

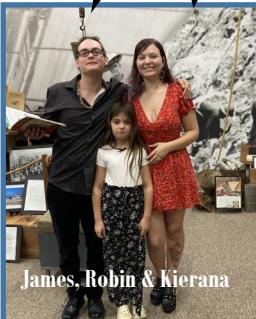
HEADTOWER NEWS

BOOMTOWN MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

by the Shasta Lake Heritage & Historical Society

Volume 22 #65 August/September 2025

MUSEUMS
CONNECT US
TO THE PAST



James, Robin & Kierana

COMMUNITY IDENTITY: THE BOOMTOWN MUSEUM

One sunny summer day, entering through the glass front doors was James Dorsey & his family seeking information about the house at 3821 Willow St. in our city. A neighbor told them the house had been built in the Boomtown Days by the Central Valley Postmaster. It was a surprise for them to see and learn that our current lobby display features historical photos and the original postal windows that were used by Thomas "Tom" Boothroyd, who was the Postmaster during that time, and coincidentally, he was the builder of the house they bought!

We emailed Bert Boothroyd, Tom's son and a longstanding SLHHS benefactor, asking if he had any early pictures of their home. As always, Bert who has given us many stories about the area, said he would look through his collection and added this: *"What should be realized is that the home on Willow Street was constructed by my father over several years. It began as a one room, one bedroom shack, and with the help of my mother who passed shingles up to the roof, improved as dad and myself hammered."*

"It was summertime and very hot so we would get up before dawn and start hammering into the early morning. There were similar construction activities going on at the same time since construction workers were building their own homes due to the lack of housing. Deputy Sheriff Guy Malcom received a call from an irate neighbor that called complaining that Tom Boothroyd was hammering in the middle of the night and he could not sleep. Malcom replied, "If you were any kind of neighbor, you would grab a hammer and help him!"



Adelaid & Anna

IT WAS A BUSY SUMMER!

Adelaid, and her lovely daughter, Anna, were visiting from Spain. They loved our museum and we enjoyed playing host to them. Anna, a musician on her way to San Francisco for a concert, went over to Ella's piano and WOW... *"made it rock!!"* even when it was out of tune!

Donated by the late **Ella Fish Barbera**, the enjoyment shown by visitors playing the piano leads us to having it refurbished and tuned which is expensive but important. We are reminded of Alice Scarborough, a former volunteer and others, who also *"made it rock!"* A 1902 Richmond Piano made in Richmond, Ind., it has tacks stuck into the felt of the hammers to give it a ragtime sound - popular in the 1920s & 30s. The lovely worn down Ivory keys are from years of use by Ella and the Wintu Indians who lived near the family store, Fish Station. (a story to follow). If you'd like to help defray the costs, Ella's daughter, **Judy Barbera**, has started a fundraiser with a \$300 donation! Just say **"Ella's piano"** on whatever donation you may send. Thank You for giving to **"music, music, music"**.



We try to be accurate but we are not liable for any additions, omissions, errors and/or corrections that may occur in this publication. Any photographs or material used may not be reprinted or reproduced without contacting us for permission of use.
Thank you, Darlene V. Brown, Editor and Pete Drosch, Assistant Editor.

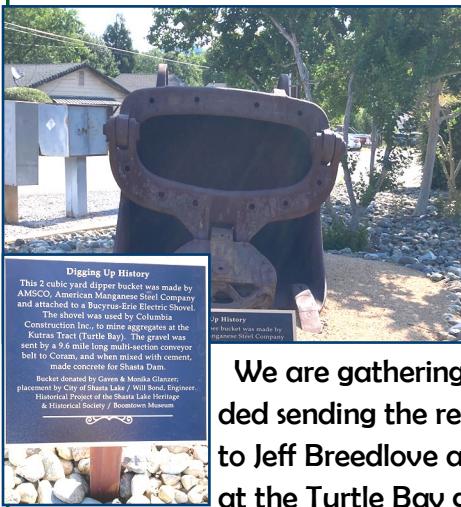


BUSY SUMMER WITH VISITORS and TOURS!

