

# Colfax Connections



## Reckless Driving Is On The Rise

By [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net)

The February 10 city council meeting opened with an alarming report from California Highway Patrol Officer Chris Nave, who said reckless driving is increasing on the nation’s roads.

Nave cited a recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) report that found the number of accidents in America rose from some 26,000 crashes in 2019 to more than 28,000 in 2020. The report said that the increase coincided with an increase in risky or reckless driving due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NHTSA determined that because there were considerably fewer vehicles on the roads during the early lockdown, people who were on the road began driving faster and making risky decisions they wouldn’t under normal traffic conditions.

According to the report’s data, fatal crashes rose about 0.6% in the beginning of 2020, dropped by 1.1% in the middle of the year, and then rose again by 13.1% through summer and fall. Another factor in the rising accident rate was a 22% increase in speeds in metropolitan areas. Officer Nave confirmed that saying, “Speeds of 85-to-90-to-100 mph are common out there now.”

Use of seat belts also declined during the first several months of the pandemic. Between March and July 2020 the number of drivers wearing seatbelts fell by 6.5 %. Over that same period pas-

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## Fireworx Farms Permit Approved On 3-2 Vote

By [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net)

Fireworx Farms became the first cannabis cultivation operation to be permitted in Colfax, following a 3-2 City Council vote at its February 24 meeting.

The Fireworx application proposes a growing operation featuring eight, 2,500 square-foot, fully enclosed greenhouses, and that would hire 18-20 full-time employees from Colfax and Placer County starting at \$17/hr. The estimated annual tax revenue from the operation would add \$140,000 in unrestricted funds to the city’s general fund.

The vote came after a lengthy discussion by the council, and a public comment period that included local voices for and against, and a Fireworx Farms legal advisor who reported that PCWA would be the operation’s water provider.

Labor union representatives applauded Fireworx Farms for its pay scale and employee benefits.

One of the union reps assured the council that Fireworx Farms was the “gold standard” for regulatory compliance in

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## City Council from page 1

the cannabis industry. Placer County Sheriff Office Sgt. Kevin Griffiths, Colfax Station Commander, reminded the council that the sheriff doesn't support cannabis anywhere in Placer County.

When the vote was called, councilmembers Mendoza, Burruss and Ackerman cited the prospect of jobs, and their confidence in a strong city ordinance to deal with complaint issues for their "Yes" votes. Ackerman summed up the majority decision simply with, "There are more pros than cons."

### Water Tender

To buy or not to buy a tacti-

cal water tender for the city volunteer fire department also returned on this agenda. Cal-Fire Colfax/Alta Battalion Chief Brian Eagan opened the discussion by laying out the city's options:

- Fix aging, ailing Engine 36, price unknown beyond a \$1,500 inspection fee
- Replace it with a piece of similar equipment, estimated cost \$250-500,000
- Purchase a custom-built tactical water tender for \$377,000.

City finance director, Laurie VanGroningen, reported \$140,891 in the city's current fire reserves and suggested that seeking grant money could help defray the costs of which-

ever option the council chose. Former councilmember Steve Harvey reminded the council that equipment purchased out of state might be a good deal, but still not clear California regulatory hurdles.

The council expressed its concerns about making a purchasing decision before the issue over integrating the Colfax Fire Department with the county was resolved. More information regarding fixing Engine 36 was requested from staff, as well as looking into possibly finding used equipment.

The county will offer an integration proposal at the March 11

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## Reckless Driving from page 1

senger seat belt use declined 16.2%.

One immediate result of decreasing use of seatbelts has been an increase of vehicle occupants being ejected from their vehicles during crashes. Ejections from March to September 2020 were one ejection per 100 crashes. Ejections peaked in April at 1.5 ejections per 100 crashes – more than double the rate in April 2019.

And according to the report, the number of drivers who were treated at trauma centers with alcohol or drugs in their systems increased from 50.6% in 2019, to 65% in 2020.

NHTSA also noted that the increase in impaired driving could be related to a decrease



in the presence of law enforcement on the roads during the pandemic, leading drivers to think they are less likely to be caught violating speed and safety laws.

Officer Nave closed his report saying that there are still too many people trying to get around chain controls, as well

as a "massive increase" in the number of people going up to recreate in the snow and creating traffic hazards by sledding in unauthorized areas such as I-80 on/off ramps.

