

Winter/Spring 2021



*Connecting  
people to the  
outdoors  
through a system  
of trails*



## TRAIL JOURNAL

### **Jobs Peak Ranch from Bridge to Bridge and a Little Farther**

By Juan Guzman

I enjoy walking the Jobs Peak Trail so much these warm, sunny and windless days of the Pandemic Year. Today I even remembered to push the start button on my Strava application, in order to keep track of the miles. I was hoping for at least 5 miles since I have been stuck at doing 4 mile walks for a while. From my garage door to the trailhead is  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile along the edge of State Hwy. 207, better known as Foothill Road. Around the corner we pass Kona's home, a young pit bull that follows us on the other side of the fence. I think that she would just love to come along with Phinney, Shelby and me. Phinney, named after Phinney Ridge, a neighborhood in Seattle, is a three year Labradoodle. Shelby is a 10 year old Australian Shepherd, and I am 67 and have fallen in love with the trails designed and built by CVTA in our backyard, particularly Jobs Peak Ranch Trail.



The trailhead parking lot is full, and there are even more cars parked at the overflow area parallel to Foothill Road. That has been the case since COVID began. In just about all indoor spaces there are multiple restrictions and closures. Families have rediscovered the outdoors and trails for recreation and exercise. It is not only Jobs Peak, but Fay Luther, Genoa, Clear Creek and even Pinyon; all trails are very busy.

Next on my walk, I check for doggie poop bags at the station and grab a couple. A few more steps and we are surrounded by brush. The decomposed granite (d.g.) trail is wide enough for the dogs to walk at my side. As I walk, I lift my head and take in the views. There are some private homes on the east side with peek-a-boo Carson Valley sightings, and that enormous looking, steep and pyramidal shaped mountain rising up and up to the west - Jobs Peak and the false summit in front, framed by the Fay Luther Canyon to the south and drainages and saddles to the north. If you really look carefully you may isolate a pine tree from the mass of them growing along the steep slopes, the ridges and the sky line. It is a fantastic sight in front of you and is so comfortable to walk parallel to the mountain following the contour of the land. It is flat along this length of trail maybe for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile or so. We squeeze past two rocks, just above knee height, forming a narrow gap. My imagination gets unraveled, this is the strait of Gibraltar, it doesn't matter that the scale doesn't work, it's still my strait of Gibraltar here in Nevada, right here in my backyard.

(continued on Page 3)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Neal Falk

I have spent quite a bit of time reflecting upon the past decades of passion and commitment given to CVTA by private landowners, local government, local businesses, and of course the dedicated CVTA volunteers, members, directors, officers and presidents. Without your tireless efforts, we would not have fifty-four miles of scenic trails today.

As incoming CVTA president, I am tasked with designing our collective path forward. In formulating this design, my job must be one of inclusion. In the coming weeks, we will be stepping up our social media outreach to share information and imagery concerning our trails and our underlying mission. In the process, our goal is to better connect with you and invite your participation with building our path forward.

Certainly, growing CVTA membership is critical to our future. A mere \$35.00 a year membership helps our volunteers continue to maintain our trails for you. Ultimately, we are all stewards for our fifty-four miles of trails. How we choose to exercise that stewardship is unique to each of us. Perhaps it is a passion for trail building and maintenance. Or perhaps a passion for photography, videography, writing and/or art. Others may have a passion for networking, fundraising, and/or serving on the CVTA board. And, of course, many of you exercise stewardship by making generous financial donations to CVTA throughout the year. All of your continuing collective efforts will help build our path forward.

Before joining me on this path, you might want to first know a little bit about me. After all, I do not want to be a stranger! In the summer of 2018, my family and I moved to the Carson Valley from South Florida, where I had practiced law for more than twenty years and my wife worked as a school teacher for more than ten. When we vacationed, it was typically in Lake Tahoe, visiting my wife's parents. During those vacations, I would spend much time hiking. The end of vacation and return to South Florida were always bittersweet.

During evening neighborhood walks over the ensuing years, my wife and I would endure the intense Florida humidity and mosquitoes, and dream together about a path that would lead us west. Ultimately, a moment came to take a chance on a dream. As John Muir once said, "The mountains are calling and I must go." And so we went.

