

Familiar Faces

A portrait of Oroville residents



TONYA PAUL / MERCURY-REGISTER

1/11/94

TERRY HODGES

If you were a fish, a duck a deer, or any other wild animal in Butte County, Terry Hodges would be one of your best friends.

Hodges, a game warden lieutenant with the state's Department of Fish and Game, is responsible for protecting wildlife from people who poach or destroy their habitat.

When he's not patrolling a network of back roads in his four-wheel-drive truck, Hodges

takes to the skies in his plane to look for suspicious characters.

He has seen people shooting pheasants from their cars and destroying streams with bulldozers. And at night he sometimes catches poachers spotlighting deer.

"I radio to one of my wardens on the ground and we pay them a visit," he said.

Hodges said he has assisted other agencies by catching suspected robbers and drunk drivers.

Hodges is also an author, and he's working on his second book chronicling the adventures of Butte County game wardens.

In his latest, entitled "Tough Customers," he tells of a bass poacher who ran from warden Will Bishop and nearly drowned. But Bishop dove after the man and dragged him to shore.

"It was an absolute epic footchase," Hodges said.

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TONYA PAUL/MERCURY REGISTER

3/3/94

SHARON ATTEBERRY

Sharon Atteberry never suspected what would come of her dog licensing job 15 years ago.

It was only a part-time job at the City of Oroville but it helped spring her into a full-time career in municipal government.

Atteberry has worked in Oroville's Redevelopment Agency, and the city's housing, parks, finance and administration departments.

Today she is the secretary of the planning department and is responsible for helping people see their way through the

bureaucracy associated with building new homes and developments.

Born and raised in Oroville, Atteberry has watched the town grow and businesses come and go.

"I think that things are changing for the better," she said. "We still have a small-town atmosphere but we have a lot to share with other people outside the area."

Atteberry is also a member of the city's Safety Committee and uses her experience to teach employees about

worker's compensation and on-the-job safety.

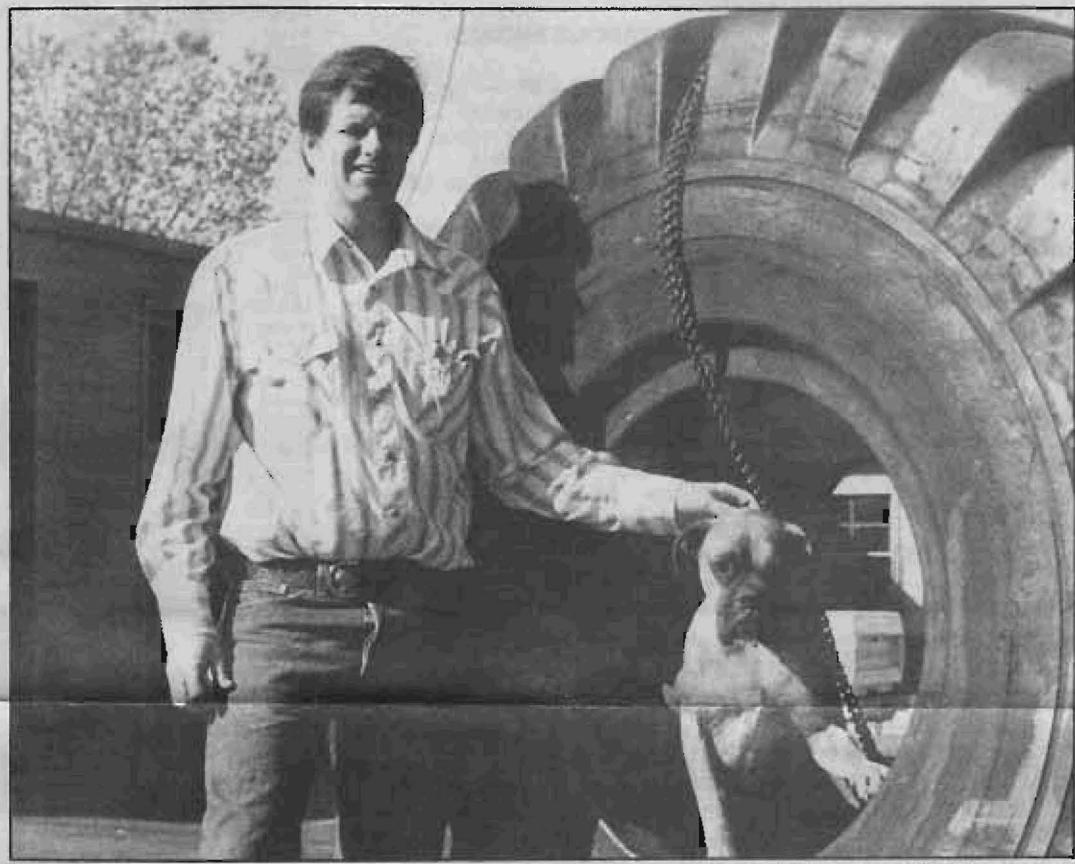
She is in the process of teaching colleagues the functions of each city department and their role in the event of a city-wide disaster.

