



A Personal View: End of summer at Kings Mountain

by Leah Lubin



Only twenty minutes or less up the road on Skyline Boulevard from SkyLonda, Kings Mountain has always been a community that I knew only a little about. The standout feature that I was familiar with was the Mountain House restaurant with its quality food plus the amazing possibility of having dinner one table away from Neil Young, the musician and local hero. This happened to us about seven years ago. No, we didn't bother him and neither did anyone else that was there, which I thought was nice.

The famous Kings Mountain Art Fair, held every year, this being the 38th event, brings many new guests to this area. Inspired to finally find out more, I discovered the following: Kings Mountain is an unincorporated area running south of Highway 92 to Bear Gulch Road along scenic Highway 35. Their homes, not easily seen, are tucked into the trees. It is a close-knit community of about 450 households.

The annual Labor Day fair supports the local school and community center with its volunteer firehouse. The community center is also a meeting place for the Kings Mountain Association, which meets once a month to discuss local issues. This year, I was told by Alma Fletcher, local resident for over 39 years, that they have raised \$1,000 as a scholarship for local students going to college.

Alma listed for me the classes held at the community center, which include aerobics and yoga, with instructors coming from the valley especially to teach these classes. Plus, a martial arts class for the children, which is very popular.

Alma went on to say that "More people have come to live here recently. My concern is that there is a lack of appreciation for the forest that is Kings Mountain, as I have seen too many trees come down for no reason. But even so I wouldn't move, it's so beautiful here."

After being closed for quite a while, another community focal point, the Kings Mountain Country Store, finally reopened to brisk business, especially on weekends. Owner Corey Stanaway told me about his experiences of coming to work on Kings Mountain. "It reminds me of Lake Tahoe. It's the best place to work."

On the third day of the Arts Fair, which was Labor Day Monday, I returned with my family early in the morning. The pancake breakfast, served only until 10 a.m., is probably the fair's most pleasant experience. Sitting under the trees, watching over 100 volunteers preparing the good coffee, pancakes, and eggs quickly makes you feel relaxed, and if only briefly, a part of the Kings Mountain scene.

It was by doing research for this column that I was introduced to Ken McIntire who introduced me to Pat Wurster, editor of The Echo, published once a month and packed full of local news, as well as Marjorie Ewen, who has lived in Kings Mountain along with her husband Bob since 1956. These strong-minded people inspire me to write again about their issues, which include safety and independent living, that this mountain community faces each day.