Our new path led us first to Genoa where we rented a home for several months. During that time, I studied for the Nevada Bar Exam in the mornings and enjoyed Job's Peak Ranch Trail with my yellow lab, Jackson, in the afternoons. Walking that trail was a welcome respite from the intense daily studies. The scenery, open space, and serenity revitalized me and ultimately gave me the focus and strength needed to pass the Nevada Bar (I now joke that I might have been the oldest first year applicant ever admitted in Nevada).

After Genoa, our path led us to Minden, where we were blessed to discover that our next door neighbor and soon-to-be-friend was none other than Bill Henderson, one of the finest human beings we have ever met. During my nightly walks with Bill, we often talked about my desire to volunteer and connect with this wonderful community. Bill's advice was "find what you love." It did not take long to find my passion for the outdoors and our wonderful trail system here in the Carson Valley.

While my dear friend Bill is no longer here to walk and talk with, I carry his memory with me each day. Bill worked tirelessly to connect and help this community. His efforts and achievements are legendary. Although I only knew Bill for just a few short years, it was evident to me that he succeeded because he had a passion. As your CVTA president, I pledge my passion to expand my outreach to you.

See you along the path!  
Neal



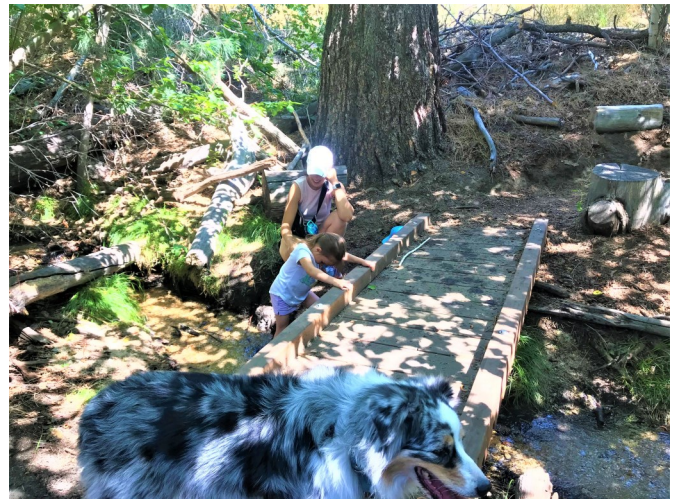


Now we are walking west straight up the slope and my lungs gasp a little, my legs are heavier and the pace slows. A good thing about the pace slowing down, instead of seeing a mass of brush I recognize some of its components: there is Bitterbrush, Sagebrush, Desert Peach, and Mormon Tea here and there. I recall discussing with Jeremy Vican, CVTA Trails VP, that the easement granted to the County for the Trail lies along the property line and there is no room to build switch backs into the trail. It's complicated - the trail is within private open space land, owned by the home owners association of the Job's Peak Ranch Development and the County was granted a 50 Ft. wide easement. Within the easement CVTA planned, permitted, and constructed close to a 1.5 mile segment of this trail. The next sections, approximately 1.7 more miles, are within Public Lands in California, and finally BLM (Bureau of Land Management) lands in Nevada. This is important. Most people believe that this is a USFS (US Forest Service) trail. That is not the case at all, but I am getting ahead of the story.



At around 5,100 ft. in elevation the brush gives way to the tree line, primarily conifers. We've already climbed from 4,800 ft. at the brush dominated trail head into the pine trees where the temperature feels about 10 degrees cooler. Here, right next to the trail, there's a rock with a peculiar hole in the center - a quern stone, or grinding stone. When my granddaughter Sawyer, 4 years old, visits from Seattle we climb up to this point in the trail and stop to play for a while. We pretend to make salsa with the pine needles in the hopper of the rock. I miss her and her brother Jack.

Once past the quern rock, the walking is much easier, and the partial shadow from the trees makes it feel cooler. A bench donated by the Tiffany Family offers you a site to rest and enjoy the views. A big new home appears to the right and close by is the northernmost bridge crossing a clear and delightful musical creek. I am walking on a new bridge that Jeremy's volunteers built a few months back. It replaces the old railroad steps anchored with steel cables that volunteers led by Phil Brisack built quite a few years back. The crossing was also relocated to a narrower spot, to facilitate the crossing of the creek, a more intimate spot into the woods. The forest becomes more diverse, and tight clusters of Aspens within the riparian zone thrive by this drainage. It is lovely at this spot and it makes you feel like you arrived somewhere.



This is just about 1.25 miles from my garage, and there is quite a bit more to go.

