Fast Kern Visions October 2016



Plane Crazy Saturdays

On cover: Randsburg General Store NAWCWD shows off at Pentagon

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Publisher John Watkins

Editor Aaron Crutchfield

Advertising Director Paula McKay

Advertising Sales Rodney Preul Gerald Elford Robert Aslanian

Writers Aaron Crutchfield Jack Barnwell NAWCWD Public Affairs Joyce Nash

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

New owners, new dreams, same old style

at the Randsburg General Store

JACK BARNWELL/DAILY INDEPENDENT

Brad Myers pours a refreshing beverage for a thirsty customer on a recent day at the Randsburg General Store.

BY JACK BARNWELL The Daily Independent

S tep inside the Randsburg General Store, one of the oldest cornerstones in the small, living ghost town, and most people won't notice a change to the iconic red building's service for the most part.

The store's interior remains very much the same: its rustic appearance resonating back to its early days in the then-booming mining town. Long tables sit open for people to come in and have a meal, a cup of coffee or its old-fashioned handmade sodas.

In all respects, the landmark on Butte Avenue in the former mining community-turned-living ghost town continues without skipping a beat since it first opened its doors in 1896 as a drug store/pharmacy. The significant change is its new owners Brad Myers and Carol Dyer.

A Friday afternoon in early September was no different. At first, it was just a couple chowing down on their way through, and Carol Dean, one of its employees, in the kitchen.

And the new owners, who happily greeted people coming through the door.

New owners

The San Fernando Valley residents purchased the General Store back in July, after owning two other businesses in Randsburg for three years.







JACK BARNWELL/DAILY INDEPENDENT

The Randsburg General Store's exterior remains unchanged for the most part, with a red, rustic look. The new owners are making some improvements.



In addition to owning the General Store, they also own MadInk Designs, followed by MadInk Motorcycle and Surf Shop, and more recently The Hole in the Wall Antique Shop.

"It's the only surf shop in Randsburg," Myers quipped.

Myers said he and Dyer don't live in Randsburg. They commute from San Fernando Valley to Randsburg, stay Thursday through Sunday to operate the General Store (and close it on Monday for repairs) and their other businesses, then pack up and head back home Tuesday and Wednesday.

"The store is open Thursday through Sunday right now, and we stay Monday to do work and repair on the store because it's over 100 years old," Myers said.

When they're not in the Los Angeles area, they're staying in a small apartment adjacent to the store.

Dyer noted without a doubt that most people come for the old-fashioned soda machine and handmade sodas that partially makes the General Store iconic.

The friendly couple is seeing a frequent stream of customers, many of them coming from outside Randsburg or nearby Johannesburg.

"We always ask how people found out about us and it turns out a lot of people are Googling interesting things to do in the Mojave Desert, or what is there on [Highway 395]," Dyer said.

Myers chimed in that the General Store usually comes up a lot of the time. In addition, the General Store remains a regular destination for Randsburg's small population of fewer than 70 people, nearby Johannesburg and Red Mountain.

The pair aren't strangers to Randsburg, aside from owning their businesses. Dyer has been riding dirt bikes in the area around Randsburg for over 40 years; Myers for 25 years.

Though they don't live in Randsburg full time, they acknowledge the area has grown on them.

"We're escaping the rat race," said Dyer.

Myers agreed, adding there's an appeal absent in the light-polluted Los Angeles area.

"You can actually see real stars out here," Myers said, adding jokingly, "The only stars you see [in Los Angeles] are on Hollywood Boulevard, or driving by in a limo."

"It definitely grows on you and there are a lot of nice people who live here," he noted.

New ownership reflects a micro-renaissance

They've noted that in the last decade, dirt biking and off-roading activities, in general, have grown significantly.

While Dyer notes that people have always done so, at least for the last 50 years, it's expanded in the last decade.

"It's a very family-oriented sport," Dyer said.

Myers noted that the General Store possesses that commonality.

"It's a place where families can come to grab a hamburger after a day of activity and a soda," Myers said.

And they've seen people invest in Randsburg in what might be deemed a miniature renaissance. And then there are the desert rats, as they note, who make the former mining town their home.

"It's mostly people in their mid- to late-50s who have been successful and are investing in Randsburg for their retirement and future," Myers said.

Dyer added that the new ownership's goal is to bring the General Store back to its "olden days as a general meeting place for the community," something for which they have support from the community.

