With April almost upon us, you must have noticed that our newsletters have been anything but regular. Many will know that we've launched a new bi-weekly e-blast for Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District called Culture Connection, and we've been in touch in other ways as we've navigated an incredible build up to spring.

Eastern Nevada County had really exciting news this month, with an important Open House hosted by the Town of Truckee and Truckee Arts Alliance, at which it launched its first draft of its first ever Public Art Master Plan.

News for all of us is that the state is inaugurating a special Arts, Culture & Creativity Month for California, starting annually this April. Read about what this means for all of us and how you can get involved - both locally and at the State Capitol on April 23.

April is an important month for us on many levels. Beginning now, a stream of pop-up poetry events will mark National Poetry Month. Open mics,
community readings and workshops will lead up to our annual Sierra Poetry Festival on April 27.

Right in the middle of the month we mark a year's worth of surveying over 100 arts organizations and over 1000 audience members spanning the entire county. We release the key findings of our Arts & Economic Prosperity Study on April 18 - at the same time as publishing our new digital Cultural Asset Map - read all about it below.

This month our Artist of Nevada County is Seydou Dante - take time to read our wonderful interview with him. Enjoy links to eight highlighted events taking place in Grass Valley, Nevada City and Truckee during April, as well as our Editor's Choice - a special partnership between eight artists, Nevada County Arts Council and Sierra Harvest. We also draw attention to another great partnership, with KVMR Radio, as we approach the 3rd Annual Art in the Garden.

Finally, we call out a fabulous competition for 13-19 year olds, designed by and for Nevada County's Firesafe Council, and we reflect on the wealth of stories, traditions and cultural histories lent us by our Nisenan peoples over thousands of years of occupancy.

Before we launch into April, however, let's ponder the passing of winter and the birth of spring - in the words of Emily Dickinson: "A color stands abroad on solitary fields that science cannot overtake but human nature feels."

Until soon,

Eliza Tudor  
Executive Director  
Contact Eliza

Arts & Economic Prosperity Launch

When?

Join us on April 18 at 5pm for the Public Launch of the Nevada County Economic Impact Study of the Arts!

Why now?

We are launching during
California's inaugural Arts, Culture & Creativity Month - it's the perfect time to celebrate the impact of arts and culture in Nevada County.

What's the deal?

At this important public launch, we will learn all about how the arts create jobs, generate commerce and drive tourism in Nevada County.

Who's our special guest?

Randy Cohen, Vice President of Research and Policy at Americans for the Arts (AFTA.) He will be presenting key findings, and will share AFTA's research methodology. Randy is one of the nation's foremost experts on the economics of our creative industries and their role in community development.

How did we get here?

During 2018-19 Nevada County Arts Council worked with Americans for the Arts to initiate the first countywide economic impact study of the arts, surveying close to 100 entities engaged in arts programming, and well over 1000 audience members across Nevada County.

We offer our thanks to our partners across the county for their support of this much needed initiative:

Nevada County Economic Resource Council  
City of Grass Valley  
City of Nevada City  
Town of Truckee  
Greater Grass Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Nevada City Chamber of Commerce

LET US KNOW YOU ARE COMING!

Register

Celebrating California's first  
Arts, Culture & Creativity
Like California's leading advocacy agency Californians for the Arts, Nevada County Arts Council supports the idea that California is the State of the Arts and, as such, should be known as the "Leading State of Creativity."

We join the call for public investment to make this a reality for all Californians!

This month, alongside Californians for the Arts, we attended a meeting of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee at the State Capitol, at which the California Arts Council supported Governor Newsom's proposal for a $10 million permanent uplift in funding to further develop programs supporting much needed public access to the arts, arts education, and the state's cultural infrastructure.

At home, we co-hosted the first of a series of Advocacy Training Workshops with Californians for the Arts, expertly led by its new Executive Director, Julie Baker.

Julie shared ways to get involved as an Arts Advocate - and shone a light on Arts Advocacy Day on April 23. This is a fun, easy way to show your support on a grand scale.