When Atteberry's not hard at work for the city, she can usually be found in the countryside, gardening and raising pheasants with her family.

Atteberry shares a home with her husband Steve, daughter Stacy, 16, and sons Matt, 12, Andy, 13, Wade, 17, and Mike, 18.

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DAVE HOWLAND / MERCURY-REGISTER

4/21/94



DAVE TOWNSEND

Dave Townsend is a man of many talents.

By day he runs Townsend Tire, the family tire and auto repair shop at the corner of Myers and Mitchell streets. By night he teaches a computer class at the Oroville Adult School.

And in between he makes time to coach his son Jack's little league baseball team and ride horses with his daughter Maggie.

"It keeps me busy," said Townsend, who has helped

replace tires and repair cars since his parents Al and Marian purchased the family store in 1970.

"I've seen the same people coming in here since I was 14," he said. "They've been able to watch me grow."

Townsend expanded his professional repertoire about seven years ago when Oroville Adult School Principal Ron Algiers offered him a job teaching a beginners' computer class.

"They were desperately, frantically looking for someone

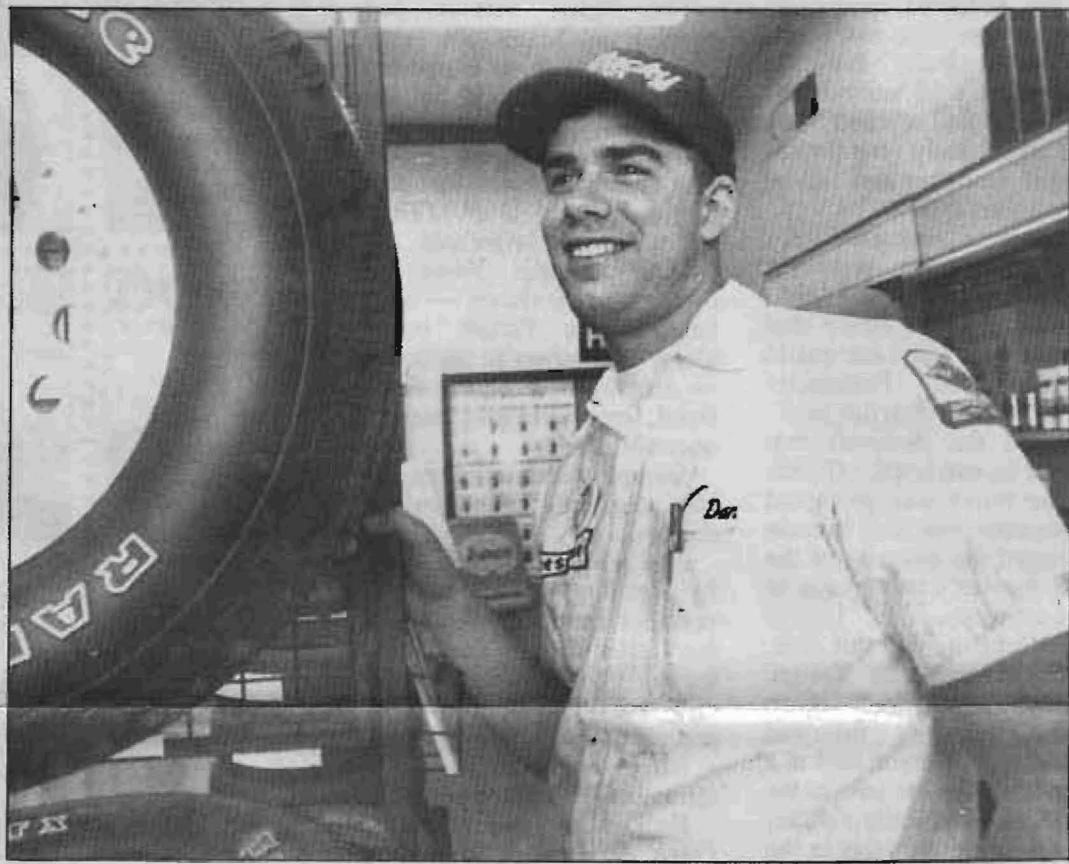
to teach the class," Townsend said. "I asked him when I started and he said, 'Tonight at six.'"

