



Volume 3, No. 1

Antelope Valley Rural Museum

MARCH 2019

**AVRM EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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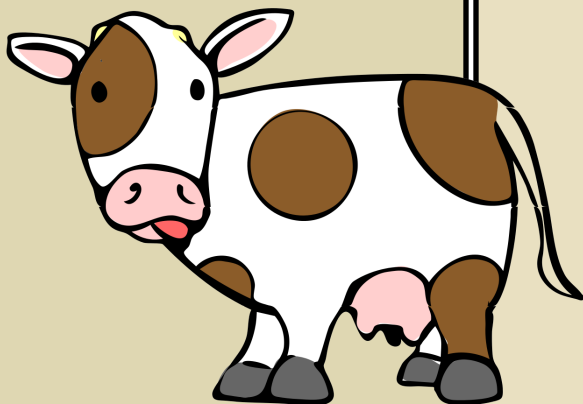
Jerry Sterk—Ag. & Dairy Research

Kristi Word—Student Field Trips

**COMING UP APRIL 10, 2019**

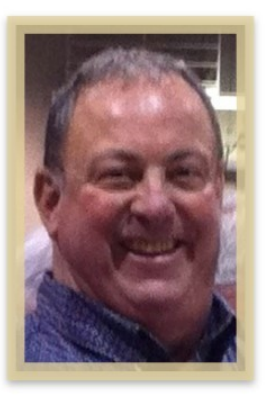
**L.A. County Farm Bureau**

**KIDS AG DAY!**



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**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

Giovanni “G” Simi

Another year has come and gone. The plans for the new building are going back and forth to Sacramento for approvals and it looks like we are almost done with the approval process. This means we will soon be going to bid for the construction of the building.

We have had our Applebee’s pancake breakfast which was very successful. Over 100 people attended and some members even drove some of their restored vehicles. In particular, I took pictures of a beautiful ‘55 T-Bird. It was a fun morning listening to stories and catching up with the supporters of the museum. Two of the Fair Directors were present, showing their support for the museum so a big “Thank You” is in order to all of our supporters!

Coming up on April 10<sup>th</sup> is Kids Ag Day sponsored by the Farm Bureau. This is a wonderful day to see kids learning about the diverse Agriculture World. I understand there are over 950 kids coming so we will have our work cut out for us but, it will be well worth it. This event has grown from 600 kids to 950 plus in a couple of years and I think it can grow to double that easily with more help.

Looking forward to the bidding and groundbreaking for the new building and another great year with such a great group of people.

## RAWLINGS' REVIEW



**Volunteers** are the most necessary tool needed to create and maintain the AVR. I am so grateful for the dedication and selflessness our volunteers demonstrate year after year. In 2018 these volunteers logged 2,755 hours working at the wide variety of tasks from serving on the Board of Directors, to working as docents, doing research or creating new displays, cleaning the museum, planning and setting up for events, keeping the multitude of legal applications and forms current, or just reaching out in support of the museum. It has taken over 32,250 hours to make the AVR what it is today and prepare for the future. **Thanks** are due to each person who gave their time!

On January 3<sup>rd</sup> we lost one of our most spirited and generous volunteers and donors. **Carman Losey** always stepped up to help. She didn't just show up, she brought her own personal mix to clean our display glass (refusing to use any of that crummy Windex) and an entourage of Losey Family helpers including Glenn I, II, & III. Our hearts go out to the Losey Family. Their loss is also our loss.

As the **AVR Finance Officer**, I am always looking for fundraising opportunities. The museum is now registered with Amazon as a recognized charity. They will donate .05% of every purchase you make to the museum if you will please sign in to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) before you purchase. You will be asked to select your charity. **Please select the Antelope Valley Rural Museum of History each time you purchase.** It does not cost you anything but about 30 seconds of your time.

If you are receiving this Newsletter by US Mail and have an email address, please notify me at [avmuseum@verizon.net](mailto:avmuseum@verizon.net). That will save the museum the expense of postage. We currently email to about 325 people and snail mail to over 50.

**Thanks** to those who supported our **Flapjack Fundraiser** at Applebee's in January. You helped boost our Building Fund by over \$1,000! Pretty good considering we only expect a profit of \$500. See page 6 for photos.