And hot off the press this week - and requiring our support as we enter Arts, Culture & Creativity Month and National Poetry Month - is a new Senate Bill to authorize our Governor to appoint a California Youth Poet Laureate as a counterpart to the California Poet Laureate. The role is designed to further promote youth literacy and cultural awareness, engagement, and appreciation.

Help us create momentum for SB 748 by sending support letters to shaina.brown@sen.ca.gov and copy California Arts Council's Director of Legislative Affairs, Kristin Margolis at kristin.margolis@arts.ca.gov.

Click on the link below to learn more about Arts, Culture and Creativity Month.

Visit our NEW PAGE on Advocating for the Arts
National Poetry Month in the Sierra

During April 30 local and regional poets of all ages will read, recite, or sing out their poetry at events across Nevada County - all leading up to our mainstage event on April 27.

FRIDAY, APRIL 5 AT 6-9 PM - Opening Reception for Word (Osborn Woods Gallery)

THURSDAY, APRIL 11 AT 5-7 PM - Journalwild, a Poetry Workshop with Poet Susan Wooldridge (Nevada City Winery)

FRIDAY, APRIL 12 AT 5 PM - An Ekphrastic Journey from Iran in an Uncentered World Map (Leeann Brook Fine Art)

SATURDAY, APRIL 13 AT 12-2 PM - Youth Poetry & Community Open Mic at Noon with KVMR Radio (The Forecourt at BriarPatch Food Coop)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17 AT 5 PM - Five Women Poets (Nevada City Winery)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17 AT 6-7.30 PM - Open Mic (Word After Word Books, 10118 Donner Pass Road, Truckee)

SATURDAY, APRIL 20 AT 1.30-2.45 PM - Breath and Shadow Creative Writing Workshop (Truckee Library, 10031 Levon Ave, Truckee)

THURSDAY, APRIL 25 FROM 6.30 PM - The Poetry Crashers (The Chambers
FRIDAY, APRIL 26 AT 3-4.30 PM - Intersections: A Reading with Gail Entrekin, Pos Moua, Lisa Dominguez Abraham, and Ingrid Keriotis (Nevada City Winery)

FRIDAY, APRIL 26 AT 5 PM - Sierra Poetry Festival Media Lounge - Live with KVMR Radio (Nevada City Winery)

Learn more about Sierra Poetry Festival

Young Creatives to the Rescue - Firesafe Council Art Contest

Nevada County Firesafe Council is challenging young people aged 13-19 to design an educational poster or new logo - all towards encouraging a stronger fire safe community.

The Council will accept contest submissions until 8pm on April 15. The finalist's work will then be displayed in a gallery style debut on Community Wildfire Preparedness Day on May 4.

All Nevada County residents are encouraged to attend and vote for their favorite work of art - and to encourage our young artists. Residents are offered one vote in each category.

After all votes have been counted, the winners will be announced on or before May 10, 2019. In the event of a tie, the final deciding vote will belong to Sheriff Moon.

Help the Firesafe Council keep Nevada County safe - learn more HERE!

Learn about this opportunity alongside other Artists Calls
Here on the Western Slope, we can't advocate enough for the rich cultural heritage of the lands we call our home, and for the people who have cared for it for thousands of years.

During the last two years we have consciously searched for ways to educate ourselves and show our respect for our local Nisenan Tribe.

A turning point for us was inviting Shelly Covert to join our board of directors in the summer of 2017. Having Shelly among us is a reminder. She brings empathy, knowledge, wisdom and meaning to our role as State-Local Partner with the California Arts Council and, in turn, we try to shine a light on the extraordinary work of the Nisenan in restoring local and federal recognition for the wealth of truths and traditions that their culture and history offer our California Cultural Districts within Nevada County.

During 2018 we hosted California Arts Council for one of its bi-monthly public meetings. Nisenan spokesperson, Shelly Covert - also Executive Director of the California Heritage Indigenous Research Project (CHIRP) - was invited to offer a formal welcome, in recognition that Nevada City as we know it sits upon ancient tribal lands - or Oustemah. Click on the image above to link to Shelly's welcome.

