Hikes to retrace Donner Party footsteps

Walk in the footsteps of early emigrant's as they traversed the Sierra Nevada Mountains by participating in the 23rd annual Donner Party Hike.

The hike provides people with spectacular Sierra Nevada scenery combined with interesting history.

The hikes are Oct. 3-4.

Participants may choose from six hikes on Saturday, and a walking tour on Sunday. All hikes offer interesting insight into emigrant history from local area guides, along with invigorating recreation and beautiful scenery.

Space is limited for all events and reservations are required. Go **online** for details and registration.

SLT councilwoman banned from talking to staff

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe City Councilwoman JoAnn Conner is no longer allowed to speak to city staff.

This edict came about last week after a closed session meeting in which the agenda item was the city manager's review.



JoAnn Conner

City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News* on Monday that as a result of the review Conner is to have no interaction with staff and staff is not to engage Conner.

Kerry would not say why this occurred or why Conner is being singled out.

City Attorney Tom Watson, who met with department heads and had meetings with other staff about the new protocol, passed down the directive. All communication involving Conner is to go through him.

Watson deferred comment to the City Council.

Mayor Hal Cole and Councilman Tom Davis said it was a personnel matter and therefore they could not talk about it. Councilmember Wendy David told *Lake Tahoe News*, "Council is committed to running a professional organization where we can move our city forward in the best way possible." Councilman Austin Sass could not be reached.

Conner, who has one year left on her four-year term, acted like she wasn't aware of the communication ban when *Lake Tahoe News* called Sept. 21.

"I have to make some phone calls to find out what is going on," she said.

About 30 minutes later she emailed saying, "It is unfortunate internal issues have been made public. I generally deny any allegations and look forward to working with my colleagues to

resolve any issues and move forward with positive accomplishments."

However, 30 minutes before she was to attend the Sept. 21 Waste Management JPA meeting as the city's representative Conner lined up alternate Davis to fill in.

Conner is known to have a short temper, and use profanity and derogatory words verbally and in writing. Her targets have been staff, elected officials and community members.

Duane Wallace, who is a member of the chamber Conner used to be president of, said, "She can be very caustic to people who disagree with her. I think I'm just one of a bunch."

During the paid parking brouhaha Conner verbally berated people outside Grocery Outlet who were against the measure.

Former City Councilwoman Brooke Laine told *Lake Tahoe News*, "She would use colorful words to refer to me when she was talking to other people in the city."

Instead of using Laine's name, Conner's favorite two words for her were "f—ing b—-."

Laine had multiple examples of how Conner acted as a bully toward her beyond the name-calling.

Conner has been a bully for much of her tenure on the council. This was first documented in a column on ***Lake Tahoe News*** **in October 2013**.

While Conner has the right to be a bully and say what she wants, as a city councilmember she is an employer. She and the other councilmembers are the employers of Kerry and Watson.

Kerry and Watson, and the city as a whole, could be held liable if they don't take action to protect the rest of the staff. A handful of employees have approached the city attorney asking for guidance in how to deal with Conner's

abuse. No communication is one way staff can be protected.

Aside from the verbal and written abuse, there are staff members who are leery of crossing Conner in any manner because she has a concealed weapon permit and often has her gun in her purse at meetings.

Event to provide food for kids in South Lake Tahoe

Bread and Broth 4 Kids will be having the inaugural Cram-A-Cruiser event on Sept. 26 at the Grocery Outlet located at 2358 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

A South Lake Tahoe police cruiser will be parked in front of the store from 9am-1pm and will be stuffed full of food that will be used to feed food insecure children in the community. People are encouraged to bring donations that are single serving size and can be easily prepared by children such as macaroni and cheese, Cup-of-Noodles, tuna, soups, canned vegetables, fruit cups, granola bars, fruit snacks, canned ravioli and spaghetti, juice boxes and any other single serving foods appropriate for kids in grades K-8.

Bread and Broth 4 Kids starts the school year off with supporting 100 local food-insecure school children with a backpack full of food every Friday. With so many children receiving free or reduced cost breakfasts and lunches in South Lake Tahoe schools, Bread and Broth 4 Kids has stepped in the help them with food over the weekend when the school lunch programs cannot help.

Page and Sage served 67 students a week over the last 3.5

years. Started by Paula Peterson with the assistance of Tahoe Douglas Rotary Club in 2012, Page and Sage grew as far as they could without being a nonprofit and with a limited number of volunteers. They also grew out of their generously donated storage and packing space at Temple Bat Yam.

Bread and Broth, a charitable, nonprofit organization whose mission is to feed those less fortunate in South Lake Tahoe with more 100 volunteers, contacted Page and Sage to see how they could assist the program.

