

THE FALLON POST



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Rural Public Health Lab in Fallon to Close Amid Funding Shortfalls

By Christy Lattin

The rural public health laboratory in Fallon, once seen as a key piece of northern Nevada’s response to infectious disease testing, will close after struggling with workforce shortages and the loss of federal funding.

The Churchill County Rural Public Health Laboratory was first envisioned in 2020 as a partnership between Churchill County, the Nevada Department of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH), and the University of Nevada, Reno. The goal was to create a satellite lab that could fill the gaps in testing demands in northern Nevada instead of sending all tests to the Reno lab. The idea grew out of frustration during the COVID pandemic as high testing demands meant long waits for results and frustration with reporting numbers and data throughout rural communities. The Churchill County Rural Public Health Lab first offered services in 2021, and opened its doors in October 2022 in the county’s annex building.

After two years of negotiations, the three parties failed to finalize an agreement so instead Churchill County was funded directly by DPBH to continue lab operations. The county also committed \$250,000 from opioid settlement funds to purchase equipment, anticipating that funding from the federal American

Rescue Plan Act and Centers for Disease Control would support operations through December 2026.

But challenges quickly mounted. Since 2023, the lab has struggled to keep a qualified Medical Laboratory Generalist, a position needed to process specimens unless the Medical Laboratory Director is present. Churchill County has an employment contract with the Lab Director, and the Lab Technician is a county employee currently studying to gain Generalist qualifications. Because the federal “clawbacks” in March 2025 removed the lab’s ARPA and CDC funding to support staffing and ongoing operations. Churchill County Social Services Director Shannon Ernst shifted some grant funding from DPBH to cover costs, but it isn’t enough to extend the lab’s lifespan.

Ernst told Churchill County Commissioners at their Sept. 17 meeting that since it’s been difficult to hire a Laboratory Generalist due to a workforce shortage, she championed a plan to help the Lab Tech earn the credentials to become a Generalist, which is a two-year process. Although the laboratory is shuttering, she worked with DPBH and



At the Satellite Lab Opening in 2022, Shannon Ernst and county grounds crew. File photo.

UNR to continue grant funding to help that Lab Tech gain the Generalist licensure since it supports workforce development in rural Nevada. The Nevada State Public Health Laboratory at UNR will provide oversight for the remainder of her training.

Commissioners approved of the closure plan and the ongoing employment of the lab tech. Ernst will begin transferring the lab’s equipment to the UNR lab, in accordance with federal guidelines. She said the lab’s closure will not affect the Central Nevada Health District as its lab samples are already couriered to Reno for testing. The Fallon lab filled a critical gap in northern Nevada’s public health system, but for now, the Churchill County Rural Public Health Lab will not continue past its current funding window.

Governor Lombardo Kicks Off Campaign in Fallon



Community members and leaders meet at the Grid to support Governor Joe Lombardo kick off his re-election campaign. Photo by Rachel Dahl.

By Rachel Dahl

Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo visited Fallon last week to launch his re-election campaign, meeting with supporters as part of a statewide rural tour that began in Churchill County.

The event drew several Republican leaders, including Senator Robin Titus, Assemblyman Greg Koenig, Nevada Republican Party chair Michael McDonald, and state comptroller Andy Matthews.

Speaking to a full room at the Grid, Lombardo outlined his priorities for a second term, emphasizing what he described as continued progress in education, healthcare, and public safety, along with his record of fiscal discipline and vetoing legislation he said did not align

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Captain’s Log
Making Friends

By Rachel Dahl

Two years ago, when it was still only me and Clio and the bunnies at the Boyer Bunny Ranch, it became apparent we had a mouse problem in the garage. The search for a cat to assist was begun in earnest at about the same time that Garrett’s mom, Joyce passed away. She had two cats that Garrett and Allison had to find a home for so I gladly volunteered.

Trouble was, although they lived in the house, there was no catching them. The story of how they showed up in my garage with a huge water dispenser and a bigger food dispenser, and an even bigger litter box is a story for Allison to tell. Suffice it to say soon there were no mice in my garage.

But it was six months before I ever saw said mousers. To say they were wild was an understatement. The only evidence of the existence of the elusive hunters was a full litter box once a week and the dead carcass of lizards and small birds scattered near the back door of the garage.

One day, about a year after their arrival, I left that garage door open when I went to town and coming home in the dark allowed the headlights to illuminate the inside of the garage long enough to see the quick flash of a large black cat dash back behind the Christmas decorations. It was several months later when digging for something related to fixing a chicken pen that out of the corner of my eye the flash of beautiful long, Siamese cat hair darting behind a shelf confirmed the other cat was still with us.

Last summer when Hector and Mikey came to help with the mice in the bunny shed, they seemed to convince the garage cats that life at the Bunny Ranch wasn’t so bad and there were several more sightings of the elusive ones as they ventured out across the yard from time to time.

With this new batch of rescue kittens that came this summer, Buckley and Samuel, Ernest and Jack, the entire place has become their domain. They’ve brought together the shed mousers and the garage mousers with their antics as they leap from tree to roof to chicken pen and race across the yard, roll through the grass and take ownership of choice perches in the garage. Every morning as I feed the kittens near the front door of the house, the garage cats come sit in front of the garage politely waiting for me to take their food to their dish under the work table.

This morning, the black cat forgot himself and came right up to me as I leaned in to pour his food and I could hear him purring. As easy as possible my reach extended to scratch behind his ears, and he stopped and let me give him a good little pet. Of course, his nervous friend took one look at that from the shadows and turned tail and fled into the dark recesses. But I’m going to get her too, you watch.

So, as we slowly make friends of the work cats, and protect the peacocks from the biggest coyote you’ve ever seen, a story for next week, we’ll always be right here...

...Keeping you Posted.

—*Rach*

[Governor Lombardo continued from page 1]

with conservative values.

“I set a record for vetoes, and it’s not one I enjoy,” Lombardo said. “But many of those bills would have moved Nevada in the wrong direction. My job is to look out for the majority of Nevadans, not special interests.”

The governor also discussed efforts to expand school choice programs, increase access to rural healthcare through telemedicine, and support workforce housing for public employees such as teachers, nurses, police, and firefighters.

Lombardo said his administration has invested in graduate medical education to retain more physicians in Nevada and strengthened rural hospital capacity to improve healthcare delivery outside urban areas.

On public safety, he criticized what he called “soft-on-crime” approaches in recent legislative sessions, arguing that law enforcement is “doing more with less.”

Looking ahead to 2026, Lombardo said his campaign will focus on two ballot initiatives: one to require voter identification at the polls and another concerning gender-specific participation in school sports. He said both measures are intended to increase voter turnout and ensure, in his words, “integrity and fairness” in state policy.

Lombardo also acknowledged the electoral challenges Republicans face statewide, noting that 75% of Nevada’s population lives in Clark County and Washoe County, where

Democratic voter registration is higher. He called on rural voters to increase participation, saying, “We need every vote we can get from rural Nevada.”

Senator Robin Titus, who represents Churchill County and serves as the Senate Minority Leader, praised Lombardo’s leadership, citing his veto record and commitment to rural priorities. “Having a Republican governor makes a real difference,” she said, referencing more than 160 bills vetoed across the last two sessions.

Assemblyman Greg Koenig echoed the message, reminding attendees that while Churchill County remains one of the state’s most conservative regions, voter turnout in non-presidential election years often drops. “We have to make sure people show up,” Koenig said. “We can’t assume our side will automatically carry the day.”

Nevada Republican Party chair Michael McDonald and state comptroller Andy Matthews also addressed the crowd, urging Republicans to rally support ahead of the 2026 election and highlighting the importance of rural voices in shaping statewide outcomes.

Lombardo closed his remarks by thanking Churchill County residents for their support. “You have my word that I’ll continue to stand up for rural Nevada,” he said. “But we can only keep making progress if everyone gets out and votes.”



In Remembrance

For obituaries please call 775-426-4545
or email: admin@thefallonpost.org

FEATURES

Local Farm Apprentice Takes on Her Own Acre, Starts ‘Pumped Up Porches’ Business

By Claudene Wharton

Monica Mori is obviously an optimist. An aspiring farmer, she relishes learning about growing things outside in Nevada’s challenging climate.

“I like doing desert farming outside using what Nevada has to offer in the outdoor space,” she said. “I just want to utilize the space and grow with the sun shining down. I like the challenge of that. I think it’s really cool to see how garlic, pumpkins, and corn grow really well here.”

Mori spent the last year learning about growing through the Nevada Farm Apprenticeship Program, a University of Nevada, Reno program based at Valley Road Field Lab in Reno. Part of the university’s Desert Farming Initiative (DFI), the program provides a stipend to aspiring farmers for a year filled with classroom education from faculty, mentoring from university faculty, and staff and local farmers, and hands-on experience.

The program aims to promote long-term viability of Nevada’s agricultural industry and resiliency of the state’s food system. It was made possible by a grant from the USDA Regional Food Systems Partnership Program and support from the Nevada Agricultural Foundation.