Townsend has since introduced hundreds to the basics of word processing, spread sheet and graphics programs. He began teaching with skills he developed while studying at Chico State and has kept up with the latest information on the job.

As for the future, Townsend said he plans to stay in Oroville and watch his community, and his family, learn and grow.

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TONYA PAUL / MERCURY-REGISTER

1/20/94

DAN BRIGGS

On the soccer field, Dan Briggs' friends called him "Hollywood."

Briggs, a former captain of the Las Plumas High School soccer team, put on a show worthy of the title by juking and weaving the ball past opponents and down the field.

But what could easily be mistaken for raw talent was really a product of hard work and practice — a credo Briggs brings to his life and work at his father's auto repair shop.

At age 19, Briggs is the youngest mechanic at his father's, Vic's Firestone Car

Care Center on Oro Dam Boulevard, where he has worked for the past eight years after school and on vacations.

Briggs started sweeping floors and has worked his way up to repairing brakes and serving customers at the counter.

"It's kind of hard being the youngest guy here," Briggs said during a break this morning. "I feel that I have to prove myself more."

He has worked to prove himself at school as well as in the auto shop.

Briggs, an avid outdoors-

man, has been studying at Butte College and plans to transfer to Chico State as a full-time business major with an option in marketing later this year.

Though he has enjoyed growing up in the Oroville area, Briggs said he is eager to explore the country and possibly venture to Seattle, Idaho or Colorado.

And after that?

"Someday in the distant future I'd like to own my own business," he said. "Maybe this one or maybe somewhere else."

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1/18/94



Larry "Butch" Klein

There are many milestones in life, but few as unique as the one Oroville's Larry "Butch" Klein hit this month.

Klein, an employee of Oroville Solid Waste Inc. since 1974, has dumped his one-millionth garbage container.

For about a decade, Klein has patrolled Kelly Ridge, Palermo and several foothill neighborhoods, hoisting large green cans full of trash into his truck with the help of a hydraulic lift.

In one week Klein dumps about 2,000 cans — boosting

his stats toward the Big One Million.

On the way to his personal record, Klein has received kudos for an outstanding service and safety record — winning him the company's "Employee of the Year" award in 1992.

"He gets along with his customers really well and that's very important," operations supervisor Paul Payne said of Klein.

Klein knows his beat well. "You give him an address

on his route and he knows exactly where it is," Payne said. "He can describe the house for you."

In addition to collecting trash, Klein serves as the company's representative to the Corporate Communications Committee.

Klein was born and raised in Oroville. His wife, Diane, works at the Kmart in Chico. Their son, 19-year-old Larry Jr., and their 18-year-old daughter, Sarah, both attend Butte College.

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TONYA PAUL / MERCURY-REGISTER

8/26/93

BILL COUGHLIN JR.

Bill Coughlin Jr. was as surprised as everyone else when he saw a runaway horse galloping down Grand Avenue and jumping over cars one dreary March afternoon.

But unlike many who went about their business after the horse passed by, Coughlin sprung into action. He grabbed a halter and a lead rope from his shelf, jumped into his car and chased after the frantic mare.