**Looking forward to a fantastic 2019. After 10 years of dreaming and planning, our permanent home is really going to happen!!!**

Bill Rawlings

## UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2019

**MARCH 2:** Board meeting the first Saturday of the month. Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

**MARCH 16:** Museum open the third Saturday of the month from 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

**APRIL 6:** Board meeting the first Saturday of the month. Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

**APRIL 10: KIDS AG DAY** 9 a.m.—1 p.m. **Wednesday.** Need volunteers!

**APRIL 20:** Museum open the third Saturday of the month from 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

**MAY 4:** Board meeting the first Saturday of the month. Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

**MAY 5: AVR at the Antelope Valley Flea Market** at the AV Fairgrounds. Hours are 7 a.m.—4 p.m. on **Sunday.**

**MAY 18:** Museum open the third Saturday of the month from 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

**JUNE 1:** Board meeting the first Saturday of the month. Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.



The **May 5<sup>th</sup> Spring Flea Market** is another way to support our New Building Fund as we near our September Ground Breaking for Phase I (date TBD), we are now raising money for Phase II. There will be a lot of great items for purchase! Just look for the big white AVR trailer.





## CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

California was the leader in the movement to address the lack of history regarding the women who helped build this nation. A independent organization consisting of parents and educators began a drive in 1978 and established a Women's History Week in March of that year.

President Jimmy Carter proclaimed March 2–8 National Women's History Week in his address to the nation in 1980:

*From the first settlers who came to our shores, from the first American Indian families who befriended them, men and women have worked together to build this nation. Too often the women were unsung and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength, and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well.*

In March of 1987 the first National Women's History Month was declared by Congress.

Here in the Antelope Valley we have an abundance of women who have made their mark and contributed to the rich history of this area. From the women who traveled over the harsh trails by covered wagon, to the women who are a integral part of our history today, we honor them all as we take a look back at some of the individuals who helped shape the Antelope Valley as we know it today.

### **Alice J. (Lyon) Rutledge 1857-1940 – First female realtor in Antelope Valley, 1890s. Nicknamed "The Mother of Antelope Valley."**



Alice went by "A. J." so no one would know she was a female.

She was born 1857 in New York, and died in 1940 in Los Angeles.

She was first married to Oliver Adams and had a son, O.P. Adams who was also in real estate. She married Joseph Rutledge, both residents of Lancaster in July 1892. She did not want a divorce but wanted to be a "sole trader." A sole trader is "a woman, who having a worthless husband, gets permission of the court to do business in her own name."

In 1900, Benjamin F. Carter bought lots in the Lancaster townsite (totaling 6,000 acres) at \$5 per acre. A deal was made through Alice Rutledge to help Carter acquire unsold land. Alice stipulated that 10 acres of land needed to be donated for a cemetery. The deal was made but County officials decided five acres was enough. In later years another five acres was added to the Lancaster Cemetery. Her son Frank Rutledge followed her footsteps and became a prominent real estate broker in the AV.

**Jane Reynolds 1864-1949 – In 1937 donated seven acres of land for the first public park in Antelope Valley.** She felt sorry for the "barefoot children standing around on the hot sidewalk waiting for their parents to shop." Jane came to the AV in 1896 from Ireland (in 1888) as a nurse-companion to a doctor's invalid wife. She worked as a cook at the Western Hotel where she also lived when she first moved to Lancaster.



*Jane Porter Reynolds at 117 W. 9th St. in Lancaster.  
Photo courtesy of Tami Kelley*

**Myrtie Webber 1868-1978 (110 years old) – Owner/Proprietor of the Western Hotel for nearly 50 years.** Myrtie arrived in Lancaster in 1906 (for her health), a middle-aged widow. She was one of Lancaster's earliest supporters. Chamber of Commerce meetings were held at the Western Hotel. Myrtie helped with the AV Alfalfa Festival and was a charter member of the Lancaster Woman's Club.

**Anna "Mom" Evert 1864-1947– Anna was a midwife who turned her husband's shoe store/saloon into a hospital (Lancaster Blvd. & Beech).** She arrived in Lancaster with her husband in the early 1890s. Anna established an ice cream parlor and worked as a laundress and also delivered babies. In the early 1900s Anna's "hospital" was the only medical facility for at least 20 years.