He encouraged everyone to slow down, wear seat belts and to obey traffic laws.

Colfax Fire Service workshop.

City Finance Director Laurie VanGroningen reported that city staff had completed a detailed mid-year review of the budget and all funds for all operating revenue and expense accounts for fiscal year 2020-2021. She said that, citywide, the difference between the adopted budget and the projected actuals was a favorable increase in Net Change in Fund Balance for total City funds in the amount of \$81,917.

The council had no questions and unanimously accepted the report.

**At the February 10 meeting** the council was briefed on the audit report for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2020 by Brian Nash of Richardson and Company, LLP in Sacramento.

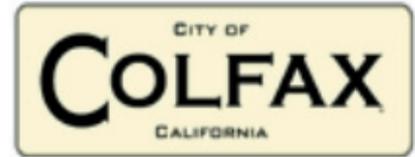
According to Nash the city's clean audit showed assets exceed liabilities by \$27 million, total revenue was nearly \$9 million while total expenses totaled \$4.5 million, and no internal control issues or non-compliance with financial statements were found.

**“A lot of cities would love to be in Colfax's position, with your high reserves and lower pension liabilities,” Nash said.**

Colfax also rejoined the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District later in the meeting.

The city originally joined the district in 1994, but dropped out in 2002.

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*Colfax Connections* is a monthly city publication edited by Will Stockwin, who can be contacted via e-mail at [wstockwin@hughes.net](mailto:wstockwin@hughes.net). All submissions are welcome, the earlier the better.

**Deadline is the 20th of the previous month.**

### STAFF

**Photography – Alan Shuttleworth  
Proofreading – LindaLou Haines**

**Hard Copies of Colfax Connections can be found at City Hall, the Colfax Library and Lumenaris.**

**Digital copies can also be found on the Chamber's Website at ([www.ColfaxChamber.com](http://www.ColfaxChamber.com)) and on the City's Website at ([www.colfax-ca.gov](http://www.colfax-ca.gov)).**



## Business Briefs . . . . . . with LindaLou Haines

Colfax area residents have several local options to have their cars worked on. This month I am focusing on one such shop, **Plaza Tire and Auto Service**, 1774 S. Canyon Way.

Plaza was recently named “Best Tire Store” and “Best Oil & Lube” in a customer poll of Colfax area Placer residents. It earned similar ratings for its three Nevada County shops in a poll of Nevada County residents as well.

Plaza sells a variety of tire brands and does all repairs and service for your car. In addition to the Colfax shop, Plaza does business in Nevada County, where they have three shops, Nevada City, Grass Valley and Penn Valley; for the government; and online.

Steve Tipton has been the manager of the Colfax shop since Plaza opened in Colfax in 2007. However, Steve has been with the company since 1994.

Many of the employees in the Colfax shop have worked in that location since before Plaza bought the property. That is a lot of tire and auto service experience.

At this time Steve has nine employees that are mechanics, tire installers and sales people. His assistant manager, Jacob Oliver, is the friendly face at the counter when you come into the shop. Jake takes his time with each customer in explaining things and answering questions. Plaza is very community-oriented. They support high school sports, the Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce and other events in the area.

The company has always been family owned and operated since it started in 1950 in Nevada City. Currently, since the 1970's it has been owned by the Heuser Brothers.

Plaza Tire & Auto Service is also rated as a AAA Auto Repair Shop. Keep that in mind the next

time you have an accident.

To get any kind of work done at Plaza, call 346-8782. They are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 to 5:00 and Saturdays 8:00 to 3:00. You can also check them out online at [www.PlazaTire-AndAutoService.com](http://www.PlazaTire-AndAutoService.com) and [Facebook.com/Plaza-Tire-Auto-Service](https://www.facebook.com/Plaza-Tire-Auto-Service).

If you own a business in the City of Colfax, and you'd like to be the focus of my column, email me, [lindalouhaines14@gmail.com](mailto:lindalouhaines14@gmail.com).

Priority is given to new businesses and existing businesses offering something new.

I am also interested in home businesses. So many businesses start out at someone's kitchen table or in the garage, and with a good product or service they grow into a bigger business renting out a big warehouse or shop. I want to help you get the word out. Email me.



