

Lake Berryessa News Summary 2015

Amid drought, Lake Berryessa still has water recreation, by Barry Eberling, Apr. 4, 2015, Napa Register

Marcia Ritz sees a tourist-season selling point for Lake Berryessa amid California's four-year drought – the reservoir is more full than empty. “We have more water than most of the lakes around California,” said the operator of Spanish Flat Country Store & Deli. “Last year, we had people who came up here because they knew we had water and other lakes did not.”

Lake Berryessa is 30 square miles of water and 160 miles of curving, snaking shoreline amid the hills of eastern Napa County. Officials say the massive reservoir is 66 percent full — full enough to keep the sprawling Berryessa Valley and the old Monticello town site far underwater.

But the federal government's big Berryessa resort makeover effort remains a work in progress. Markley Cove Marina and Pleasure Cove Marina are at full strength, Steele Canyon and Putah Canyon are stripped-down but open, and Spanish Flat, Monticello Shores and Berryessa Point are closed. For Lake Berryessa, 2015 is a glass half-full, half-empty. Visitors can find water and things to do – just not as much as in the old days.

Berryessa business owners are hoping tourists give the reservoir a chance. Ritz said lake visitation levels have fallen ever since she became owner of Spanish Flat Country Store & Deli seven years ago, back when all seven resorts were at full strength. “I've seen a decline every single year,” she said. “But so far, I've been able to weather it. You have to be creative.”

Now comes the 2015 tourist season. On March 18, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation held a “state of the lake” meeting at the Capell Valley firehouse. A few dozen people attended to learn the latest news on what might lie ahead.

Drought challenges

One problem the lake faces is the statewide stigma of the drought, Bureau of Reclamation officials said. People might assume the Lake Berryessa water levels are too low for recreation because they see pictures on television of other drought-sapped lakes.

“This year isn't that bad – come up to Lake Berryessa,” said Drew Lessard of the bureau.

The drought stigma has hurt the bureau's attempts to have concessionaires run skeletal version of the Spanish Flat, Steele Canyon and Putah Canyon resorts. These resorts were open last year for day use, tent camping, RV camping and boat launches. Bureau Lake Berryessa Park Manager Jeff Laird said that Forever Resorts does not intend to run Spanish Flat this year. He blamed the drought for low visitor numbers.

“Right now, Spanish Flat will be closed for the summer,” Laird said, though he added another operator might be found.

Meanwhile, the drought has had at least some effects on Lake Berryessa that go beyond being a mere stigma. Even though the lake is 66 percent full, it is also 34 percent empty and will be even emptier after a long, hot summer. Last year, the bureau closed its Capell boat launch in September because of falling lake levels. The launch is on a finger of the lake that runs up a valley.

Winter rains have allowed the bureau to reopen the Capell launch. But the lake this year is three feet lower than at the same time last year. Laird said the launch might become unusable as soon as late July. One unknown is precisely how fast Lake Berryessa water levels will fall. Solano County farms and cities take water from the reservoir. Chris Lee of the Solano County Water Agency said there will be no drought-related restrictions imposed on allocations this summer.

Drought water cutbacks for farms and cities don't kick in unless the lake falls below the 50-percent level in spring. But Lake Berryessa recreation advocates are concerned about keeping boat launches open through a tourist season that lasts until fall. Even in a worst-case situation, Laird doesn't see boaters being left high-and-dry anytime soon. He noted Markley Cove, in particular, has a long boat launch.

Lake Berryessa is nowhere near its historic low since the first time it filled in 1963. That low happened at the end of the 1987-1992 drought, when the lake fell to just over 25 percent of capacity and foundations from the submerged Monticello townsite saw the light of day.

Transforming Berryessa resorts

For many in the Capell firehouse audience, the main issue wasn't water. They want more resorts open so visitors will have more destinations at the lake. The bureau closed four of the seven resorts in 2008 and 2009. It scraped the land bare of the trailers, marinas and other amenities so it could start from scratch with new concessionaires.

But an attempt to have Arizona-based Pensus redevelop and run six resorts failed. The company planned to build marinas, hotels, a spa, a conference center, cabins and other amenities for a New-Look Berryessa. In 2012, the bureau declared itself unsatisfied with the renovation progress and canceled its contract with Pensus. It decided to start the bid process over again. Bureau officials told the Capell firehouse gathering that the agency should release a prospectus for five new concessionaires this spring. It could award contracts by 2016, though maybe not all of them at once.

Carol Kunze of the regional environmental group Tuleyome asked bureau officials how many companies submitted proposals to bring more recreational services to New Melones Lake in the Sierra Nevada foothills. The submission period had just closed. None, officials said. That made some in the Capell firehouse gathering wonder what would happen if the Berryessa bid effort also receives no takers.

Bureau officials noted that New Melones Lake is only 23 percent full. In addition, some of the possible concessionaires said they want to wait to bid on Lake Berryessa.

