

Bruin's brand comes from proud past

Deborah Robles cried as I interviewed her son. At no failure to vocalize how wonderful her son is, the loving mother's humble pride is enough to inspire anyone.

A few months after writing about a nameless bear displayed at the Tuolumne County Museum, I drove with museum volunteer Winnie Lovine to speak with James Robles, the winner of the museum's Name the Bear Contest. The bear will officially receive James' American Indian heritage-inspired choice of names at a special event Saturday celebrating National Museum Day.

While the day will include many other activities – including the opportunity for guests to interact with Grizzly Adams and Hard Luck Lin – the day's celebrations put the spotlight on an award ceremony for the contest. Deborah will be there to support and congratulate James, and it would come as no surprise if she cried tears of joy and motherly pride, too.

More than 200 third- through sixth-graders entered the contest to name the bruin. James came up with the idea for his entry while talking to family members about the contest. His winning choice was: Yosemite, pronounced “uh-shoo-ma-tee.” The word may remind you of our nearby national park, but the Indian term actually means “bear.”

James and his sister, Julia, are one-sixteenth Me-Wuk Indian. Their pureblood great-great-grandmother was born in a teepee near Twain Harte. Given the history of Tuolumne County and James' heritage, he said his family all agreed that Yosemite would be a perfect name for the stuffed bear.

The polite young man, who finished sixth grade at Twain Harte Elementary last year, described his win as “awesome” and “fantastic,” something to be “excited” about. His mother said she calls him, “Dovetown, because he soars like an eagle.” Another American Indian nickname he has picked up means “dancing man,” but James describes himself as any 12-year-old might: he's a boy who likes sports – especially basketball and wrestling – hanging out with friends and certain subjects including math, language, arts and physical education.

That didn't stop James from owning up to the honor and pride he feels for his heritage which, according to Julia, the family can trace back to the 1500s.

“The history is beautiful,” Deborah said. “It's who they are.”

“It feels good talking about my heritage,” James agreed. “Not many

people get to experience that.”

James' history includes some of the graves in the Tuolumne Band of the Me-Wuk reservation cemetery and his sister did American Indian dancing for six years as a youngster.

Deborah said she hopes James' choice for the bear's name and his own heritage will inspire others to look more into the history of the Tuolumne County area. That's a look that the Tuolumne County Museum would be more than happy to provide, and visitors can get a taste of it on Saturday as the museum announces the winning bear name, hosts games for kids, has knowledgeable docents give tours and provides refreshments and mountain bluegrass music for entertainment.

Winnie Lovine will be there as well. The active senior has inter-

Tuolumne Talk

Harmony Wheeler



viewed numerous Mother Lode residents to record their family histories and stories and her passion for what the museum calls its “Third Generation Project” shows when she lights up talking about the many stories she's heard and the possibility of putting them in a book one day. Lovine said she has heard four bear stories so far and has three more scheduled for the

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Harmony Wheeler

Deborah Robles, left, Winnie Lovine, James Robles and Julia Robles will be at the Tuolumne County Museum Saturday.

National Museum Day

WHEN: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday

WHERE: Tuolumne County Museum, 158 Bradford St., Sonora

COST: Free

MORE INFO: tchistory.org or 532-1317

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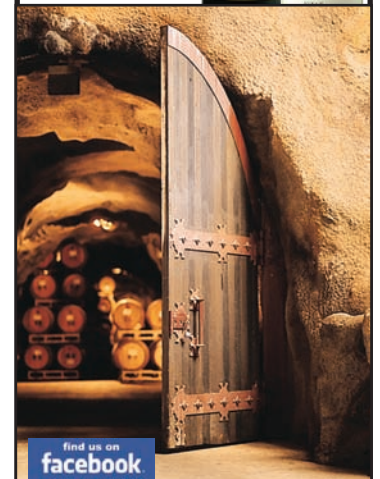
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is maintained for wheelchair access. The hike to Rainbow Falls is a bit more athletic, requiring a 2-mile hike up a very mild trail from the parking area, but with stunning views of a raging waterfall and some truly unique wildlife, the sights are well worth the extra mileage.

To get to Devils Postpile National Monument from Mammoth Lakes, head west on Main Street and turn right onto Minaret Road. Minaret Road leads you directly to the kiosk and ranger station at Devils Postpile. If you don't have a valid national parks pass, there is a mandatory \$10 fee to access the park. During peak summer seasons, a shuttle bus ride is required from the rangers' kiosk to the parking area and trailhead. In my opinion, drive-through access is another great reason to visit this location during fall months.

Camping is available at the monument for \$14 per night. The campgrounds are very well maintained with restrooms, water and excellent swimming options in the river just footsteps from camp. For more information, visit nps.gov/depo.

Reach Dean Fleming at dfleming@sierralodestar.com.



Camanche has a few kokanee

A few weeks ago I heard a rumor that someone caught a kokanee while fishing Calaveras County's Camanche Reservoir. This wasn't the first time such stories had come to my ears; a few years back there was a similar report about a stringer of good-sized kokanee that was reeled in at Camanche. To me, "self-sustaining" kokanee in Camanche was exciting news and a story that was worth further investigation.

I gathered some information on the subject about a year ago for my files, but without a "live catch," the story would just have been hearsay. Since hearing the recent news of another kokanee catch at the lake at the 213-foot elevation, I knew the time was right to make a trip to Camanche.

I called my fishing buddy, Dave Paulo, and on the morning of Sept. 12, we backed my boat down the South Shore launch. I told Dave about my plan to stack four rods (two on each downrigger) set up for kokanee, but noted that the trout seem to hit the same setups as well. My lure selection for all the rods was the ultraviolet watermelon-pattern Apex. Remembering this lure caught trout to 5-pounds

William Heinselman

Solid Gold Fishing



on our last Camanche outing, Dave was more than happy with the idea. Luckily, I still had my mix of white shoepeg corn that was scented with garlic and ginger to tip each of the hooks. We brought plenty of dodgers from Sling Blades to Sep's to Lure Jensen's, too. Our arrival time was good, too; I figured 6 a.m. allowed us every minute to hopefully find the seldom-caught kokanee that live in the lake.

Dave and I motored from the docks into the main lake. The story I was told said the kokanee was caught in the deepest part of the lake – the river channel. I heard the exact spot was near the houseboat cove on the North Shore and the first narrows headed east toward the river. After quickly covering the lake and closely watching my sonar, I had a trolling path planned that would

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future. One man found the mounted head of black bear with brown fur and a rare white chest.

Lovine said she looks forward to the day she'll see a real live bear. In the meantime, she said she'll settle for our lovely Yosemite, the bear at the Tuolumne County Museum in

downtown Sonora. And she's happy to watch young James Robles take his award at Saturday's celebration. She even plans on meeting him again when he turns 18.

Send your Tuolumne County events to Harmony Wheeler at hwheeler@sierralodestar.com and mtaylor@sierralodestar.com.

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