

# THEN & NOW



BY MIDGE NEFF-LECLAIR, PHD, HISTORY

**THANKSGIVING**-an expression of gratitude, an act of giving thanks, a day to count our blessings. We were taught in school how a group of Pilgrims arrived and settled in Plymouth Mass. in 1620. It was a

bitterly cold winter and they did not have enough warm clothing or enough food to survive.

Over 100 died that first winter. The nearby Wampanoag Indians taught the survivors how to hunt wild game, and in the spring gave them corn seeds to plant, with other beans and squash. That autumn they had a bountiful harvest. In appreciation, Governor Bradford said there should be a celebration in thanks, and be shared with their Indian friends. The Indians brought wild turkeys and venison. The men in the colony brought geese, ducks and fish. The women learned to bake cornmeal

bread with nuts, and how to make succotash. The celebration lasted three days.

The custom of a day of thanksgiving spread from Plymouth to other New England colonies. During the Revolutionary War, eight special days of thanks were observed for victories won, or being saved from dangers. On November 26th, 1789, President George Washington proclaimed a day of thanks. That same year, the Protestant Episcopal Church announced that the first Thursday in November would become a regular yearly day for giving thanks, "unless another day

be appointed by the Civil authorities."

For many years there was no regular National Thanksgiving Day observed in the United States. Some states did have an annual celebration; others did not. By 1830 New York state had an official state thanksgiving holiday, and soon other northern states followed the example. Virginia was the first southern state to adopt the custom, and proclaimed a "Thanksgiving Day" in 1855.

Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale, the editor of Godeys' Ladys Book (a popular magazine) worked many years to

promote the custom of an annual National "Day of Thanksgiving." President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November 1863 as a "Day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father." For the next 75 years the president formally proclaimed that Thanksgiving Day should be celebrated on the last Thursday in November.

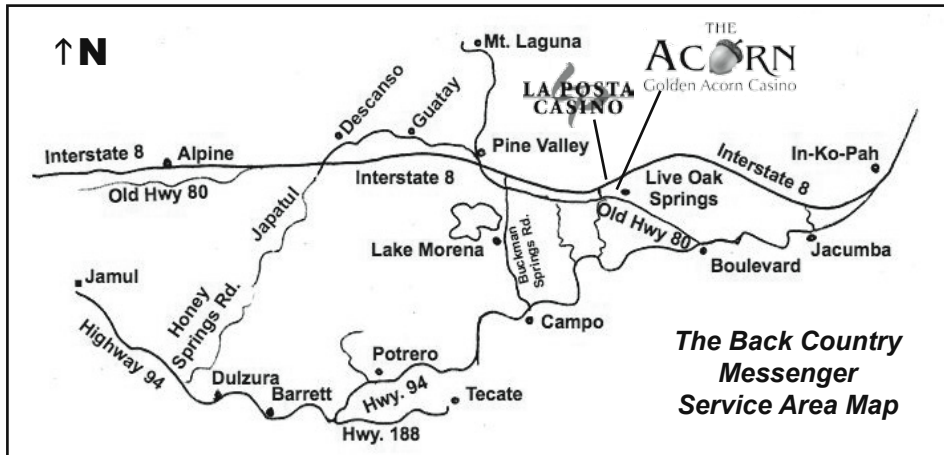
As our country struggled desperately to recover from the devastating effects following the collapse of Wall Street in 1929, the great depression grew ever deeper. Banks closed, business after business failed, as millions of people

lost their jobs, their savings and their homes. (Does this sound familiar?) By late summer of 1939 a great controversy developed pitting state against state, football coaches against retail businessmen, and almost everyone against the President. Since the presidency of Lincoln, Thanksgiving was always celebrated on the last Thursday, but President Roosevelt in an effort to provide a longer shopping time for retailers announced he was moving Thanksgiving to one week earlier to help the economy. Angry letters to the White House blasted

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## A Back Country Guide

To help you find your way around the back country



**ALPINE:** Motels, fast foods, restaurants, shops, health care, gas&lodging, historical significance, Viejas Casino and Factory Outlet Center, Post Office, churches, library, sheriff, fire protection, and community center.

**DESCANSO:** The Descanso Junction Restaurant, the Trading Post, Perkins Store & center, Camp Oliver, Historical sites, Post Office, churches, CDF, schools, and library along with a community center.

**PINE VALLEY:** Gas, restaurants, grocery, dental, lodging, County Park, camping & hiking, horseback riding, Historical sites, ORV area and U.S. Border Patrol facility, churches, library, Post Office and community center.

**CAMPO:** The Railroad Museum, Motor Transport Museum, Stone Store Museum, fishing and camping at Lake Morena, gas, groceries, Lake Morena RV park, the Malt Shop and El Rancho Bar and Grill.

In Campo the Campo Diner, Circle K, Trading Post, Mountain Health Center, Pacific Crest Hiking Trail, U.S. Border Patrol, ORV sites in Corral Canyon and along the U.S./ Mexican border, churches and a library, CDF and Campo Fire, Post Office and community center. In addition, the Golden Acorn Casino.

**POTRERO:** The Potrero Store, Caf 94, Post Office, CDF, County Park, library, schools, a Christmas tree farm, hiking, camping and a community center.

**TECATE:** The gateway to old Mexico; a passport is required to enter the United States through the International border.

**BARRETT:** Home of camping, fishing, and the best all you can eat fish fry at Barrett Junction Caf.

**BOULEVARD:** The La Posta Casino and restaurant, Live Oak Springs Resort, camping, cabins, gas, liquor & deli, markets, library,

community center, hotels, Coins and Collectables and the world famous Wisteria Candy Cottage, U.S. Border Patrol, fire and sheriff depts. The "Sacred Rocks Reserve" is a live-in park that offers overnight camping and motor home traveler's spaces with full hook ups. Restrooms, showers, swimming pool, and many large oak trees and hiking trails are located within the reserve.

**JACUMBA:** The Hot Springs Resort and Spa, laundromat, market, Mountain Health Center, library, community center, park, glider port, and churches in town. Off the interstate is the De Anza Resort, a Subway and two gas stations.

**IN-KO-PAH:** Home to an equipment sales center and the Desert View Tower. The tower is a roadside attraction with gifts, shade, drinks, restrooms and a view for many miles.

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