"I would say one step at a time," Lessard said. "I hope we get five good bids. Let's hope we get 15 good bids."

Ritz has seen Lake Berryessa's ups and downs. She's visited the lake since 1961, when she came with friends who liked water sports and camping. "I love it up here," she said.

Now, as operator of Spanish Flat Country Store & Deli, she needs others to discover Lake Berryessa for her business to flourish. She needs Lake Berryessa leaders to navigate those twin challenges of drought and the prolonged lake resort remake effort.

Thompson to try again to change federal oversight of Lake Berryessa, by Barry Ebeerling, May 10, 2015, Napa Register

Rep. Mike Thompson will try again to switch federal agencies in charge of managing Lake Berryessa, and again he will have the support of Napa County. Thompson wants the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, not the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, to manage recreation at the eastern Napa County reservoir. He plans to reintroduce legislation in Congress to make the switch.

The Bureau of Reclamation for several years has tried to renovate the lake's seven resorts. But there have been delays, leaving two resorts at full strength, two in stripped-down versions and three closed. That, in turn, has led to frustration among lake businesses and residents.

“BLM is just the agency best suited to manage the recreation activities at Lake Berryessa,” Thompson aide Austin Vevurka said last week.

The Napa County Board of Supervisors agreed on Tuesday. Thompson (D-St. Helena) sought the board’s support before reintroducing the bill and received it. Both the Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Land Management are part of the federal Department of the Interior. But, county Supervisor Diane Dillon said on Tuesday, they have different mission statements.

The Bureau of Reclamation statement mentions managing, developing and protecting water and related resources. The Bureau of Land Management statement mentions sustaining public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Under Thompson’s vision, the Bureau of Reclamation would continue managing the reservoir’s drinking and agricultural water resources and the Bureau of Land Management would manage its recreational services. Thompson introduced a similar bill in the last session of Congress. The Napa County Board of Supervisors also endorsed that bill.

“The management status quo at Lake Berryessa needs to change,” Thompson said at the time. “Lake Berryessa is an important part of our country and we’ve waited too long for BOR to effectively execute its redevelopment plan.”

His bill had 226 co-sponsors, more than the votes needed for House of Representatives approval, but never came up for a vote. “Timing,” Vevurka said, adding Congress adjourned and the bill must be reintroduced. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Reclamation continues its resort renovations efforts. It plans to release a prospectus this spring for concessionaires to run five of the resorts and could award contracts in 2016.

Dillon said she doesn’t think a switch of federal agencies would further stall the resort redevelopment effort. She noted that Thompson’s bill allows the Bureau of Land Management to build on the work done by the Bureau of Reclamation.

Peter Kilkus is a Berryessa resident and owns The Lake Berryessa News. He opposes a switch from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Bureau of Land Management. Prospective concessionaires bidding on the resort contracts need confidence that they will be dealing with one agency and not another, he said. “I don’t know what benefit they’re talking about,” Kilkus said. “I see absolutely zero benefits.”

Kilkus criticized past Bureau of Reclamation attempts to renovate the resorts, but said the agency is doing a good job with the latest effort.

Berryessa resort resurrected in time for Memorial Day, by Barry Eberling, May 22, 2015

The Bureau of Reclamation announced two months ago that Forever Resorts would no longer operate Spanish Flat, and that the resort would be closed this summer. Craig Morton, Marcia Ritz, Jerry Rehmke and Wesley Plunkett decided they just couldn’t let that stand. They quickly formed Spanish Flat Partners, LLC, signed a short-term contract with the bureau and are the new operators of Spanish Flat Recreation Area on federal land.

“If all our work comes out to breaking even, we’ve still made it to where the lake is surviving,” Morton said. “It’s looking more and more like a ghost town out there and the few businesses up there are starving.”

Lake Berryessa is amid a slow-motion recreation transition designed by the bureau to renovate the seven lakeside resorts. But there have been multi-year delays. Only two resorts are at full strength, two are closed and three – including Spanish Flat – exist in stripped-down versions. The Spanish Flat of old, with its marina and mobile homes, was leveled by the Bureau of Reclamation several years ago as part of its Lake Berryessa transformation. Today’s Spanish Flat offers tent and RV camping and day uses such as picnicking, swimming, fishing and hiking.

It is located on a spit of land projecting into the lake. Ritz runs Spanish Flat Country Store & Deli near to the resort. Having Spanish Flat resort open means more people coming into her store to buy sandwiches, drinks, bait and other items. "It's going to make all the difference in the world," Ritz said. "It's going to help keep the west side of the lake alive."

The other partners come from various backgrounds. Morton runs a pest control company, Rehmke is a painting contractor and Plunkett's parents founded the original Spanish Flat resort several decades ago. "We've all been in business, different types of business," Ritz said. "All of us have been around this lake for many, many years."