## MUDGET/MUDGETT PIONEERS

*While working at Lancaster Cemetery you never know who will walk through the door on any given day. It is always a pleasure to meet someone who is as captivated with local history as I am. Since working at the cemetery for almost 12 years now, I have come across some interesting people and listened to their stories.*

*Gary Fredericksen and his wife Kathryn Ardyn Stanfield Fredericksen walked through the door in July of 2009, hoping to find their family. Katherine's grandfather was Elvin Leroy Mudgett and Eliza Ann Reed Mudget was her great-grandmother. Other family members were Myrum James and Walter Mudgett, Dolly, Mary Celia and Will Mudget. Some members of the family spelled their surname Mudgett while others used Mudget.*

*Of course, I am always happy to help and always ask for more information which Gary provided via e-mail after his return home. Gary commented in his letter, "Thanks for such a well-kept cemetery and for being so helpful. It means so much to us to be able to find these graves and to celebrate their lives." And that is what we all should do—celebrate their lives and the history of those who have passed on before their stories are lost. Since March is Women's History Month, I thought this would be a great story to share and bring Eliza Ann's story back to life. This gives a glimpse of what this strong woman of the 1800s must have endured. I will have more stories in the next issue about Eliza's children.*



**Eliza Ann (Reed) Mudget** was born February 12, 1852 in Texas. In 1865 she was abandoned by her mother and new stepfather and married Elvin Mudget in Madera, California. She was the niece of his best friend and not yet 14 years old.

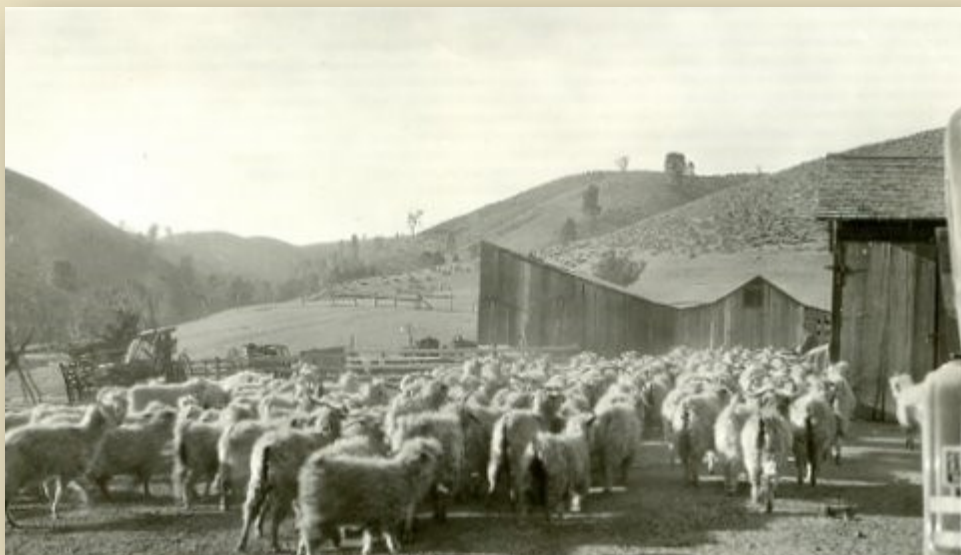
Elvin and Eliza had four children together: Elvin Leroy in 1873; William "Will" in 1877; Mary Celia in 1881; and Viola Evelyn in 1889. Because Elvin was a hunter and trapper as well as a cattleman, he would be gone or weeks leaving Eliza to care for their home and animals. They eventually separated but never divorced.

When they lost their cattle to disease, the family scattered. Elvin took Mary Celia to live with his sister, Almeda (Mudget) Frakes, who was living at Lake Elizabeth. When Eliza found out where Mary Celia was she sold her place in Fresno County and moved herself and daughter Viola to Mojave where she took to washing for a living. One of her customers offered her the management of the stage station at Indian Wells, on the road to Bishop.

Eliza needed milk for Mary and Viola so one of her patrons who had a herd of Angora goats (raised for mohair) gave her a couple of nannies. She soon found that there was money to be made in the goat business. She homesteaded another 80 acres in Little Lake (Inyo County, California north of the Antelope Valley) and put all her money into goats.

She continued to manage the stage station. When the City of Los Angeles bought up most of the land and water, she saw that she had to move her goats. In 1907 she hired herders to help her and drove the goats from Little Lake to Camp Cady. She realized, once there, that there wasn't enough feed so she reversed course and drove them to the Antelope Valley. She rented a place so her ewes could have their young. As soon as they were old enough to travel she sold the goats to a man in Tehachapi.