He corralled the horse, with the help of two motorists,

calmed it with soft words and found a trailor with fresh hay. The quick action came naturally for Coughlin, whose passion is animals and business is keeping them fed.

Since January, Coughlin has supplied local farmers and family pet owners with an assortment of grains, crunchies and biscuits from his small Triple "C" feed store on Grand Avenue.

Coughlin said he and his wife Connie decided to open the business after he recovered

from a severe leg injury he suffered trying to break in a spunky horse named Scooter.

Coughlin said he has learned much about nutrition and how different feeds can help make animals healthier and more energetic.

He relies on large nutrition books and occasionally a veterinarian to help him pick the right foods for his customers' animals.

"I'm learning every day," he said. "We've met some super people in the Thermalito area."

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TONYA PAUL / Mercury-Register

2/16/93

CRYSTAL ROGERS

Crystal Rogers may know businesses in Oroville better than anyone else.

That's because it's her job as the administrative assistant at the Oroville Area Chamber of Commerce to stay in touch with the small and large stores, repair shops and eateries in this "City of Gold."

Among other responsibilities, Rogers oversees the Chamber's membership and helps businesses find advertising in the Chamber's monthly newsletter and fliers.

And when she's not on the phone helping members communicate, Rogers can be found at the counter in the Chamber's small Montgomery Street headquarters, helping potential customers and tourists find their way to the store best for their needs.

"When somebody comes in here and says, 'I need something where can I go?' I can tell them," Rogers said. "That's because I have a feel for what each business does and the services they offer."

Rogers, a graduate of Butte

College, said she's cultivated the skill during the year and a half she's worked for the Chamber.

She and Chamber Manager Kay Fenrich are preparing for the Oroville Dam's 25th anniversary and all of the potential customers the celebration will bring to area businesses.

Rogers said she enjoys her work but if you had asked her years ago if she expected to work in an office she would probably have said, "No way."

"I wanted to be a cop," she said.

Helping Hands

A look at altruism in Oroville



DAVE HOWLAND / MERCURY-REGISTER

9/25/03

PAM SEEMAN

On Friday afternoon Pam Seeman lifted her familiar red stop sign and halted a row of cars as rambunctious Nelson Avenue School students bounded across the street.

For five years Seeman has watched over the Sixth and Nelson Avenue intersection, helping kids make their way safely to and from school.

"The kids know you're concerned about them," she said between crossings. "They know that I'm not afraid to get

out and deal with some of these drivers. It's not for the faint-hearted."

Seeman, who also volunteers in the school office, said she has enjoyed watching the students grow and has even earned the title "mother" from some.

"Some started to call me grandma but I said, 'I'm sorry, I'm not that old,'"

Seeman said she first started as a crossing guard when she was in fifth grade at the old

Burbank Elementary School at Myers and C streets. Back then, she used a stop sign attached to a long broom handle.

Though they may have outgrown the need for a crossing guard, Nelson eighth graders, Seth Cable and Alan Williams gave Seeman high marks on Friday.

"She's pretty nice," Williams said. "She's done a good job through all these years helping us cross."

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DAVE HOWLAND / MERCURY-REGISTER

10/5/93

Rhonda Chance

Rhonda Chance has worked hard to get where she is.

Six years ago today she started as a part-time worker washing dishes at the Marysville McDonald's and today she manages 55 employees under the "Golden Arches" in Oroville.

Chances are if you drop by you'll see her working around the restaurant, helping her staff or customers with a smile and encouraging words.

Chance said she got into the business at first to help her family make ends meet.

"Within a year I became the main bread-winner of the family, and I decided McDonald's wasn't so bad," she said.

Rhonda and her husband, Ron, who works at the McDonald's in Gridley, hope some day to own and operate their own McDonald's.

Already the two have taken several management courses offered by the company, and Rhonda Chance graduated at the top of her class at McDonald's University in Chicago.

There she studied everything from financial and personnel

management to mechanics and electronics in classrooms filled with grills, friers and ice cream machines.

