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### Duck Race kicks off festivities

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Thursday, September 11, 2003

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Whitewater Willie

[ENLARGE](#)

Don't be scared if you see pirates Saturday in downtown Nevada City. They're actually friendly characters with an altruistic mission - to raise funds for several local nonprofit organizations via the 12th annual Gold Country Duck Race and to kick off Constitution Day weekend festivities.

With "Revenge of the Ducks" as this year's theme, Rotarians will don pirate clothes and frequently utter "Aye, aye matey," "Shiver me timbers" and "Aaargh" all day-long.

The duck race is 49er Rotary's largest fund-raiser, with thousands of dollars raised annually for schools, youth sports and community service organizations. This year's proceeds will go to Seven Hills School, Pleasant Valley School, Nevada Union High School Band, Deer Creek School, Boy Scouts/Venture Scouts, Lutz Center, Lyman Gilmore School, Friendship Club, Nevada City Constitution Day Celebration, Bitney Springs High School, Nevada Union High School Interact Club and 49er Rotary Club community projects.

The family event includes a carnival, youth games, food and drink booths and music from 10:30 a.m. to about 3 p.m. at the Cornerstone Realty parking lot on Broad, Boulder and Sacramento streets. The first of six preliminary races begins at 11 a.m.; the "lucky seven" final race begins at approximately 2:15 p.m.

A total of up to 12,000 toy ducks will enter the Deer Creek races, with the 25 top ducks from each race qualifying for the Lucky Seven final. The race offers a \$5,000 first prize, \$1,000 second prize and \$500 third prize, among other awards.

Racing ducks can be adopted for \$5 each from any 49er Rotarian or at Saturday's event. Call the Duck Hotline at 272-3825 for any questions.

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Besides pirates taking over the downtown, don't be surprised to see scores of Confederate and Union soldiers in full uniform also walking the streets. About 200 soldier and settler re-enactors from the American Civil War Association will present re-enactments and living history at 1 and 4 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. Sunday in Pioneer Park. Following each battle re-enactment, association members will answer questions and open their battlefield and camps for viewing.

You might as well forget your weekend gardening plans, shopping plans and day trips and spend the rest of Saturday and Sunday in the downtown area. There's plenty more educational activities planned before festivities culminate Sunday with the colorful 37th annual Constitution Day Parade at 2 p.m., which the Nevada City Chamber of Commerce reports as the oldest and largest Constitution Day observance in western America.

Sunday's pre-parade activities on Broad Street include a free concert by the Nevada County Concert Band from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. on lower Broad Street and a U.S. Constitution signing reenactment from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the intersection of Broad and Pine streets. Food and merchandise booths will be featured on North Pine and Commercial streets before and after the parade.

Larry Burkhardt, the Nevada County Economic Resource Council's president and chief executive officer, will once again sing the National Anthem before Nevada City personalities Greg Cook and Paul Matson begin introducing the 100 or so parade entries.

Several marching bands, including the popular Ophir Prison Marching Kazoo Band, will be joined by floats, dancers, clowns, politicians, antique autos and equestrian units. The Famous Marching Presidents of Nevada City return for their 17th year, humorously featuring all 43 of this country's presidential leaders.

The parade, which begins at the top of Broad Street, usually lasts up to two hours. Thousands of spectators line the street, many arriving a few hours before the procession to claim the best viewing spots.

For those diehards who aren't ready for the weekend party to end quite yet, they're in luck. A post-

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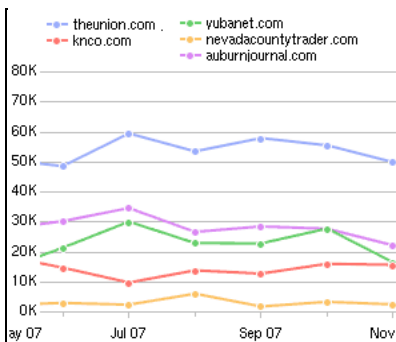
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parade concert features the zany Ophir Prison Marching Kazoo Band on Lower Broad and Commercial streets.

Under the Nevada City's umbrella, the Nevada City Constitution Day Committee is cosponsored by Nevada Lodge No. 13, F.& A.M. Committee members include Nevada City Chamber of Commerce representatives, city of Nevada City staff and community members.

To make parking easier, a shuttle service from the Nevada County Government Center off of Highway 49 will take visitors to and from Saturday's and Sunday's activities. Fares are \$1 per day for unlimited rides and free for anyone in period costumes and children under 12.

For information on the Constitution Day weekend celebration, call 265-2692 or 265-2496.

#### Nevada City's Constitution Day Parade Activities Schedule

##### Saturday

10:30 a.m.-3 p.m.: 12th annual Gold Country Duck Race, sponsored by the 49er Rotary Club of Nevada City. Includes carnival, youth games, food and drink booths, music and seven duck races from 10:30 a.m. to about 3 p.m. at the Cornerstone Realty parking lot on Broad, Boulder and Sacramento streets.

1 p.m. and 4 p.m.: Battle re-enactments by the American Civil War Association at Pioneer Park.

2:30 p.m.: Fashion show featuring attire from the Civil War era at Seaman Lodge, Pioneer Park.

##### Sunday

11 a.m.: Battle re-enactments by the American Civil War Association at Pioneer Park.

12:30 p.m.: Nevada County Concert Band performs one-hour concert at lower Broad Street.

1:30 p.m.: Reenactment of the signing of the U.S. Constitution at the corner of Broad and Pine streets.

2 p.m.: 37th annual Constitution Day Parade begins at the top of Broad Street. It should last about two hours.

4 p.m. or immediately following parade: Ophir Prison Marching Kazoo Band presents a post-parade concert on lower Broad and Commercial streets.

9 a.m.-5 p.m.: Craft and food vendors at North Pine and Commercial streets

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