There is some more climbing, but just for shorter segments of trail. The Carson Valley views are superb to the east, framed by the openings in the forest. Next we cross a man-made rock lined drainage with a good size basin. It seems to me that this channel serves to capture the main drainage from the saddle north of Jobs Peak and the mountain to the north. There is an attractive rustic looking fence, built by CVTA volunteers, along the trail's west side, demarcating the private ownerships from the public access easement. The trail continues relatively flat into another wet area with several seeps and instead of walking on decomposed granite, now the track is covered with moss and organic materials. There are ferns and more aspens that make you feel right inside the woods. Will we see a bear or mountain lion? If I were one of these creatures for sure this is where I would like to live.



Ahead are some “disguised” switchbacks, they are so well built that they are a pleasure to walk even when steep. All of a sudden there is a narrow paved rock road and another new home, with a distinctive flat roof design. Beyond, the unparalleled views of the Carson Valley continue to ease your walking efforts. A metal fabricated sign proudly announces that you are about to enter the Jobs Peak Unit of the Fay Canyon Wildlife Area, California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Yes, the Stateline is just ahead and this 200 acre parcel of land is located just over the state line in Alpine County, Ca. The parcel was sold to the Nevada Land Trust as an intermediary owner waiting to complete the land conservation transaction with the State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife. If you could see a map view you will see the trail skirting the state line bordering this parcel with Nevada to the east and California to the west.

Some more short ascents on segments of winding trail and we arrive at the highest elevation point, around 5,300 ft. There is Mountain Mahogany with a low branch stepping into the trail and you can see south to the terminus of the Carson Valley, and the Pine Nut Mountains all across the Valley to the east. The view is stunning. All the way up here, there is a memorial bench from the Hall Family. From this point, very close to the two mile mark (1.75 from the trailhead), the trail descends steeply and the views of rock outcrops to west and the Valley to the east take your breath away.

The trail zig-zags and before you know it, you’ve arrived at the second bridge, also constructed by Jeremy and a handful of dedicated volunteers that carried all the materials way up here a few years back. This second creek crossing (from north to south ) is somewhat larger than the first one. It is not as enclosed but a similar rhythm of the creek water tumbling down makes you feel renewed. The views southwest of the rock outcrops on the lower ridge are mesmerizing. The elevation approximates 5,100 ft and that means that in a short distance the trail steeply loses elevation when you are going south. If you were to be walking in the opposite direction to the north then your heart would pound and your heavy breathing would remind you that it is steep here, probably the steepest segment in the whole trail. This was my planned turning point but I feel like walking more so I continue.

The d.g. path continues in a southerly direction along easy rolling terrain losing altitude gradually. There are huge house size boulders here and there and some more sporadic seeps on the banks of the trail. Just ahead I see the Valley View Trail junction site and my legs feel a little tired. I feel happy however, since this is the point approximately 3 miles from my home where I decide to head back and experience the route one more time on the reverse. This time we walked six miles, and it was a lot of fun.





## TOP TIPS WHEN ENCOUNTERING EQUESTRIANS

By Karen Chaton, Local Equestrian

Many trails in Carson Valley are experiencing an increase in use and will likely continue to do so. We are fortunate to live where there are so many beautiful and varied trails with fantastic views that are open to such a variety of trail users. These trails are shared by hikers, bikers and equestrians alike. Here a few tips for helping understand horses on the trail and what you can do to help.

### **Narrow Trail - What to do?**

If you are hiking up a narrow trail and an equestrian approaches from behind, moving to the side of the trail on the downhill side is very helpful. If the horse should spook, it will usually be away from the other trail user towards the uphill side.

If you are hiking down a narrow trail while an equestrian is riding up, it is always helpful if you can backtrack to allow for a safe spot for everyone to pass. It is difficult for horses to backtrack downhill, and we greatly appreciate your helping us! Likewise, by



communicating with each other on the trail, we can work together to safely pass one another.



### **Do Horses Like When I Say "Hi?"**

Yes! Horses and equestrians love saying "hi." A friendly word of greeting reassures horses and also lets their riders know of your presence. If you are with a group, letting riders know how many others might be ahead is helpful so that they can prepare to safely pass them.

A talking backpacking hiker can be particularly soothing to the horse. That backpack, for whatever reason, can sometimes be scary to the horse.