After discovering her passion is open-field farming, Mori applied to stay on for another year to run her own “incubator space,” a one-acre plot at a local farm where she could start and develop her own business, Pumped Up Porches, a porch-decorating business using produce.

“Going into a farming apprenticeship, you could be nervous, especially as a female,” she said, “but, Garrett, Jill and everybody at DFI, are like a dream team to work with. I learned more than I had originally planned, but in the best ways. It has been an eye-opening and honest experience.”

Along with DFI farm production manager Garrett Menghini, and Jill Moe, the director, Mori also credited Todd Rissone, a local farmer with decades of experience, for keeping her motivated.

“Todd really lifted my spirits when he came here in May,” she said. “The winter was really hard, and he just brightened my world. He showed me how to run a larger scale irrigation system, I was almost too scared to do the incubator program due to the irrigation aspect but he showed me how.”

During the last six months of the program, Mori spent one day a week at partner farm Lattin Farms, working alongside Lisa Lattin



Monica Mori helped grow pumpkins at the University’s Desert Farming Initiative as part of her Nevada Farm Apprenticeship. Her love of farming and the fall has inspired her to launch her own Pumped Up Porches fall porch-decorating business, with the help of the SBDC at the University. Photo by Claudene Wharton

Voiglaender and her husband Ryan. Mori decided to do her incubator program at Lattin Farms, leasing an acre of their property to run as her own business.

“I chose Lattin Farms because I live in Fallon, and I want to farm there,” she said. “It ended up being the best decision I ever made.”

With help from Kelli Kelly, advisor at Small Business Development Center, Mori has developed a business plan and launched her Pumped Up Porches business. She has even signed up customers, including the Fallon Chamber of Commerce. Pumped Up Porches is a service offering seasonal decorating services to dress up a resident’s outdoor space like the porch, deck or veranda. Her business and crop plan calls for a variety of corn and pumpkins, as well as onion and garlic, since part of the program calls for 25 percent of her product going to local food banks.

“Monica has formulated a clear path for success and has the capacity to substantively contribute to Nevada’s food system,”

Moe said. “We are so excited to see her business take off.”

Mori’s path to pursuing a career in agriculture in Nevada took the unlikely route of a stint in Maui, farming dragon fruit.

“I grew up in northern Nevada, with ranching in my blood,” she said. “But, I really cut my teeth in farming in Hawaii. And yeah, farming in Hawaii and farming in Nevada couldn’t be more different,” she chuckled.

Mori’s grandfather had a ranch and dairy in Yerington. After graduating from Reno High, she eventually landed in Hawaii through “WOOFing” – working at “Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms.”

“WOOFing is really what got me hooked on farming. It was on a dragon fruit farm, that also had pineapples, bananas and other tropical fruit.”

After eight months of WOOFing and eight more years in Hawaii, Mori returned to Nevada. Her husband, Louie, grew up in Fallon and they’ve lived there for three years. While developing her agricultural knowledge, she also runs Tumbleweeds Boba, selling coffee, tea, and boba at local events.

“Farming is not easy. It’s really hard. You really have to want to do it, or you’re not going to last,” she said.

For more information on Pumped Up Porches, please visit pumped-up-porches.square.site/services.

Claudene Wharton is a Senior Marketing & Communications Specialist, UNR College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources.

Division of Minerals Reports 82% of Nevada’s Abandoned Mines Now Secure

Staff Report

Nevada’s Division of Minerals has released its 2024 Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Physical Hazard Report, showing both progress and continuing challenges in dealing with the state’s legacy of abandoned mines.

The AML program, now in its 38th year, is responsible for locating, cataloging, and securing the dangerous remnants of Nevada’s mining past. Since its launch in 1987, the program has documented more than 161,000 mine-related features across the state. Of those, more than 26,000 were identified as hazardous, and about 21,300 have been secured with fencing, warning signs, or permanent closure methods.

In 2024, field crews identified 1,033 new hazards and secured 1,169, while also revisiting 1,451 sites to ensure earlier safeguards remain intact. The division also completed 10 hard-closure projects across several counties, sealing 183 mine openings permanently with backfills, bat-compatible gates, or polyurethane foam plugs.

Nevada has not had a reported fatality linked to abandoned mines in 12 years, a streak state officials consider an important achievement. Still, the report catalogs a long history of accidents, including serious injuries and deaths, dating back to the 19th century. In modern times, abandoned mines have trapped off-road vehicles, claimed the lives of hikers and explorers, and even endangered pets.

Officials warn that abandoned mines remain a serious public hazard. The division estimates there are about 300,000 abandoned mining features statewide, with as many as 35,000 posing significant risks to public safety.

To prevent accidents, the division has invested heavily in outreach. Its “Stay Out, Stay Alive” campaign reached 3.2 million people last year through social media, billboards, and classroom presentations. The campaign even gained national exposure when the Smithsonian Channel featured Nevada’s abandoned mine closures in a 2024 episode of “How Did They Fix That?”

The division also relies on student interns, who last year logged more than 700 hazards and helped secure dozens of sites. Contractors and partner agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and Nevada Department of Wildlife also play a key role in survey and closure efforts.

The 2024 report shows a sharp increase in activity compared to the previous five years. Hazards inventoried jumped by 190 percent from the year before, while closures rose 89 percent. Officials attribute the surge to increased funding from partner agencies, improved use of technology such as drones and LiDAR for site discovery, and a strategic shift in staffing that allowed interns to focus on locating new hazards while contractors performed closures.



Abandoned mine. Photo by Neil Lockhart.

Since the program began in 1987, the Division of Minerals has discovered 26,030 abandoned mine sites statewide and secured 21,314 of them—about 81.9 percent. Carson City leads with 96.5 percent of its 85 sites secured, followed by Washoe County at 95.4 percent and Douglas County at 92.9 percent. Lyon, Storey, and Lander counties also exceeded 88 percent. Churchill County has secured 822 of 967 identified sites, or 85 percent. Esmeralda and Pershing counties each reported 86.5 percent secured, while Elko and Nye remain below 81 percent. The lowest completion rate was in Mineral County, where 71.6 percent of 3,157 discovered sites have been secured.

Despite progress, abandoned mine hazards remain widespread and often hidden across Nevada’s public lands. Many are located near popular recreation areas, where unsuspecting hikers, campers, and off-roaders are at risk.

State officials emphasize that the work of securing and closing mines will continue for years to come. With thousands of hazards still unsecured, the report serves as both a measure of progress and a reminder of Nevada’s ongoing responsibility to protect public safety while managing its mining heritage.

The report can be found online at minerals.nv.gov/programs/aml/aml/.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Movies and More

The Fallon Theatre is keeping fall lively downtown with family-favorite films, live music from Nashville, and community events that roll straight into Halloween.

At 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, the theatre will screen “The Nightmare Before Christmas” (1993). The Tim Burton stop-motion classic blends Halloween and Christmas in a musical tale about Jack Skellington and his misadventures in Christmastown. It’s rated PG with a runtime of one hour and 16 minutes.

At 7 p.m. Friday, the big screen turns to Steven Spielberg’s beloved “E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial” (1982). The film follows young Elliott and his unlikely friendship with a stranded alien, a story that continues to charm audiences more than 40 years after its release. Also rated PG, it runs one hour and 55 minutes.

On Saturday at 7 p.m., the spotlight moves from the screen to the stage as Nashville recording artists Luke and Kaylee return to Fallon. The husband-and-wife duo built a following with their strong harmonies and upbeat performances since moving to Music City in 2016. They’ve opened for artists including Dwight Yoakam, Walker Hayes, Dylan Scott, Phil Vassar and Love and Theft, and placed in the top 10 of the 2022 NSAI Songwriting Contest. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased through the duo’s website.

Looking ahead, the theatre will go dark for movies on Friday, Oct. 17, and Saturday, Oct. 18, as the historic vaudeville stage hosts “Schoolhouse Rock Live! Jr.,” presented by Performing Arts of Churchill County. The family musical brings the classic “Schoolhouse Rock” songs to life with local performers. Tickets are available in advance through PACC’s website.



Halloween brings one of downtown Fallon’s favorite traditions. On Friday, Oct. 31, from 4 to 6 p.m., Maine Street will close to traffic for the annual Maine Street Spooktacular, a free event featuring trick-or-treating at local businesses, booths hosted by community groups, and plenty of games and activities for kids. Organizers are still welcoming sponsors and donations to keep the event thriving for years to come.

When the street party ends, the fun moves indoors. At 7 p.m., the Fallon Theatre presents the interactive cult favorite “The Rocky Horror Picture Show.” Admission is \$10, and audience participation is encouraged—props are welcome,

though anything wet or messy should stay outside. Patrons can sing, shout and do the Time Warp as the theatre caps Halloween night with a community tradition of its own.

NOVEMBER CONTINUES THE ENTERTAINMENT STREAK WITH TWO WEEKEND EVENTS:

- Friday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.: Nashville comedian Lee Hardin returns with his clean, relatable stand-up. Tickets \$20.
- Saturday, Nov. 15, 7 p.m.: River Rogue performs a free concert blending country, rock and blues; the band plays for tips.

The theatre will release its full November and December schedules soon, including additional holiday movies, concerts and community programs.

Movies at the Fallon Theatre are always free, and the concession stand offers fresh popcorn, candy and snacks. For theatre rentals or marquee messages, call 775-423-6210 or email thefallontheatre@gmail.com.

FALLON ANIMAL WELFARE GROUP

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Friday, October 17

Doors open 5 p.m. | Dinner starts 6 p.m

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All proceeds benefit Fallon Animal Welfare Group (FAWG) to aid the community and its cats.

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PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Rooster



Meet Rooster (D-781), a 1 1/2-year-old dog with plenty of personality and a story to tell. True to his name, Rooster once discovered that chickens taste just like, well, chicken—and that little adventure brought him to the shelter! He’s friendly with other dogs and comfortable around horses and cattle, though his history with cats is unknown. Rooster has been an outdoor dog but is young enough to learn the comforts of indoor life. If you’re looking for a loyal companion with charm and potential, stop by the City of

Fallon Animal Shelter or call 775-423-2286 to meet him.

City of Fallon Animal Shelter
1255 Airport Rd, Fallon | 775-423-2282

Creamsicle & Creampuff



These two adorable 4-month-old orange brothers are ready to find their forever family! Creamsicle and Creampuff are everything you could want in kittens—loving, sweet, and full of playful energy. They adore snuggling for cuddles, rubbing against your legs, and purring the moment you give them attention. Whether chasing toys or curling up together for a catnap, these affectionate little charmers will melt your heart and bring endless joy to your home.

Fallon Animal Welfare Group is a 501(c)(3) charity supporting the welfare of cats in Churchill County, Nevada.
Questions? Call 775-217-4745

OBITUARIES



STEVEN NEIL WALLACE
December 16, 1945 - September 23, 2025

Steven Neil Wallace of Fallon, Nev., passed away on Sept. 23, 2025. He was 79 years old. Steve was born Dec. 16, 1945, in San Diego, Calif. to Art and Shirley Wallace, the eldest of two sons. After a few years in San Diego, the family chose to settle in Fresno, Calif. Steve earned a degree in communications from Fresno State University California before joining the Air Force, eventually rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Air National Guard. In his civilian life, Steve made good use of his communications degree at the California Highway Patrol and then the California Department of Forestry. In 1991, eager to get away from city life, Steve traded a relatively short commute in Sacramento for a longer one from a kiwi farm up in Marysville. After retiring from the military and his state job, he and his wife, Valerie, moved to Fallon in 2003, where they have lived since. Communications was a logical choice for Steve as his technical skills were matched by an undeniable gift of gab. He was so adept at small talk that there was a running joke about how even at the den-

tist, with a mouth full of instruments, he could still somehow manage to chat with the hygienist and get their life story. As a shortwave radio hobbyist, Steve had a very impressive array of radios. He even built his own antennas to talk with people all around the world. He was an avid railroad enthusiast, enjoyed military history, and had a large collection of train, car, ship and plane models waiting to be built. There was so much to love about Steve, and so much we'll miss. We'll miss his easy charm, his smarts and his smile. We will miss the joy we'd get when we could earn a genuine laugh. We will also miss his confident advice about cars, computers and home repair. Now, we'll just have to figure it out on our own. Steve was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Craig. He is survived by his wife of 35 years, Valerie; his children Sarah Wallace, Grant Wallace (Kim Blank Wallace) and Jill Wallace (Matt Satterthwaite); stepchildren Nissa Hallquist (Becky Barnhart) and Jessica Hallquist; and grandchildren Eleanor Wallace and Benjamin Hallquist. A service to celebrate Steve's life will be held Oct.18, 2025, at 10 a.m. at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 850 W. 4th Street in Fallon. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Steve's name to Churchill Animal Protection Society or the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

DONALD S. JOHNSON
September 29, 2025

We report with great sadness the passing of our husband, father, and grandfather, Donald Scott Johnson, 96. Our sadness is solely because of how much we will miss him; we could not have wished him a better life. Don died at age 96 on Sept. 29, 2025, in the house that he built in 1965.

Born in Page, Nebraska, to Clarence (Kelly) Johnson, a teacher, and Ruth Scott, a homemaker, Don lived in several small Nebraska towns, moving as better job opportunities for his father arose. While in Nebraska, Don spent summers at his grandparents' farm, where he enjoyed fishing in the Platte River.

When he was 12, Don moved with his family to Nevada, where his parents had siblings. He lived in Gerlach for a year, after which the family moved to Golconda, where Don graduated from high school at the age of 15. He enrolled at the University of Nevada, Reno, where he graduated with a degree in chemistry. Later, Don returned to the university to earn a master's degree in education.

In 1948, Don was given a position teaching seventh grade at Oats Park School, where he taught for three years. During the spring of 1951, he was offered the principalship of West End School along with initially teaching a fourth-grade class. He remained at West End



for 15 years, during which time it grew from about 200 students to 750. Don became principal of E.C. Best Junior High School in 1966. Teaching was always Don's first love, so in 1975 he returned to the classroom, teaching sixth-grade math for eight years. He enjoyed teaching very much and often mentioned how much he genuinely liked all his students. He served as business manager during his last three years with the district, retiring June 30, 1986, after 38 years.

It was during his third year teaching seventh grade that a "lovely teacher" (Don's words), Dawna Audrain, arrived in Fallon to teach fourth grade. Don was interested immediately but didn't manage a date until Dec. 7. Things moved rapidly after that, and they were married seven weeks later, on Jan. 27, 1951. Soon after the birth of their first child in 1953, they purchased a small farm on Sheckler Road, where they raised their four children. While they initially moved into the old farmhouse, during 1964-65, Don built their home on the property where he lived for the rest of his life.

Don and Dawna traveled extensively during their retirement. They took a three-month trip across the U.S. in their motorhome, toured England, Costa Rica and the Baltics, and went on several cruises. For 30 years, he and Dawna spent winters in a senior resort facility in Surprise, Arizona, where they made many good friends. Don

and Dawna loved to dance and enjoyed the weekly dances with big-band music at Sunflower Resort. They also belonged to square-dancing groups in both Fallon and Arizona. Don and Dawna were members of the Fallon 20-30, Mr. and Mrs., and Good Sam clubs. Avid bridge players, Don and Dawna played duplicate bridge for most of their almost 75 years of marriage, even giving lessons through the community college on occasion. Don loved hunting and fishing; in his senior years, one of his favorite pastimes was reminiscing about the many hunting trips he took with his sons, brothers-in-law and friends. He was active in the Fallon bowling league and played slow-pitch softball. One of the achievements he took most pride in was running a marathon when he was 49.

Don was an active member of the United Methodist Church, where he served as Sunday School teacher and superintendent, lay leader and speaker, and representative to the annual conference for many years.

He is survived by his wife, Dawna; his four children, Lynn (Richard), Wade (Melinda), Randy, and Jim (Carol); siblings Mary, Rodger, Karmen, Marcia and Kelli; six grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Don was a caring, compassionate man who was a positive influence for his family, students and friends; he will be dearly missed.

A celebration of life will be held at Epworth United Methodist Church on Nov. 1 at 11 a.m.



JAMES FRANCIS FALK
June 18, 1935 - September 28, 2025

James Francis Falk is the son of Mary Grace Haverstock and Harry Clem Falk. He was born on June 18, 1935, in Effingham, Effingham County, Illinois, USA. After a hard-fought battle with cancer, he passed away on September 28, 2025, in Fallon, Nevada, with his wife, Linda, by his side. In 1953, Jim graduated from Stewardson-Strasburg High School in Illinois.

He entered the U.S. Navy in 1954 and retired in 1974. After leaving the Navy, he worked for 20 years at *San Diego Union-Tribune* as a copy editor. His military service included serving on the USS Lexington (aircraft carrier) and USS Orca (seaplane tender). Naval Air Station Miramar, Naval Photographic Center, Washington, DC. He traveled through Vietnam on a military flight in the 1950s. Served 1964-67 as Fleet Journalist, Chief of Naval Information. Jim spent time near Phu Bai and Quay and was later sent to Da Nang. Jim's next assignment was with the 4th Marine Regiment. He reported to *Stars & Stripes* in 1966 as a photojournalist assigned out of Japan. Jim spent two years at Naval Air Station Facility Atsugi and 3 years at 7th Fleet at Yokosuka. From 1963-64, he attended the Navy program in photojournalism at Syracuse University, New York state. Served

1969 to early 70s: Navy headquarters Saigon: Lead Chief for Public Affairs, Commander US Forces Vietnam. Final assignment: Assistant Public Affairs Officer: Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific, San Diego. Among his awards, Jim earned two Navy Commendation Medals and one Navy Achievement Medal. He said being assigned to the staff of Pacific Stars & Stripes in Tokyo was his proudest career accomplishment. He was among 6 Navy photojournalists assigned to photograph the U.S. Navy in Vietnam for a travelling exhibit titled "Jets to Junks." Jim was a member of the VFW Post 1002, NRA, Churchill County Republican Central Committee and attended The Country Church in Fallon, NV. He and Linda are members of the Hillsdale College President's Club and are Hillsdale College Associates. He is survived by the love of his life, Linda Hartweg. They were married in Virginia City, Nevada, on October 11, 2012. He is also survived by his sister, Dorothy Parkison, of Tunkhannock, PA, a brother-in-law Larry Pennington of Covington, TN, and numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews and cousins residing in various states. Also, many friends who loved and respected him. He is preceded in death by his parents, Mary Grace Haverstock and Harry Clem Falk, his sister Sarah Lynn Pennington of Covington, TN, first wife Masako Ohme Falk of Jamul, CA, brother-in-law Bob Parkison of Tunkhannock, PA. His family requests any donations be made in his name to The Country Church, Fallon, NV, or Hillsdale College. A memorial service will be held later this fall.

