

The Holiday Herald

21-22 December 2010

California Cascade Range



Lassen Volcanic National Park, Tehama County, California. (Story on next page)

Happy Holidays to you

In far northern California – where giant volcanoes claw every last bit of Pacific moisture from winter's thick clouds before forwarding dessicated wisps to Nevada – the holiday season doesn't arrive with the tinkle of bells or the strains of Christmas carols.

It arrives with the barely audible splishes of huge, heavy snowflakes that splatter against the windshield and pile many feet deep, filling the streets and burdening the trees.

A fiery land sleeps beneath a blanket of cold snow.

The friends who receive this newsletter follow many faiths and celebrate a wide range of holidays this time of year.

From a family in the midst of Advent and which soon will celebrate Christmas, I send you best wishes for your holidays and the coming New Year by sharing scenes from my annual drive into California's winter lands.



California's largest volcano, 14,179-foot Mount Shasta, reaches for an elusive bit of morning sunlight. The dark, forested hillside in the foreground is actually the forward edge of a lava tongue hundreds of feet thick that flowed from the volcano centuries ago, cooled and solidified at this spot. For an aerial view of how the lava, now covered with green forest, spread from Shasta, follow this link http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=hotlum+ca&sll=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=32.66491,79.013672&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=Hotlum,+Siskiyou,+California&ll=41.474041,-122.314459&spn=0.060322,0.154324&t=h&z=13 or paste it into your browser's URL window. Be sure you click on the "SATELLITE" button for the picture view and check the block beneath it that says "SHOW LABELS." You can use the navigation arrows to move the view so that Mount Shasta, which is out of the frame to the bottom right, comes into view to give you an idea of its size. This picture was made at dawn as I was parked on Highway 97. For a summer view from this same vantage point, go to <http://railpictures.net/viewphoto.php?id=287750&nseq=3>. The train gives perspective to the massive size of the mountain. Hotlum, Siskiyou County.

Where were these photos taken?





Horses at breakfast, Weed, Siskiyou County

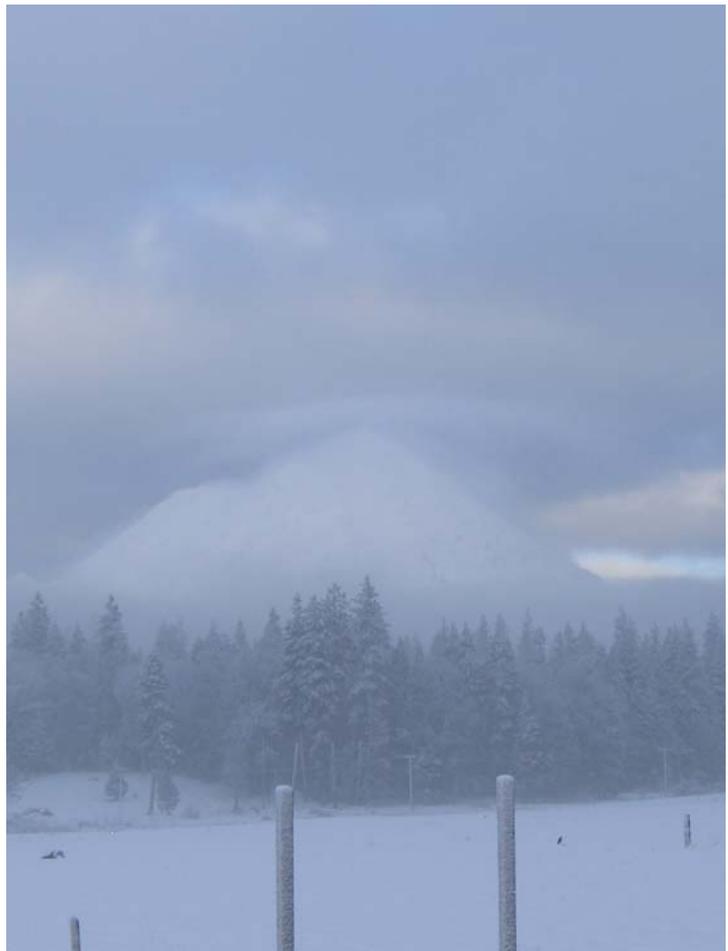
Black Butte, a 6,334-foot volcanic cone at the base of Mount Shasta, is clad in its formal winter white and visible through a morning snow shower. Mount Shasta City, Siskiyou County.