Tours: Shasta Lake School; Shasta Lake Chamber of Commerce; Redding Veterans Home; Hilltop Estates Senior Living, Sheriff's Office Citizen's Patrol Volunteers. In September - Shingletown Historical Society. **SINCERE THANKS to the Bureau of Reclamation Visitors Center Staff for recommending people to visit our Museum; to Ron Harrington/North State Visitor's Guide featured articles on Shasta County Museums; to Shasta Lake Chamber of Commerce's promotions, KIXE TV, Historical Societies, our FB staff and everyone who put out the good word! We love showing our museum collection.**



BACK TO SCHOOL! BUT SUMMER WAS FUN WITH THESE GUYS!!
 l/r: Tucker (home school) and from Shasta Lake School: James 6th grade, Steven 8th grade and Abel & Jason 7th grade. Smart & polite. We enjoyed their antics; they enjoyed our typewriters and they "dig" history!
 Brings to mind, we are DESPERATE to have our typewriters serviced. *If you know of anyone who can service typewriters. Please contact us.*



John Duckett, former City Manager and a SLHHS benefactor, dropped off a vintage sign of the Shasta Dam Public Utility District which now proudly hangs in the lobby over the museum's front door. The early history of our city and the community's struggle as Boomtowns to become independent of PG&E for water and power is a story that we will feature in another issue soon.



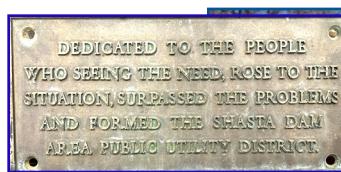
We are gathering artifacts for a future historical walking tour. QR codes will be embedded sending the reader to our museum site for historical information on the piece. Thanks to Jeff Breedlove and Public Works, our bronze plaque is in front of the shovel bucket used at the Turtle Bay gravel pit during Shasta Dam construction and will soon have a QR code.

Donated by Gavin and Monica Glanzer, the piece is located by the Museum Office entryway.

Another piece of history? - Gloria Spinks, a Sheriff's Office Citizen Patrol volunteer asked if we wanted the plaque that was mounted on the water fountain in front of the old City Hall Building on Stanton Street.

Of course we did! We showed the sign to John Duckett, who dug through his photo archives and produced this picture of the old City Hall with the fountain and plaque which reads,

"Dedicated to the people who seeing the need, rose to the situation, surpassed the problems and formed the Shasta Dam Public Utility District". The story needs to be retold to remind the community about the hardworking people who stayed here to build the Boomtown's legacy.



We are humbled to receive a Speed Graphic camera and a case of accessories as a thoughtful donation from Laural Hall Parks and her father's estate. Similar to the camera used by Howard Colby to photograph the construction of Shasta Dam, it will make a wonderful historical display. Note: Laural previously donated "the elephant" in our room - the movie projector her father rebuilt from the leftover pieces after the Shasta Theatre fire.



Sandy's GIFT SHOP HELLO FALL!

Thanks to Lynn Pascoe for the apricots! Darlene made "Dam Good Jam" of Apricot/Pineapple/Mango and Peach, Marionberry, Tayberry, Raspberry, etc.



SUPPORT YOUR MUSEUM!

Children's books for Halloween AND Never too early for stocking stuffers!



 Books, Hats, local Honey, coffee, handmade Jewelry, Sweatshirts & more!
HOLIDAY SHOPPING!



24th Anniversary Dinner!

WHEN? FRIDAY OCTOBER 3, 2025

WHERE? LARRY FARR COMMUNITY CENTER,
4499 MAIN ST., CITY OF SHASTA LAKE

TIME: 5 PM - COMPLIMENTARY WINE & APPETIZERS
6 PM - DINNER BY SHASTA DAM KIWANIS
7-9 PM ENTERTAINMENT
PIANO BY PAT KARCH and....

A MOVIE - "I REMEMBER THAT" - a RAFFLE AND MORE....

\$40 each - Reserved table of 8 for \$300.

Purchase tickets online: shastalakehistorical.org

Call for info or tickets 530-275-3995

Limited seating - Buy your tickets early before we sell out! MEET OLD FRIENDS OR MAKE SOME NEW!

Deadline for tickets: September 22nd



Looking for SUMMER HELP in 2026- WE NEED Volunteers

4 HOURS A MONTH! ONLY 4 HOURS A MONTH DURING THE SUMMER WILL

KEEP THE DOORS OPEN! IN JANUARY, A 2026 CALENDAR SCHEDULE WILL BE MADE FOR MAY THROUGH AUGUST OF NEXT YEAR. PLEASE STOP BY.

