



## EDUCATION/CERTIFICATIONS/HIGHLIGHTS

- 1973 Graduated E.B. Stall High School, North Charleston, South Carolina
- 1973 Studied Fine Art at Eastern Florida State College, Cocoa, Florida, Two Semesters
- 1974 Studied Fine Art/Photography/Graphic Design at Delta College, Stockton, California, Two Semesters. <Note> Was President of Graphic Design Club.
- 1980 Studied Still Life Painting 6 months under Lou Edwards in Jackson, California
- 1981 Studied Landscape Painting 6 months under Fran McKinney, Jackson, California
- 1982 Studied Figure Drawing under Alice Fredricks, Jackson, California
- 1984-1990 Operated Nedra's Fine Art Gallery and Studio in Amador City, a working studio open daily. A major focus was that Nedra gave weekly classes and she required featured artists to present a monthly workshop in featured techniques.
- 1987-1990 Working part-time for Safeway, was trained in hand-made sign making, went on to full-time work as the #1 Safeway Display artist in California and had to close gallery.
- 1986-1989 Was commissioned artist for the "Amador Fun Times," a local entertainment and advertising periodical.
- 1987-Now Started company, "SignDesign," in 1987, doing private sign work, still designing and maintaining signs through present day.
- 1989 Won three (3) First Prizes for paintings at the Amador County Fair
- 1989 Was awarded a "Certificate of Appreciation" from the City of Sutter Creek, "...for outstanding and exemplary service to the City of Sutter Creek on behalf of the citizens of Sutter Creek..." (See Appendix)
- 1989 Was awarded a "Certificate of Appreciation" from the Amador Artist's Association for serving on the Board of Directors.

Nedra J. Russ Resume  
December 28, 2018

- 1990 As Scenic Concept Designer for the Volcano Pioneers Theatre Group play, ***Mornings at Seven***, Nedra designed the set and provided artwork for the program and poster.
- 1990 Was awarded First Prize in the “SNICKERS 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY” Display Contest. <NOTE> This was the first of many prizes won from Safeway, prizes which included a trip to Europe, a new car, and, a whole week at Disneyland!
- 1990 Was promoted by Safeway to Regional Advertising/Marketing/Sign Director/Trainer, overseeing 18 stores, from Sonora to Antioch. Duties included logistical oversight, Grand Openings, was responsible for all training of local staff and maintaining integrity of complex signs and displays.
- 1994 Commissioned to design commercial label for Sutter Creek Brewing Company. The artwork was well received by the company and community (see Ledger-Dispatch article from 11 June 1999 in Appendix) and was utilized both on the individual bottle labels, and on 6-pack carriers.
- 1995 Safeway changed from manual to digital signage, Nedra was retrained as local florist for the Jackson market, but continued to oversee sign and display design there and at the Sonora market.
- 1999 Nedra attended her first Master Class on harmonica put on in San Jose by David Barrett of the renowned School of Blues, <http://www.bluesharmonica.com/>. Also, she started studying under Howard Levy, a world-renowned master of all harmonica genres, at this time.
- 2000 Nedra was invited to participate in an international internet-based cooperative ([www.masks.org](http://www.masks.org)) and take her masks to display in China.
- 2000 Nedra began hosting a successful weekly open mic event at the Union Hotel in Volcano and became a featured guest artist playing harmonica with local bands.
- 2004 Commenced study of Graphic Arts/Electronic Publishing at Sacramento City College. Also, won another First Place Ribbon at the Amador County Fair.
- 2005 Nedra was awarded Certificate of Completion, Graphic Communication and Electronic Publishing from Sacramento City College. See Appendix.
- 2006 Studied Small Business at Folsom Lake Community College for two semesters.
- 2007 Received a Certificate of Completion, Beyond Critical Thinking, from the School of Thinking ([www.schoolofthinking.org](http://www.schoolofthinking.org)). Also, Nedra began studying Speech Level Singing™ under Daniel Hayes

- 2008 Nedra began teaching [Speech Level Singing™](#) and Performance Training at Blue Mountain Coalition for Youth and Families ([BMCYF](#)).
- 2008 Was installed on Board of Directors for ART IN THE GARDEN, an annual West Point art with music event. Nedra continued as volunteer Art Director with them through 2017
- 2009 Attended her second Blues Master Class sponsored by the [School of Blues](#) and attended the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for the Advancement and Preservation of Harmonica ([SPAH](#)).
- 2010 Was awarded the **2010 Teamagic Award** in recognition of her service to youth and community by [BMCYF](#).