The partners think they can be more successful with Spanish Flat than Forever Resorts, which also tried to run the resort on a temporary basis pending its ultimate redevelopment. "We've been here a long time and we love it," Rehmke said. "We're the local people. That's a plus. We know what we want and what people want when they come in and camp."

The contract calls for the Bureau of Reclamation to receive a 1 percent franchise fee on gross profits, said Peggy Brooks of the agency. It's unusual but not unprecedented for residents to step up and run a resort in danger of closing on bureau-managed land, she said. A man also recently did so at New Melones Lake in the Sierra Nevada foothills, she said.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Reclamation is preparing to launch a new search to find long-term concessionaire operators for five of the seven Lake Berryessa resorts. Brooks said a prospectus could be ready for release in June. That means if Spanish Flat Partners, LLC, wants to run the resort for the long haul, it would have to be one of the bidders. But that's a matter for another day. For now, the four partners have a resort they've had to ready for operation at lightning speed.

Reclamation Announces Margaret David Bailey is New Park Manager at Lake Berryessa

The Bureau of Reclamation welcomes Margaret David Bailey as the new Park Manager for Lake Berryessa in Napa County. In this position, Bailey will assist the Area Manager of the Mid-Pacific Region's Central California Area Office, Drew Lessard, in managing public recreation, natural resources, visitor services and concession management at Lake Berryessa.

Lessard stated, "I'm very pleased to welcome Margaret to the Mid-Pacific Region. She is exceptionally qualified for this position, with 26 years of supervisory experience and proficiency in managing public lands. Margaret will be a tremendous asset to the Region and Lake Berryessa."

Bailey earned a Master of Science in Forest Management from Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, in 1991.

She began her career as a National Environmental Policy Act Coordinator in 1990 with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in Alsea, Oregon. She joins Reclamation from her former position as District Ranger with the USFS, Fremont-Winema National Forest, in Klamath Falls, Oregon. In that position, she managed the Klamath Ranger District, consisting of approximately 200,000 acres and resources ranging from developed recreation to vegetation-management projects in northern spotted owl habitat.

Most recently, Bailey served as the Nevada State Liaison, USFS, in Sparks, Nevada. She and her husband, Bruce, have two grown sons. The family enjoys the outdoors, camping, bicycling, kayaking and traveling.

As District Ranger, she managed the Klamath Ranger District, consisting of approximately 200,000 acres and resources ranging from developed recreation to vegetation-management projects in northern spotted owl habitat.



Business Opportunity for Commercial Recreation Services Development and Operation at Lake Berryessa

Proposals will be requested from interested parties for the development, management and operation of commercial concession operations at five locations at Lake Berryessa located in Napa County.

The Bureau of Reclamation shall shortly be announcing a business opportunity, or Prospectus, for commercial recreation services development and operation at LakeBerryessa, in Napa County, California. Reclamation shall request proposals from interested parties for the development, management and operation of long-term concession contracts at Steele Canyon, Spanish Flat, Berryessa Point, Monticello Shores, and Putah Canyon Recreation Areas at Lake Berryessa.

The Lake Berryessa Concession Prospectus provides a business opportunity for the development of new commercial recreation services and support facilities for short-term recreation users along the shores of beautiful Lake Berryessa.

Reclamation will provide an opportunity for prospective bidders to tour the recreation areas, see future recreation services locations, and submit questions regarding these concession business opportunities.

The new concession operations envision required services including marinas with pleasure craft and commercial houseboat rentals, slip rentals for pleasure craft and houseboats, dry boat storage, marine mechanic services, boat launch ramps, marine fuel, wastewater pumpout, retail sales, rustic overnight lodging, full service RV, standard and tent camping sites, on-site parking, and restaurants.

Additional services are authorized for each of the five recreation areas. Required support facilities shall include water and wastewater systems, electrical systems, paved and unpaved roads, marina access ramps, parking lots, security lighting, restroom facilities, trail connections, and landscaping. Some facilities will be provided by Reclamation.

Reclamation is in the process of completing conceptual site planning and detailed infrastructure design, as well as a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document to guide the development of recreational opportunities at all five areas under consideration. A Market Assessment and Financial Feasibility Evaluation have been prepared and will be available to bidders. Successful bidders will be responsible for completing facility designs and site-specific NEPA documentation for site development, as well as all necessary permitting requirements.

Lake Berryessa is located in eastern Napa County, approximately 20 miles northeast of Napa and 25 miles west of

the town of Winters in Yolo County. Lake Berryessa is within a short drive of other attractions such as Napa Valley wine country and wilderness recreation in the nearby Cedar Roughs and Knoxville Recreation Areas. It is readily accessible by millions of potential visitors. It is within a three-hour drive of the San Francisco Bay area, Sacramento, and other municipalities in Central California.

Bids will be accepted for 75 days, commencing in spring 2015. To learn more about recreation at Lake Berryessa and watch for updates about the upcoming Prospectus, please visit the Lake Berryessa website at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cca0/berryessa/index.html>.