Plaza Tire manager Steve Tipton.

Photo by Alan Shuttleworth

## Doctor Fox Immortalized By Local Artist Foxey McCleary



The last 12 months have been stressful and, in many instances, downright discouraging. We all look forward to the segments on national news where some uplifting occurrence is featured. So, just how much can an individual do to address these stresses and do something to add to the positive side of our human equation?

Colfax Community leaders, Earl Coppin and Kim Douglass meet often for a socially distanced coffee and have been wrestling with how to create an uplifting local story. What they decided to do was a small return to the days when we publically celebrated the Arts and honored community members who have had a profound effect on the entire community.

In years past, Colfax has hosted an Art Walk to showcase the

work of local artists. The pandemic has put that, as well as all other civic events, on hold. In years past, local agencies and organizations have feted the accomplishments of regular citizens.

**Story and photo by  
Alan Shuttleworth**

To answer the need for some good news, Earl and Kim commissioned well-known local artist, Foxey McCleary, to paint a portrait of Colfax General Practitioner, Dr. Kurtis Fox. After completing his residency at Harbor/UCLA General Hospital near Los Angeles, Dr. Fox planned to return home.

Since he is a Placer High School alumnus, opening his general medical practice close to home seemed like a great plan. Some 42 years later, Dr.

**Dr. Kurtis Fox and Foxey McCleary holding her portrait of him, that perfectly matches his shirt and tie.**

Fox is still caring for his patients in the Colfax area.

If not at his office on Kneeland Street, you can find Dr. Fox supervising possible medical needs at home football games. If not on the gridiron, Fox can be found judging the Lions Club Speaker's Contest or providing in-service training on sports injuries and safety practices for local athletic coaches.

If you catch him at his medical offices, you will find an attentive and insightful physician and, for much of the community, a dear friend. The Colfax community says thanks to Earl, Kim and Foxey for honoring one of Colfax's finest.

## If The Wind Is Blowing, It's Probably Not A Burn Day

CalFire Battalion Chief Brian Eagan urges everyone to always check county burn conditions if it's windy. He said that there have been a number of incidents where 'debris burns' have gotten away due to gusting wind. One scorched a couple of acres in Nevada City.

"It may be a burn day in the morning, but that will change if the wind comes up later in the day," Eagan said. "Your fire is your responsibility, and your liability if it gets away."



The Best Western project is shown getting a new entry cover. Construction on the project is scheduled to finish later this summer. Photo by Alan Shuttleworth

# Colfax Green Machine's 14th Annual Crab Feed Fundraiser



## "Crab n' Go" (Covid Style)

Saturday, March 20th, 2021  
Pick-up from 5-9 pm  
Sierra Vista Community Center  
55 School Street, Colfax

Tickets are \$50 per person

<https://colfaxgreenmachinecrabngo2021.eventbrite.com>

Each to-go meal includes 2 lbs of crab,  
shrimp cocktail, pasta, salad, bread & dessert

Wine and Mixed drinks available "to go"

Virtual Silent Auction runs March 13-19th  
Details to follow

For more information please visit  
[www.colfaxgreenmachine.com](http://www.colfaxgreenmachine.com)



## Chamber of Commerce Notes and Events

By Sally Laughlin

Whoever predicted that this would be a warm, dry winter? Someone said that back in October, and it was a hopeful thought, but these long, wet days of the Winter of COVID seem to have proven otherwise.



It is with great pleasure, then, that I announce that we have secured funding and are in the process of constructing outdoor dining facilities in Colfax! Canopies and heaters have been ordered and will soon appear in several areas around town, giving us a new haven for safe dining.

Main Street will have a large outdoor area in front of Main Street Pizza, Grandma C's and Rail-head Saloon. TJ's Roadhouse, Homie Joe's and Red Frog will also be getting canopies and heaters very soon.

We are working with the City of Colfax to set up the Main street dining area, along with decorative split rail fencing to replace the straw bales that have been deteriorating in the rain. This funding has been provided through the Placer Shares Community Collaborative Grant for small businesses in conjunction with Sierra Small Business Services.

In addition to Outdoor Dining, our Chamber is in the process of awarding Collaborative Grant funding to a select number of small businesses that have been most affected by the COVID restrictions. We have accepted applications from 65 hair salons, restaurants, retail shops, daycare centers, hotels, fitness centers, brick n mortar nonprofits, auto body shops, theaters, storage facilities and service businesses, and \$2,000 checks will go out to each of them in the next few weeks.