Bread and Broth 4 Kids is the result of the collaboration and is poised to grow and help more kids in need in the South Lake Tahoe community.

Small brush fire at Northstar contained



Crews drop water on a fire in Truckee on Sept. 21. Photo/Ellie Waller

Firefighters were able to contain a blaze at Northstar to one-quarter of an acre this afternoon.

The cause of the Sept. 21 fire is under investigation. Lack of wind and a quick response from several agencies kept it from spreading.

It burned an area between Highway 267 and Sawmill Reservoir. There was no threat to the community of Northstar or the ski resort, according to officials.

North Tahoe Fire Protection District on its Facebook page said, “Today was a ‘high’ dispatch which included two chief officers, four engines, air attack, two air tankers, a helicopter, hand crews and a bulldozer. Aircraft placed retardant drops on the fire. This held the fire until ground resources made access.”

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Letter: NDOW bear actions questioned

To the community,

Many of you are probably aware of the female mother bear captured at Incline High School last Wednesday morning without her cub. The story has been covered by the **media**. There have been daily reports since Wednesday through Saturday.

Unfortunately, many of the details within the reports are misleading and not truthful on the part of NDOW.

The mother bear was on the football field of Incline High School on Wednesday morning and the school went into lockdown.

A volunteer for the Nevada Department of Wildlife, who is also an Incline Village resident, was called to the school to act on NDOW's behalf. The NDOW volunteer treed the female bear on campus and kept her there for two hours until NDOW personnel arrived. Despite her being a lactating female, she was tranquilized and removed from IHS and taken to Carson City. NDOW said this mother bear was caught in the wrong place at the wrong time and was not a "threat".

She was brought back to IHS in the late afternoon in the hopes of reuniting her with her cub. The BEAR League and other bear advocates were aware of the plan and steered clear so the mom and cub could be reunited. NDOW brought a family trap with the mom to IHS Wednesday late afternoon behind a locked gate. NDOW, however, reported that "someone found their way in there and disrupted the area and kept the reunion from happening."

Chris Healy of NDOW further stated, "Unfortunately, NDOW bear trapping efforts in Incline Village have been greatly hindered by people tampering with traps. The strategy has a chance of working only if the trap is not tampered with. Over the past few years, a small group of people have seen fit to prevent NDoW from trapping bears at Incline Village by encouraging activists to monitor traps and prevent bears from entering those legally set traps"

As many of you know, from 2009-2013, NDOW killed 48 percent of trapped Incline Village bears. Because of this, some Incline Village BEAR League volunteers and bear activists have peacefully protested and monitored trap activity in Incline Village the last few years. It is clear to those in the community and beyond that NDoW's comments about the disruption Wednesday night are clearly targeting and accusing the BEAR League volunteers as interfering and disrupting the mother-cub reunion. NDoW's comments are not only dishonest but NDOW knows they are highly misleading:
Since the story broke out on Mynews4 on Wednesday, the BEAR League, BEAR League Incline Village volunteers, and other bear

advocates all chose to “stand down” and not discuss or post anything publicly relating to the trapped mother bear. Bear advocates only concern was reuniting the mother with the cub. Everyone agreed to stay clear of IHS so NDOW could reunite the mother and cub in the family trap. Unfortunately, this did not happen Wednesday night/Thursday morning.

On Thursday morning the BEAR League received a call about a cub sighting near IHS. Two BEAR League volunteers immediately went to the area and also immediately called NDoW to report the sighting.

BEAR League volunteers canvassed the neighborhood. Four different households reported seeing a cub. Three sightings on one street still appear legitimate while a fourth sighting on a different street turned out to be a yearling.

At this time, NDOW also said they would prefer to place the trap very near to the last sighting of the bear cub.

BEAR League volunteers approached, asked and secured full approval from a property owner to place the trap on their property. The BEAR League then called NDoW explaining they secured a placement of the trap and the location was not readily visible for others to see.

The trap stayed in place from Thursday night through Saturday morning. Unfortunately, the cub did not enter the family trap. The lactating mother bear was released out of the area Saturday afternoon with a GPS tracking collar in case the cub is located.

NDOW should have never trapped and removed a mother bear without getting the cub. She could have been easily escorted off the school property. Mother bears typically place their cubs in trees for their safety and leave only to come back a short time later. Again, this lactating mother should have been allowed to leave school grounds to get back to her cub. Instead, she was treed for two hours, tranquilized, and taken

to Carson City.

Furthermore BEAR League volunteers assisted NDoW both in reporting sightings and arranging permission on private property for the trap to be set so the cub can be reunited with his mom. NDoW, however, has implied and continues (with Saturday reporting) to infer that BEAR League volunteers hindered their efforts. NDoW's Chris Healy through carefully crafted Press Releases, emails and interviews continue to slander and tell untruths about bear advocates in Incline Village and continue to blame others for their actions that lead to an abandoned cub.