In 2018 the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribal Council, together with California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project (CHIRP), launched an Ancestral Homelands Reciprocity Program to seed the efforts of the Tribe to engage more closely with all of us who live within the Bear & Yuba River watersheds.

Enjoy learning more about the Ancestral Homelands Reciprocity Program HERE, including ways to get more involved.

Enjoy a recent piece by Shelly in our new Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District newsletter, Culture Connection, HERE.

Read about our Belonging program in this week's Union article, in which the Nisenan play a critical role in reminding us of their relationship to our changing rural landscape.
A new Community Arts Calendar

We have a brand new Community Arts Calendar for Nevada County! Use this to post your events, or plan which local cultural events mean the most for you during the week or month to come.

We're using a new platform called "Trumba" which calls itself "the most advanced, powerful, brand-flexible toolset available for publishing and promoting events online nationwide," and are grateful to the Nevada County Economic Resource Council for supporting our move to it.

For our arts community who are posting, remember that our calendar syncs with GoNevadaCounty.com and from there is automatically integrated with many agencies throughout the county.

Now let's put it to the test - post your event **HERE** - and view listed events **HERE**!

A new dawn for public art policy in Truckee

Last week the Town of Truckee and Truckee Arts Alliance collaborated on a special working "Open House" at Art Truckee.

A small dedicated group of citizens, public art advocates and community stakeholders met to continue conversations with the Town of Truckee on the first draft of a Public Art Master Plan.

Hats off to the Town for taking the lead on this and for being so inclusive. When California Arts Council created the California Cultural District Program it described a key sign of success as being "inclusive
Cassie Hebel, Executive Director, Truckee Downtown Merchants Association, and member, Truckee Arts Alliance Advisory Board, describes the Truckee Arts District as "where the arts are always "at the table..."

Check out the Town's first ever first draft Public Art Master Plan here HERE.

Learn more about the role Truckee Arts Alliance plays in supporting the development of public art policy in Eastern Nevada County HERE and more about Truckee Cultural District HERE.

See Truckee Arts Alliance's brand new FACEBOOK PAGE. Take a moment to "Like" this page to receive regular updates on the pioneering spirit that is driving public art for Truckee Cultural District.

Artists of Nevada County - Seydou Dante

Originally from Mali in West Africa, Seydou leads African Drum and...
Dance of Nevada County. We asked a close friend of Seydou’s, Christina Stock, to talk with him about his love of music and his growing following.

What is your art form, and what instruments do you use?

I play music, drum, and djeli dun dun from the Kassonke people. Music comes from my mom’s side. Mariam (Mamu) Diabate, and my Grandma, Marietou Sakiliba, both are very beautiful singers. My grandpa, Djelimoussa Diabate played ngoni. We come from Mandeng society, we’re griot people. The griot is a big society in Africa who make sure everything is peaceful, between family, between sisters, between husband and wife. The griot calls everyone to be together. At the wedding we tell the history of grandpa, grandma. If you have a new baby, the griot is the one to let everybody know. A lot of people can sing but they don't know the history. You cannot imitate them, it's something in the blood, it's natural.

At what age did you discover you loved your art medium, and at what age did you realize you have a talent?

I was almost 20. I didn't study music early, I just focused on my books, my studies. I've never taken a music class with anybody. I have family, all musicians, brothers, sisters, uncles, they come back and forth to visit my mom, I just watch them. I never touch the instrument when I was little, but I love to listen. My mom told me one day, "I need the dun dun player for my wedding next week," I have many brothers who can help her, I think maybe she wants to see how I play. I had no dun dun, so I borrowed one from my uncle. After this wedding I got my first, my own dun dun. I bring to my mom after the wedding and she blessed it.

What is your creative process?

I play with my brother from Bamako, Moussa Camara. The heart is very important for the musician. We don't look up sometimes, but I'm here, play, bam bam bam bam bam and go back, make a nice break, and take your accompaniment. We're never going to let the music broke, If my energy becomes slow, I have a cousin who's watching and listening, he's going to make double energy of me. That's the music. It's not a competition, but to create something very sweet.

What is the art project or piece you are most proud of?

