

NITWIT RIDGE NOMINATED TO NATIONAL REGISTRY OF HISTORIC PLACES:

On November 3, Nitwit Ridge and 10 other California folk art environments were unanimously nominated by the California State Historical Commission to the National Registry. According to Rob Selway, State Historic Preservation Specialist, "about 95% of all the State nominations are approved at the National level". The decision could come as soon as two weeks, or take as long as 6 months.

If Nitwit Ridge achieves National Registry status, the Art Beal Foundation will become eligible for various Federal and State grants for restoration purposes. However, only a small proportion of those eligible actually receive grants.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION: After several months of phone work, form filling-out and visits with the County Assessors Office, the Art Beal Foundation has been awarded a partial property tax exemption. From now on, only the rooms in which Art Beal actually resides will be taxed. This lifts a tremendous financial burden off the Foundation and will allow us to use future funds raised for badly-needed restoration and repair.

CHRISTMAS FUND-RAISING DRIVE: As our second fund-raiser of the year, we are asking people to "give a present of the past -- and help save a piece of history". We have just mailed over 500 direct-mail donation solicitation letters (see enclosed sample). If any of you have names you'd like us to add to our mailing list, please call or write. Our goal is to raise at least \$800, which will go toward the personal loan made by one of our Associate Members to the Art Beal Foundation. Money over and beyond that will go toward restoration and repair of the Ridge.

NITWIT RIDGE PUBLICITY: To paraphrase Art Beal, "this dump ( and the Art Beal Foundation) is picking up speed". We're enclosing recent inaccurate but nevertheless welcome stories in the L.A. Times and the Telegram-Tribune. Other coverage includes a line or two in the November Sunset magazine.

ART BEAL HIMSELF: Art's recent antics include airplane trips to Las Vegas and the Bay Area. He is also becoming a very popular artists' model for sketch groups in the S.L.O. area. He was also the subject of a sketch by a young paraplegic man from Las Vegas who recently had his first one-man show there.

CREDITS: Part of the credit for Nitwit Ridge's nomination to the National Registry goes to the petition-signers in S.L.O. county, including members of the S.L.O. County Historical Society Board, three of the five County Supervisors, the Mayor of S.L.O., and various Cal Poly Professors of Art, Architecture, etc. If any of you would like to send letters of support for Nitwit Ridge's nomination, please send them to us, P.O. Box 1738, San Luis Obispo CA 93406, and we will forward copies to the appropriate bodies.

THE FUTURE: We are toying with a number of ideas for future fund-raising projects and other worthwhile projects for the Art Beal Foundation to undertake. One of the most intriguing is the possibility of a joint project with the Historical Society for a county oral history program. (It's already underway, but needs money and equipment and training.) It's an area that is close to Art Beal's heart. As he says, "You've got to PRESERVE THIS HISTORY!" Let us hear from you!

Happy holidays!