Before settling in Marysville with their children, Michelle and Aaron, Rhonda moved where Ron's job as an Air Force bomber crew chief took them. Among other memorable places, they lived in Texas, Japan, Italy, Guam and Michigan.

"We left Guam it was 80 degrees and when we came to Michigan it was 80 below with the windchill factor," she said.

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11/16/63

Fred Hacker can make a good case that he has the best house in Oroville.

His wood-paneled mansion stands more than three floors tall. It has three fireplaces, two master bedrooms, a sewing room, children's room and a beautiful kitchen.

And the entire structure fits inside his cosy Pine Street living room.

Fred Hacker

It was Hacker's love of carpentry and a quest to fill idle hours that helped him build his miniature 41-inch tall house from scratch. It took him five years.

"It was mostly therapy," Hacker said of his hobby. "I'd get up at one, two or three in the morning to work on it for four or five hours — whenever I felt like it."

Hacker carved, sanded and

glued the entire house — from its cedar shingles and wooden floorboards to its pane glass windows and glass-paneled book shelves.

Lockable fiberglass doors in the back of the house expose detailed handiwork.

Lights turn on and off and red fires flicker and glow with the turn of 26 switches in the attic, accessible by a ladder

that pulls down from the ceiling.

Photo's of Hacker's parents adorn the downstairs living room wall and a phone box labeled "Yuba City" hangs next to the phone.

Hacker said he would like the public to enjoy his work but he has not yet scouted out a safe, clean place to display his miniature house.

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TONYA PAUL / Mercury-Register



JOYCE GAZA

By Dave Howland 1/14/93
MERCURY-REGISTER STAFF WRITER

Joyce Gaza is bringing a little of the Hawaiian Islands to Oroville in the form of massage.

Many massages actually. Her repertoire includes soothing full-body Swedish massages, deep muscle massages and more therapeutic massages to treat sore muscles and common ailments including tennis elbow.

Gaza, an Oroville native and graduate of Las Plumas High

School, kneads, rings and squeezes muscles as part of her massage therapy practice on Lincoln Street which opened last month.

She learned her trade two years ago at the Hawaiian Islands School of Body Therapies in Hawaii where she also studied anatomy, pathology (diseases) and kinesiology (muscles).

Though it may raise a few eyebrows in Oroville, massage is a widely accepted way of relaxing and curing sore muscles in

Hawaii, Gaza said.