The Bureau of Reclamation is promoting Lake Berryessa, as they promised to do at the last Lake Berryessa Community Forum meeting.

Reclamation's Lake Berryessa is a Great Choice for Summer Recreation

NAPA, Calif. –For those who are looking for summer recreation, Lake Berryessa in Napa County is a great choice. It's open for business with full services expected throughout the summer, including boating, skiing, swimming, fishing, hiking, picnicking, biking and camping – and it is also full of wildlife and natural beauty.

Reclamation Operated Facilities: The Capell Cove Boat Launch, Dufer Point Visitor Center, expansive Oak Shores Day Use Area, Smittle Creek Trail and several other Day Use areas around the lake are all open for the summer recreation season. Come fish for bluegill, bass, trout and salmon. Barbecue with family or friends at one of the many picnic areas. Walk the many miles of beach, or hike the Smittle Creek Trail.

Concession Operations: Markley Cove Resort, Pleasure Cove Marina, Steele Canyon Recreation Area and Putah Canyon Recreation Area are open and offer a variety of recreation services, including camping, boat rentals, cabin rentals, boat launching and more. For specific information, please call the concession operators or visit their websites:

Markley Cove: 707-966-2134, www.markleycoveresort.com

Pleasure Cove Marina: 707-966-9600, www.goberryessa.com

Steele Canyon Recreation Area: 707-966-9179, www.goberryessa.com

Putah Canyon Recreation Area: 707-966-9051, www.royalelkparkmanagement.com.

Other Recreation: There are many other recreation opportunities at and around Lake Berryessa. For questions, please contact the Lake Berryessa Field Office at 707-966-2111 ext. 0, or visit the lake's website for directions, hours of operation and other

Bid packages contain future of Lake Berryessa resorts, by Barry Eberling, Sep. 26, 2015, Napa Register

The federal Bureau of Reclamation sought bids from contractors to run five resorts on Lake Berryessa, the older versions of which were demolished by the bureau years ago. Three are operating in a stripped-down configuration and two others are closed completely. Supporters hope rebuilt resorts will jump-start the economy of the remote corner of the county.

Napa County is considering whether it would like to again manage one or more of the resort sites at Lake Berryessa. In the early years of Lake Berryessa, the county managed all seven, making itself the target of criticism. Somebody wants to redevelop and operate Lake Berryessa resorts in eastern Napa County, but who and how many parties are in the running remains a mystery to the public.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation will only say that it has received bids in its quest to find concessionaires for five of seven lakeside resorts. The deadline to submit bids passed on Sept. 15. “It is good news, we did get several bids,” agency spokeswoman Janet Sierzputowski said. “Now hopefully they’ll be good bids and hopefully we can make some real progress.”

But she wouldn’t say how many bids have been submitted or if bids have been received for all five resorts, adding that the agency is keeping this information confidential for now. Details could be available after an agency review panel looks at the bids in mid-October. Nor is it yet clear whether the bids are credible.

“They have not been reviewed or read in any way,” Sierzputowski said. “They have only been looked at to make sure they were submitted in the correct format, which they were.” The bureau wants to award contracts for up to 30 years for Spanish Flat, Steele Canyon, Putah Canyon, Monticello Shores and Berryessa Point resorts. Concessionaires are to come in and rebuild the resorts virtually from scratch.

Plans call for marinas, lodges, restaurants, stores and other features to return to the five resort sites. The bureau had the previous resorts that dated back many decades demolished several years ago.

Lake Berryessa in its recreation heyday had an estimated 1.5 million or more visitors annually. Numbers since 2011 have ranged from a high of 550,000 in 2012 to a low of 408,000 in 2014 amid the resort transition, the bureau estimates.

Those “several” bids may hold the key to revitalizing Lake Berryessa recreation and improving the financial fortunes in lake communities. Stu Williams lives in Berryessa Highlands, a subdivision launched in the mid-1960s near the lake with about 350 homes and 900 residents. He is closely watching the bidding process.

“My fingers are crossed,” he said. “Believe me, my fingers are crossed.”

Berryessa Highlands residents in 2012 approved an assessment to comply with state demands to improve the subdivision’s wastewater system. They are counting on nearby Steele Canyon resort to shoulder a portion of costs topping \$11 million for wastewater and water system improvements.

Residents pay a \$980 annual assessment for the improvements, Williams said. They also have sewer and water bills that come to \$350 to \$400 and more every two months. The state wanted the new infrastructure sized to serve Steele Canyon. But the bureau’s resort renovation plan has experienced delays over the past few years. Steele Canyon resort operates today in a stripped-down version with campgrounds. Williams estimated that a redeveloped resort might pay 20 percent of the wastewater and water system costs.

“It’s very frustrating for us (that) we haven’t had our rates lowered,” said Williams, who has long been involved with resort utility issues.