It's unfortunate that this Incline incident is not the first time NDoW abandoned a cub. On June 2nd of this year, NDOW quietly trapped a lactating female in Carson City. They did not catch the cub and NDOW relocated this lactating mother bear in the Pinegrove Mountains two and one half hours away. NDOW is not always transparent as this information was obtained through a public records request. Because this most recent abandoned cub happened in Incline Village where bear advocates monitor NDOW's activities, NDOW could not sweep this under. Instead, they are attacking the very organization and people who truly wanted to reunite the mom and cub as NDOW handled this situation wrong from the beginning.

If anyone sees this lone cub with two tags in both ears, please call the BEAR League at 530.525.7297.

Thank you,

Carolyn Stark, BEAR League volunteer

Nevada missed worst of West's wildfire season

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Wildland fires don't discriminate by geography, but due in part to some help from Mother Nature and just plain old luck Nevada has so far avoided the carnage seen elsewhere out West this summer.

For the season to date there have been 501 fires that have burned 42,153 acres in the Silver State, said Mike Klug with the Nevada Division of Forestry. Lightning caused 326 of the blazes while human activities accounted for the remainder.

The state saw 59,252 acres burned in 2014 and 162,841 acres burned in 2013, which was significant for Southern Nevada because of the Carpenter 1 fire. Nearly 30,000 acres of the Mount Charleston area burned in that fire in July 2013.

By comparison, nearly 1.9 million acres burned in Nevada in 1999, a record year for wildfires.

Read the whole story

Sandoval seeks new direction for state prisons

By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – The ouster of the Nevada Department of Corrections director signals changes are coming to the

beleaguered agency at the insistence of Gov. Brian Sandoval.

The Republican governor on Sept. 14 abruptly called for the resignation of Greg Cox, saying a “change in leadership” was necessary to move the department forward.

Sandoval did not hide his annoyance when he found out, the day before it was promised, that a report from an outside agency on use of force at state prisons would be late and unavailable for discussion at the Sept. 15 meeting of the Board of Prison Commissioners.

That report, being conducted by the Association of State Correctional Administrators, was commissioned earlier this year after a string of incidents at Nevada prisons, beginning in November when officers at High Desert State Prison outside Las Vegas shot and killed one inmate and wounded another. Lawyers say both were handcuffed behind their backs.

The death was not disclosed until four months later when the Clark County coroner ruled it a homicide.

Read the whole story

Vallejo kidnap suspect arrested in Tahoe pleads to other charges

By Dan Lawton, Bay Area News Group

HAYWARD — A Harvard-trained lawyer and former Marine, alleged to have been the mastermind behind a cinematic kidnapping in Vallejo last spring, pleaded no contest on Friday to charges

stemming from an unrelated Dublin home invasion, after first collapsing in court.



Matthew Muller

Matthew Muller, 38, sat behind a dark-glass partition as Judge Joseph Hurley accepted his plea and found him guilty on charges of attempted robbery, burglary and assault with a deadly weapon. He faces a maximum of 11 years in prison.

Minutes earlier, Muller had been splayed on the ground, his gray socks and brown sandals sticking out from behind the partition as medics rushed in to assist him.

When executing a search warrant at the South Lake Tahoe cabin where they arrested Muller, investigators found zip ties and gloves similar to those left at the Dublin house, as well as three sets of swim goggles with black duct tape covering the lenses.

Read the whole story

Woodward Tahoe putting on community day

Woodward Tahoe is putting on a community day on Sept. 26.

The 10am-6pm event is for kids of all ages.

They will have the opportunity to to tour the Woodward indoor facility, jump in foam pits, bounce on trampolines, meet local pros Corey Duffel, Erik Roner, Tanner Fox and Martin Söderström.

The cost is $10. It is free for Bunker passholders and CORE members. Children 6 and younger must be accompanied by a parent. Helmets are required.

Woodward Tahoe is at 19749 Boreal Ridge Road, Soda Springs.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Austin

Austin is an active happy dog who is great with kids. He’s 2 years old, only 10 pounds, Heinz 57 mix with nice coarse fur. He’s playful and fun and loves other dogs.

The county has reduced some adoption fees until Sept. 30 due to large numbers of dogs and cats in the shelter:

Adult cat adoption fee is now $20. Normal adoption fee $80; Kkitten adoption fee 2 for 1 or $80 for a pair; all bully breed dogs are $60, normal adoption fee $120. The Tahoe shelter currently has threepit bull mixes.

Austin is neutered, microchipped, heart worm negative, and vaccinated. He 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