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COMMUNITY

The Dog Days of Summer



Buck, the Husky shelter dog, won the “Ugliest Dog” contest at last weekend’s Together We Are Stronger 5K Color Run/Walk. He competed alongside Community Service Officer Kayla Norcutt. Photo courtesy City of Fallon Animal Shelter.



Community Service Officer Kaylee Hammond brought shelter dog Chunky to the Bark and Splash Bash last Saturday. Photo courtesy City of Fallon Animal Shelter.

By Christy Lattin

The doggie play day at Oats Park, billed as the “Bark and Splash Bash,” saw more than two dozen dogs join some shelter dogs for a day of fun last Saturday.

Community Service Officer Kayla Norcutt with the City of Fallon Animal Shelter said the event was “awesome” and the dogs had fun. The dogs had access to everything at the city’s Splash Pad adjacent to Oats Park Pool. “It was like a dog park with hoses,”

Norcutt laughed, adding the dogs got the zoomies and just enjoyed running around the splash pad and grassy area. She said they saw all breeds of dogs, from a 15-pound corgi to a pair of greyhounds, poodles and rot-tweilers. She especially enjoyed watching a shy golden retriever from Fernley break out of its shell and bound around the splash pad energetically. “She had the best time!” Norcutt said.

The Fallon Animal Control staff also participated in the “Together We Are Stronger” 5K Color Run/Walk sponsored by the Churchill Community Coalition. Norcutt said three staff members ran the 5K with

two of their shelter dogs, and it was the first year this event has allowed dogs.

Norcutt said after the humans received awards, the dogs did too. There was the “cutest dog,” and the “dog who most looks like its owner.” But when the “ugliest dog” contest was up, Norcutt was stumped — she couldn’t let the “two cutest dogs ever” take the ugliest dog award, so she ran to her truck and grabbed Buck, the shelter’s longtime resident husky.

Buck, the well-behaved 10-year-old husky, is an owner surrender and as of Sept. 30, 2025, has spent 148 days at the shelter.



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Nevada Community Alliance Receives Support from County Commissioners



From left, Commissioner Eric Blakey, Alison Fenimore, and Commissioners Myles Getto and Matt Hyde. Photo courtesy Churchill County.

By Christy Lattin

Churchill County Commissioners donated \$250 to the Nevada Community Alliance on Oct. 2 to support the nonprofit’s upcoming Tricks & Tees Golf Tournament on Oct. 11.

The Alliance, formerly known as Fallon Community Events, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that supports local veterans and seniors. It began in 2010 as Fallon Lights of Christmas, which grew into a family festival where decorated trees were auctioned as fundraisers. As its efforts expanded beyond holiday events, the group became Fallon Community Events. In 2019, it launched the annual Fallon Armed Forces Day Celebration, held each May.

Looking to the future, the Alliance’s vision is to create a Cozy Home Community, a safe, affordable housing community for veterans, seniors and others in need. Planned tiny homes will range from 650 to 1,200 square feet and incorporate green technology such as solar power and reclaimed water for landscaping in the common areas. The group is seeking donations of funds, building materials, household goods and volunteer support to bring the project to life.

In addition to the golf tournament, the Alliance will host its Christmas Craft Fair on Nov. 14–15 at E.C. Best Elementary School. For more information, visit nevadacommunityalliance.com.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

County to Launch Pay Study Following Zulz Promotion and Road Department Restructure

By Christy Lattin

Churchill County Commissioners voted Oct. 2 to revive the position of Assistant Road Supervisor and promoted longtime employee Karl Zulz to the role. Zulz has worked in the Road Department for more than 22 years, including over a decade as Road Maintenance/Construction Foreman.

Road Department Supervisor Gary Fowkes asked commissioners to approve a departmental reorganization after the loss of several key employees. His proposal included reinstating the assistant supervisor position while eliminating two others, the Road Maintenance/Construction Foreman and Lead Mechanic, in favor of hiring a regular mechanic. That change, he said, will save the department \$10,470.

Additional savings came from the recent retirement of the office supervisor. The newly hired replacement earns less, saving \$27,730 annually, while a new Office Specialist will start at Step 1, saving another \$4,350. Altogether, the restructuring is expected to save the county \$42,550.

With Zulz’s promotion, commissioners once again turned to the county’s personnel policy, which structures how employees are placed within the pay scale. According to Title 3, an employee promoted internally is placed at the lowest step in the salary range two steps above their current pay. Exceptions may be granted in two cases: when facing a difficult recruiting problem or when

hiring someone with superior qualifications.

By policy, Zulz would have landed at Grade 69, Step 5. But county staff argued his long service and institutional knowledge qualified him for advanced placement. Commissioners agreed, approving him at Step 10, with an annual salary of \$106,829.

This marks the fourth time in 2025 that commissioners have approved an advanced step appointment. Earlier this year, County Manager Chris Spross, Library Director John Hong, and Assistant County Manager and Human Resources Director Joseph Sanford all entered their positions at higher-than-usual steps.

Spross, Sanford and Zulz each received exceptions based on superior qualifications and extensive county experience. Hong, who joined the county from outside, was hired under the “difficult recruiting problem” provision. The library has had three directors in as many years, and board members felt offering a higher salary was necessary to attract and retain leadership.

Not all commissioners have agreed with the practice. In June, during the hiring of the new county manager, Commissioner Eric Blakey opposed the advanced step placement. He argued that policy should place internal promotions at Step 1 in the new pay grade with standard 2.5 percent annual increases, not Step 3 with 5 percent raises. Blakey said he respected Spross’ qualifications and county service but believed the decision set a precedent that could appear

unfair to other employees.

When asked in October whether the policy itself needs to be updated or enforced more consistently, Blakey acknowledged the challenge.

“It’s a balancing act between following policy but leaving employees room to grow,” he said. “I don’t know if the policy is the problem, or if we’re behind on paying people appropriately. The only thing we can offer is money.”

The county has already seen how recruitment challenges can strain departments. The District Attorney’s office reported in April that the only qualified candidate for a Deputy DA position received a substantially higher salary at his last job in another Nevada jurisdiction. Meanwhile, the Public Defender’s office has struggled to fill vacancies for more than a year. In an effort to draw applicants, the office created a Legal Intern position.

At the Sept. 17 commission meeting, County Manager Spross said Human Resources and his office will launch a countywide compensation study and present a strategic plan within 30 days, with results expected before the next budget cycle.

Commissioners now find themselves balancing competing priorities: adhering to policy while offering enough incentive to keep positions filled. With the road department’s restructuring approved, they will be watching whether the balance of savings and salaries helps stabilize staffing across county offices.

Local Emergency Planners Debrief on Communication Exercise

By Christy Lattin

The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) met Sept. 30 to review communication efforts tested during August’s Citadel Rumble, the U.S. Navy’s annual emergency response exercise.

This year’s exercise, held Aug. 5 at Naval Air Station Fallon, simulated a major earthquake and focused on coordination between the military, local governments and emergency services.

Fallon Emergency Manager Steve Endacott and Churchill County Emergency Manager Rich Ingram described how they activated the Emergency Operations Center and tested multiple contact methods, including cell and landline phones, ham radio, and a satellite phone. They also tested their new Starlink system to gain internet access and phone service.

The committee began a preliminary review of the Churchill

County Multi-Jurisdictional Emergency Response Plan, which Endacott said needs updating. He suggested forming a “communications subgroup” to revise that section. Ingram noted the LEPC will seek funding for a consultant to overhaul the entire plan, a project expected to take more than a year.

Members also discussed the region’s Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which received initial feedback from FEMA requesting additional information before approval.

Endacott reviewed the LEPC membership list and asked for more representation from local agencies. Current members include the Nevada Office of Emergency Management, State Emergency Response Commission, Red Cross, Amateur Radio Emergency Services, Social Services, Central Nevada Health District, Truckee-Carson Irrigation District, Churchill County School District, law enforcement, NAS Fallon, Banner EMS, Kennametal and Ormat.

The LEPC meets quarterly, with the next meeting date to be announced.