Lake Berryessa this past summer still had activity, despite the uncertainty over resort redevelopment. Markley Cove and Pleasure Cove operate at full strength with marinas and other features. Spanish Flat, Steele Canyon and Putah Canyon offer such activities as camping.

But that’s only an echo of the lake recreation scene before the Bureau of Reclamation’s renovation effort began several years ago. The bureau’s goal is to award contracts for new resort concessionaires before the 2016 recreation season.

[Berryessa resort bid results to be announced in January, by Barry Eberling, Nov. 23, 2015, Napa Register](#)

Napa County is considering whether it would like to again manage one or more of the resort sites at Lake Berryessa. In the early years of Lake Berryessa, the county managed all seven, making itself the target of

criticism. Winners in the Lake Berryessa competition to revitalize resorts with new marinas, campgrounds, stores, restaurants and lodgings should be known in January.

That's when the Bureau of Reclamation expects to announce its picks to rebuild and operate up to five resorts. These resorts have for several years been either closed or run in stripped-down versions. The bureau's latest redevelopment effort involved putting the concessionaire contracts for five of the lake's seven resorts out to bid. The federal agency closed the bidding period on Sept. 15, but has yet to announce how many bids it received or for which resorts.

"It's still a confidential process," Bureau of Reclamation spokeswoman Janet Sierzputowski said.

At stake is the future for a major regional recreation draw. Lake Berryessa businesses for several years have waited for a successful resort redevelopment effort to boost the area's economy. The bureau estimates lake visitation fell from 1.5 million people when all seven resorts were at full strength to 408,000 in 2014. The resorts targeted for redevelopment are Steele Canyon, Spanish Flat, Putah Canyon, Monticello Shores and Berryessa Point. Markley Cove and Pleasure Cove continue to operate at full strength with marinas under separate contracts.

Sierzputowski repeated the bureau's prior announcement that it received "multiple bids" for its latest redevelopment effort. A panel is reviewing and scoring proposals and will make a recommendation to the regional director, who will make a decision, she said. After announcing the selected bidder or bidders for the various resorts in January, the bureau will start negotiating with them. It expects to award the contract or contracts in the April-to-June time frame, she said.

The bureau wants bidders to show evidence that their financial assumptions and business models are realistic, that they have funding sources documented by letters of credit or proof of assets and that they have the experience to develop resorts, she said.

As part of its public outreach effort, the bureau holds regular Lake Berryessa meetings with representatives from the Berryessa community. Sierzputowski said a future meeting will focus on the bid results. More Berryessa changes are to come. The bureau is to release a prospectus to become the next concessionaire for Markley Cove sometime from January to April, Sierzputowski said.

The bureau in 2006 decided to drastically revamp Lake Berryessa resorts on public land. It cleared out hundreds of mobile homes where people lived part of the year, razed five of the resorts and moved to rebuild from scratch with a greater emphasis on short-term visitors. The bureau in 2010 chose Arizona-based Pensus as its resort redeveloper and operator. In December 2012, it terminated the Pensus contract because it was dissatisfied with the firm's progress and restarted its search for resort operators.

Metaphors, Similes, and Analogies

Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech that uses one thing to mean another and makes a comparison between the two. The key words here are "one thing to mean another." So, when someone says "He's become a shell of a man," we know not to take this literally, even though it's stated directly as if this person had actually lost his internal substance.

Simile

A simile compares two different things in order to create a new meaning. In this case, we are made explicitly aware that a comparison is being made due to the use of "like" or "as" (He's like a shell of a man). For fun, the next time someone corrects you and says "That's a simile, not a metaphor," you can respond by letting them know

that a simile is a type of metaphor, just like sarcasm is a type of irony. Resist the urge to be sarcastic in your delivery.

Analogy

An analogy is comparable to metaphor and simile in that it shows how two different things are similar, but it's a bit more complex. Rather than a figure of speech, an analogy is more of a logical argument. The presenter of an analogy will often demonstrate how two things are alike by pointing out shared characteristics, with the goal of showing that if two things are similar in some ways, they are similar in other ways as well.

Why metaphor?

There are circumstances where either a simile or analogy is the more appropriate vehicle for getting your point across. But coming up with a great metaphor may be your best bet in many situations.

A metaphor carries so much more power than a simile, because it's direct. Using "like" or "as" to make an open comparison will often diminish the vivid visual you're trying to paint in the reader's mind. Likewise, a spot-on metaphor will spark instant understanding for a reader, without the elaboration that an analogy requires.

The dictionary defines a "metaphor" as a figure of speech that uses one thing to mean another and makes a comparison between the two. For example, Shakespeare's line, "All the world's a stage," is a metaphor comparing the whole world to a theater stage. Metaphors can be very simple, and they can function as most any part of speech. "The spy shadowed the woman" is a verb metaphor. The spy doesn't literally cast his shadow on the woman, but he follows her so closely and quietly that he resembles her own shadow.