On Martin Luther King Day we were part of the music. In Africa, in my activities, I never see racism, no difference, same. We played a traditional song, Dansa:

"Ko ke mogo ye, mogo nama ko ke mogo ye, ka lon baga ye..."

It means, some people, if you do good things for them, they can see it, recognize and appreciate it, but some people are incapable of appreciating. Do not give your gifts to those who cannot appreciate them. It's very deep, real things.

(We play a break, go from slow to fast.)
"Ay ye bo sako ba, ey folilalu na ta..."

It means, everybody come outside! The drummers are here, the dun dun, the djembe, the dancers are here. We are playing!

We play to let the different dancers know that everybody is invited. Not only the nobles dance. Everybody is here to dance, the singer welcomes everybody.

**What do you love best about our arts community in our county?**

I love how the people dance, any level, they come. They love to share and show me they love African music. Lauren Goodwin teaches West African dance and Lisa McVay teaches Congolese class (Tuesdays 5 pm at Miner’s Foundry).

**Name two Nevada County artists whose work you admire, and why.**

We played a recent show at the Miner’s Foundry with Simrit Kaur and Gordon Hellegers. Gordon plays the kora from my country beautifully. He has knowledge of the music, respect, vibe, no drama. I love this guy. He’s my favorite one here.

**What is your current or next art venture?**

My current project is to keep this culture and share it with people, do my best for the community. Anyone interested to know West African drum, (Mali dun dun, djembe, djeli dun dun, bell) We do the private classes, any level. Moussa makes and fixes djembes, djeli dun dun, any African woodwork with skin, Moussa can work on it.

We have dance class on Thursdays at Odd Fellows Hall in Nevada City at 5 pm. Coming up on April 24th & 25th, my sister from Mali, Mariam Diakite will be our guest teacher, with a drum class Wednesday 3:30-5:30 and dance class after, at Miners Foundry. Mariam will come each month and other West African sisters will come to teach also. Mandjou Kone, Djeneba Sako. Join us!

**For information on events, see Seydou Dante's Facebook page HERE.**

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**Editor's Choice: Sierra Harvest Soup Night & Agrarian Art Exhibition**

**When:** Saturday, April 4 at 5.30-8pm

**Where:** The Miners Foundry, Nevada City

**What:** In recognition of Grass Valley-Nevada City as a rural California Cultural District - and in celebration of California’s first Arts, Culture & Creativity Month,
Nevada County Arts Council is supporting Sierra Harvest this year through a beautiful display of agrarian themed work by eight local artists:

Thomas Devine
Karel Hendee
Lori Lachman
Randy Griffis
Paul Steege
Ron Kenedi
Katie Wolff
Yvon Dockter

Come and support these fantastic artists, and meet local agricultural artisans in the process.

Enjoy hearty soup using farm fresh ingredients, followed by music and dancing to Love Train. Children and families are welcomed.
Upcoming Arts Events in Nevada County

- click on picture for more information -

Tell Tailors
presents "Going Public," an 8-week writer's workshop on what it takes to get published, helping you craft ways to showcase your work professionally, find your target audience, and plan your publishing strategy.

Music in the Mountains presents its 37th Annual Home Tour. Take a peak at some of the most beautiful and unique Gold Country homes.

Hurry - last performances today! Nevada City School of the Arts presents Alice in Wonderland on Saturday March 30 at 1pm and 7pm.

Kodo Arts Japanese Antiques presents its Spring Warehouse Show

LeeAnn Brook Fine Art presents Abstraction of Nature, featuring over twelve new large format landscape-inspired abstract paintings by LeeAnn at her gallery.

A 10-week I AM HERE performance workshop on themes of Belonging culminating in a public showing at The Culture House in Grass Valley.

Save the Date! Truckee Community Chorus presents The Truckee Historical Review.

2019 Sierra Poetry Festival will feature readings, open mics, workshops, discussion, youth voices and activism to celebrate the many ways that poetry can act as an agent for change.

You can find a full listing of Nevada County's arts events here.

Become a Member

Nevada County Arts Council | info@nevadacountyarts.org | 530.278.5155

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