A gazetteer

Shasta. A mountain, county, town, dam and lake in northern California derived from the English name for the local Indian tribe. The mountain and town are in Siskiyou County. **Redding**, pop. 81,000, is the county seat.

Siskiyou (*SISS-kyoo*). A county and mountain range in northern California, word origin unknown. The county is large and largely empty with only 8 people per square mile. **Yreka** (*wye-REE-kah*), pop. 7,200, is the county seat.

Tehama (*teh-HAY-muh*). County includes the main entrance to Lassen Volcanic National Park and 10,462-foot Lassen Peak, California's second-largest volcano. **Red Bluff**, pop. 13,200, is the county seat.



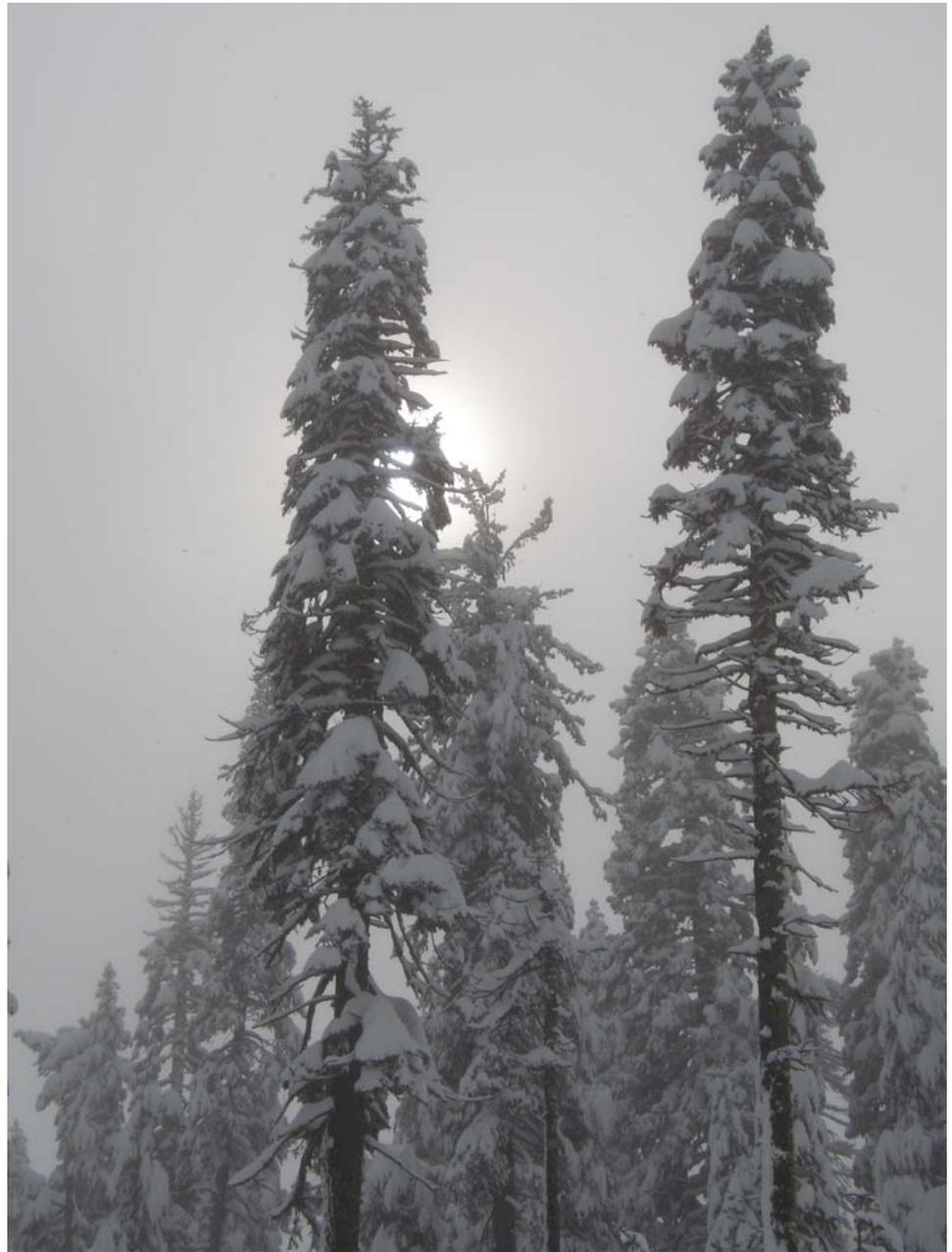
Lamp post in Mount Shasta City decorated for Christmas. Located at the southwest base of the mountain itself, folks here will have to leave the next time Shasta erupts. Historically, that happens every few centuries.