- 2010 Was featured artist at the Wine and Art Festival in Jackson.
- 2010 Nedra enrolled at [Artist Works](#), an online teaching center, and began studying advanced harmonica techniques under Howard Levy, as noted above, a world-class master of all harmonica styles.
- 2011 Nedra wrote the music, designed the art work, and produced the first album of her discography, ***Movin' On***. This marked the beginning of NJR Productions and she was soon accepting musician customers to record their work, which led to providing instruction and musical counseling services as well to her customers.
- 2011 Attended the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for the Advancement and Preservation of Harmonica ([SPAH](#)) in Virginia Beach, VA.
- 2012 Formed the duo, [nJr](#), with new music partner Julio Guerra, and wrote the music, designed the art work, recorded, and produced their first album, ***Everybody's Been Somewhere***. <NOTE> Everybody's Been Somewhere was ranked as **#2 People's Choice album of 2012** by the **World of Harmonica** website in the UK. Also, in 2012, the World of Harmonica ranked Nedra Russ as 94<sup>th</sup> out of the top 100 harmonica players in the world!
- 2013 Nedra won **First Place** in the Miscellaneous Category for a rousing railroad train instrumental at the "[Singing Rails](#)" contest at Railtown 1897 in Jamestown.

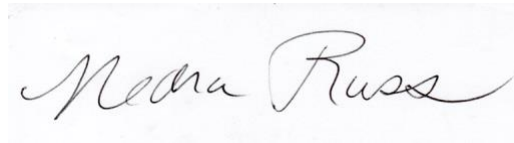
- 2014 Began online study on [Modern Musician Specialization Program](#), Berklee School of Music.
- 2014 Was accepted, based on her creative use of harmonicas in jewelry design, as an endorsed [Hohner](#)™ “Juke Joint Representative.” Hohner is the world’s largest harmonica manufacturer.
- 2015 Completed the 4 modules, [Songwriting](#), [Introduction to Music Production](#), [Developing Your Musicianship](#), and [Modern Musician Capstone](#) of the **Modern Musician Specialization** course and was awarded [Certificate of Completion](#).
- 2015 Blues Gr., the Blues Society of Greece, published: [Interview with Nedra Russ & Julio "Inglases" Guerra - capturing the true spirit of Americana blues & roots](#).
- 2015 Nedra completed course: [The American South: Its Stories, Music, and Art](#), and was awarded a certificate from the **University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill**.
- 2015 Second nJr album, **Dusty Roads** is released.
- 2016 Nedra was [interviewed](#) and added to the roster of “[Famous Harmonica Players](#)” by the Netherlands-based Bluesharp Info.
- 2016 Attended the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for the Advancement and Preservation of Harmonica ([SPA](#)H) in San Antonio, TX. Nedra prepared and presented a seminar, “**Making the Music.**”
- 2016 <Ongoing> Two successful monthly community events instituted by Nedra at **BMCYF**: [Art With Nedra](#) and [Open Mic](#).
- 2017 Third nJr album, **Blues News**, is released.
- 2017 Nedra was asked, in addition to teaching the “**Making the Music**” seminar, to perform in the Variety Show on the Main Stage of the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for the Advancement and Preservation of Harmonica ([SPA](#)H) in Tulsa, OK. The original tune performed, [Happy Little Frog](#), was showcased as an emblem of our Calaveras County home.
- 2018 Continuing her education, Nedra is taking lessons in recording on the [Logic Pro](#) program.
- 2018 Attended the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for the Advancement and Preservation of Harmonica ([SPA](#)H) in St. Louis, MO.
- 2018 Nedra was chosen to show her work in the (juried) 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Columbia Fine Art Show at Columbia State Historic Park.

- 2018 Nedra was invited to submit songs to be published in **The Amador-Calaveras Songbook, Lyrics and Links**, a project sponsored by the Amador Ledger-Dispatch and the Jackson Rancheria. In addition to recording and contributing two of her own songs, **Pine Grove** and **Happy Little Frog**, Nedra was the Recording Engineer, harmonica player and music Producer on three other songs, **Calaveras** and **Brick by Brick** by Susan Preece, and **The Argonaut Mine** by Den McCue. This publication showcases local talent by presenting lyrics and music will be distributed along with the newspaper on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 by the Ledger-Dispatch.
- 2018 <Ongoing> Nedra was invited to show at Main Street Gallery, 299 Main Street, West Point.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

Bloom where you are planted! As an active member of the West Point Community, I enjoy helping where I can and I have continued to help as an active BMCYF volunteer these last few years. Teaching and working with the youth at BMCYF was an extremely satisfying gift to me, as well as to the kids. My education, background, and experience make me a perfect candidate to help create, as the BMCYF Mission Statement states, "... ***a vibrant, peaceful, healthy community where everyone is nurtured, supported, and inspired.***"

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nedra Russ". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nedra" and last name "Russ" clearly distinguishable.

Nedra J. Russ

[www.nedraruss.com](http://www.nedraruss.com)  
[www.njrmusic.com](http://www.njrmusic.com)





Team Magic  
2010



2018



Nedra J. Russ Resume  
December 28, 2018



Martel



Moke River after the fire



Rick a night cat



Transformation and healing



Pearl



Coy Wolf



Hot nights last hope



Reflections Of My Minds Eye



California Nectar



Sunset tunnel



Sunny day



Sea Of Night To Come



Heading towards Tahoe



Tuscan wine

MINI-PORTFOLIO OF NEDRA CREATIONS



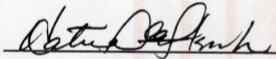
# Sacramento City College Certificate of Completion

**Nedra Jean Russ**

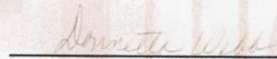
Is awarded this certificate for satisfactory completion of

## **Graphic Communication Electronic Publishing**

Qualifying courses and the date this certificate was granted  
are recorded on the recipient's transcript.

  
SCC President

August 4, 2005  
Date

  
Division Dean



Sacramento, California • Los Rios Community College District



4 Courses

Songwriting  
Introduction to Music  
Production  
Developing Your Musicianship  
Modern Musician Capstone



03/24/2015

**Nedra Jean Russ**


has successfully completed the online, non-credit Specialization


## **Modern Musician**


A sequence of 3 courses with an accompanying 6-week-long final project, in which you record and produce a song that you have written.

This 24-week-long sequence of courses teaches key concepts in music theory, ear training, songwriting, and music production. Those who complete the specialization are armed with the tools they need to write and produce their own music.

  
Professor Peter Bell,  
Assistant Professor  
Electronic Production  
and Design, Berklee  
College of Music

  
Professor George W.  
Russell, Jr.  
Harmony and Piano  
Departments  
Berklee College of Music

  
Pat Pattison  
Professor  
Berklee College of Music

  
Professor Loudon  
Stearns,  
Berklee College of Music

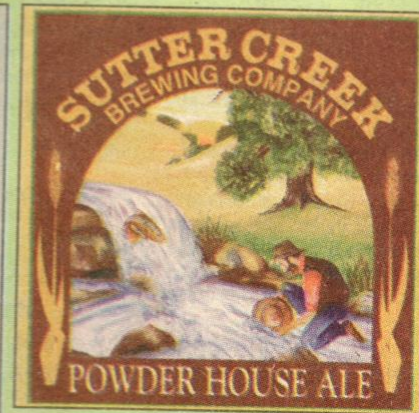
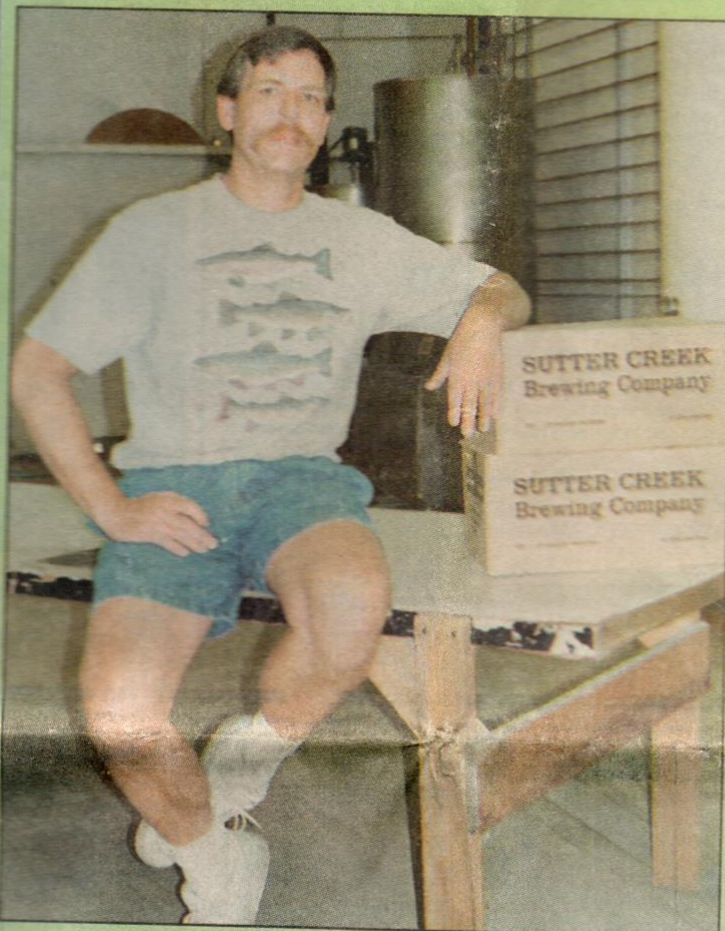


Jackson, California

Friday, June 11, 1999

50¢

# Microbrewery closure is 'the end of a dream'



Crowded marketplace too much for 4-year-old Sutter Creek Brewing Co.

By SEAN BARRY  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

**SUTTER CREEK** — David and Jean Gassaway enjoyed the good life at their microbrewery on Church Street, sipping their homemade ale in the company of friends and tourists.

"We had some really good times," Jean says.

The Gassaways were hardly alone, living that dream in the 1990s. Microbreweries were popping up everywhere. Meanwhile, the nation's largest beer makers introduced brands aimed at the same market.

The Gassaways' products did well locally. But promotions at "brewfests" weren't yielding any big breaks. Two silver medals and a bronze at the State Fair in Sacramento didn't turn things around either. Distribution was falling off.

"It's a hard thing to have to go through," said David Gassaway as he closed Sutter Creek Brewing Co. last week. But he and his wife enjoy good memories, and they express appreciation for the strong local support. The brewery's label was painted by Nedra Russ of West Point.

Ledger Dispatch photo by Sean Barry

See **BREWERY**, Page A3



## BREWERY

From Page A1

In a last-ditch effort to save the business, the Gassaways raised tens of thousands of dollars from investors to change production from single 22-ounce bottles to six packs. That didn't help.

Last week, after about four years in business, the Gassaways closed Sutter Creek Brewing Company, the only microbrewery in Amador County.

"It's not a fun thing to have to go through," said David, who ran the company while his wife continued to work in the medical profession. "It's very hard to shut it down. But there's more money going out than coming in. I probably should have closed it six months ago, maybe a year ago."

Jean said, "It's really sad. It's the end of a dream."

A number of factors worked against the Gassaways, and they readily admit they should have done some things differently.

But there was always a bright side.

"Locally, the support was great," said Jean. "It always has been, and we thank everyone for that."

David said, "Sutter Creek rolled out the red carpet for us, making us feel welcome. We had great community support."

The Gassaways, who bought out their business partner a year ago, own all their equipment — grain hoppers, mashers, brewery kettles, fermentation units and conditioning tanks, among other things. The vast majority of that was paid for by investors.

The Gassaways are now selling the equipment, which a distributor has agreed to store while the couple vacate their leased property.

A goldsmith, David plans to get back into the jewelry business. Jean is an X-ray technician at Sutter Amador Hospital, and also a licensed massage therapist. They live in Jackson with their two children.

After four years of planning,

the couple opened Sutter Creek Brewing Co. in 1995, as the microbrew craze was in full swing.

"A million other companies opened up at the same time," David said. "They were all over the United States, but especially in California."

Sutter Creek Brewing Co. offered two regular brands, Powder House Ale and McCladd's Ale. David bottled them by hand — "about 325 bottles in an hour," he said.

Those were 22-ounce bottles, which he says were cheaper to turn out than six packs of 12-ounce bottles. When the company went to six packs, those were hand-filled also. But packages, more labels and new bottles were required.

David also made other varieties, which were offered on tap in the brewery's tasting room. Some local restaurants and stores offered the company's beers, bottled and draft.

The brewery location was not the best to attract tourists, compared to Main, Hanford or Eureka streets. But the Gassaways weren't too concerned with that. They were focused on getting their product on store shelves, especially beyond Amador County.

