Underground movement to bank El Niño’s rainfall

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

Gary Serrato watched as a tractor worked its way across a field of dried-up weeds, slicing the sandy dirt into orderly furrows.

The field was being readied not for a crop but for what he hopes will be a bountiful harvest of floodwater this El Niño winter. “We’re going to capture as much as we can,” said Serrato, general manager of the Fresno Irrigation District.

He was standing in the district’s Boswell Groundwater Banking Facility near Fresno: A complex of 100 graded acres enclosed by low earthen berms. If El Niño lives up to its promise, early next year up to 10 feet of Kings River flood flows will inundate the shallow basins and slowly seep into the torn earth, replenishing growers’ groundwater supplies.

With El Nino promising a wet winter, water districts across the state are working feverishly to capture as much rain as possible to recharge depleted aquifers.

A confluence of factors is focusing attention on stowing supplies underground, which is generally cheaper and less environmentally damaging than building a big dam and reservoir.

Read the whole story

Pot farmers' pesticides poisoning forest animals

By David Perlman, San Francisco Chronicle

Fishers, those rare little forest animals barely larger than a big house cat, are dying from rat poisons left behind by illegal marijuana growers in California who abandon their plantations when the law closes in.

Ecologist Mourad Gabriel should know: He lives in Blue Lake, a Humboldt County town not far from the area's fast-moving hidden pot farmers. Nyxo, his pet Labrador retriever, died of a powerful rat poison last year while Gabriel was investigating the unusual deaths among fishers.

Fishers, related to the weasel family, live in forests along the West Coast from Oregon to Yosemite and the southern Sierra and are already proposed for federal protection as a threatened species. Once abundant, their populations have been declining for years as civilization closes in on their habitats.

But now Gabriel, along with colleagues at UC Davis and the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation's tribal forestry department, have found that a variety of poisons are killing some of the fishers, although their primary enemies are still predators.

Read the whole story

Heavenly, Northstar to open Saturday

Mother Nature is saying to heck with fall, winter is here – at least in Lake Tahoe.

Storms combined with snowmaking are allowing Heavenly Mountain Resort and Northstar to open Nov. 14 – six days sooner than planned. This is the earliest opening since 2012, and the first time opening six days ahead of schedule since at least 2009.

Heavenly this season had received about 3 feet of white stuff as of Monday afternoon.

Heavenly plans to operate the gondola, Tamarack Express and Dipper Express. Northstar will open with the Big Springs gondola, Vista Express, Arrow Express and Comstock Express. Northstar will also operate a surface lift near the Big Easy Chair to offer children's ski and snowboard lessons.

Skateboarders plunge down twisty Donner Pass



Professional skateboarders conquer old Highway 40. Photo/Red Bull

By Robert Pursell, GrindTV

Donner Pass is one of the most treacherous mountain roads in America, a passage in the Northern Sierras famous for a party of pioneers that got stranded by deep snow within it in the 1840s and resorted to cannibalism to survive.

Naturally, given its tragic history, winding roads and sheer cliffs, it made the perfect setting for Red Bull and Sector 9 to send a group of downhill skateboarders to race down it.

“One of the hardest challenges with filming that edit, was that was actually our first time ever down the road,” downhill pro Louis Pilloni told GrindTV. “So we were flying around these blind corners with no idea what was on the other side.”

Pilloni is a 29-year-old skateboarding champion who has been downhill skateboarding for the past 13 years.

Read the whole story

Alpine Carpet One recognized for helping vets

Paul Friederici, owner of at Alpine Carpet One in South Lake Tahoe, is being honored on Veterans Day by the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation, an organization begun in memory of a fallen Sept. 11 firefighter.

Building for America's Bravest program builds hi-tech "smart homes" for service members returning from war who have been catastrophically injured.

Alpine Carpet One has committed to providing flooring materials and installation for some of these "smart homes." Carpet One Floor & Home, parent company of the South Lake Tahoe store, has provided materials for 46 homes. The goal is to collect a donation of $10—or more—from each customer, to ultimately build at least two more "smart homes."

Members of the Fire Department of New York City – acting on their own initiative, as ambassadors of the Tunnel to Towers Foundation—will present a specially-designed shadowbox containing hallowed 9/11 steel from Ground Zero to Alpine Carpet One.

Climate change may push 100 mil. into poverty by 2030

By Associated Press

STOCKHOLM – Climate change could push more than 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030 by disrupting agriculture and fueling the spread of malaria and other diseases, the World Bank said in a report Sunday.

Released just weeks ahead of a U.N. climate summit in Paris, the report highlighted how the impact of global warming is borne unevenly, with the world's poor woefully unprepared to deal with climate shocks such as rising seas or severe droughts.

"They have fewer resources and receive less support from family, community, the financial system, and even social safety nets to prevent, cope and adapt," the Washington-based World Bank said.

How to help poor countries – and poor communities within countries – deal with climate change is one of the crunch issues in talks on a global climate accord that's supposed to be adopted next month in Paris.

Those who say that rich countries aren't doing enough to help the poor said the report added emphasis to demands for billions of dollars in so-called climate finance to developing countries.