A simile, also called an open comparison, is a form of metaphor that compares two different things to create a new meaning. But a simile always uses "like" or "as" within the phrase and is more explicit than a metaphor. For example, Shakespeare's line could be rewritten as a simile to read: "The world is like a stage." Another simile would be: "The spy was close as a shadow." Both metaphor and simile can be used to enhance writing.

An analogy is a bit more complicated. At the most basic level, an analogy shows similarity between things that might seem different -- much like an extended metaphor or simile. But analogy isn't just a form of speech. It can be a logical argument: if two things are alike in some ways, they are alike in some other ways as well. Analogy is often used to help provide insight by comparing an unknown subject to one that is more familiar. It can also show a relationship between pairs of things. This form of analogy is often used on standardized tests in the form "A is to B as C is to D."

A mixed metaphor is one that leaps from one identification to a second identification inconsistent with the first. "I smell a rat [...] but I'll nip him in the bud" -- Irish politician Boyle Roche. This form is often used as a parody of metaphor itself: "If we can hit that bull's-eye then the rest of the dominoes will fall like a house of cards... Checkmate."

Now let's look at another type of poetic metaphor:

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Consider these two sentences from Leonard Gardner's novel *Fat City*:

The stooped forms inched in an uneven line, **like a wave**, across the onion field.

Occasionally there was a gust of wind, and he was engulfed by sudden rustling and flickering shadows as a high spiral of onion skins fluttered about him **like a swarm of butterflies**.

Each of these sentences contains a **simile**: that is, a comparison (usually introduced by *like* or *as*) between two things that are generally not alike--such as a line of migrant workers and a wave, or onion skins and a swarm of butterflies.

Writers use similes to explain things, to express emotion, and to make their writing more vivid and entertaining. Discovering fresh similes to use in your own writing also means discovering new ways to look at your subjects.

Metaphors also offer figurative comparisons, but these are implied rather than introduced by *like* or *as*. See if you can identify the implied comparisons in these two sentences:

The farm was crouched on a bleak hillside, where its fields, fanged in flints, dropped steeply to the village of Howling a mile away. (Stella Gibbons, *Cold Comfort Farm*)

Time rushes toward us with its hospital tray of infinitely varied narcotics, even while it is preparing us for its inevitably fatal operation. (Tennessee Williams, *The Rose Tattoo*)

The first sentence uses the metaphor of a beast "crouched" and "fanged in flints" to describe the farm and the fields. In the second sentence, time is compared to a doctor attending a doomed patient.

Similes and metaphors are often used in descriptive writing to create vivid sight and sound images, as in these two sentences:

Over my head the clouds thicken, then crack and split like a roar of cannonballs tumbling down a marble staircase; their bellies open--too late to run now!--and suddenly the rain comes down. (Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire*)

The seabirds glide down to the water--stub-winged cargo planes--land awkwardly, taxi with fluttering wings and stamping paddle feet, then dive. (Franklin Russell, "A Madness of Nature")

The first sentence above contains both a simile ("a roar like that of cannonballs") and a metaphor ("their bellies open") in its dramatization of a thunderstorm. The second sentence uses the metaphor of "stub-winged cargo planes" to describe the movements of the seabirds. In both cases, the figurative comparisons offer the reader a fresh and interesting way of looking at the thing being described.

Really Bad Similes Written by High School Students

Every year, English teachers from across the country can submit their collections of actual analogies and metaphors found in high school essays for the amusement of teachers across the country. Here are some winners:

- Her face was a perfect oval, like a circle that had its two sides gently compressed by a Thigh Master.
- His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without Cling Free.

- He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it.
- She grew on him like she was a colony of E. Coli, and he was room-temperature Canadian beef.
- She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh, like that sound a dog makes just before it throws up.
- Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.
- The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.
- McBride fell 12 stories, hitting the pavement like a Hefty bag filled with vegetable soup.
- From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and Jeopardy comes on at 7:00 p.m. instead of 7:30.
- Her hair glistened in the rain like a nose hair after a sneeze.
- The hailstones leaped from the pavement, just like maggots when you fry them in hot grease.
- He fell for her like his heart was a mob informant, and she was the East River.
- Even in his last years, Granddad had a mind like a steel trap, only one that had been left out so long, it had rusted shut.
- The plan was simple, like my brother-in-law Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work.
- He was as lame as a duck. Not the metaphorical lame duck, either, but a real duck that was actually lame, maybe from stepping on a land mine or something.
- It was an American tradition, like fathers chasing kids around with power tools.
- He was deeply in love. When she spoke, he thought he heard bells, as if she were a garbage truck backing up.
- Her eyes were like two brown circles with big black dots in the center.
- He was as tall as a 6'3" tree.
- John and Mary never met. They were like two hummingbirds that had also never met.
- She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh like that sound a dog makes before it throws up.
- The ballerina rose gracefully en pointe and extended one slender leg behind her, like a dog at a fire hydrant.
- Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.
- The revelation that his marriage of 30 years had disintegrated because of his wife's infidelity came as a rude shock, like a surcharge at a formerly surcharge-free ATM.
- The lamp just sat there, like an inanimate object.

Latest forecast suggests 'Godzilla El Nino' may be coming to California, by RONG-GONG LIN II, LA Times

The strengthening El Niño in the Pacific Ocean has the potential to become one of the most powerful on record, as warming ocean waters surge toward the Americas, setting up a pattern that could bring once-in-a-generation storms this winter to drought-parched California.

The National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center said Thursday that all computer models are now predicting a strong El Niño to peak in the late fall or early winter. A host of observations have led scientists to conclude that "collectively, these atmospheric and oceanic features reflect a significant and strengthening El Niño."

"This definitely has the potential of being the Godzilla El Niño," said Bill Patzert, a climatologist with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La Cañada Flintridge. Patzert said El Niño's signal in the ocean "right now is stronger than it was in 1997," the summer in which the most powerful El Niño on record developed.

"Everything now is going to the right way for El Niño," Patzert said. "If this lines up to its potential, this thing can bring a lot of floods, mudslides and mayhem."

After the strongest El Niño on record muscled up through the summer of 1997, the following winter gave Southern California double its annual rainfall and dumped double the snowpack in the Sierra Nevada, an essential source of precipitation for the state's water supply, Patzert said. A strong El Niño can shift a subtropical jet stream that normally pours rain over the jungles of southern Mexico and Central America toward California and the southern United States.

But so much rain all at once has proved devastating to California in the past. In early 1998, storms brought widespread flooding and mudslides, causing 17 deaths and more than half a billion dollars in damage in California. Downtown L.A. got nearly a year's worth of rain in February 1998.

There are a couple reasons why scientists say El Niño is gaining strength.

First, ocean temperatures west of Peru are continuing to climb. The temperatures in a benchmark location of the Pacific Ocean were 3.4 degrees above the average as of Aug. 5. That's slightly higher than it was on Aug. 6, 1997, when it was 3.2 degrees above normal. The mass of warm water in the Pacific Ocean is also bigger and deeper than it was at this point in 1997, Patzert said.

Second, the so-called trade winds that normally keep the ocean waters west of Peru cool -- by pushing warm water further west toward Indonesia -- are weakening. That's allowing warm water to flow eastward toward the Americas, giving El Niño more strength.

For this year's El Niño to truly rival its 1997 counterpart, there still needs to be "a major collapse in trade winds from August to November as we saw in 1997," Patzert said. "We're waiting for the big trade wind collapse," Patzert said. "If it does, it could be stronger than 1997."

There is a small chance such a collapse may not happen. "There's always a possibility these trade winds could surprise us and come back," Patzert said. Overall, the Climate Prediction Center forecast a greater-than-90% chance that El Niño will continue through this winter in the Northern Hemisphere, and about an 85% chance it will last into the early spring.

In California, officials have cautioned the public against imagining that El Niño will suddenly end the state's chronic water challenges. A forecast is never a sure thing, they say. And they also want to remind the public that California has been dry for much of the last 15 years. Even if California gets a wet winter this year, it could be followed by another severe multi-year drought.

“We certainly wouldn’t want people to think that, ‘Gee, because it’s an El Niño this year, it’s going to be wet and therefore we can stop conserving water,’” Jeanine Jones, the California Department of Water Resources’ deputy drought manager, said in July.

Another problem is that the Pacific Ocean west of California is substantially warmer than it was in 1997. That could mean that though El Niño-enhanced precipitation fell as snow in early 1998, storms hitting the north could cause warm rain to fall this winter. Such a situation would not be good news “for long-term water storage in the snowpack,” said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist at Stanford University.

Drought officials prefer snow in the mountains in the winter because it slowly melts during the spring and summer and can trickle at a gentle speed into the state’s largest reservoirs in Northern California. Too much rain all at once in the mountains in the winter can force officials to flush excess water to the ocean to keep dams from overflowing.

Swain said it’s important to keep in mind that all El Niño events are different, and just because the current El Niño has the potential to be the strongest on record “doesn’t necessarily mean that the effects in California will be the same.” “A strong El Niño is very likely at this point, namely because we’ve essentially reached the threshold already, but a wet winter is never a guarantee in California,” Swain said in an email.

“I think a good way to think about it is this: There is essentially no other piece of information that is more useful in predicting California winter precipitation several months in advance than the existence of a strong El Niño event,” Swain said. “But it’s still just one piece of the puzzle. So while the likelihood of a wet winter is increasing, we still can’t rule out other outcomes.”