Federal Funds Boost County Budget; Parks & Rec, Social Services to Benefit

By Christy Lattin

Churchill County received more revenue than expected this year from federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and the state’s Consolidated Tax (CTX) distribution, giving officials additional flexibility in the 2025–2026 fiscal budget.

PILT payments, which compensate counties for lost property tax revenue due to federally owned, tax-exempt lands, totaled \$3,071,354 for fiscal year 2025—about \$296,000 more than the \$2.78 million the county had budgeted. An additional \$39,296 in excess revenue from the Debt Service Fund brought the total surplus to \$335,650.

County commissioners voted at their Sept. 17 meeting to transfer those funds into the Parks and Recreation budget to help erase a negative fund balance. Parks and Rec was initially budgeted at \$400,000, but with the new transfer, its funding level rises to \$735,650.

CTX revenues, derived from a combination of six state-level taxes including sales and use taxes, came in at \$9,112,693, roughly \$425,000 above budget. Those additional funds will be allocated to Social Services and Parks and Recreation, according to the county comptroller.

Not all revenues exceeded expectations, however. Geothermal royalties, generated from leases on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, fell slightly below projections. Churchill County budgeted \$875,000 in geothermal income but collected about \$26,987 less. County staff will adjust the General Fund, Debt Service Fund and Building Reserve Fund to reflect the shortfall.

The county receives 25% of federal geothermal rents and royalties, with 50% going to the state and 25% to the U.S. Treasury.



ENTERTAINMENT

‘Schoolhouse Rock Live! Jr.’ Brings Double the Talent to the Fallon Theatre

By Rachel Dahl

The Performing Arts of Churchill County (PACC) is ready to rock the stage this month with Schoolhouse Rock Live! Jr., a lively children’s musical running October 16–18 at the historic Fallon Theatre on Maine Street.

The one-hour show brings the beloved songs and lessons from the classic Schoolhouse Rock television series to life, with performances full of color, energy, and local talent.

Churchill County’s young performers turned out in such impressive numbers that PACC had to form two casts—Team Jazz and Team Swing—to give everyone a chance to shine.

“This show highlights just how much talent we have in our community,” said PACC organizers. “The kids have been working hard, and audiences are going to love every minute.”

Family-friendly and perfect for all ages, Schoolhouse Rock Live! Jr. promises familiar favorites like “Conjunction Junction” and “Interplanet Janet,” performed with all the enthusiasm Fallon’s young stars can bring.

Tickets are available now at www.paccnv.org.



SHOW SCHEDULE

Wednesday, Oct. 16 Team Jazz
Thursday, Oct. 17 Team Swing
Friday, Oct. 18
Team Jazz & Swing
Combined Showcase

★ ★ ★

Before purchasing tickets, make sure to check which cast your favorite performer is in—the full Team Jazz and Team Swing rosters are listed online at www.paccnv.org. Come cheer on Fallon’s next generation of stars and support local performing arts at the Fallon Theatre!

Museum Brings Back Chautauqua Theatre with ‘Agriculture’ Theme

What is a Chautauqua?

A Chautauqua is a form of living history performance where actors portray historical figures in first person, sharing stories, challenges, and insights from the past. The tradition dates back to the late 19th century, when traveling Chautauquas brought culture, education, and entertainment to small towns across America. The Churchill County Museum’s modern Chautauqua series keeps that spirit alive, connecting local audiences with Nevada’s history through the voices of those who lived it.

By Rachel Dahl

After last year’s sold-out success, the Churchill County Museum is bringing back its beloved Chautauqua Theatre program, this time celebrating Nevada’s deep agricultural roots.

The performance, themed “Agriculture,” will take the stage at the Fallon Theatre on Saturday, October 25 at 3 p.m.

Six local Chautauquans will bring Nevada’s agricultural history to life, portraying figures who shaped both the land and the community. This year’s performers include:

- Mel Glover as Clarence King
- Zip Upham as J.J. Cushman
- Jennie Mader as Nancy Ann Whitney Sanford
- Ernie Schank as Le Roy Cyril Schank
- Glen Perazzo as Alfred Oats
- Pam Duarte as Mary Odessa Van Why Johnson

Each performer will step into character to share personal stories, historic challenges, and colorful moments from Nevada’s farming and ranching past.

“Last year’s Chautauqua was an overwhelming success, so we’re thrilled to bring it back,” Mel Glover, museum director said. “These performances give history a heartbeat and remind us of the people who made our community what it is today.”

Tickets are available now at the Churchill County Museum front desk.

- General Admission: \$20 (Museum Members \$10)
- Seniors, Military, and Children under 12: \$15 (Members \$7.50)

Tickets will be \$25 at the door on the day of the event.

The museum encourages guests to purchase early — last year’s show sold out quickly. For more information or to reserve tickets, call 775-423-3677 or visit the museum in person.

Violinist Lucia Micarelli to Perform in Fallon Oct. 11



Violinist Lucia Micarelli. Photo courtesy Lucia Micarelli.

Staff Report

The Churchill Arts Council will host violinist Lucia Micarelli at the Oats Park Art Center on Saturday, Oct. 11. The performance begins at 7 p.m. in the Barkley Theatre.

Micarelli is known for blending classical works with jazz, Americana, and traditional fiddle. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Sydney Opera House, and toured with artists including Josh Groban and Chris Botti. Some audiences may recognize her from the HBO series “Treme,” where she played the role of violinist Annie Talarico.

Tickets are \$20 for Churchill Arts Council members and \$25 for non-members. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are available online at www.churchillarts.org. The Oats Park Art Center is located at 151 East Park Street in Fallon.

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COURT

Fallon Man Charged with Child Exploitation and Assault

By Leanna Lehman

Brandon Michael Wilcox, 39, was arrested on multiple felony charges related to the sexual assault of a child under the age of 16. The Churchill County District Attorney's Office filed a criminal complaint on Aug. 12 in New River Township Justice Court in Churchill County. A warrant was issued the same day with a bond set at \$470,000, after which Wilcox was arrested.

According to the complaint, Wilcox has been charged with the following four counts:

Count I: Sexual Assault on a Child Under 16, a Category A Felony punishable by life in prison with or without the possibility of parole after 25 years, depending on the circumstances. Specifically, the charges allege that on or about Nov. 23, 2023, Wilcox forced an unnamed minor child who was 15 years old at the time to engage in sexual acts against her will under conditions in which Wilcox knew or should have known that she was mentally or physically incapable of resisting or understanding the nature of his or her conduct.

Count II: Lewdness with a Child Under 16, a Category B Felony punishable by 1-10 years and a fine of up to \$10,000. The complaint alleges that on Nov. 23, 2024, Wilcox did willfully and unlawfully commit a lewd or lascivious act, other than acts constituting the crime of sexual assault, upon a child under the age of 16.



Brandon Wilcox. Photo courtesy of Churchill County Sheriff's Office.

Count III: Sexual Assault, a Category A Felony, punishable by life in prison, with or without the possibility of parole after 10 years, again based on the circumstances. This charge covers sexual assault when the victim is 16 years or older (but still without consent, or where the defendant knew the victim couldn't resist or understand). The allegations state that on or about Mar. 16, 2024, Wilcox sexually assaulted a 16-year-old child. As noted in Count II, it is alleged that Wilcox knew or should have known that the victim was mentally or physically incapable of resisting or understanding the nature of his or her conduct.

Count IV: Possession of Visual Pornography of a Person Under 16 Years of Age, a Category B Felony punishable by 1- 6 years in prison and a fine up to \$5,000 for a first offense. The complaint alleges that between Nov. 23, 2023, and Dec. 25, 2023, Wilcox possessed photos of the same victim as identified in the first three counts, who was under age 16 at the time.

In Nevada, the age of consent is 16. That means anyone younger than 16 is considered legally incapable of consenting to sex, no matter what they say or do. Even if a child is 15 and says they agreed, the law treats them as unable to give consent. Once someone turns 16 or older, they can legally consent, but the law still prohibits sex that is forced, coerced, or where the person cannot understand or resist – that is where the general sexual assault statute applies.

Wilcox appeared via Zoom from the jail for his initial arraignment on Aug. 14, at which time Judge Trotter appointed Public Defender Sommer to represent him. A status hearing was scheduled for Aug. 21, at which time the matter was continued. Wilcox is scheduled to appear for a status hearing on October 16 Justice Court.

BUSINESS

Help Your Trees Through Proper Pruning

By Nancy Chapman

Marco DiGiacinto and his family moved to Fallon in 1982 when he went to work for a local tree trimming and pruning business. Within a year, his experience and knowledge of trees earned him a position as the crew boss. Since then, he has taken his love for trees and turned it into a successful business with an excellent reputation in the community.

Marco, now the owner of MD Tree Surgery, is a member of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and ISA Certified Arborist. ISA is a non-profit organization serving the tree care industry. As a membership and credentialing entity, ISA promotes the professional practice of arboriculture. ISA supports tree care professionals through research, science, technology, and education as they continue in their field. As a certified arborist, Marco has six certification credentials, each with different requirements, earning him the highest level in arboriculture offered by the ISA.