### **That Tree or Rock Looks Like a Good Spot, Should I Step Behind It?**

A hiker, biker, or other trail user should avoid stepping behind a rock, a tree, a bush or out of sight from a passing horse. If the horse has seen you, he's looking for you! And with the sudden disappearance the horse can become nervous. To a horse, that disappearing human could suddenly jump out and eat them! Even if the horse did not see you go behind that rock, tree or bush, a snapping twig or a rustling branch as a horse goes by can spook the animal. Horses are friendly and so are we! Please stay in sight. We would like to see you and say "hi!"

### **What Can Bikers Do To Help?**

To a horse, bikers can appear quickly while making very little noise. If you are a biker and see an equestrian ahead, please do not be shy! The horse would like to hear your voice before you approach. If you could please just reduce your speed and say hi to let the horse know you are nearby, it is most helpful to the horse and equestrian alike.



### **What Can Dog Walkers Do to Help?**

If you are walking with your dog(s) and encounter an equestrian, it is greatly appreciated if your dog remains on leash. A horse can sometimes become frightened by unleashed dogs who approach too closely or suddenly. This can trigger a horse's natural flight response. It is always greatly appreciated if you and your leashed pet yield to the side of the trail and say "hi!"

## REPLICATING SUCCESSFUL RIVER RESTORATION: From the Truckee to the Carson

by Sara Cobble  
Marketing & Communications Manager of The Nature Conservancy

with Introduction by CVTA President Neal Falk

As President of the Carson Valley Trails Association, I have enjoyed meeting and exploring collaboration with many local and national not-for-profit organizations. One such organization is The Nature Conservancy. I am most pleased to share with you their story below. I hope you will agree with me that the trees and vegetation at River Fork Ranch can benefit recreation and the Carson Valley community as a whole. Enjoy the read and see you on the trail!

Neal Falk  
CVTA President



Since the beginning of the Lower Truckee River restoration 20 years ago, 50,000 cottonwood trees, plants and shrubs have been planted along its banks, creating a lush, shady habitat for birds and fish and a refuge for recreationists. A once-straightened, barren river was restored to its natural curves, and diverse wildlife and migratory birds that had not been seen in years returned. Now, thanks to the success of that restoration, 600 cottonwood trees, naturally generated from seeds and harvested from McCarran Ranch forests, are helping to transform another northern Nevada river.

The cottonwood trees will live along the Carson River at River Fork Ranch Preserve, where they were recently planted by The Nature Conservancy in Nevada's (TNC) River Fork Ranch Preserve Manager Lori Leonard and Restoration Projects Manager Chris Sega, thanks to a Nevada Department of Environmental Protection grant for streambank stabilization. New trees, native willows and shrubs will help stabilize streambanks along the Carson River by reducing soil erosion and sediment flowing into waterways and improve the river's water quality by reducing nonpoint source pollution.

Before restoration of environmental flows, and the start of TNC's efforts on the Truckee, there was little natural regeneration of cottonwoods for decades. Now, the thick



forests at McCarran Ranch provide an excellent source of trees that would otherwise be expensive and difficult to find in the numbers needed for successful restoration in the Carson Valley. Cottonwoods also used to thrive in larger numbers along the Carson River, and Leonard hopes they will again.



"Historically, there were more cottonwood galleries in Carson Valley and there aren't many of them remaining," Leonard said. "The Truckee River restorations have created somewhat of a cottonwood tree nursery, allowing us to harvest and transplant them to new restoration sites. Finding a source like this for sizeable native cottonwood trees isn't easy. This is a great example of using successful restoration techniques and being able to expand and replicate them to other areas."

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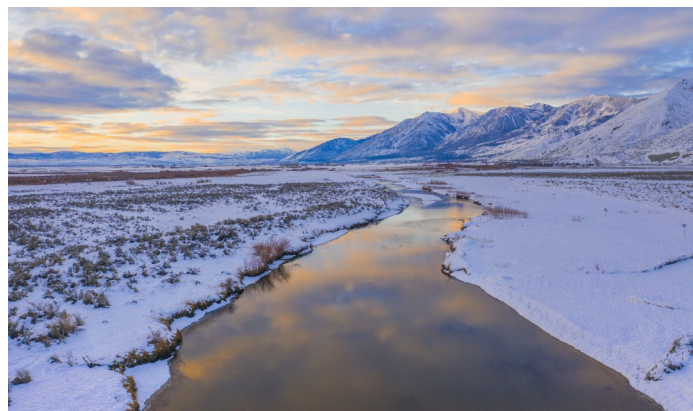
The restoration of the Truckee River connected it to the adjacent floodplain, allowing for cottonwoods to naturally regenerate from seeds by having access to water long enough for them to develop into mature trees. Planting the trees at River Fork Ranch was part of multi-year process: trees harvested and planted in 2021 began growing from seeds after the 2017 floods, helped by the most recent Truckee River restoration in 2016-2017.