In 1908, Eliza along with her son Will and daughter Viola, left the Antelope Valley to make their home in Oregon. One winter was all they could stand. They returned to west Antelope Valley and lived the balance of their lives there. Eliza Ann Mudget died August 10, 1941 at the age of 88.



*Eliza Ann's Angora goat farm—Antelope Valley's westside.*



## REMARKABLE WOMEN OF THE ANTELOPE VALLEY

### MARY (INCE) MCPHERSON

It's extremely difficult to pick any one woman to single out as remarkable. I never met Mary McPherson, but her nephew, Milt Stark, lovingly spoke about her and always said what an exceptional person she was.

**Mary Ince** was born June 7, 1891 in Hill, Texas and passed away at the age of 98 on November 11, 1989 in Lancaster, California. She wrote a book entitled, "Looking Back," with stories about growing up among the rolling hills of Texas in a farm house. She was the sixth child of eleven children.



*Mary McPherson (front, center) Class of 1930*

She was inspired to become a teacher when in 1899, a remarkable woman—Miss Ella Peck—provided the inspiration for what would become a lifelong career for Mary. "She so impressed me that I said I wanted to be a teacher like her."

Mary attended Southeastern State Normal School in Durant, Oklahoma. She took the teacher's exam and received her credentials to teach at the age of 19. Mary was selected to teach in Calera, Oklahoma, just south of Durant.

"The teacher of today does not realize what an easy task they have with a class of 25 or 30 with everything supplied and a helper. In this first school I enrolled 76 third and fourth grade children. About one third of the class had part of their text books needed for their work. This meant I had to write their lessons on the black board. Their seats were made for one. I had two in each seat, with enough chairs placed along the wall for the remainder of the children. The situation was bad enough, but in addition the fifth grade teacher had two boys she could not control in her room of 35, so I got the two boys making me have a class of 78."

For teaching the class of 78 children Mary received \$50 a month. She taught at several schools within the area, then in 1920 she made her way to California with her sister and family. Once in California Mary lived in several places, but settled in the Los Angeles area. She was invited by a cousin to visit where he lived in the Antelope Valley. Mary's uncle lived in the Wilsona area. It took them seven hours to drive from Los Angeles to the Antelope Valley! There were no paved roads at the time north of Newhall/Saugus area.

While visiting her uncle she met with some members of the school board. "They had been told I was a teacher, so asked if I would teach the Wilsona School the next year. I said I had no California credentials. They insisted I see the County School Superintendent to see about getting this taken care of during the summer." Mary took the course and passed the examination and was now a school teacher in California.

This would be the beginning of her over 40 years of teaching. She would start in a one-room school house in Wilsona and teach at several schools across the Valley. Mary married Taylor McPherson in 1925 at the age of 34. She homesteaded 320 acres of land and donated three acres for a school site in the Wilsona School District.

Throughout her teaching years she taught over 2,000 children. She was dedicated to teaching and also was a leader of the Esperanza 4-H Club for 12 years. She was a charter member of the Lancaster Society of the Delta Kappa Gamma, an international society for women teachers whose members are selected "on the basis of outstanding service for the betterment of humanity." Mary also taught Bible class for 33 years at the Church of Christ in Lancaster.

"After having been in the classroom for 42 years, at the close of the school year in 1956, I decided it was time to retire. A beautiful party was held at the Hairgrove home in the Westside School District. A memory book was given to me with many letters of "Way Back When" from parents, pupils and friends. I was presented with a rocking chair, a lamp, and a table with many cards of good wishes. In 1957 I was asked to do some substitute teaching, the result being I substituted for the next 11 years. This being my record 53 years."



*Nephew Milt Stark with painting of Mary.  
Photo by Dayle DeBry taken in Leona Valley.*



# Fundraising flapjack event slated

Valley Press

LANCASTER — The Antelope Valley Rural Museum will conduct its second annual Flapjack Fundraiser from 8 to 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 19, at the Lancaster Applebee's restaurant, 43545 10th St West.

For \$10 diners can enjoy an all-you-can-eat breakfast of pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, potatoes, orange juice and coffee. Tickets are available from any museum board member, or by calling Financial Officer Bill Rawlings at 661-478-4841. Tickets also can be purchased at the door the day of the event. For every ticket sold, the museum keeps \$5.

The dream of a permanent building to house the museum at the AV Fairgrounds is becoming a reality through ongoing fundraising.