"One of my biggest mistakes was thinking I could distribute the beer, that I could do it myself," David said.

Enlisting distributors in the Central Valley wasn't a recipe for success either.

The Gassaways say the nation's largest breweries give big incentives to independent distributors, which in turn act as sales associates for their new products. That makes it tough for start-up companies to get their beer onto the trucks and into the stores, the Gassaways say.

In the mid-'90s, Anheuser-Busch Inc. introduced three high-priced specialty beers — advertised as revivals from the pre-Prohibition era — plus a brand called Red Wolf. Those competed

directly with microbrews, as did Miller Brewing Co.'s Red Dog, among others.

Microbrews also battle fast-growing "contract" brands like Samuel Adams, which is made under license by Stroh's Brewery Inc., according to the Gassaways. Imports also crowded the high-end beer market.

And then there's the fierce competition among microbreweries themselves.

At its peak, Sutter Creek Brewing Co.'s annual production was just 750 barrels, at 31 gallons each. By contrast, industry leader Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. — actually based in Chico — makes roughly 300,000 barrels per year, according to the Gassaways.

When sales exceed a certain point, a brewery can no longer call itself a "micro," and it is taxed at a higher rate. Sierra Nevada is near that limit.

San Francisco's Anchor Steam Co. makes about 100,000 barrels per year, the Gassaways say; Mendocino Brewing Co. in the Hopland-Ukiah area, 20,000.

The Gassaways had no delusions their company would grow past microbrewery status. But they're disappointed they weren't able to revive a long tradition. Sutter Creek and Jackson both had breweries in the Gold Rush era.

Several other Mother Lode microbreweries have folded in recent years, including Murphy's Creek and Parrot's Ferry — both in Calaveras County — and El Dorado Brewing Co. in Mount Aukum. But a couple are doing well, including Snowshoe in Arnold.

The Gassaways gave the Sutter Creek Brewing Co. sign to a friend. But they're keeping one memento: the original watercolor painting, by Nedra Russ of West Point, that was transposed to the all the labels.

The painting depicts a man panning for gold at sunset.

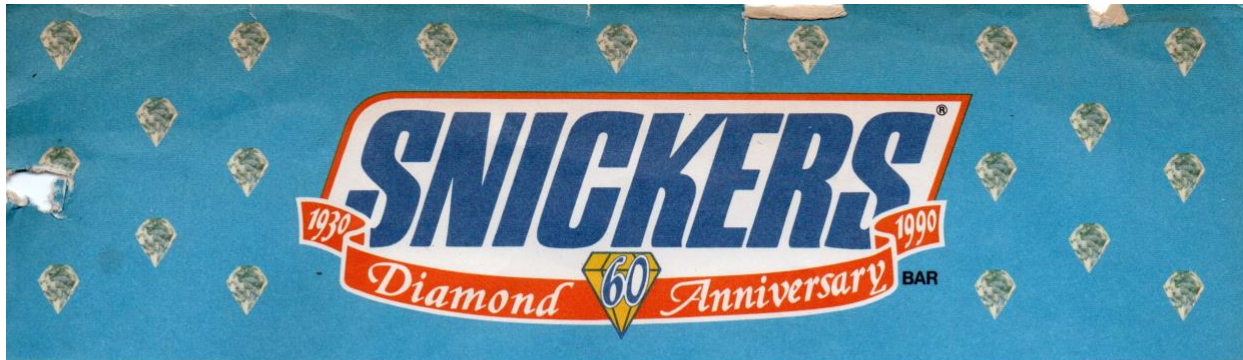
December 218











August 6, 1990

Nedra Bush  
Thomas LePage  
Safeway Store #279  
#9 S. Highway 49 and 88  
Jackson, CA 95642

Dear Ms. Bush and Mr. LePage,

On behalf of M&M/MARS, I'd like to specially thank you for your outstanding support of our "SNICKERS 60TH ANNIVERSARY" Display Contest.

This contest was definitely the best we've ever sponsored in this area. The creativity, imagination and just plain hard work was evident in displays like yours.

Your \$500 FIRST PRIZE will be distributed to you through your headquarters.

This type of program creates excitement for all of us --- Safeway, M&M/MARS and your customers. Thank you again for your outstanding support.

Sincerely,

*Patty Wright-Ferrini*

Patty Wright-Ferrini  
M&M/MARS