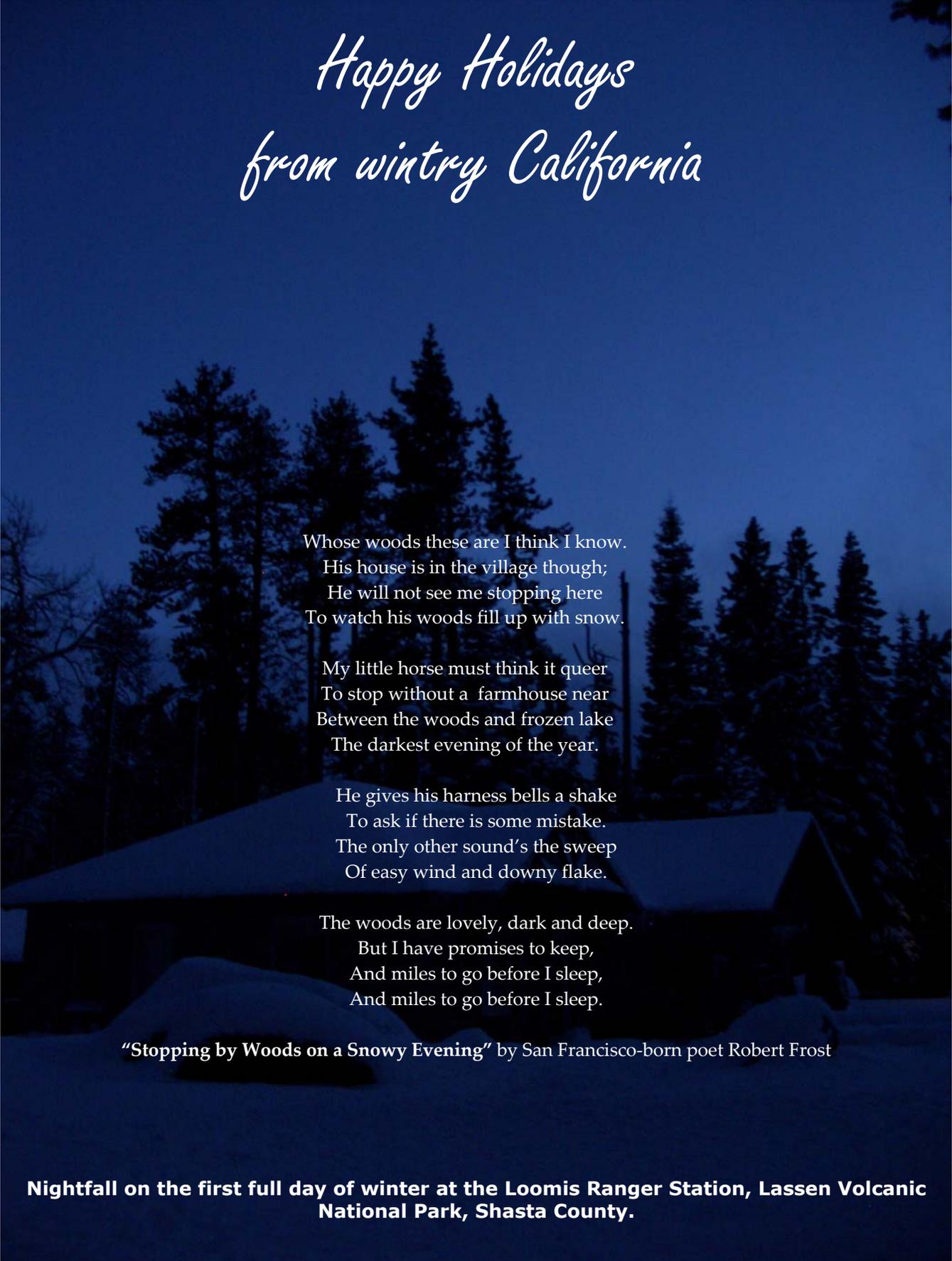
The main drag in Mount Shasta City, a tourist town of 3,600 in Siskiyou County



Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Tehama County.



**Break forth, O
beauteous heavenly
light. Lassen Volcanic
National Park.**



*Happy Holidays
from wintry California*

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by San Francisco-born poet Robert Frost

Nightfall on the first full day of winter at the Loomis Ranger Station, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Shasta County.