Tacos

6pm American Legion
Friday Night Dinner/Happy Hour 4pm

February 18
1pm Great Basin Bull Sale
3C Arena

Fallon Youth Baseball
Deadline for sign ups

8pm Soroptimists
Adult Prom – Forever Young

February 20
President's Day

February 24
6pm American Legion
Friday Night Dinner/Happy Hour 4pm

February 25
Fallon Youth Baseball
Skills Draft TBD

5:30 Author Reading at Arts Council
Michael P. Branch

February 3
6pm Fallon Chamber
Appreciation Awards Banquet

6pm American Legion
Friday Night Dinner/Happy Hour 4pm

5:30 Elk's Chili Dogs

February 7 & 8
Fallon Swing Dance Tryouts
4:30 pm CCMS Gym

February 9
4pm High Desert Grange
Make Valentine's cards
At Lattin Farms

February 10
6pm American Legion
Friday Night Dinner/Happy Hour 4pm

*Fallon Daily Bread – Free Hot Meal every Monday &
Thursday evening 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. at the Wolf Center,
457 Esmeralda Street. 775-423-4714*

February 11
9am Fallon Theatre
20V3 Our Theatre Fun Run/Walk

9am Angolan Kizomba Dance Crash Course
ChurchillCountyRecreation.org

10 am Elk's Chili Cook-off
93 W. Center Street

12 noon Frey Ranch Whiskey +
Dorinda's Chocolate Tasting
1045 Dodge Lane

7pm Barkley Theatre
Rudresh Mahanthappa Performance

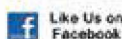
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Highland Inn Assisted Living

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AJ's Fitness Center

AJ's Fitness is just another way that the residents can reach and maintain their optimum levels of function. Our fitness center is outfitted with strength training and endurance equipment, which allows for an easy individualized strengthening workout.

Memory Lane – Fitness for the Mind

Our Memory Lane – Fitness for the Mind program has been developed to uniquely focus on an individual's strengths. We then apply those strengths to personalized therapeutic programs, which will exercise existing memory function.

Welcome to Highland Village of Fallon Retirement Community where you can retire with ease. We offer Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care and more. Our Independent Living community offers spacious apartments, and convenient services where you can enjoy your freedom at an affordable price. Starting at \$1,800 a month and we offer our apartments on a month-to-month basis that includes utilities, meals, and light housekeeping services.

In our Assisted Living community we make sure you always have the assistance and reminders you need to live your independent lifestyle. We personalize all of your care needs. We offer services such as our AJ's Fitness Center to get you on track to good physical health. We also have daily events including bingo, coffee hour, group exercise classes and more.

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