Clint Pridmore Leaves Lake Berryessa Forever

Clinton Roy Pridmore born December 4, 1937 in Napa, California to Joseph Roy Pridmore and Martha Ella (Bartley) Pridmore. He was the fifth generation to be born and raised in Napa, on the family ranch in Capell Valley. He lived, worked, and raised his family on the ranch for the entirety of his life. This legacy has been carried on by his children and grandchildren, which was something he thoroughly enjoyed.

Clint married Nancy Lee Wright on October 12, 1957. They raised three sons, Gil Cory, Kelly Dean, and Darryl Clinton; all whom remained in Napa. They carved a wonderful life out for their family through hard work, perseverance, and ingenuity; starting a general engineering construction business with his brother/sister-in-law, Pridmore Brothers Construction. Clint and his brother, Don played a big part in developing Lake Berryessa and surrounding areas.

Growing up on his family ranch, Clint held a deep appreciation for conservation of land and wildlife. He served on the Resource Conservation District Board for over 30 years, holding the president seat for many terms. Through his lifetime, he spent countless hours creating water/feed sources for wildlife and maintaining access to the family ranch. He taught his children and grandchildren to be caretakers of the land and to enjoy the benefits of spending time in nature.

Clint made many friends throughout the nation through his trapshooting endeavors. He was a champion trapshooter since the late 1970’s with credits in vast circles. This was a sport he enjoyed with his children and grandchildren whereby they were able to travel the world from South America, Mexico, Hawaii, Alaska and Europe for events. His love of the sport was passed along through his other passion, hunter safety, of which he instructed generations of students. He was a member of the Martinez Gun Club, and the Napa Gun & Pistol Club through most of his life. He was also a lifetime member of the Safari Club International and many other conservation groups.

Perhaps his greatest accomplishment was instilling his values and sense of family into the three generations that have come during his lifetime. He truly enjoyed his family and watching them grow up in such close proximity. He was able to be apart of his grand-children's lives and later his great-grandchildren. His nieces and nephews and their children were as much apart of his family and apart of the joy as his own.

Clint is survived by his wife Nancy of 58 years, their three sons Gil (Cathy), Kelly (Susan), and Darryl Pridmore, 7 grandchildren, Cori (Casey) Carlson, Cameron (Brenna) Pridmore, Candice (Bill) Howden, Clinton (Alice) Pridmore, Austin (Lacey) Pridmore, Whitney Pridmore, and Joe Pridmore, 8 great-grandchildren; as well as many nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews, and cousins. As per Clint's wishes, there will be no funeral or memorial. Memories and notes of sympathy may be shared at claffeyandrota.com

Clint and the Banditos Gringos (Lake Berryessa News Story, 2005)

Clint Pridmore had just tied the U.S Skeet Shooting champion in Texas the week before, but now he was working on a TV special in his backyard. Clint was hosting a Public Broadcasting System crew shooting a segment of the PBS series American Experience about the legendary Annie Oakley. But "shooting" with a camera and "shooting" with an over/under shotgun clearly take different visual skills.

As the film crew adjusted their equipment, Clint calmly shattered clay pigeon after clay pigeon until the camera focus was just right. Pull, bang, poof! Watching the targets disintegrate brought to mind the official government definition of explosion: rapid mechanical disassembly.

During a lunch break, Clint and the producer, Riva Freifeld of New York, discussed Annie Oakley and shooting accuracy. Clint's answer as to why he thought he was so accurate was the same as Annie Oakley's answer to that same question many years ago, "I don't know - I just feel it." The conversation switched to eye coordination and cross-dominance and soon Clint and the whole crew were holding up their index fingers trying to determine which was their dominant eye.

Clint claims he started shooting "when they took my diapers off" and has been shooting in heavy competition since 1978 - 1,200,000 rounds in one gun alone! He's also a member of the exclusive 1,000 rounds in one day club and has actually fired off just under 1,500 rounds in a single day. Skeet shooters reading this may be wincing at the imagined shoulder pain, but Clint, the 60-something athlete, says it's not too bad. The shotguns use a reducer and light target loads. The stock has a shock absorber and the shooting vest has two gel pack/bubble pack shoulder inserts.

Clint enjoys competitive shooting because he's good at it (multiple championships) and because of the camaraderie with other shooters. But he also loves the fact that it's a multi-generational family affair for him. The Pridmore family now stretches back six generations to the 1800s in Napa County. His children were good shooters and now his grandkids, who started at 9 years old, are champions too. A couple of years ago three generations of Pridmore's journeyed to Spain for an international competition where they were billed as the Banditos Gringos. Clint and teenage grandkids Austin, Clinton, and Whitney all did well, with Austin winning all the Junior classes and 4 out of 5 adult classes against 520 adult shooters. Granddaughter Whitney placed third in the Women's class. Back home, Austin also plays high school football while Clinton concentrates on baseball.

As with any modern sports star, Clint has an agent and manager who works behind the scenes - his wife Nancy - who has always encouraged him and helped organize the family adventure to Spain.