"The statistics in the World Bank report are suitably shocking and I hope they force world leaders to sit up and take notice," said Mohamed Adow of Christian Aid. "The Paris deal needs to support the poor and vulnerable communities to cope with unavoidable climate crises better, and to be more resilient to a changed climate."

Despite pledges to rein in emissions of carbon dioxide and other global warming gases, climate change isn't likely to stop anytime soon. Carbon emissions are expected to rise for many years as China, India and other developing countries expand the use of fossil fuels to power their economies.

But efforts to protect the poor, such as generally improving access to health care and social safety nets, and targeted measures to upgrade flood defenses and deploy more heat-tolerant crops could prevent most of the negative consequences of climate change on poverty, the bank said.

“Absent such good development, climate change could result in an additional 100 million people living in extreme poverty by 2030,” the report said.

The report referred to studies showing climate change could result in global crop yield losses as large as 5 percent by 2030 and 30 percent by 2080. It also referenced studies showing warming temperatures could increase the number of people at risk for malaria by 150 million.

Letter: Heavenly dishes up food at B&B

To the community,

Six times a year Heavenly Mountain Resort partners with Bread & Broth to host an Adopt A Day of Nourishment thanks to Vail’s Epic Promise Grant program. On Oct. 19, Heavenly hosted the evening dinner and sent a great crew from the product, sales and services team.

“We are always honored to help the community,” said Jared Autio, PSS assistant manager. “Do good is a core value here at Heavenly.”

Feeding dinner guests a nutritious meal, providing second servings and distributing giving away bags filled with food to

use during the week certainly constitutes “good”, especially to those 118 folks who attended the dinner. Helping B&B volunteers to provide all these services were fellow PSS team members Chris Barbar, scanning assistant manager; Kelly Carmichael, manager; Paul Hopkins, director; and Jolena Hearn, guest services assistant manager.

Hearn has been a frequent Heavenly sponsor crewmember and she “loves joining the community here for good food and friendship.”

Bread & Broth volunteers always look forward to evenings hosted by Vail Resort employees. They always bring a great sense of community spirit and joy to the evening and are a tremendous help in all the activities needed to put the dinner event together. B&B is very grateful for the partnership they share with Vail Resorts and their team members. Thank you Heavenly Mountain Resort.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



· The Bona Fide Print Club and Book Arts Club in Meyers have new techniques to share. Bring your own tools or use the club’s. Creative sessions are on second and fourth Sundays and third Mondays. The next date is Nov. 16 from 6-9pm. Cost is $10. Go **online** for more info.

· Concerts at Commons Beach has applied for a $25,000 Levitt AMP Matching Funds Grant for Tahoe City’s free 12-week summer music series. **Online voting** goes until Nov. 30.

· The 17th annual Tahoe Cross Country ski swap is Nov. 14 from 10am-3pm at 925 Country Club Drive, Tahoe City. A percentage of each sale will benefit the center's nonprofit programs.

· Paul Raymore is now marketing manager for Diamond Peak Ski Resort and the Incline Village General Improvement District.

K's Kitchen: Creamy, rich cauliflower soup

By Kathryn Reed

There are many wonderful things to embrace about the changing seasons. In the food world, it means soup.

As a vegetarian it can be frustrating to eat out and not be able to get the soup. So many places use chicken or beef broth even for what otherwise would be a vegetarian soup.

This just means having to make more soups at home. The best thing about this is having leftovers. With this particular soup, it got thicker with time. Adding water would be an option if the thickness is not to your liking. The flavors were still just as wonderful as the first night.



Cauliflower Soup with Feta

1 medium size head of cauliflower

¼ C olive oil

2 medium leeks, white and light green parts only, coarsely chopped

5 large garlic cloves, minced

Kosher salt

1 large baking potato, cut into 1-inch pieces

1 C dry white wine

1 quart vegetable broth

3 thyme sprigs, plus 2 teaspoons chopped leaves

8 Brussels sprouts, separated into leaves or rough chop

4 ounces crumbled Feta

2 T chives, chopped

½ C heavy cream

Chop one-quarter of the cauliflower into half-inch florets, while coarsely chopping the rest.

In large saucepan cook the leeks and garlic in 2 tablespoons

of oil over medium heat. Add pinch of salt.

Add potato and chopped cauliflower, then wine. Cook until half the wine is gone.

Add the stock and thyme sprigs. Bring to a boil.

Simmer for about 30 minutes.

On a rimmed baking sheet toss the cauliflower florets and Brussels sprouts with remaining olive oil and a little salt. Roast at 375 degrees for 15 minutes or until lightly browned, tossing occasionally.

Mix cheese with chives and chopped thyme.

Remove thyme sprigs.

Puree soup until smooth. Slowly stir in cream.

Ladle into bowls and top with roasted vegetables and cheese mixture.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Allie

Allie is one of 17 cats and kittens at the shelter right now. She is a 3-year-old female gray tabby shorthair with a huge purr.

She loves to be around people, and is good with other cats and well-mannered dogs. She was left behind when her owners moved.

Allie is spayed, microchipped, tested for FIV, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz