

THE MIDDLE MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION

The Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust



from Thompson & West History of Sutter County 1879

SPRING 2012

A New Year is a New Opportunity

By Michael Hubbart

The Middle Mountain Foundation toasts all of our members, sponsors, hikers, and of course the Buttes landowners with a traditional greeting, “Happy New Year.” A new year is a new opportunity.

Some of us actually started our New Year in and on top of the Sutter Buttes. The panorama of Sutter County farmlands stretched out before us, inspiring in each of us a renewed vigor to keep focused upon those values and activities that enable us to accomplish our goals.

This past season we have been involved with conservation easement negotiations with several Sutter Buttes families. We have talked with new landowners about bequeathing donations or access to their hillsides for educational tours.

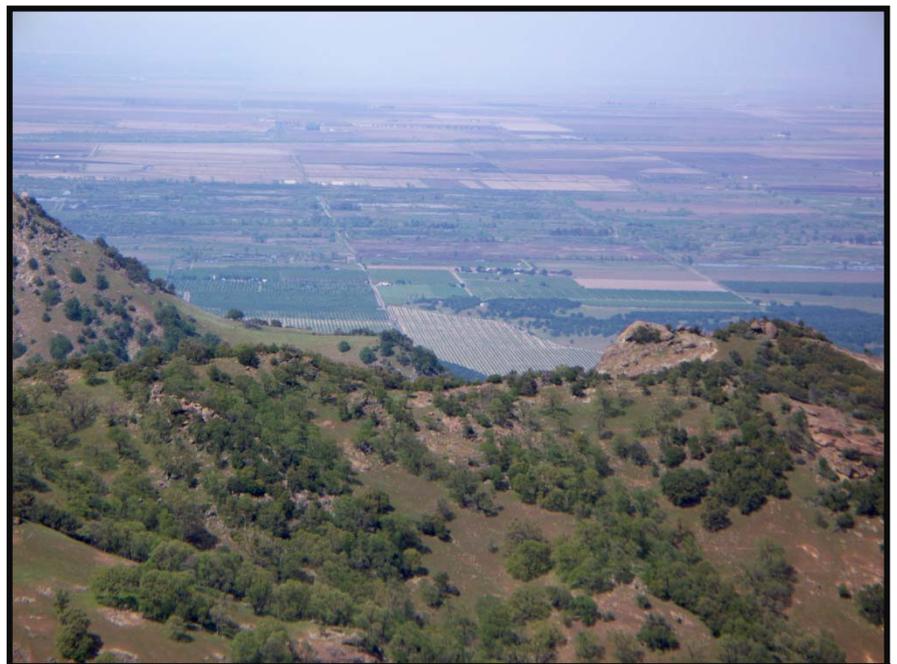
And we have reviewed another development proposal, weighing proposed community benefits against the impacts upon the visual, the environmental, and the cultural aspects of an iconic landscape that is the pride of the County and an attraction for all of Northern California, just as it is—in its natural state.

Most of the long-time Buttes ranchers are deeply connected to the landscape of their forefathers, and they wish to perpetuate that family heritage. Both the Foundation and these families share that vision; and a

conservation easement is a win-win agreement to accomplish that goal.

Our local community supports this vision. A resounding 2/3’s of our neighbors recently voiced their disdain in the ballot box against loosening the zoning that could enable building and development in or around the Sutter Buttes.

Hike with us, connect with us, and work with us. Any contribution you make will help us to protect this heritage.



A view from the top.

(Photo by K. Morrison)

President's Message

By Kathy Larsen

The Mission of the Middle Mountain Foundation

The Middle Mountain Foundation works to protect the land and natural resources of the Sutter Buttes and the surrounding region for present and future generations.

Values

- ◆ Protect the natural, cultural, geological, historical, and scenic qualities of the Sutter Buttes.
- ◆ Identify prime agricultural lands and natural areas that preserve and enhance the unique characteristics of the region surrounding the Sutter Buttes.
- ◆ Build partnerships with landowners, community leaders, and developers to balance conservation with economic growth, flood protection, and water quality to help plan better communities.
- ◆ Respect landowners' rights and provide information to those who want to conserve their land.
- ◆ Increase public awareness of the Middle Mountain Foundation's dedication to education, interpretation, and land conservation.
- ◆ Maintain an efficient, effective, and sustainable organization.

Special Thank You

The Middle Mountain Foundation acknowledges the following contributors and individuals:

Eleanor Knox, Pete Sands, Mary Spilman Crane, Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County, Our Members, Our Volunteers, and our Hikers!

In Honor of

Donations received in honor of:

Mike Hubbartt,
Middle Mountain Foundation, Joe Reusser

In Memory of

Donations received in memory of:

Delphine Babb, John Clark, Carroll E Cox, Jr.,
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Daniel E. Mussetter, Virginia Nunes,
Erlyn Osburn, Steve Pantaleoni,
Audrey Wilkerson Sawtelle, Fred Shaeffer, Jr.,
Elizabeth Sutton, Lillian Webber

As the organization enters a new year with the ongoing challenges of the current economic situation, I welcome the opportunity to serve as its new President. My personal goals include strengthening the organization, continuing to create opportunities for local residents to appreciate the beauty and significance of the Sutter Buttes, and continuing to work with landowners to enhance their appreciation of preserving the land for future generations.

In an effort to strengthen the organization, we continue our search for volunteers who can help in small ways – but valuable ways. Manning a booth, helping out with hikes, serving on a committee—all help us move along more easily to fulfill our mission and goals. We are particularly looking for someone who can consult on occasion with legal matters. This would require minimal time, and only on occasion. If you know someone who might be interested, please advise our office.

In the past, we've had lots of support from people who live out of the area. But local residents, who are so familiar with the Sutter Buttes, often seem to take them for granted. Most have never been up into the Buttes and aren't aware of their inner beauty. Our interpretative hike program, speakers' bureau, and event participation has increased local awareness of the beauty and importance of the Buttes. Last year, we were very encouraged by the outpouring of support for our preservation efforts by the local voters. Also in the last year, we expanded our interpretative outreach program to include our school program which will bring in over 1,500 students this year. There will be a Kite Day this spring, as well as our annual Sunset Serenade Dinner. And in the fall, we will host the first annual Trail Run on a property on the north side of the Buttes.

We continue to meet with landowners to discuss their concerns about the future of the Buttes. Increasingly, landowners are seeking ways to insure that their land will be maintained and unencumbered by development.

We encourage you to support Middle Mountain Foundation and its mission to preserve the Sutter Buttes for future generations—through your gifts of time and donations.



North Butte peeking over Spring Hill.

(Photo by K. Morrison)

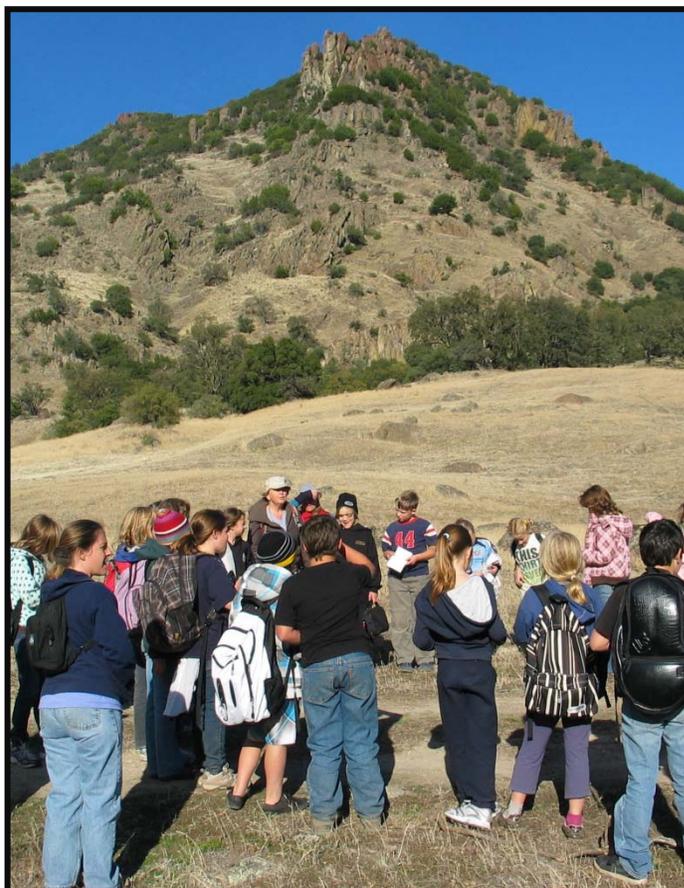
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MMF Education Program

The MMF Education Program continues to grow. The "Ed Guides" have already taken steps in anticipation of a busy Spring Hike Season. In September, Ed Guides led an invitational hike for local teachers, which was an enjoyable and informative preview for teachers and a review for guides. We have recruited several new back-up guides to ensure adequate coverage during multi-class hikes. Despite economic constraints, interest remains high for school outings. We are also preparing pre-hike classroom presentations to augment our standards-based outdoor program.

Hikes are held from late October into April and are designed to enable students to see relationships between wildlife and plant life, to encounter geological forces that have shaped our local landscape, and to experience how the local indigenous Maidu, the early explorers, and finally the settlers and ranchers used the land. The curriculum is designed to complement each grade level, third through sixth. In addition, the teacher can choose from selected activities.

Discovery treks and structured learning activities are geared to promote observational skills, as well as reflective reactions to modern society's relationship with the environment. The proximity and accessibility of the natural Sutter Buttes landscape make an incomparable classroom without walls where educational experiences become lifetime memories. Visit the website for more information and to schedule your outing: www.middlemountain.org.



Students gather below North Butte. (Ed Program files)

Watch for details for a Kite Day in March

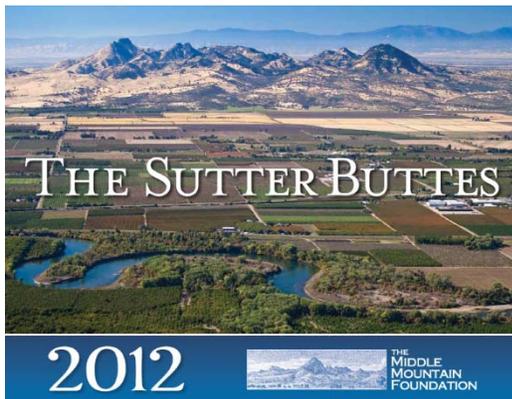
Wanted!

Professional-quality Sutter Buttes Photographs for the 2013 CALENDAR

Each page will have one large landscape photo (that highlights an aspect of the Buttes) and several smaller thumbnails. Send slides or disc to Brian Hausback, Geology Department, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819; 916-278-6521. Send digital photos to: hausback@csus.edu. Submittals are limited to 10 full page photographs per year (thumbnails are unlimited). Full resolution will be required for chosen page photographs. The submittal deadline is March 6, 2012. Images must allow for 1/4" bleed.

Also...BECOME A SPONSOR

You can have your name and/or your company's name on a 2013 calendar month. Tell everyone you love the Sutter Buttes with a donation to the Calendar Project for 2013. The cost is \$300 for your own month on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact: Karen Morrison at mmfhikes@yahoo.com or 530-671-6116.



Sunset Serenade

This is a fund-raising event and costs \$100 per person. It will be held on **Saturday, May 5**. It features an afternoon stroll or hike, hor d'oeuvres, wine, a catered dinner, classical music, extraordinary desserts, pleasant company, and items for a silent auction and opportunity drawing, all in an enchanting outdoor setting at the base of North Butte. Pre-registration is required. Details will be sent to you when you register. If you have questions, contact Karen at 530-671-6116 or mmfhikes@yahoo.com. Sorry, there is no member discount for this event.



MARKs Ensemble

(Photo by K. Morrison)



Sunset Serenade Crowd enjoying dinner.

(Photo by K. Morrison)

MMF Web Store

The Middle Mountain Foundation Web store is located at www.middlemountain.org. The Sutter Buttes Calendars, two Sutter Buttes books, and a Sutter Buttes Postcard are the items available. The purchase of any of these items is another way to support our efforts in the Sutter Buttes.

Business Sponsors and Supporters

The Middle Mountain Foundation would like to thank and acknowledge the generous support of the following sponsors. Their donations—financial, time, and space—help to make our work possible.

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 Yuba Sutter Disposal, Inc.

Interpretive Program

The MMF Interpretive Program events provide access to the privately owned Sutter Buttes' interior. Guides share its unique origins and history and explore with you the diversity of plant and animal life that helps to make this range so appealing to us in modern California.

A typical day in the Buttes begins by 8:00 am and ends around 3:30 pm (*unless otherwise noted*). Events are scheduled and will proceed in all but the most severe weather conditions. Participants of **all events** should be prepared to expect encountering uneven footing, stepping over rocks and boulders, crossing streams, walking through thistles and brush, and climbing hills.

Some events are acceptable for smaller **children**, but many are not. All of our outings are educational experiences. We find that no outings or events are appropriate for toddlers. We suggest that hikes rated 3 or 4 **MAY** be suitable for children 12 or older, but it depends on the child and the hike. Please **inform the hike coordinator** when making your reservations if you are considering bringing children to an event or hike.

Open Events: Reserve a date for one of the open events listed below at mmfhikes@yahoo.com or call Karen at 530-671-6116. Cost for open events is \$35 per person *unless otherwise stated*. Prepayment is expected. The fee is used to pay the guides; reimburse the landowners for the wear and tear on their roads, gates, and fences; and for liability insurance. Any remainder is used for our conservation and education work.

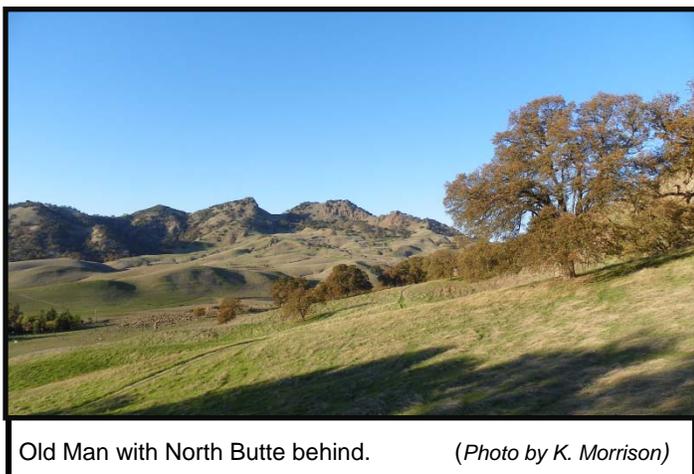
Charter Events: Organizations or groups may schedule a charter outing by contacting Margit at sandsmp@comcast.net or 530-846-5142. The cost for charter hikes is \$300 minimum for the first ten people and \$30 for each additional person.

Note: Guides do not carry change. If you have made arrangements to pay the day of the outing, do so with a check or money order made out to the Middle Mountain Foundation (or MMF).

Spring 2012 Event Schedule

Sunday	February .19	....	Photographer's Outing—Brockman
Monday	February .20	....	Summit Ascent—North Butte
Saturday ...	February .25	....	Ridge Ascent—Bragg Canyon West Ridge—Shaeffer Ranch
Sunday	February ...26	....	Geology Trek—Dean Ranch Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon
Saturday ...	March	3	.... Brockman Canyon Challenge
Sunday	March	4	.... Summit Ascent—North Butte
Saturday ...	March	10	.... Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon
Sunday	March	11	.... Art Outing—Shaeffer Ranch Ridge Ascent—Bragg Canyon
Saturday ...	March	17	.... Ridge Trek—Brockman Canyon Summit Ascent—North Butte
Sunday	March	18	.... Wildflower Study—Shaeffer Rnch
Saturday ...	March	24	.... Native Californians & Sutter Buttes Wildflower Study—Shaeffer Rnch
Sunday	March	25	.... Nature Study—Brockman Canyon Wild Nature in Buttes—Dean Rnch Wildflower Study—Dean Ranch
Saturday ...	March	31	.... Ridge Trek—Dean Ranch Wildflower Study—Bragg Canyon
Sunday	April	1	.... East Ridge—Shaeffer Ranch Ridge Ascent—Bragg Canyon
Friday	April	6	.... Full Moon Stroll—Dean Ranch
Saturday ...	April	7	.... East Ridge—Shaeffer Ranch Wildflower Study—Dean Ranch
Saturday ...	April	14	.... Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon Gentle Stroll—Dean Ranch Bat Research Outing—Dean Rnch
Sunday	April	15	.... Ridge Trek—Dean Ranch
Saturday ...	April	21	.... Elderberry Flute Workshop
Sunday	April	22	.... In a Sacred Manner—Dean Ranch
Saturday ...	April	28	.... Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon
Sunday	April	29	.... Birds in the Buttes—Dean Ranch Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon
Saturday ...	May	5	.... Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon Sunset Serenade*
Sunday	May	6	.... Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon
Saturday ...	May	12	.... "Moo..sic" in the Meadow**

*MMF Fundraising Hike & Dinner in the Buttes; cost is \$100.
**The cost of this hike is \$50 per person.



Old Man with North Butte behind.

(Photo by K. Morrison)

Interpretive Event Ratings

Event Ratings are a guideline to help you to choose an outing that matches your fitness and ability.

- 1 = Easy:** One to three miles and less than 300 feet elevation gain/loss.
- 2 = Moderate:** Two to five miles and generally less than 600 feet elevation gain/loss.
- 3 = Challenging:** Four to six miles with the possibility of multiple elevation gains/losses of 600-900 feet.
- 4 = Difficult:** Four to seven miles and/or elevation gains/losses, likely in excess of 1000 feet.
- 5 = Strenuous:** Six to eight miles with multiple and significant elevation gains/losses.

Middle Mountain Open Event Information

Workshop Events: These outings will concentrate on a specific topic or aspect as described. There may be an opportunity to stroll or hike during the outing, but that will not be the focus of the event. Detailed “meet and greet” information will be sent upon registration. Cost is \$35 per person unless otherwise noted.

Art Outing: Bring your pencils, paints, sketch book, camera, and/or musical instrument and enjoy a day of creativity in the Sutter Buttes. We will hike to the back of the ranch, covering about 1-1/2 miles and a 500 ft elevation gain. Then you will be free to explore a myriad of subjects, both natural and man-made. Bring food and water, plus you may want an easily-carried cushion or seat.

Sunday, March 11

3

Bat Research Outing: A rare opportunity for a limited number of participants to witness mammal biologist David Wyatt conducting bat research in the Sutter Buttes. Meet at 2:30 pm. Bring food and water.

Saturday, May 12

1

Birds in the Buttes Hike: Witness the spring migratory birds in and around the Sutter Buttes with the Christmas Bird Count organizer, Pete Sands. Bring food and water. Meet at 7:00 am. Limit is 12; not suited for younger children.

Sunday, April 29

1

Elderberry Flute Workshop: Walk around for a couple of hours, then Antonio Flores will show you how to make and play an elderberry flute. He will use some of the elderberry bushes found in the Sutter Buttes. This is a little-known primitive flute that has been used world-wide, as well as by the tribes in California and sometimes called the California Flute. Cost is \$45. Bring food and water. Limit is 15.

Date to be determined; check the website.

1

Full Moon Stroll: Observation and reflection on nature’s balance will be our focus on this meander through oak groves and gentle hillsides under the lunar glow of a full moon. Bring food, water, and flashlight; you may want an easily-carried cushion. Meet at 3:00 pm. Limit is 15.

Friday, April 6

2

Geology Trek—Dean Ranch: Discover the violent origins of this tiny mountain range with Volcanologist Brian Hausback. Brian reveals clues to 1.5 million years of geologic history, uniquely accessible here. Bring food and water and wear sturdy hiking boots.

Sunday, February 26

3

In a Sacred Manner: A walk with Stan Padilla focuses on the reverence for life and balances the mythology, botany, geology, mineralogy of the Buttes with active hiking and contemplative free time.

Sunday, April 22

1

“Moo.sic” in the Meadow: Enjoy a late afternoon hike or stroll. Then, as lengthening shadows of sunset evoke a romantic setting in the “Middle Mountains,” you listen to chamber music (flute, cello, and violin) and eat your provided box dinner. Cost is \$50. Meet at 3:00 pm. Limit is 50.

Saturday, May 12

1 to 3

Native Californians & Sutter Buttes: Most of us look at the Middle Mountains as a place of beauty, a geologic wonder, or just a cool place to observe Nature. But how did the Native Peoples view these mountains? Join Chuck Kritzon on an enlightening hike to learn how the Native Peoples used the Middle Mountains and its unique resources and managed this land for thousands of years. Bring food and water.

Saturday, March 24

1

Nature Study—Brockman Canyon: Explore the depths of a canyon area of the Buttes. Your guide will help you to see the details and learn about the natural elements that exists here. Bring food and water.

Sunday, March 25

3

Photographer’s Outing: This event is designed for photographers of all levels. We will caravan/carpool to Brockman Canyon on the south side. We will take our time hiking up the canyon along a sometimes steep dirt road. On top, there will be several guides so that you may scout and choose different locations for your photos. Bring food and water. Rain will cancel; occasional showers won’t.

Sunday, February 19

3

Sunset Serenade: This is a fund-raising event and costs \$100 per person. Pre-registration is required. For more information, see Page 4.

Saturday, May 5

1 to 3

Wildflower Study—Canyon Experience: Spring rains cause the dry Buttes hillsides to turn into a verdant, colorful, wildflower garden. Bring your hand-lens and wildflower field guide. Trek will be about 6 miles with a significant elevation gain. Bring food and water.

Saturday, March 31

3

Wildflower Study: Spring rains cause the dry Buttes hillsides to turn into a verdant, colorful, wildflower garden. Bring your hand-lens and wildflower field guide. Bring food and water.

Saturday, March 18 (*Shaeffer*) Saturday, March 24 (*Shaeffer*)

Sunday, March 25 (*Dean*) Saturday, April 7 (*Dean*)

2

Wild Nature in the Buttes: Learn about the exciting diversity of animals and plants in the Buttes, and the fascinating adaptations that allow them to survive here. Your leader will be Gene Trapp, Professor Emeritus of Bio. Sci. at CSU Sacramento. Bring food and water and wear sturdy boots with ankle support. Walking sticks are very helpful. There will be some steep downhill terrain.

Sunday, March 25

3

Friend us on FaceBook!

Hike Events: These outings will each cover a broad outline of information about the Sutter Buttes in general and a property in particular. Detailed “meet and greet” information will be sent upon registration. Cost is \$35 per person unless otherwise noted.

Brockman Challenge: This is a 6-mile strenuous and steep ascent between the tallest of ridge tops. It is a narrow trail that traverses a precipitous incline with a 1000-foot elevation gain. Mid-way you will be peering deep into the hidden valleys below. Bring food and water. 4

Saturday, March 3

Gentle Stroll: Join us for a leisurely stroll especially suited for casual walkers and nature lovers. Prepare for some moderate climbing and mostly uneven ground. There will likely be late wildflowers. Bring food and water. 1

Saturday, April 14

Ridge Ascent—Bragg Canyon: The Steidlmayer family hosts walks deep into the Sutter Buttes. This ascent will take you up the walls of the upper canyon; the route will vary. Only register for this hike if you are in top physical shape. Bring food and water. Limit is 15. 4

Saturday, February 25 Sunday, March 11
 Sunday, April 1

Ridge Trek—Bragg Canyon: Travel to the center of the Buttes with steady climbing on uneven ground. There will be frequent stops to examine the natural elements provide an excellent view of the Sutter Buttes. Bring food and water. 3

Sunday, February 26 Saturday, March 10
 Saturday, April 14 Saturday, April 28
 Sunday, April 29 Saturday, May 5
 Sunday, May 6

Ridge Trek—Brockman Canyon: Explore the depths of Brockman Canyon, a little-seen area of the Buttes. Your guide will help you to see the details and learn about the natural elements that exists here. The wildflowers should be abundant. Bring food and water. 3

Saturday, March 17



Hikers above Bragg Canyon, December 2011

(Photo by S. Morrison)

Ridge Hike—East Shaeffer Ranch: The Shaeffer Family will host hikers on their ranch on the north side of the Buttes. Hikers will explore this ranch that has been in the same family since the 1860’s. Hikes will be on the east or west ridge, with possible views of North Butte and Peace Valley. Bring food and water. 2

Sunday, April 1 Saturday, April 7

Ridge Hike—West Shaeffer Ranch: The Shaeffer Family will host hikers on their ranch on the north side of the Buttes. Hikers will explore this ranch that has been in the same family since the 1860’s. Hike will include possible views of North Butte, Peace Valley, and the old Titan Missile site. Bring food and water. 3

Saturday, February 25

Ridge Trek—Dean Ranch: Steady climbing on uneven ground and frequent stops to examine the natural elements provide an excellent view of the Sutter Buttes. Bring food and water. 3

Saturday, March 31 Sunday, April 15

Summit Ascent: One of our most challenging treks, this route is a steep, 1,000-foot push straight up North Butte, off trail with no easy switchbacks. Only register for this hike if you are in very good physical shape and don’t suffer from vertigo. Bring food and water. Limit is 15. 4

Monday, February 20 Sunday, March 4
 Saturday, March 17



THE MIDDLE MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION

PO Box 3359, YUBA CITY, CA 95992-3359

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Editor—Karen Morrison
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In this issue: A New Year; President's Message; Education Program; Sunset Serenade; Business Sponsors & Supporters; Interpretive Program

Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County Events

1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City 95993
530-822-7141

January-

February 19 Hood Ornaments as Automobile Art Exhibit

February 24-

March 16 River Valley High School Art Exhibit

March 30-

April 13 Yuba City High School Art Exhibit

April

Spring Vacation Children's Program

May 4 -

August 3 Baseball Exhibit

July

Summer Vacation Children's Program

August 24 -

November 18 Then and Now local photo exhibit

**Sutter Buttes Calendars, Books, and other items
are available for sale.**

Contact Us

The Middle Mountain Foundation is a group of dedicated individuals who work on a part-time basis, most of us volunteering our time. You can reach us:

- On our website: www.middlemountain.org
- By mail: PO Box 3359, Yuba City, CA 95992
- Mike Darnell, Land Trust Consultant, 530-755-3568 or mike@middlemountain.org
- Donna Johnson, Administrative Assistant, 530-755-3568 or middlemountain@yahoo.com
- Karen Morrison, Open Hikes Coordinator, mmfhikes@yahoo.com or 530-671-6116
- Margit Sands, Charter Hikes Coordinator, sandsmp@comcast.net or 530-846-5142

Telephone calls and email messages will be returned as soon as possible and our mail on a weekly basis. Please leave detailed messages or requests for information. We appreciate your patience and understanding and, especially, your interest in the Sutter Buttes and surrounding regions.

The Middle Mountain Foundation is a 501c(3) non-profit organization; Federal Tax ID #68-0204641.