"We have regulars who come in for their coffee, sit here for a couple of hours and shoot the you-know-what, and bring the community together," Dyer said.

Changes for the good



JACK BARNWELL/DAILY INDEPENDENT Carol Dyer, left, and Brad Myers stand behind the bar of the Randsburg General Store in Randsburg. Dyer and Myers took over the store July 1 and have positive, ambitious plans for the historic icon. The old-fashioned sodas, made by hand, will still be the same, as they inherited the recipes and techniques when they acquired the business.

Some things will change for the General Store, however, according to the new owners.

While the old-fashioned soda fountain and tradition of handmade sodas ("a moving process" as Myers describes it because of moving from station to station) will continue, the menu will be downsized.

"One of our goals is to put out food in a timely manner," Dyer said. The couple said the reduced menu will aid make service more efficient.

"The stuff that was on the menu originally is good, but there were just so many things on the menu that it took too much time to prepare," Dyer said.

Myers noted that if a long-time patron came in and asked for a staple no longer on the menu, they won't hesitate to make it.

"But the reality is that in order to run a good quality restaurant, you've got to have a limited menu," Myers said.

Another ambition includes turning it into a true general store and offering a selection of goods and groceries for locals who aren't able to make it into Ridgecrest or another nearby city.

The continued tradition of good customer service will always be the new owners' top priority. This is shown in the slight flexibility of hours around opening and closing.

Both have taken on the task with enthusiasm, as shown by the way they greet their customers. Not too soon after sitting down for an interview with the Daily Independent, Dyer answered the phone to provide directions.

Five minutes later, a large San Bernardino family bound for Mammoth swept in. Dyer popped out to greet them and take a family photo in front of the General Store's red, old West exterior. Soon the family took a seat at the bar in front of the soda fountain, and were ordering up a variety of drinks which Dyer and employee Carol Dean did in style.



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Randsburg General Store employee Carol Dean, left, serves a handmade cherry bomb to a young customer in Randsburg Friday, Sept. 2. The store, while under new ownership, continues its tradition of old-fashioned service.

As they sat, Myers shared some anecdotes and some tips about what to see in Randsburg.

Another family, also on a road trip, entered the small community off Highway 395, and ambled around exploring the store.

"We sell happy here," Myers said. "We're here to help locals and visitors have a good time."

About the Randsburg General Store

Where: 35 Butte Ave, Randsburg, CA 93554 Contact: (760) 374-2143 Open: Thurs-Sun, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Website: http://randsburggeneralstore.com

The Randsburg General Store was initially a drug store built on the current site in 1896 by Nicholas N. Miller and called the Randsburg Drug Store. Two fires occurred at the store in 1898.

The store was sold to 20-year-old George W. Turner in 1900. In 1903, one of the mining community's large fires destroyed the store. Turner rebuilt the store in 1904, also the Year of the Soda Fountain's Arrival, which was purchased in Boston.

In 1905, R.S. Cheney of Los Angeles buys the store, followed by a successive list of owners from 1916 to present. In 1938, W.A. Hankammer purchased the business and called it Jones Drug Company, the last pharmacist to own it.

In 1949, George and Connie Post (Hankammer's daughter) buy the store and calls it The Randsburg General Store, where it goes through more ownership changes.

Despite fires, ownership changes, and the mining boom and bust of Randsburg, the store has operated continuously since 1896. **Source:** Randsburg General Store online



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224 E Ridgecrest Blvd. - Ridgecrest, CA 93555 - 1-760-375-4481 www.ridgecrestca.com or m.ridgecrestca.com or facebook.com/thedailyindependent From left, Dr. Paul Goodman, Dr. Heather Meylemans, and Dr. Joseph Tsang are Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division employees who recently showed off their work in research during a Naval Innovative Science and Engineering Expo held at the Pentagon.

NAWCWD shows off innovative work at the Pentagon

AWCWD employees from China Lake showcased some of their most innovative research with nanoparticles, supercapacitors, and fire-resistant polymers at a Naval Innovative Science and Engineering Expo held at the Pentagon earlier this year.

Hosted by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition), the April expo allowed scientists and engineers within the Naval Research and Development Establishment, which is comprised of Warfare Centers, Systems Centers, and the Naval Research Lab, to share their ideas for improving Navy and Marine Corps capabilities.

"The NISE Expo was a great opportunity for our folks to demonstrate the progress they are making in various areas of research to advance naval technology," said NAWCWD Executive Director Joan Johnson. "There is a lot of valuable work going on here, and this expo helped enhance the visibility of the technical, hands-on, in-house expertise we have at NAWCWD."