“We hope these transplanted trees will survive and create a seed source for new seedlings to grow along the Carson River and Brockliss Slough,” Leonard said. “This is the first time we’ve transplanted trees from the Truckee River to the Carson Valley, so it will be an experiment to see how well they do at this site, with different soil and water conditions.”

Expanded vegetation at River Fork Ranch will help plant communities, create more habitat for species and may increase the diversity of wildlife along the Carson River. More trees and less pollution also mean better recreational opportunities for people, with more shade and windbreaks along the trails, and clean water in the river for rafters and kayakers.

“Assuming that we have good success, there are going to be a variety of benefits from these trees,” Sega said. “We will of course create shade and beautiful trees that visitors can look at and enjoy in the warmer parts of the year, but we will also be creating patches of habitat that can be used by birds and other wildlife, for feeding, perching, nesting and shelter. Shade from the trees, fallen leaves, and the wind break that they provide will also cause beneficial changes to the soil and plant communities that surround the small groves that we have created.”

The Carson Valley’s many resident mule deer will also benefit from additional shelter, shade and food sources. Next year, TNC will work on a similar habitat enhancement project to protect an additional 500 feet of the Carson River in partnership with River Wranglers and Sierra Nevada Journeys, supported by the Dream Tags Charitable Fund. That project will focus on improving habitat resiliency to help reduce the impacts of drought on mule deer populations and create habitat for nesting and migratory bird species.



TNC hopes to host events for small groups of volunteers to help with planting shrubs this spring and fall and in 2022 (dependent on health and safety guidelines). If you’re interested in volunteering, please email [nvfovolunteer@tnc.org](mailto:nvfovolunteer@tnc.org) to be updated on future volunteer opportunities.



## TRAIL OPERATIONS

### 2020 Trail Operations Highlights

by Jeremy Vican

**Bently Heritage Trail:** Routine brushing and boardwalk maintenance occurred on the entire trail system.



**Clear Creek Trail System:** Thirteen fallen trees were removed from the trail system. Seven short trail realignments were built to improve turns, sight lines and overall safety for bikers. Routine drainage and brushing maintenance also occurred.



**Fay-Luther/Jobs Peak Ranch Trail System:** Seven fallen trees were removed from the trail system. In cooperation with the Jobs Peak Ranch Homeowners Association, a new bridge was installed on the Fay-Luther/Jobs Peak Ranch Trail to provide easier and safer access across the creek, particularly during winter. Routine brushing and drainage work also occurred.



**Genoa Trail System:** Nine fallen trees were removed from the trail system. Retaining walls were cleared of rubble. Routine rock clearing, brushing and drainage work, and trail widening occurred on all trails. Two boardwalks were installed on the East Brockliss Loop to provide easier access over intermittent wet areas.



**Pinyon Trail:** One fallen tree was removed and routine trail maintenance was performed.



A detailed report and prior year reports can be found at: [www.carsonvalleytrails.org/?page\\_id=2190/](http://www.carsonvalleytrails.org/?page_id=2190/)



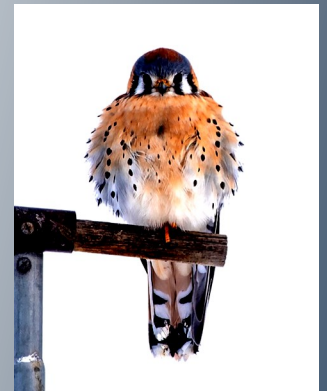
## BEGINNER'S INTRODUCTION TO BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY

By Kim Steed

I have been a Nature & Wildlife Photographer for a few years now. There are so many amazing opportunities right here in Carson Valley to practice my passion! A local trail I enjoy that provides plenty of photography opportunities is the River Fork Ranch Trail. My favorite subject to photograph is birds. Here are a few beginning tips that could help you when you are out on the trails. My tips will be for shooting with a camera but if all you have is a cell phone then that works too!

