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Public Contact: Karon Knuist, Event Coordinator, angelscampcelebrates@gmail.com, (209) 736-1333, cell (209) 418-8478, goldrushday.com

Media Contact: Jan Hovey, jan@hoveywine.com, (209) 736-1965

Gold Rush Day honors 160th anniversary of foundry

Angels Camp – Oct. 8, 2014 – The third annual Gold Rush Day in historic downtown Angels Camp celebrates the region’s rich heritage from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18 with three stages of live music and entertainment, street vendors, sidewalk sale, historic reenactments, a miner’s encampment, gold panning, children’s activities and a variety of food and beverage including wine and beer. Entry is free of charge and a free shuttle service is offered from Bret Harte High School and the Calaveras County Fairgrounds.

This year Gold Rush Day will honor the 160th anniversary of the oldest foundry west of the Mississippi, California Electric Steel, fondly referred to as the Angels Camp Foundry located on the southeast corner of Highways 4 and 49. “We are honored to pay tribute to one of the longest-continuing businesses in California,” stated Anne Forrest, chair of the Angels Camp Commemorative Committee, the entity organizing the event. “Foundries are becoming more and more rare as time passes, but the Angels Camp Foundry continues to produce highly specialized state-of-the-art products that go into some of the world’s most sophisticated devices.”

With humble beginnings as a blacksmith shop in 1854 serving mostly the gold mining industry, the foundry now designs and is the sole producer of brake shoes for San Francisco trolley cars, steel claws for underwater exploration and custom parts for ski lifts, as well as pumps and specialized part for automotive, aircraft, marine, farm, oil and trucking industries.

The Foundry will be honored during opening ceremonies, starting at 10:15 a.m. at the main stage in the Calaveras Visitor’s Center parking lot. Master of ceremonies, Bill Soest, will introduce Mark Twain (Pat Kaunert), Henry Angel (Ernie Boire) and dignitaries, Denni Oravec will sing the national anthem, and Mark Twain will present Loren Whittle and Bob Helvey, owners of California Electric Steel with a special gift, honoring the foundry’s long history. The Angels Camp Fair Board will then recognize Corey Nash, winner of the 2014 Frog Jump Jubilee. Ceremonies culminate with the arrival of the Kit Carson Mountain Men in a covered wagon and shooting of the canon that will signify the start of the event.

A pancake breakfast, hosted by the Italian Catholic Federation, will be served prior to the event from 8 to 10 a.m. at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, 820 S. Main St., Angels Camp featuring pancakes, sausage orange juice and coffee. Cost is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children.

A variety of regional entertainment will be highlighted throughout the event and includes live music by Route 88, the Fabulous Off Brothers, Sierra Mountain Band, Grover Anderson and

Maria Behm, Jeremiah the Juggler, a face painter and a balloon twister. Maria Behm performs from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Stage 2 in front of Stories in Stones; Route 88 on the Visitors Center Stage from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Fabulous Off Brothers on Stage 3 by the Utica Hotel from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sierra Mountain Band from 2 to 5 p.m. on Stage 2; and Grover Anderson on the Visitor's Center Stage from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Attendees will have the opportunity to visit with Mark Twain from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. on the covered porch of the Visitors Center.

Main Street in historic downtown Angels Camp will be closed from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Sam's Way to Vallecito Road. South Main Street will be open for local traffic to Bret Harte Drive. The southbound detour will be at Murphys Grade Road to Gardner Lane to Dogtown Road and will enter at the Highway 4 Bypass eastbound to Vallecito Road exit, then west to Highway 49/Main Street.

Hosted by the Angels Camp Commemorative Committee of the Angels Camp Business Association, major sponsors include the City of Angels, Mark Twain Medical Center/Dignity Health, Angels Camp Trading Post STP, Foothill Village, the Calaveras Visitors Bureau, Century 21 Sierra Properties and the Calaveras County Fairgrounds.

For more event information, visit www.goldrushday.com or call Karon Knuist, event coordinator, at 736-1333 for vendor booth reservations or to become a volunteer.