Dr. Joseph Tsang, Dr. Heather Meylemans, and Dr. Paul Goodman represented NAWCWD among nearly 50 presentations at the expo.

"After the expo, I was in a meeting with Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition Mr. Sean Stackley and he commented specifically about Drs. Joe Tsang, Heather Meylemans, and Paul Goodman and their work," said Scott O'Neil, former NAWCWD executive director who is currently serving as a special advisor to Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Test and Evaluation Dr. John Burrow. "They all represented NAWCWD, NAVAIR and the Navy research and development community extremely well."

Dr. Tsang gave an overview of his work on micro-scale calorimetry measurements of new composite resins. The objective of his basic research is to gain a better understanding of structure-property relationships of resins, and correlate and predict their thermo-oxidative properties as well as their fire-resistant properties in fiber-reinforced composite structures. So far, good correlations have been obtained in demonstrating this concept using high char yield resins as a barrier ply on carbon fiber laminates.

Stackley and Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus spent some time with Meylemans learning about her work with smart sensors and coatings made from florescent nanoparticles. Her research focuses on developing nanoparticle substrates to be used for a variety of applications from environmental metal detection to safety coatings.

"Mr. Stackley was especially interested in the quantum dot nanoparticles, which we have already synthesized and characterized," said Meylemans, who determined that fluorescence changes are detectable by eye, so there is no need for expensive equipment. These nanoparticles can also be incorporated into polymers for fluorescent coating applications.

"The expo was a great opportunity to engage with a lot of Department of Defense leaders about our projects," she said. "I made several good contacts who indicated interest in collaboration and possible funding."

Goodman wowed expo attendees with an explanation of how he fabricated carbon electrodes from cow bones. His basic research is dedicated to improving naval power systems by developing new supercapacitor components and designs.

"Events like this give us a chance to show off our capabilities, and also find out what issues are of specific importance to the people in charge," Goodman said. "Knowing that people like Secretary Mabus and Under Secretary of Defense Kendall have enough interest in our work to come and hear about it provides motivation to keep working on the hard problems."

O'Neil said an added bonus from the expo was the dialogue between scientists and technologists working at the other Warfare and Systems Centers, and NRL.

"I heard many attendees express excitement about actually getting to see some 'real work' that is being done by the Navy team," he said. "They were surprised at the depth and breadth of the work we do in-house. Many did not realize that the Navy has an organic technical workforce outside NRL."

There are potentially very big problems that NAWCWD could solve for the warfighter if the sciences prove out and can be matured for operational use, according to Mallory Boyd, technical deputy for NAWCWD's Research and Engineering Directorate, who also manages the command's \$15 million NISE Program, and attended the expo.

The National Defense Authorization Act, section 219 legislation approved in 2008, enabled the NISE program by approving the Warfare Centers to generate the investment fund. The success of the program, witnessed by the growth of technical expertise and capabilities, has led to its renewal several times since first implemented.

"The NISE program is enabling a considerable amount of unique, basic and applied research going on in-house at NAWCWD especially in the chemical and material science areas," Boyd said. "After you get an understanding of what's possible through basic research, then you can begin to envision where it might be applied toward addressing Navy problems. During the expo, each of our three researchers furthered their knowledge of additional potential applications for their discoveries and inventions. NISE at NAWCWD is all about funding highly technical, hands-on work activities with the aim of preparing the scientist and engineering workforce of the future. These three examples, while important, are a



U.S. NAVY PHOTO

Dr. Heather Meylemans' research at Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division focuses on developing nanoparticle substrates to be used for a variety of applications from environmental metal detection to safety coatings.

small sampling of all the great work that is going on at both China Lake and Point Mugu."

O'Neil said he thought the objectives for the expo were met.

"Navy leadership, both uniformed and civilian, are beginning to see and understand why it is so important to have a resident, strong in-house technical capability," he said. "I'm in the Pentagon more frequently now, and I am hearing this message more often, and that's good news for NAWCWD."





There is a lot to do in Kernville

n the heart of Kernville there is a lot to see and do. The streets are lined with small businesses offering all types of antiques and rustic items to take home and treasure.

The Buzzard Trading post is one stop for people wanting to step back in time to get old fashioned candy, such as salt water taffy, and even old fashioned sodas, wine, beer, and even fresh Alien Jerky. They also have souvenir T-shirts, hats or sweatshirts available.