1. The best time to photograph birds is when they are most active which is in the morning and late afternoon.
2. Patience! Sometimes you need to wait for the bird to come to you! A lot of times they come back to the same spot, so if you wait long enough there is a chance they could come back to where you are.
3. Use softer light. Early morning or late afternoon typically works best because that is when the birds are most active. The light is softer during these times and it does not cast harsh shadows on the birds.
4. Use the composition "Rule of Thirds." This is where you will position the bird off center to the right or left in your image.
5. Tell a story. This is what I try to do with my photography. You show the bird in its surroundings. Just a few examples are when a bird is huddled up with other birds or taking flight out of a tree during a snowstorm.
6. Capture the birds when they are hunting. This is easier to do with Blue Herons because they are so intent on what they are hunting, I find that they don't pay attention to their surroundings as much!
7. Practice! I would go to a pond and just take photographs of ducks and common birds so I could understand how to get the birds' wings in motion. The more you practice the better you become.
8. You can photograph birds with your phone. Of course, for more detailed imagery, you will need to invest in better equipment. I personally shoot with a very big telephoto lens that I actually take with me hiking (Nikon D850/200-500mm). It is quite heavy at about 12 lbs. I don't recommend this for everyone, and certainly not for beginners. However, if you enjoy nature photography as much as I do, you may find yourself making an investment in better and larger equipment!

Thanks for reading my Beginner's Introduction and enjoy the trails!



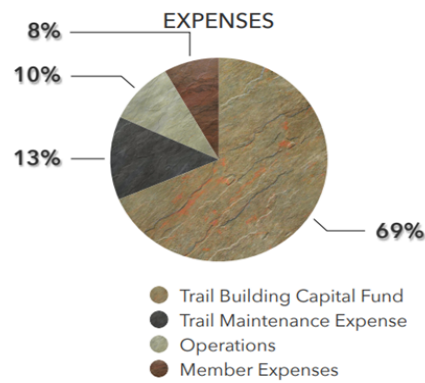
Kim Steed is a local Carson Valley photographer.  
Contact her at Kim Steed Photography  
[mtbdiva@yahoo.com](mailto:mtbdiva@yahoo.com) 408-829-3717  
<https://www.facebook.com/kimsteedphotography/>  
<https://www.instagram.com/mtbdiva/>



# CVTA 2020 FINANCIAL REPORT

Submitted by Vickie Kieffer, Treasurer

Description	Income	Expense
Donations	\$24,920	
Membership Dues	\$12,300	
Interest Income	\$2,120	
Miscellaneous Income	\$720	
Trail Building Capital Fund		\$27,490
Trail Maintenance Expense		\$5,300
Operations (Insurance, Website, Fees, etc)		\$3,960
Membership (Newsletters, Brochures, etc)		\$3,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,060</b>	<b>\$40,060</b>



The generosity of donors and members allowed CVTA to realize a 9.4% increase in total annual income with a record \$19,000 received during our Year-End Campaigns. \$27,490 was added to the Trail Building Capital fund and is targeted to finance the completion of the Clear Creek trail in 2021. We are very pleased to note that CVTA continues to be supported entirely by volunteers and 100% of all funding is used to uphold the mission and goals of this organization.



Your annual membership dues and donations to the Carson Valley Trails Association, a Nevada 501(c)(3) organization, may be tax deductible pursuant to the provisions of section 170.c. of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 170.c. All proceeds support trail construction and maintenance, project planning, community events and trail access in the Carson Valley.

## 2021 CVTA Officers and Board

**President** Neal Falk

**President-elect** Joel Potter

**Secretary** Linda Kleiner

**Treasurer** Vicki Kieffer

**VP/Membership** Lee Elson

**VP/Chief Information Officer**  
Michael Hartstein

**VP/Trail Operations**  
Jeremy Vican

**VP/Outreach and Publicity**  
Judy Larquier

**Directors-at-Large**

Carlo Luri

Joni Jackson

Juan Guzman

Nora Gastelum

Robert Schilling

Diane Jennings

**Newsletter Editor** Anne Thomas

## IN THE COMMUNITY

February 2021



## OUR COMMITMENT

Minden Lawyers, LLC congratulates its associate attorney Neal Falk on becoming President of the Carson Valley Trails Association. We look forward to volunteering with him to advance the CVTA mission and are proud to be a CVTA member.



## THE MISSION

The Carson Valley Trails Association is a nonprofit, volunteer-based organization working with partners to provide public access through a recreational trail system for present and future generations to enjoy.