Our board members, Tim Ryan and Randy Eley, and Executive Director Amy Andrews, have spent

many hours, going out to each of these businesses, helping them complete the applications, and ensuring that even those that aren't tech savvy will get the funds they desperately need to get by until the restrictions have been lifted.

Here is what one of our applicants had to say about our efforts:

"Thank you for the quick correspondence and GREATLY appreciated simplicity on the Chamber Grant...it is 1000 times easier than the other (CA grant) process. This grant will go a long way to help ease some of the small-business pandemic stresses and financial free fall it created. We have many more months of hardship to come, so every penny is a blessing to keep the doors open." - Jeannette and Patrick Witz/ Creative Kids Preschool & Child Care.

March and April are our Chamber board election months, and we are now looking to fill two positions on our board. If you or anyone you know would like an opportunity to get involved in the Colfax community and have a passion for making good things happen, we'd like to hear from you.



**Sally Laughlin, CACC President**  
Colfax Area  
Chamber of Commerce  
colfaxareachamber@gmail.com  
colfaxchamber.com  
(530) 346-8888



# FREE FARMERS MARKETS MERCADO DE VEGETALES GRATIS



## 2021 Schedule – Placer County

**JANUARY**

8	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
11	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
22	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
25	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
29	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**FEBRUARY**

8	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
12	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
19	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
22	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
26	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**MARCH**

8	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
12	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
19	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
26	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
29	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**APRIL**

9	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
12	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
23	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
26	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
30	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**MAY**

10	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
14	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
21	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
24	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
28	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**JUNE**

11	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
14	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
18	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
25	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
28	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**JULY**

9	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
12	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
23	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
26	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
30	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**AUGUST**

9	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
13	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
20	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
27	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
30	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**SEPTEMBER**

10	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
13	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
17	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
24	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
27	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**OCTOBER**

8	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
11	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
22	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
25	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
29	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**NOVEMBER**

8	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
12	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
19	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
24	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am
29	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon

**DECEMBER**

10	Sheridan	8:30 - 10:30 am
13	Colfax	10:00 am - noon
23	Lincoln	8:00 - 10:00 am
20	Foresthill	10:00 am - noon
30	Rocklin	8:00 - 10:00 am

**Sheridan** Celebration Family Worship  
**Lincoln** McBean Park  
**Rocklin** Johnson-Springview Park

5721 10 Street  
 65 McBean Park Drive  
 5480 5<sup>th</sup> Street

**Colfax**  
**Foresthill**

Sierra Vista Comm Center  
 Harrison Street Yard

55 School Street  
 24625 Harrison Street

[Placerfoodbank.org](http://Placerfoodbank.org) 916.783.0481

# Colfax Soroptimist Club Celebrates Its 75th Anniversary

On a cold winter day in 1946, a group of 25 civic-minded women gathered at the Colfax Grammar School. There, they received their official charter presentation from their club sponsor, the Soroptimist Club of Sacramento.

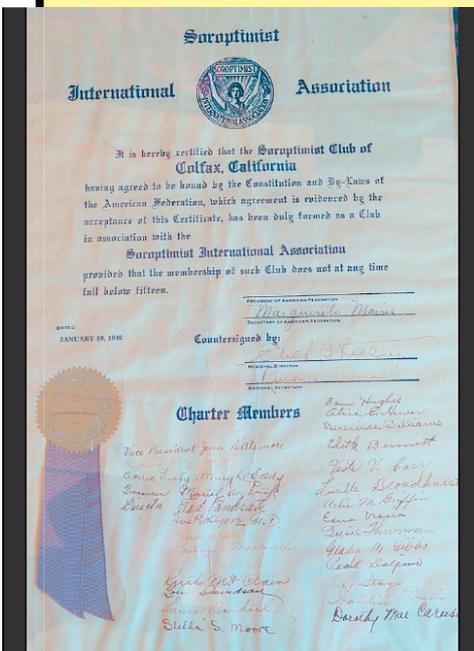
The Colfax Soroptimist Club has had many firsts and accomplishments to attest to lots of hard work and dedication during their 75 years of operation. The following is a brief chronology of some noteworthy special events the club has supported or completed to improve the City and its environs:

- \*Visits to children's ward at Weimar TB Sanitorium, and Expansion of the Library 1946
- \*Bleachers and a grandstand at Ball Park 1949
- \*Press box at Ball Park 1951
- \*First donation to the community pool project 1960
- \*Downtown flagpole 1960
- \*Children's wading pool 1962
- \*Bathhouse at pool 1967
- \*First lights at Ball Park 1967
- \*Caboose brought to Colfax 1969
- \*Colfax Thrift Shop established as fundraiser 1969
- \*Student of the Month recognition at Colfax High 1970
- \*Eighth grade student awards begin at Weimar/Colfax/Alta-Dutch Flat 1971
- \*Caboose Railroad Museum begins 1974
- \*Student Service Club established at Colfax High 1978
- \*Support for 4-H After School Program at Colfax Elementary 1985
- \*Sponsor of the Colfax Record Run 1988
- \*Annual Holiday Soup Kitchen established 1989 (!)
- \*Co-sponsor, First Colfax High Grad Night 1991
- \*First Christmas Project to benefit needy families 1993



Past President Janis Quinn (L) passes gavel to incoming president, Karen Miller.

Below - the 1946 Soroptimists Club charter



In more recent years, the Colfax Soroptimists have focused their energies on providing financial grants and scholarships that promote women in the workplace and the community at large. In addition to the student awards at area schools, the Colfax Soroptimists also sponsor:

- \*The Violet Richardson Award to a high school girl who exemplifies outstanding community service.
- \*The Live Your Dream Award to a woman who is re-training to enter the workforce.
- \*The Ruby Award to a woman who supports women and girls in our community.

Photos by Alan Shuttleworth

## Churches



Colfax Assembly of  
God Community  
Fellowship  
252 Culver St.,  
Colfax, CA 95713  
Email: colfaxes@gmail.com  
Website: <http://www.colfaxagca.org/>

Colfax Baptist Church  
24850 Ben Taylor Rd., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8110  
Email: pastorgaryhoward@yahoo.com  
Website: <http://colfaxbaptist.com/>

Colfax United Methodist Church  
59 W. Church St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-2267  
Website: <https://www.colfaxumc.org/>

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah Witnesses  
944 Canyon Way, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-2525  
Website: <https://www.jw.org/en/>

St. Dominic's Catholic Church  
589 E. Oak St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-2286  
Website: [https://www.scd.org/parish/  
st-dominic-parish-colfax](https://www.scd.org/parish/st-dominic-parish-colfax)

Seventh Day Adventist  
454 Scholtz Ave., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8844  
Website: <https://www.colfaxsdachurch.com>

The Church of Jesus Christ of  
Latter-Day Saints  
1875 S. Auburn St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-7702  
Website: <https://www.lds.org/>

## Social Organizations

American Legion Post 192  
22 Sunset Dr., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-9433  
Website: <http://norwellpost192.org>

Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce  
99 S. Railroad St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8888  
Website: <http://colfaxchamber.com>

Colfax Area Historical Society  
Archives: PO Box 185, Colfax, CA 95713  
Museum 99 Railroad St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8599  
Website: <https://colfaxhistory.org>

Colfax Garden Club  
PO Box 1801, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-7474  
Website: [http://californiagardenclubs.com/  
content/colfax-garden-club](http://californiagardenclubs.com/content/colfax-garden-club)

Colfax Lions Club  
PO Box 664, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-477-2533  
Website: [https://www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/  
colfaxca](https://www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/colfaxca)

Gold Country Lionesses  
PO Box 1852, Colfax, CA 95713

Illinoistown Clay-Mason Lodge #51 of Colfax  
14 N. Main St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-6627  
Website: <http://lodge51.freemason.org>

Sierra Vista Artists  
55 School St., Rm. C-4, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-320-0433

Sierra Vista Center  
55 School St., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-8726  
Website: <https://sierravistacolfax.wordpress.com>

Soroptimist International of Colfax  
PO Box 475, Colfax, CA 95713  
530-637-4878

VFW Post 2003  
22 Sunset Dr., Colfax, CA 95713  
530-346-7768  
<https://www.colfaxveterans.org/vfw.html>