With over 30 years of experience, Marco shared his concerns about tree health in the Lahontan Valley. “Our old-growth cottonwood and elm trees in Churchill County are being destroyed by topping and improper cutting or pruning of the trees,” said Marco. “The importance of our trees and their contributions to our environment is essential.”

MD Tree Surgery has contracts with the City of Fallon and the State of Nevada Highway Department to keep trees pruned and healthy. Marco says improper pruning happens when the branches are cut in the wrong location. There is a “collar” where a branch connects to the tree. Cutting into the collar damages the tree and the limb, not allowing the tree to heal correctly. This causes the tree to spend more energy repairing itself than doing its job of producing oxygen, creating photosynthesis that cleans tons of carbon from the environment, and simply being pretty.

Similarly, improper leaf pruning makes trees susceptible to diseases and parasites, which will eventually kill the tree or, at the very least, stunt the tree and leave it looking unsightly.

Topping trees or removing the canopy disrupts a tree’s natural balance and ability to produce food for itself, explained Marco. Topping can cause trees to grow weak. Additionally, removing large amounts of leaves inhibits adequate photosynthesis, which the tree needs. Large open wounds created by topping provide easy entry points for insects and diseases, leaving the tree at a health risk. This is a highly damaging practice that significantly weakens the tree’s structure and could lead to the tree’s decline or death.

According to Marco, trees also play a vital part in a home’s value. When a property appraisal is done, the number of trees is added to the property’s overall value. Again, if a tree is improperly pruned or



Photo courtesy of MD Tree Surgery.

trimmed, it can weaken branches and, at some point, possibly break off and fall on homes, vehicles, or the unthinkable – on a person.

Zakkary Thomas, Foreman at MD Tree Surgery, strongly urges homeowners, other tree pruning companies, and citizens concerned about our ecosystem to check the International Society of Arboriculture website. He recommends finding an arborist with a certification number, much like a plumber or electrician contractor number, to discuss appropriate pruning or crown thinning methods.

Professional arborists spend thousands of dollars on the correct equipment to safely prune or thin a tree. The proper safety equipment is essential for the individual arborist’s safety. For example, hard hats have built-in speakers for communication, and pants are designed to prevent technicians from getting entangled in the chain of a running saw. MD arborists are required to have ISA affiliation to be appropriately insured.

Marco and Zakkary emphasized caution when planting a new tree. Purchase a tree and plant based on its mature size to ensure it will be suitable for the desired area. In time, less harm will come to the tree from pruning.

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SMALL BUSINESS

EXPOSE

WEDNESDAY

15

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EDUCATION

CCSD Cool School News

Compiled by Kaitlin Ritchie.

CCHS

Churchill County High School celebrated Homecoming last week with a full lineup of student-led events. The week kicked off on Maine Street, where student council members joined Mayor Ken Tedford and the City Council to dye the fountain green. Festivities included the annual parade, the Powderpuff game where the juniors claimed a rare win over the seniors, and an all-classes Lip Sync battle that ended with the juniors taking the win over the seniors by just one point. Throughout the week, students enjoyed themed dress-up days, a schoolwide assembly, and, in keeping with tradition, Block F members sold and delivered Homecoming mums, a long-cherished part of the week. There was plenty of Greenwave pride leading up to Friday night’s football game, where homecoming royalty was crowned at halftime. The celebration wrapped up with a Rio-themed dance on Saturday.

CCMS

This week, Isabel Martinez-Gomez’s sixth graders at Churchill County Middle School received their first official introduction to the middle school library. Students navigated the library independently, and learned

how to locate books, check out materials, and use resources to support their reading and research. “They are very excited to take the lead on their reading journey and for a more independent library experience,” Martinez-Gomez said.

NUMA

During PE class at Numa, students in Kevin Wickware’s class practiced and explored a variety of playground games. Activities included Wall Ball, Tetherball, 4 Square, 9 Square, and Handball, giving students opportunities to develop coordination, strategy, and teamwork. Beyond just playing, students focused on applying the school’s Standards Operating Procedures (S.O.P.s) during each game, reinforcing rules, sportsmanship, and safe play.

E.C. BEST

Third-grade music students in Tina Koenig’s class explored the work of composer John Philip Sousa. They practiced bouncing tennis balls along to his famous march, The Stars and Stripes Forever, matching the rhythm of whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes. The activity helped students connect movement to music, de-

velop a sense of timing, and have fun while learning about rhythm and musical notation.

LAHONTAN

Students in Jenny Young’s first grade class explored key life science concepts, focusing on the life cycle of plants. Through hands-on activities, they discovered how plants grow and adapt to their environments. The unit began with an up-close look at a sunflower head, where students investigated the unique patterns and structures of the plant. Afterward, they enjoyed tasting sunflower seeds, connecting science to a real-world experience. Next, students expressed their creativity by designing bright and cheerful sunflower artwork, blending artistic expression with scientific learning. To wrap up the unit, each student recorded their observations and reflections about sunflowers, demonstrating how plants use their external features to survive and thrive. Students also compared young plants and animals to their parents, noticing both similarities and differences. By the end of the unit, students showcased their curiosity, critical thinking, and creativity, gaining a deeper understanding of the natural world and the life cycles of living things.

Veritas Preparatory School – Classical and Christian
Veritas Second Graders Channel the Olympic Spirit

By Assistant Headmaster David Ernst



Veritas second graders compete in their own Olympics.

Veritas Preparatory School was abuzz with excitement as second graders capped off a unit on Ancient Greece with their very own Olympics. The celebration showcased Veritas’ signature approach to joyful learning, combining creativity, community, and classical education in action. The second grade students took to the field this past week for the Veritas Olympics, an energetic culmination of their studies on ancient Greece. Donning homemade laurel crowns and colorful togas, students competed in friendly contests inspired by the original Olympic Games. Students competed in teams representing the city-states of Argos, Corinth, Sparta and Athens. Students demonstrated their prowess in

throwing, jumping and relay races, all emphasizing effort, teamwork and good sportsmanship. Parents and teachers cheered from the sidelines as students gave their all, showing both skill and spirit. “The students loved learning about how the ancient Greeks honored excellence and perseverance,” said second grade teacher Mrs. Buller. “Our goal was to connect history with hands-on experience—and of course, have a lot of fun along the way!” The day concluded with an awards ceremony celebrating not just the winners but every student’s enthusiasm and dedication. The event captured the Veritas spirit: education rooted in truth, beauty and goodness—brought to life through joyful experience.

Bighorn Bulletin

By Angela Viera

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: TALON JOHNSON



Talon Johnson.

Oasis Academy senior Talon Johnson is preparing to take his skills directly into the workforce after graduation. “I plan to go start working in the welding industry after graduation,” he shared. Along with his high school diploma, he will also graduate with his Associate of Science in Welding Technology from Western Nevada College. He is an AWS Certified Welder with a Certification in Vertical Stick Welding. Looking back on his time at Oasis, Johnson described his high school years as “pretty eventful,” beginning as a freshman and filled with experiences he will carry with him. One favorite memory for him stands out. “My favorite memory is when a few of my friends and I were making modifications to my truck in the school parking lot,” he said. “It was great to just be with my friends working together.” Johnson participated in FFA as an active member throughout his time in high school. The classes associated with the group were his favorite. “My favorite class was FFA because we got to learn many things in the agricultural world,” he said of the hands-on experiences the class offered.

When asked if there was a teacher or mentor he would like to thank, he didn’t hesitate: “I would like to thank Ms. Jackie Bogdanowicz for all that she does,” he said. “Ms. B has supported me throughout high school. She has made me get out of my comfort zone and encouraged me to take on new challenges in my life.” As graduation approaches, Johnson has advice for those who will come after him. “One piece of advice for future students is to enjoy your time with your friends at school because time will fly by quicker than you think,” he closed.

OASIS ACADEMY STAFF ATTENDS NATIONAL COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CONFERENCE Oasis Academy Lead Counselor Gabriella Madraso and High School Academic Advisor Eric Grimes traveled to Columbus, Ohio, to attend the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Conference. The NACAC Conference is one of the largest gatherings in the country focused on helping students achieve their educational goals after high school. Thousands of counselors, advisors, and admissions representatives come together each year to learn about the latest trends in college access, financial aid, and student support. Madraso and Grimes attended sessions on topics such as career readiness, the evolving landscape of college admissions, and strategies for guiding first-generation college students. They also had the opportunity to network with professionals from colleges

and universities across the United States, building connections that will directly benefit Oasis Academy students. “Having the opportunity to attend NACAC left me motivated to bring back new ideas and strategies to our students. I had the wonderful experience of collaborating and talking about our program and the big takeaway was how much we do for our students and the opportunities given at Oasis Academy College Prep,” Madraso said. Madraso shared with fellow attendees many of the strategies Oasis Academy uses junior and senior students. “Every counselor that I spoke with was shocked to learn that we meet with every single Junior and Senior student weekly to discuss college applications and scholarship opportunities,” she said. “This conference was a wonderful reminder of our commitment to excellence, our mission and to serving our students to the greatest capacity.” Grimes also added that the conference reinforced Oasis Academy’s mission of preparing students for success beyond high school. “The NACAC conference is an amazing opportunity for us to stay on top of the latest changes at colleges and universities affecting admissions,” Grimes said. “We want our students who choose to go on with their education to be as competitive as possible with other applicants. This conference helps us achieve that goal.” By attending, Oasis Academy continues its commitment to ensuring every student has access to the guidance, knowledge, and resources they need to pursue college and career success.