"The plans are completed, submitted for approval, and will soon enter the bid process. We expect to break ground for the new building this year," Rawlings said.

The museum has fulfilled its \$250,000 commitment toward the building, which was matched by the Friends of the Fair.

"We are now beginning to raise money for Phase II, to complete the entire project as planned," Rawlings said.

The Rural Museum, which began as the Rural Olympics Hall of Fame, is dedicated to preserving and

showcasing the history of the Antelope Valley.

Exhibits include aerospace, military, farming, mining, and pioneers, settlers and explorers, as well as first responders. The museum is entirely operated by volunteers and all artifacts were donated or are on loan.

The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the first and third Saturdays of every month. There is no admission fee.

To get to the museum, enter the fairgrounds, 2551 West Ave. H, through Gate 3, just west of the Watch and Wager building. Continue on the road to the third building. There is no parking fee.

## 2019 FLAPJACK FUNDRAISER LANCASTER APPLEBEE'S JANUARY 19, 2019

A good time was had by all! Thanks to everyone who volunteered to help serve our wonderful AVRМ supporters. We appreciate all who helped and everyone who attended.

Thanks to Lancaster Applebee's for their continued support of the AVRМ.



*Left: Jeff Godde, G Simi and Bill Rawlings greet at the door.*

*Right: Luci Pickus serves a delicious pancake breakfast to a table of supporters.*

*Below middle: Jerry Sterk serves a mean cup of coffee!*

*Below left: Dayle DeBry, Luci Pickus, G & Janine Simi, John & Susan Knapp, Bill & Pam Rawlings.*

*Below right: Lynn DuPratt, Susan Knapp & Kristi Word enjoy a yummy breakfast.*







2019 Membership Application for the **Antelope Valley Rural Museum**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

2019 Annual Dues \$20/person \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest as a volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

Tax deductible Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Bronze = \$100 Silver = \$1,000 Gold = \$10,000*

**Please make checks payable to:** AV Rural Museum

**Mail to:** AVRМ P.O. Box 1316, Lancaster, CA 93584

Donate and pay dues via PayPal or credit card on our website: [www.avmuseum.org](http://www.avmuseum.org)



**IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH  
A FIRST FOR A FEMALE TEST PILOT**



Major Rachel Winiecki, 461st Flight Test Squadron F-35 test pilot, shakes hands with Lockheed F-35 crew rep Dustin DeBry at Edwards Air Force Base. Major Winiecki is the first female test pilot to lead an F-35 mission. Dustin is the son of Dayle DeBry, AVRМ Director of Military and Aviation.

Website: [www.avmuseum.org](http://www.avmuseum.org)  
[www.facebook.com/Antelope Valley Rural Museum](http://www.facebook.com/AntelopeValleyRuralMuseum)

Mailing address:

AVRM  
P.O. Box 1316  
Lancaster, CA 93584



Contact us:  
[avmuseum@verizon.net](mailto:avmuseum@verizon.net)

*Donate and pay dues via PayPal and credit card on our website*

### DONATIONS

Pickus Challenge 2019 Building Fund	\$1,000
Honor the Past Plaques and Display Sponsorship (Custom laser cut wood plaques with Personal memorial or message)	\$1,500
Bronze Sponsorship Donor	\$100
Silver Sponsorship Donor	\$1000
Gold Sponsorship Donor	\$10,000

### ANTELOPE VALLEY RURAL MUSEUM GIFT STORE

Annual membership dues	\$20.00
Hats—all baseball hats (Members)	\$10.00
Hats—all baseball hats (Non-members)	\$15.00
Lancaster, CA Through Time	\$25.00
History books—all books are priced at:	
Images of America “Lancaster”	\$20.00
Images of America “Palmdale”	
Legendary Locals of the AV	
(Above AV history books signed by Norma Gurba)	
P-38 Lightning	
Images of America “Edwards Air Force Base”	
DVDs Listed DVDs are priced at:	\$20.00
Jane Pinheiro Wildflowers NEW!	
Yester Years—AV History 1876—1942	
1987 Rural Olympics (narrated)	
Evolution of the Rural Olympics book (On DVD—Excel & Word Doc format)	

The AVRM is a 501(c)(3) public charity  
EIN: 27-1002922

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The AVRM will honor the history of the Antelope Valley with documentation, preservation, exhibition, and education.

Antelope Valley Rural Museum  
P.O. Box 1316  
Lancaster, CA 93584