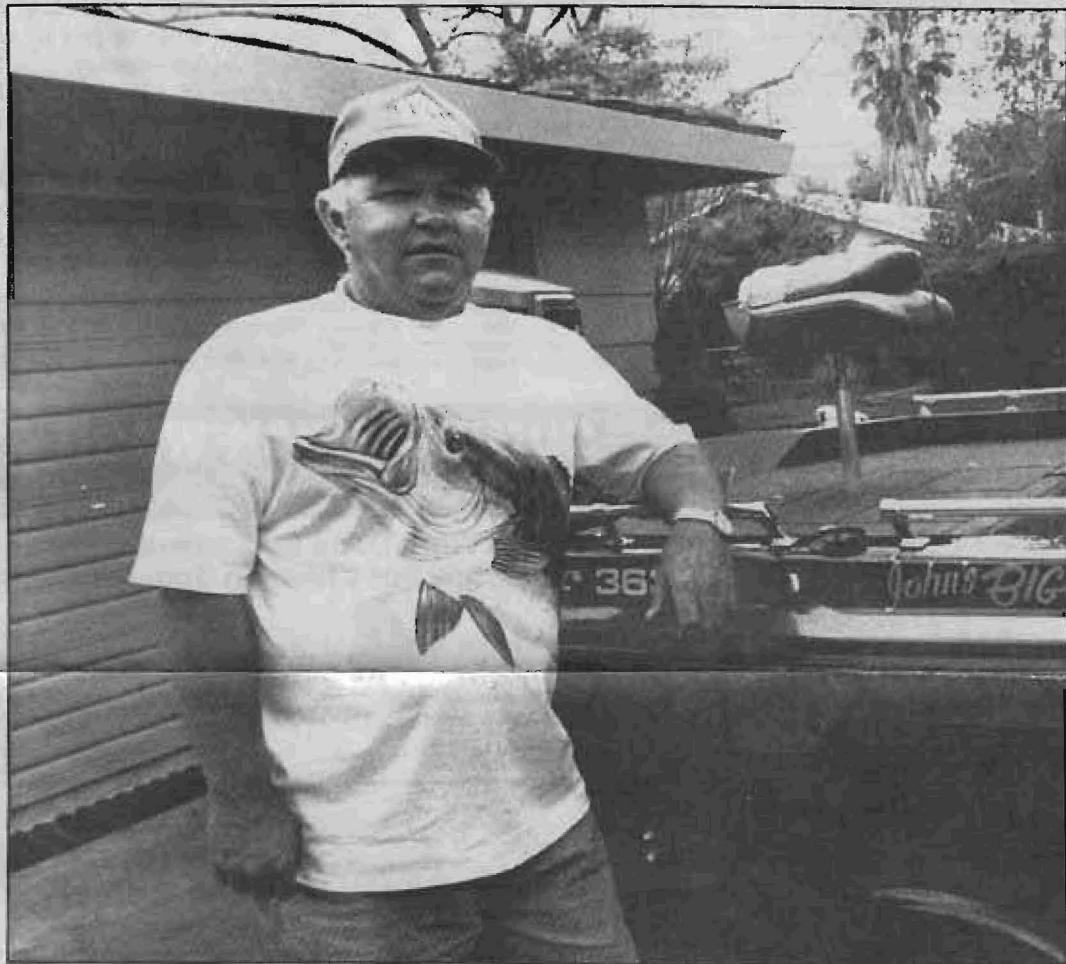
"When people hear the word massage they become a little defensive," she said. "Our emphasis is to make you as comfortable as can be."

Clients, covered at all times by a sheet and a towel, can take all of their clothes off — which Gaza said is traditional — or leave some on for their massage.

Gaza can be contacted for an appointment at Beach and Body EFX where she rents a small room for her practice.

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TONYA PAUL / Mercury-Register

4/20/93

ED CLARK

When Oroville's Ed Clark isn't helping run the Las Plumas Lumber Company you might find him on his bass boat, or pursuing his passion for barbecue behind a delicious smelling grill.

Clark has made his living in lumber for the past 35 years at Las Plumas Lumber on Oro Dam Boulevard, where today he holds the post of yard superintendent in charge of production, watching over workers as they process boards to make framing for homes.

Clark is truly an Oroville native son.

"I'm just a hometown boy," he said. "I was born and raised here."

Clark started at the mill right after high school when it was the Schnieder Lumber Company. He served as a laborer, fork lift driver and sawyer on his way to becoming a supervisor.

Like lumber mills across the country, Las Plumas has suffered its setbacks and Clark has witnessed the industry's troubles

from the beginning. While at one time Clark supervised more than 200 mill workers, today he oversees only 50.

"The housing industry is real tough right now, lumber prices are way up and the availability of lumber is down," Clark said.

Away from work, Clark is an avid fisherman and last weekend he braved the storm-tossed waters of Lake Shasta for a bass tournament. Clark also loves to barbecue and he has big plans for the upcoming wedding of his son.

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TONYA PAUL / Mercury-Register

5/18/93

FAYE B. OPENSHAW

Oroville's Faye B. Openshaw has trotted around the globe more times than most people would care to count.

She's chased camels outside the Great Pyramids of Egypt, stood beneath the white, lace-patterned walls of India's Taj Mahal and stared into the crystal aqua waters of Australia's Great Barrier Reef.

"We've been around," Openshaw said of her husband and traveling partner, Gerald

Openshaw. "I think the only continent we haven't been is Africa."

Openshaw, whose Hammon Avenue home is decorated with treasures from countries across the globe, has put her worldly experience to use in a unique educational program for senior citizens aimed at exploring arts and literature of foreign countries.

For the past two years, Openshaw has been the presi-

dent of PrimeTimer's — a Chico-based seniors club with about 250 members that offers classes at Cal State Chico.