SPORTS

Greenwave Homecoming Week Brings Wins, Rivalries, and Lightning



Calin Anderson.



Keaton Jacques.

By John Baker

Homecoming week kicked off with plenty of excitement for Greenwave fans, starting Monday night with the annual Powder Puff Flag Football game between the juniors and seniors. The juniors came out on top this year, winning 13-0 thanks to an opening-drive touchdown by Karlie Simper and a 95-yard pick-six by Kortnie Simper in the fourth quarter.

On Thursday, boys soccer hosted the North Tahoe Lakers. The JV team battled hard but fell 2-0, while the varsity squad also struggled to find momentum, dropping their match 4-1 to the visiting Lakers.

Friday night brought football under the lights and a little lightning. The JV Greenwave game against Dayton was cut short due to weather, but not before Fallon put 33 unanswered points on the board. The varsity team followed with another dominant performance, rolling to a 53-0 victory over the Dustdevils.

Junior Maxton Richardson led the way with three touchdowns, while senior Carson Melendy added two more as the Greenwave remained undefeated for the season.

Fallon hits the road next week for a rivalry matchup, traveling to Fernley on Friday, Oct. 10, to face the 6-1 Vaqueros.

Lady Wave Volleyball Hosts Pink Out Night to Support Local Healthcare

By Rachel Dahl

The Lady Wave volleyball teams will take the court Friday, Oct. 17, for one of the most meaningful games of the season. Fallon’s annual Pink Out Night pairs great volleyball with an even greater cause, supporting the Churchill Community Hospital Foundation.

The Lady Wave will host Lowry, with the freshman match at 4 p.m., junior varsity at 5 p.m., and varsity following at 6 p.m. The gym will be decked out in pink as players, fans, and families rally around local healthcare support.

Churchill Community Hospital Foundation Coordinator Joanna Deane said the foundation plays a key role in supporting healthcare close to home. The group helps fund:

- Equipment Support: Purchasing vital tools and upgrades, including the newly completed ambulance station on Reno Highway.
- Patients in Need Program: Assisting local families with the cost of medicine, gas for medical travel, and transportation after care.
- Nursing Scholarships: Providing financial aid for Western Nevada College nursing students, many of whom go on to work in Fallon.

“These girls are thinking beyond the court,” Joanna Deane, Coordinator of the Hospital Foundation said. “They’re determined to help local groups and make a difference.”

Fans can also join in the fun with a bake sale, raffle baskets, gift card games, and a \$5 serve-a-thon challenge for a chance to win a Hydro Flask. All proceeds will go to the foundation’s community programs.

Spectators are encouraged to wear pink and show their support for both the Lady Wave and the healthcare professionals who serve Churchill County.

For more information about the Churchill Community Hospital Foundation, visit www.cch.foundation.

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Raffle Prizes

Gift Card Game

CHURCHILL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

Freshman 4 pm, JV 5 pm, Varsity 6 pm

COLUMNS

What’s Cooking in Kelli’s Kitchen: Veal Osso Buco

By Erik Jimenez

Well folks, braising season is officially upon us. With the cool weather finally reaching Northern Nevada, we have now reached the point where it’s appropriate to slowly cook meat in the oven until it falls off the bone.

For this week’s recipe, we have a classic braised dish that’s surprisingly easy to make. Veal osso buco is a fine-dining delicacy, where veal shanks are braised for a long time until the meat is fork-tender and the marrow nearly flows out the top of the bones.

By straining the sauce after the meat braises, we elevate this dish to restaurant quality. *Good luck!*

Ingredients

- 2 Veal shanks, about 2 lbs.
- 1/2 cup All-purpose flour
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 1 Small yellow onion, roughly chopped
- 2 Celery ribs, roughly chopped
- 1 Large carrot, peeled and roughly chopped
- 4 cloves Garlic
- 1 tbsp. Tomato paste
- 4 sprigs Thyme
- 1 cup Dry white wine
- 14-oz. Can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand, liquid reserved
- 2 cups Chicken stock
- ½ tsp. Crushed red pepper
- 1 bay Leaf
- 2 tbsp. Butter
- 3 tbsp. Vegetable oil

Gremolata Ingredients

- 1/3 cup Parsley leaves
- Zest from one lemon



- 6 cloves Garlic
- Pinch Kosher salt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Take veal shanks out of the refrigerator and let rest at room temperature for about an hour.
2. In a food processor, finely chop the onion, celery and carrot until very fine. Set vegetables aside. Then finely mince the four cloves of garlic and set aside.
3. Combine the flour with 1 teaspoon kosher salt and 1/2 teaspoon black pepper. Once the veal shanks have rested, coat them in the seasoned flour.
4. Heat a Dutch oven over medium-high heat for about 5 minutes. Once hot, sear the veal shanks on all sides until well browned. Remove to a plate.
5. Over medium heat, add 1 tablespoon butter and the chopped onion, celery and carrot to the Dutch oven. Cook for 5–6 minutes, scraping up the fond from the bottom. Once the vegetables are golden, add the

- garlic and crushed red pepper and sauté for about 30 seconds. Add the tomato paste and cook for about 2 minutes, stirring constantly.
6. Deglaze the pot with the wine, bring to a boil and reduce by half. Add the crushed tomatoes, a few tablespoons of the reserved tomato liquid, thyme, bay leaf, a good pinch of kosher salt and about 3/4 cup chicken stock. Heat to a simmer, cover with the lid slightly ajar and place in the oven for 1 hour.
7. After the first hour of braising, remove the lid and continue to cook for 2 to 2½ hours more, until the meat is very tender. If the liquid runs low, add the remaining chicken stock.
8. While the meat braises, prepare the gremolata. In a food processor combine the six cloves of garlic, parsley, lemon zest and pinch of salt, and process until finely chopped. Set aside.
9. Once the meat is tender, remove it from the Dutch oven. Strain the sauce through a fine-mesh sieve into a skillet. Heat over medium heat until the sauce thickens and coats the back of a spoon. Season to taste with kosher salt, pepper and lemon juice. Turn off the heat and whisk in the remaining tablespoon of cold butter.
10. To plate, flood the bottom of the plate with sauce and top with the braised veal shank. Spoon the gremolata over the top. Serve with saffron-infused rice or creamy polenta.

Erik Jimenez splits his time between the statehouse and the stove—he’s Nevada’s Chief Policy Deputy by day and an inventive chef by night. He brings flavor to everything he does—from state finance to five-star culinary delights.

Crossword

By Peanut

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WORLD

past & present

Across

2. Portugal
3. Poland
5. South Africa
9. Netherlands
12. Japan
14. Austria

Down

1. Thailand
4. France
6. Serbia
7. Israel
8. India
10. Greece
11. Egypt
13. Morocco

[Crossword answers found on page 16]

Allison’s Book Report



The Reggae Rise Up music festival venue.

By Allison Diegel

Hello, readers! I don’t have a book for you this week because I have been a slacker.

Once again, my husband and I have been dancing and soaking up all the good vibes at the annual Reggae Rise Up music festival in Las Vegas. This was our third time at this festival, and I swear every year is better than the one before it.

Seeing all of my favorite bands and all of my “reggae friends” and dancing until my feet are absolutely wrecked is truly a cleansing and rejuvenating experience. After three days, however, my middle-aged body is begging for a rest.

I will be back next week with a book recommendation, but until then, enjoy these pictures from the weekend – and don’t forget to follow me on Instagram at @allison.the.reader in the meantime!



Allison the Reader slacking in Las Vegas.

Allison Diegel is the Executive Chaos Coordinator at the Diegel Home for Wayward Girls. She has been reading since before she could talk, and now she likes doing lots of both.

COLUMNS

Postcards:
Ranching in the Soda Lake District, 1920-1926
— Part 1 —

By Michon Mackedon

If you read my column regularly, you know that I like to turn the clock back 100 years to 1925, and vicariously view the way we dwellers of the valley lived then. We were in the middle of the Roaring Twenties, and locals joined in many of the national trends of the times. We danced. We bought automobiles. We listened to radios. We were optimistic. In general, we prospered.

To put flesh on these bones, I turned to a memoir published in Volume 7 of “In Focus,” written by Glenn F. “Kelly” Engle (1892-1980). Engle, recently out of college (UNR) and newly discharged from the army following the end of WW1, moved to Fallon in 1918 and resumed a job as engineer with the U.S. Reclamation Service. In 1919, he married Ruth Williams of Fallon, “one of the sweetest and prettiest girls in Lahontan Valley.” He soon surrendered to the “land bug” and bought a parcel of land in Soda Lake, where he tried his hand at ranching.