Several of the shops comprise different vendors having their own booth spaces where they feature a wide variety of antiques for if you collect china teacups, farm tools, antique salt and pepper shakers and even depression ware glass.

One stop you don't want to miss is Whiskey Flat Antiques that has everything from old collectibles to their Serendipity Corner, which features different artists. Currently on display are the photographs by Shanna Haid



The little town of Kernville is tucked away in the hills where it is like stepping back in time with all the little shops that line the streets in downtown.





Kern, which is perched high up on a hill.

DAILY INDEPENDENT FILE PHOTO One way to take in the sights plus satisfy your appetite is to dine at Ewings on the



A one-stop shop from fabrics to cowboy boots is the La De Dah Kernville Co op in downtown.





One way to see the whole town is to take a horse and buggy ride allowing you to get an overview of all the quaint stores Kernville has to offer.

DAILY INDEPENDENT FILE PHOTO

of Shaid Photography with the focus on the local area from starry desert nights to beautiful desert skies.

For those who like clothes shopping don't miss the store Dress Your Soul that also carries Bare Minerals make up and fashion accessories.

If you're feeling in an artistic mood be sure to visit The Creative Crafter where they also have ceramic painting on site. Don't miss the Quirky Quintessentials store, which carries all kinds of beads and yarn for the artist in you.

Right in the heart of the town is the La De Dah Kernville Co-op, carrying all

types of beautiful fabrics notions and items for crafters. Their other participating vendors have everything from cowboy boots, purses to vintage Christmas ornaments.

There is also the Kern River Candle Co. that features soybean oil inspired products from candles to tarts, and body products.

Along the way you will surely have to stop and grab a bite to eat — whether it be home cooking, Mexican, Italian, or a good steak, it is all there for the asking.



12 OCTOBER 2016 EAST KERN VISIONS



Aircraft and emergency response vehicles are on display at Mojave Air and Space Port during October's Plane Crazy Saturday. The event is held the third Saturday of each month.

Plane Crazy Saturdays at Mojave airport

BY JOYCE NASH *Mojave Desert News*

The Mojave Transportation Museum Foundation, a 501(C)3 organization, has been successfully holding Plane Crazy Saturday at Mojave Airport since January 2009 with all volunteer help. The goal of the foun-

dation is to build a museum to preserve transportation history. The museum will be home to a large number of completely unique aircraft and ground transportation that showcase the history of Mojave and the surrounding area.

Plane Crazy Saturday is held the third Saturday of each month and includes displays of aircraft on the tarmac, art and collectibles for sale, and more. Each









JOYCE NASH /MOJAVE DESERT NEWS ABOVE: First responders hang out by a helicopter during October's Plane Crazy Saturday. LEFT: MASP Fire Chief Rich Fauble, left, and Cathy Hansen, president of the Mojave Transportation Museum and Plane Crazy Saturday organizer. Saturday organizer.



JOYCE NASH/MOJAVE DESERT NEWS Emergency equipment from Mojave Air and Space Port and the California Highway Patrol at October's Plane Crazy Saturday.

month has a theme.

For example, October's Plane Crazy Saturday theme was, "Thanking our law enforcement heroes." On the flight line, visitors could see the inside of the Mojave Air and Space Port fire truck, and could talk to pilots of Kern County Fire Department and Mercy Air helicopters. Also on scene were officers from Kern County Sherriff's Office, California Highway Patrol, Hall Ambulance, and East Kern Airport District Fire, Crash, and Rescue.

Cathy Hansen, President of the Mojave Transportation Museum and Plane Crazy Saturday organizer, presented Certificates of Appreciation to each of the agencies that participated in October's event. MASP Fire Chief Rich Fauble presented fire safety prevention and tips to the audience at Saturday's presentation. He emphasized the importance of discussing fire safety and escape plans with children, and encouraged audience participants to practice escape routes with their children or grandchildren.

As the holidays approach, Chief Fauble recommended that people examine their extension cords before plugging in Christmas lights and make sure Christmas trees are well watered throughout the season and set up away from televisions, fireplaces, or other sources of heat. He also recommended only using space heaters with an automatic shut-off feature in case the heater tips over.

The next Plane Crazy Saturday will be on Saturday, Nov. 19, at Mojave Air and Space Port from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Plane Crazy Saturday is a free, family friendly event. Admission to the 11 a.m. presentation is \$2, and proceeds support the Mojave Transportation Museum.



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