Members take turns organizing classes about foreign lands. After instructing each other in the classroom, they take off to see the real thing.

Openshaw has led classes to England, Ireland, Spain and other countries.

Helping Hands

A weekly look at altruism in Oroville



TONYA PAUL / Mercury-Register

DENNIS MORELAND

By Dave Howland

MERCURY-REGISTER STAFF WRITER

1/30/93

If the bass in the Afterbay could speak, they might call Dennis Moreland their hero.

That's because this Oroville fisherman is planning to build them a new home.

Moreland, along with several volunteers from the Oroville Teams and Oroville Bass Club, today will string cables through 800 Christmas trees in preparation for submerging them along the Afterbay levee.

"It will give the fish one heck

of a habitat," he said. "They will like the oxygen and the shelter and the babies will hide there."

The trees will provide a better environment for the fish to grow than the Afterbay's bare rocky bottom, Moreland said.

Volunteers will connect the cables to plastic buckets to be filled with leftover concrete from local contractors. They plan to drop the buckets and rows of trees near drainage pipe openings along the levee.

Moreland has been coordinating his efforts with the State Department of Fish and Game. He

also has plans to stock fish in Lake Oroville.

The fish population should grow quickly and of course so should the fishing, Moreland said.

When Moreland is not out in his boat he's casting a line into the pond outside his home near Lower Wyandotte Avenue where he keeps large bass that he's caught in area streams and lakes.

Friends who disbelieve Moreland's fishing stories can find out the truth themselves by catching their own in his pond — just a cast away from the front porch.

Helping Hands

A weekly look at altruism in Oroville



TONYA PAUL / Mercury-Register

▲ WARREN EVANS

Dave Howland

MERCURY-REGISTER STAFF WRITER

1/2/93

If you're ever caught in the snow or lost in the woods in Butte County, Warren Evans is the man who can save you.

Born and raised in Oroville, Evans has been a member of the Butte County Search and Rescue Team for more than 15 years.

He is one of more than 50 volunteers who, on a moment's notice, will canvass hazardous countryside, cliffs or rivers to bring missing people home safely.

While many missions end in

tragedy, Evans said the greatest reward for his time is performing a successful rescue.

About 10 years ago, Evans helped save an 18-month-old girl who had wandered away from her home near the Ponderosa Dam. She was found a day later after spending a night by herself in the winter cold.

"It was something to see," he said. "Twenty-five rescuers there, all of them with tears in their eyes because they were so happy to see that little girl alive and healthy."

Evans finds time for the rescue

team outside of his job as a property and construction surveyor.

Last week, he hopped in his four-wheel-drive truck to help locate a man whose car broke down near the remote Golden Trout Crossing.

"He wasn't lost, he was OK," Evans said. "But he was a long way from help."

Evans' best advise to people who plan to drive in the snow or rough, remote areas is to bring plenty of food and blankets. And do not travel alone if you can help it, he said — rescuers never do.

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DAVE HOWLAND / Mercury-Register

DAVE BRUCE

By Dave Howland 1/12/93
MERCURY-REGISTER STAFF WRITER

Pretend for a minute you decided to throw a house construction party and everybody showed up without tools.

You could go to the hardware store, the local heavy equipment dealer and innumerable specialty stores to find the right tractors, saws and safety equipment.

Or you could give Dave Bruce a call.

He's an Oroville resident who has stockpiled a warehouse of

tools, appliances and heavy equipment which he lends for a living.

Bruce started his business seven years ago with a love he developed in the Navy's Construction Battalion for the many types of equipment he now owns.

"I started with a tractor, a lawnmower and some cash," he said.

Bruce then expanded his collection to include tractors and forklifts and quickly dropped himself into debt.

But a steady business has

helped him pay the bills and move from a cramped basement on the corner of Lincoln and Wyandotte avenues to a big new warehouse on South Fifth Avenue.

"You're always tinkering with stuff," he said. "A rental person has to be a jack of all trades."

Bruce said he delivers most of his larger equipment to help ensure it's the right equipment for the job.

In addition to four employees, Bruce's son, Allie, and daughters, April, Daya and Duste, help out with the business.