- ♦ WE ARE ALL UNPAID VOLUNTEERS - YOU DO NOT HAVE TO KNOW ABOUT OUR EXHIBITS. YOU JUST NEED TO ENJOY MEETING PEOPLE AND ENJOY SHARING HISTORY.
- ♦ WE WILL TRAIN DOCENTS OR YOU CAN WORK ON EXHIBITS, ENTER DATA ON COMPUTERS OR WORK IN THE OFFICE. NEXT YEAR IS THE NATION'S SEMQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION. WE WANT TO BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE EVENT. SO PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING US ONLY 4 HOURS OF YOUR VALUABLE TIME TO KEEP OUR VALUABLE DOORS OPEN.

An interesting story from our good friend, Dave Mundt - "Cave Dave" at Lake Shasta Caverns

The History of Benton Field in Redding, CA



The history of aviation in Redding starts with a crazy man, or as *Charles Hamilton* was known, the "Crazy Man of the Air." In 1909, a traveling exhibition team formed by Glenn Curtiss arrived at the Shasta County fairgrounds, and Hamilton, known for his "dangerous dives, spectacular crashes, extensive reconstructive surgeries, and an ever-present cigarette" brought the first airplane to Redding, piloting his Curtiss pusher and drawing a curious public to be introduced to aviation.

Although the first flight in Redding was for entertainment, it was becoming apparent though that airplanes were much more than just for stunts and thrills at fairs to amuse audiences. The rise in commercial aviation was imminent.

In the early 1920s Valley Air Service was in the process of developing an airline connecting Los Angeles to Sacramento and then began petitioning Redding to become the northern terminus. Redding had already formed an "aeronautics committee" within the Chamber of Commerce, and the Shasta Courier reported on July 23, 1927, that Redding would build a landing field for Valley Air Service connecting a north/south route to Los Angeles. On August 3, 1927, Major J. Paulding Edwards, President of Valley Air Service, came to Redding to finalize details.



The plan would have Valley Air Service employ a fleet of five Fokker Universals, with 200 horsepower "whirlwind" engines. The Universals could take up to 5 passengers, or a reduced number of passengers and some freight. Passengers would pay 12.5 cents per mile, and cargo would be four tenths of a cent per pound, per mile!

A landing field of sorts had already been developed and was in use at this time, on Johnson's Hill at the top of Centerville Road (renamed and now known as Placer Street). A rocky dirt strip had been cleared, making a rough runway, and Manzanita trees provided the tie down stakes for the Redding fliers. With easy access to downtown Redding, and an already established use for landing and taking off, Johnson's Hill became the logical location for the airport.

Grover Oaks, a self-employed real estate broker who had become one of Redding's richest men and Chairman of the Shasta County Planning Commission, embarked on a mission to purchase the Johnson's Hill property from the owner, Grace Welsh Elliott of Los Angeles. Ms. Elliott originally asked for \$45,000.00 for her 461.85 acres, but \$8,500.00 was allocated and used on December 21, 1927, to purchase the property which would become Benton Airpark. The funds were also used to purchase the Blue Gravel gold mine, (near the airpark off Buenaventura Boulevard) *the only gold mine in the United States owned by a city!*

Now that the property was purchased and the plans for Valley Air Service were established, *it was time to build an airport!* The landing strip was graded and oiled, a small hanger was built, and fuel service installed. A building was constructed for a weather station and passenger facilities. *In 1927, and the dawn of 1928, Redding California joined the cities and communities of the United States to have an airport!*

The year 1927 contained several other important milestones for our story.

In the early days of aviation anyone could be a pilot. There were no training programs, no restrictions on age. Anyone could build something that could fly and sell it to someone who wanted to take wings. Crashes were common. In 1927 The U.S. Department of Commerce had begun to construct beacon lights and navigation arrows every 30 miles through the Sacramento Valley and Sacramento River Canyon. Drawing upon the methods of marine navigation, airway beacons identified intermediate landing fields for emergencies or mechanical difficulties. This helped launch the U.S. Air Mail Service, then operated by the Post Office Department.



U. S. Weather Bureau building, Benton Field.

By 1930, it was reported that: "Night travel by air between Seattle, WA., and Los Angeles, CA, both north and south bound, over a lighted and well-equipped airway, has been made possible by the recent installation of aids to air navigation between Redding, CA and Seattle, on the San Francisco-Seattle airway, by the Aeronautics Branch. This section of the airway constituted the last link in the chain of revolving and flashing beacon lights; radio communication stations, automatic telegraph-typewriter circuits and lighted intermediate landing fields that remained to be forged to provide facilities for the safety and reliability of aircraft on a 24-hour basis between Seattle and Los Angeles."