At first, Engle had no working well, and passage to his house was by way of “an unfenced track through the desert, so sandy and rutted that I would have to leave the pickup at the bridge over the T Line canal and trudge in the rest of the way, carrying what supplies I could on my back.... For a period, before the road was made passable, when we wanted to take in a Fallon dance, I would mount Ruth on the old saddle mare with her bag containing her dancing shoes and etc. and lead the mare out to the T-Line canal bridge where the pickup was parked. We would tether the horse, transfer to the car and ride on to town, returning home after the dance by reverse process. I was reminded of Joseph leading Mary into Jerusalem on a donkey.

...We never had toilet facilities in the ranch house. Domestic water was carried in by bucket full from an elevated tank at the well, which

was kept filled by the gas engine powered pump. We bathed in a galvanized wash tub on Saturday night with spit baths in between. During the irrigation season, Ruth and I would go out after dark and bathe in the canal which was full much of the time.”

Nevertheless, blood, sweat, and tears brought prosperity and a lot of happiness to the Engle household. Roads were repaired; crops were raised; and Ruth bore four healthy children.

Engle: “Living the pioneer life we did, it was remarkable that during our ranching experience in the years 1920-1926, I don’t remember ever going to a doctor; certainly for no serious illness. We were all remarkably healthy.”

Engle tells great stories (more next week), but you will enjoy his memories of the formation of a social community in the Soda Lake District in 1922. As in Harmon, Stillwater, Old River, Union District, et al, the neighbors drew together to build a community hall.

Engle: “Frequently, Saturday night pot luck dinner and dances were held and sometimes friends from town would come out to join in. Borchert (Engle’s ranching partner) and I had belonged to the Mandolin Club in college. Neither of us were expert but we enjoyed playing and knew most of the old time two steps and waltzes. Our efforts were somewhat crude but the dancers stomped and hollered and clamored for encores. Ruth parked the kiddies under the tables which had been moved against the walls after dinner and they were soon lulled to sleep. This was in prohibition days but there always seemed to be plenty of ‘white mule’ outside the hall. The dance didn’t break up until almost dawn when we had to get back to our places for milking and the morning chores.”

I will bring you more of Kelly’s trials and triumphs in the Soda Lake District next week. Please send your stories and ideas for stories to mackedon@phonewave.net.

Michon Mackedon is a native of Fallon and a retired professor of English and Humanities (WNC). She loves her family, her home, her dog, reading, writing, making good food, and sipping a glass of fine white wine. Beyond that, she refuses to be categorized.

MEETINGS
October 13–17, 2025

Churchill County School District 4th Wednesday of the Month at 5:30 p.m. CCSD Admin Bldg. 690 S. Maine St. Next meetings: Oct. 22, Nov. 12	TCID Next Meetings: Nov. 4 at 9 a.m. 2666 Harrigan Road County Meetings 155 N. Taylor St. Commission Chambers
Fallon City Council 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the Month at 9 a.m. City Hall, 55 W. Williams Ave. Next meetings: Oct. 21 at 9 a.m.	County Commission Meets 1st Thursday and 3rd Wednesday of the Month Next meeting: Oct. 15 at 1:15 p.m. Central NV Health Dist., Nov. 13 at 1:30 p.m. Library Board, Oct 16, 12 p.m. Regional Transportation Commission, Oct. 15, 9:30 a.m.
Convention and Tourism Authority Meeting City Hall, 55 W. Willimas Ave. Next meeting Oct. 21 at 3 p.m.	

WATER LEVELS
Measurements Taken October 7, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.

Lahontan Reservoir	66,870 af
Carson River Below Lahontan	334 cfs
Truckee Canal at Wadsworth	221 cfs
Truckee Canal at Hazen	200 cfs
Carson River at Ft. Churchill	1.62 cfs

October 7, 2024	October 7, 2023	October 7, 2022
139,027 acre feet	219,535 acre feet	16,152 acre feet

Cfs - Cubic Feet per Second | Af - Acre Feet | TCID.org & Water Data.USGS.gov

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Crossword found on page 12

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CASE NO.: 25-10DC-0893
Dept. No.: 1

IN THE TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF CHURCHILL

In the Matter of the Application of STEVEN MICHAEL YOUNG, nee CHACONA, Petitioner,
For Change of Name.

NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that STEVEN MICHAEL YOUNG has on the 19th day of September, 20, filed a Petition addressed to the above-entitled court praying that said court enter its Order changing Petitioner's legal name from STEVEN MICHAEL CHACONA to STEVEN MICHAEL YOUNG . This Petition is not being submitted for a fraudulent purpose.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that any person having objection to the changing of Petitioner's name as aforesaid shall file written objection with the above-entitled court within ten days after date of the last publication of this Notice.
DATED this September 25, 2025

Published in
The Fallon Post
October 3, 10, and 17, 2025
Ad #6374

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Notice is hereby given that Pursuant to NRS Chapter 108.473 TO 108.4783 of the Business and Professions Code, State of Nevada, the undersigned will sell at Public Auction by Competitive Bidding on or after October 18, 2025 at 10 P.M. at Cache Mini-Storage, 105 Cache Ln Lovelock NV, the goods, chattels or personal goods and property of the tenants/units listed below.

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52 Seed Money LLC
57 Moana Shields
82 Oreal Shane
86 Brenda Marshal-Steele
113 Jay Hansen
G-10 Latricia Luna
G-13 Curtis Barlow
J-1 Steve Young
J-2 Global Energy Metals LLC
J-6 Steven Byrne
J-11 Renata Smith

Payment is to be made immediately upon purchase. The sale is subject to cancellation without notice in the event of settlement between owner and the obligated party.
Purchased goods are sold as is, and must be removed within (1) one day of purchase.
Cache Mini-Storage, 205 Cache Ln. Lovelock, NV 89419 775-273-2733

Published in
The Fallon Post
October 10, and 17, 2025
Ad #6376


NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Notice is hereby given that Pursuant to NRS Chapter 108.473 TO 108.4783 of the Business and Professions Code, State of Nevada, the undersigned will sell at Public Auction by Competitive Bidding on or after October 18, 2025 at 11 P.M. at Full House Mini-Storage, 640 Cornell Ave., Lovelock NV, the goods, chattels or personal goods and property of the tenants/units listed below.

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12 Itatty Espinoza
13 Ramos Gabriel Cruz
50 David Kersey
66 Martin Brett
67 Heidi Pollard
76 Annie Marie Valenzuela
78 Brian Brown
81 Raymond Roberts

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Published in
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Gabbs Lateral Naval Air Station Fallon Relocation Project
FERC Docket No. CP25-551-000

Great Basin Gas Transmission Company (“Great Basin”), formerly Paiute Pipeline Company, is a natural gas company primarily engaged in the business of transporting and storing natural gas flowing in interstate commerce. Great Basin owns and operates an interstate pipeline system which extends from a point on the Idaho-Nevada border to the California-Nevada state line, near the north and south ends of Lake Tahoe. In addition, Great Basin operates an LNG peak shaving storage facility near Lovelock, NV.

On September 29, 2025, Great Basin filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity authorizing Great Basin to install approximately 33 miles of pipeline and abandon approximately 21 miles of the current Gabbs Lateral. The Project will start approximately 26 miles east of Schurz, Nevada, and 20 miles south of the intersection of SR 31/SR 839 and US Highway 50, and will terminate about 3 miles west-northwest of Gabbs, Nevada.

Great Basin is working with government agencies to obtain all necessary permits in a timely manner. Construction of the pipeline facilities is scheduled to begin on or about March 1, 2027, and be completed by November 1, 2027. Construction would commence soon after permits and agency approvals have been granted. The time frame is subject to change depending on the FERC action and other developments.

The facilities will be installed in easements and rights-of-way from public landowners. Great Basin will engage in good faith negotiations necessary for the construction of the new pipeline facilities.

The FERC has a brochure that explains the FERC’s certificate process and addresses the basic concerns of landowners. The brochure, entitled “An Interstate Natural Gas Facility on My Land? What Do I Need to Know?” is available on the FERC’s website at <https://www.ferc.gov/media/25an-interstate-natural-gas-facility-my-landlowpdf-0> .

In addition, the FERC’s Landowner Helpline is available at 1-877-337-2237 or LandownerHelp@ferc.gov to answer any further questions about the procedures associated with the certificate process.

The Gabbs Lateral Naval Air Station Fallon Relocation Project Application is available for review at: (1) the Hawthorne Branch of the Mineral County Library; (2) the Fallon Branch of the Churchill County Library; (3) Great Basin’s Project website - www.GreatBasinGTCProjects.com; or (4) the FERC’s website - www.ferc.gov/ferc-online/elibrary. The FERC docket number assigned to this application is CP25-551-000.

Affected landowners and governmental entities impacted by Great Basin’s certificate application will receive a separate landowner notification package from Great Basin. If you have any questions, contact Great Basin toll-free at 1-877-593-2065 or via email at GreatBasinProjects@swgas.com.

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