And with that, Redding joined CAM #8. CAM, or Contract Air Mail, was the most significant era of development of commercial air service in the United States. The Contract Air Mail period began and ended with government legislation: The

Air Mail Act of 1925 (also known as the Kelly Act) authorized the United States Post Office Department to contract with commercial airlines to transport air mail.



CAM #8 covered San Diego to Seattle, and Pacific Air Transport had won the contract and eventually made Benton Field their headquarters. This was important to Redding, for example in the year 1932 a total of 317 aircraft carrying 816 persons had flown into Redding. Many of those aircraft and people were related to the commercial enterprises of Pacific Air Transport and helping Redding's economy.

Benton Field was also visited by some of aviation's elite in the early days. *Ernie Smith* and *Emory Bronte* (the first civilians to fly from the mainland to Hawaii), *Hap Arnold* (the U.S. Air Force's only 5 star General), and *James Doolittle* were guests at the airfield. *William Randolph Hearst* used Benton Field as a base when staying at his McCloud River home during the thirties.

The Namesake of Benton Field

Also in 1927, the namesake for Benton Field, *Lieutenant John Benton*, died at 30 years of age. He was the son of a Shasta County pioneer family. His father, Thomas Hart Benton, owned property at Turtle Bay and a sawmill at Shingletown. Lt. Benton was one of 10 pilots on a goodwill flight to 23 Central and South American countries. They would fly 5 Loening OA-1 amphibious aircraft, the expedition was known as the Pan American Goodwill Flight.

They left San Antonio, TX, on December 21, 1926, and the tragedy occurred over Buenos Aires when two of the planes collided mid-air: "As the aircraft prepared for landing, Lt. Benton went out on the wing to lower the landing gear by hand (the plane's landing gear had been damaged and could not be hand-cranked down by the pilot). To increase his freedom of movement, Benton chose not to wear a bulky parachute. As the formation descended to 1,500 feet, the Detroit (Benton's plane) accidentally drifted into the New York. The aircraft locked together and spun out of control. Maj. Dargue and Lt. Whitehead parachuted to safety. Rather than use his own parachute, Capt. Woolsley chose to stay with the helpless Lt. Benton, and they both perished when the Detroit hit the ground."



Lt. John Benton was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. The dedication of Benton Field occurred on the weekend of July 4, 1929, with Major General Gerald Clark Brant officiating. *In honor of Lt. John Benton, there were two airports named after him!* The other one was the Benton Airfield in Alameda, CA, which became Naval Air Station Alameda (now closed).

In the late 1940's it became apparent that Benton Field was not sufficient to support increased air traffic with larger, heavier planes. A new regional airport would be needed, and land was purchased jointly by the City of Redding and Shasta County, under a grant from the Works Project Administration, paving the way for what is now the Redding Municipal Airport.

Sources: Air Commerce Bulletin volume 2, number 7, October 1 1930 ; Defense Environmental Restoration Program, Formerly used Defense Sites, Redding-Shasta Army Air Field, Mark J. Denger; Air Force Magazine September 1985 ; Benton 60th (typewritten, author unknown)

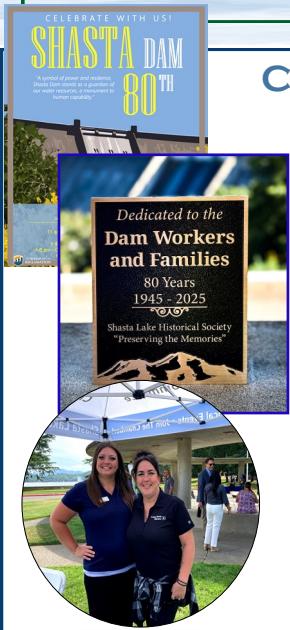


Benton Air Field



Woolsley and Benton with the "Detroit"

HAPPENINGS



Jantina and Angel hosted the Chamber's table.

CELEBRATE 80 YEARS WITH US! FRIDAY, JUNE 20TH, 2025 WE DID JUST THAT!

IT WAS A GRAND BEAUTIFUL DAY AT THE DAM! Dignitaries and guests wore smiling faces as the magnificent Shasta Dam was spilling water in the background. Shasta Lake Chamber of Commerce held a mixer in the Rotunda. Speeches were given by our City Vice Mayor, *Greg Watkins* and USBR dignitaries from Washington, DC who also presented a gift to the "Grand Dam Kid" *Janice Powell*, recognizing the damworkers in her family who were present at the first and last pour on Shasta Dam. *Darlene Brown* presented the Bureau with the SLHHS historical plaque commemorating the event. Frank Crowe's great nephew, *Frank Crowe*, attended with his wife, Sandy, and a special guided tour of the mighty Shasta Dam was offered to all present!



Having fun with *Frank & Sandy Crowe* visiting our museum.



S T O R I E S

Planning for the 250th Anniversary of our Nation next year, on display will be Civil War era handmade dolls and their unique story from Nancy Leslie's collection, pictured on the right.

"Steve" Stevenson, a Millville pioneer family descendant (story in the Millville Society book) said his great grandfather, Issac, was a pirate who jumped ship and served during the Civil War. Steve & his son, Tim, donated farm equipment from the homestead.

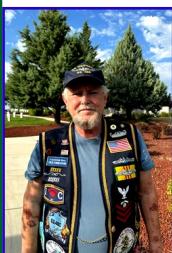


Donated by Judy Barbera, a "Redding City Bakery" barrel.

Thanks to Linda Beaver and the Methodist Church, we have an original pew from the Boomtown era.

It is with sad hearts that we write about the loss of two of our volunteer friends.

STEVE MORGAN 5/3/43 - 7/27/25 Steve was a proud Navy Veteran, a submarine man whose service story was in an earlier newsletter. He grew up in Vallejo but as a young man, spent his summers here with extended family in the Summit City area. In later years, he and his lovely wife, Pam (currently our City Mayor) moved to this area. They became SLHHS benefactors and within a short time were immersed in the community, donating their time, labor & love to its betterment. Steve's 18 year battle with prostate cancer didn't stop him from staying involved. The list is too long to name them all but a few are: County Supervisor District 4; Boards: SL Fire Protection, SLHHS Financial Advisory, First 5 Shasta, LAFCO and loving soccer, SL Youth Soccer League as coach, referee and President. So many accolades, Steve is truly missed. A Celebration of Life will be held at LF Community Center in our city on September 20th at 2 pm.



LINDA (SPEAR) STOUT 11/11/47- 7/27/25 Linda was "A Dam Kid". She was born In Redding and grew up in Central Valley surrounded by cousins, aunts & uncles. She and Mike Daniels used to joke at the museum that they were related to just about everybody in our city. Linda was a 1965 CVHS graduate, a Damboree Queen and then performed with the marching band at Chico State. She was a paraprofessional at Rother School, loved working with children and her husband, Jimmie and her family were her whole life. She is truly missed and leaves one of her many talents with us in the unique crocheted items she made for our gift shop.



Memorial Donations in memory of Steve and Linda by Bill & Darlene Brown.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- Joan Fackrell

Hello friends,

What a joy it has been to see our museum buzzing with life this year! From tours and community gatherings to quiet visits where someone rediscovers a piece of their family's past — every moment reminds us why this place matters.

Our museum is more than exhibits and artifacts; it's a place to share stories, celebrate traditions, and connect generations.

I am so grateful for the many hands and hearts that make this possible. Our volunteers, members, and supporters are the backbone of everything we do. Whether you helped greet visitors, cared for collections, donated items or simply shared your love of history with a neighbor, you've played a part in keeping our community's story alive.

Right now, we need volunteers for November/December/January on Friday, First Saturday each month and Monday from 9-1pm. In January, we will be making a new Summer schedule with new days and hours. If you've ever thought about getting involved, now is the perfect time. You'll be helping preserve our history and have fun along the way.

Thank you for being part of our museum family. We couldn't do it without you, and we can't wait to see what the next chapter brings!

**THANK YOU FOR RENEWING MEMBERSHIPS** *You are why we are!*

BENEFACTORS: Betty Trapp Felch/Redding; Jeanie Jennings Fogle/Veneta OR; Lynda Hays/Shasta Lake; Patricia Horner Holmes/Redding; Joan Black Jennings/Shasta Lake; Rod & Debbie Kelly/Shasta Lake; Sam Sowards/Dayton, NV; Tammy Stewart/Phoenix AZ; Connie Strohmayer/Redding

INDIVIDUALS: Celeste Draisner/Redding; Sephanie Griffen/Shasta Lake; Carole Burge Humiston/Redding; Richard Terry/Angels Camp and Andy Thorne/Cottonwood.

FAMILY: Carolyn & Philip Peterson/Shasta Lake

WELCOME NEW BENEFATOR: Michael H Payne/Redding (Michael is a Sheriff's Citizen Patrol volunteer).



Thank you to Benefactor, **Bert Boothroyd** for the \$400.00 donation in memory of Board Member, **Mike Daniels**. From Bert: "Mike was a neighbor of mine while growing up in what was then, Central Valley. Mike was 6 years younger, but his brother, **Billy Daniels**, was my age and we were best friends in High School. (Bert was CVHS/SHS Class '58)

Thank you to Benefactor **Sam Sowards** CVHS '59 for adding an extra \$100 donation to his dues.



WE HAVE GREAT NEWS! Thanks to our grant writer and treasurer, **Kay Kobe**, we were awarded a \$2500 grant from Redding Rancheria towards the purchase of new computers - Thank you Redding Rancheria and it only gets better.

The heart and soul of our membership is the growing list of Benefactors and their awesome support. Thanks to **Alex & Krista Barbosa** in Texas for an earlier \$3000 donation (in memory of Marlys Pederson Barbosa) and recently, CVHS '59 & '61 classmates **Gary & Marylin Bohn** in Nebraska for a \$2500 donation! Combining the grants and donations, we will soon be purchasing new computers and a printer! OMG, are they ever needed! Long overdue, they will enable us to continue our goal to put our collection online and provide decent printed copies of material.

Like everyone living in CA, due to the horrific fires, our insurance costs have doubled along with everything else. Continuous thanks to the **Shasta Lake City Council & staff** for supporting us. Thank you for awarding a \$2500 grant to help defray our many expenditures as part of the program budget offered to qualifying community organizations who contribute to the city's betterment.

Frugal, prudent and fiscally responsible, we are so very grateful for the above named donations.

Please patronize our renewing BUSINESS members:

LAKE SHASTA CAVERNS - Next newsletter will feature the WWII transport "Elsie", owned and operated by the Caverns. It was used on Shasta Lake this summer ferrying the Firefighters & equipment!

LIVINGSTONE ELECTRIC/SHASTA LAKE - owned by Angel & Scotty Dyer. Angel also volunteers as the SL Chamber of Commerce Director.



Shasta Lake Heritage & Historical Society
P.O. Box 562 Shasta Lake, CA 96019
Visitors Center: *Boomtown Museum*
1525 Median St., Shasta Lake
530-275-3995
501c3 non-profit organization

IN MEMORIUM



Kathleen "Kathy" Frank - 12/29/44 - 7/13/2025 Husband John, children Daniel, Linda and the late John S. Frank. A lifetime of faith, love of family, and service to the community in our city. She and John owned the Construction Firm KMF in our city before retiring and moving to operate the family's resort, Frank's Lodge in Minnesota.



Jim Goodwin - 9/10/43 - 6/1/2025 Veteran, US Army. Wife Pennie (Johnson) CVHS Class '64, Children CVHS grads Denette and Donald. Jim grew up in the Mountain Gate area. As a Real Estate broker with Pennie, he owned and operated Blue Ribbon Properties for 20+ years before leaving and eventually returning "home" to this area.

EVENTS AND DATES TO REMEMBER!

SEPTEMBER 11TH - 9/11 Remembrance Candlelight Ceremony
6 - 7:30pm - at SL Fire Hall, 4126 Ashby Court.
OCTOBER 3RD - Our Annual Dinner - *details inside.*
OCTOBER 19TH - Halloween Carnival, Clair Engle Park. 12-9pm.
OCTOBER 31ST - Shasta Lake Trunk or Treat 6-8 pm City Hall/
Community Center Parking Lot.
NOVEMBER 8TH - Annual Veterans Day Parade 10am in our city
NOVEMBER 15TH - Community Holiday Bazaar hosted by Non-profits
and Churches. Doors open Saturday 8am-2pm

For more information visit city calendar: cityofshastalake.gov

Love history? Become a member.

Membership dues are renewable January of each year.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

NEWSLETTER - email OR paper?

Please check the applicable boxes:

Individual \$10 Family \$25

Business \$25 Benefactor \$100

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