USFS to celebrate 50 years of trails

Eldorado National Forest is hosting an event at the former high-elevation Olympic training center at Echo Summit on Aug. 25 from 9:30am-3pm to celebrate the National Trails System which turns 50 this year.

The event will be at Adventure Mountain Lake Tahoe on Highway 50. It will feature guest speakers, information displays and guided hiking opportunities. Registration is required for this free event. Space is limited to 150 participants. No food will be provided. For event details and to register, go **online**.

The three national trails that cross Echo Summit are the California Emigrant Trail, the Pony Express Trail, and the Pacific Crest Trail.

Representatives from the Oregon-California Trail Association, the Pony Express Association, and the Pacific Crest Trail Association will highlight the history of the trails with guest speakers and information displays. There will also be a reading from “The Track in the Forest” by Sacramento author Bob Burns about the 1968 Olympic training that took place at Echo Summit.

The Eldorado National Forest Interpretive Association, Tahoe Rim Trail Association, the El Dorado Backcountry Ski Patrol, and the Eldorado National Forest will also have information displays at the Get Outdoors Echo Summit event.

No toxins detected at Wright’s Lake

By Mountain Democrat

On July 9 staff from the Central Valley Regional Water Control Board were at Wright’s Lake collecting water samples after an unusual algal bloom that was reported at the lake. The algal bloom was suspected of being benthic cyanobacteria, a blue-green algae that produces a toxin that can be deadly to humans and animals. The initial lab results were negative for cyanobacteria. Further chemical tests were conducted to be on the safe side and those also came back negative.

According to the board, the algal toxins microcystin and cylindrospermopsin that are produced by cyanobacteria and are toxic to most vertebrates were not detected.

Read the whole story

Slew of events at S. Lake Tahoe Library

The South Lake Tahoe Library on Rufus Allen Boulevard has special events scheduled through September.

Here they are:

- Aug. 7, 6pm: Bagpiper Séan Cummings Concert on the Lawn. The Tahoe bagpiper will return for another summer evening. Bring a picnic dinner. Free and open to all.
- Aug. 15, 6:30pm: Todd Borg, award-winning author, will

discuss his much anticipated 16th book in the Owen McKenna mystery series, “Tahoe Skydrop.” This mystery set in Tahoe involves a brilliant young child who knows about computer encryption. The child is kidnapped in an effort to unlock stolen software that could be worth as much as a billion dollars. Tahoe Detective Owen McKenna must grapple with a murderous gang as well as with the child’s impulsive and obstinate father who doesn’t accept that his kid is transgender. Book sale and signing will follow.

- Sept. 8th, 2pm: Peter Mires presents his newest book “Lost Carson City.” Carson City has the distinction of being one of the least populated state capitals in the nation, but its contributions to Nevada’s history are anything but diminutive. Set against the backdrop of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, it’s a quintessential Wild West town. The gold and silver riches of the nearby Comstock Lode left a legacy that includes the Carson City Mint, one of only nine mints ever to exist in the United States, and the Virginia & Truckee Railroad, which still snakes through the hills. Residents once flocked to the Carson Opera House to take in a show and to the local racetrack to bet on the horses. Mires explores the city’s legacies, brick by locally quarried sandstone brick with an illustrated presentation that will inform and delight. Free and open to all.
- Sept. 22, 3pm: Author Mark S. Bacon will answer all your questions including (and not limited to): Who wrote the first murder mystery? Who wrote the first noir mystery? Where did the expression, “The butler did it” come from? In addition he will share his expertise on writing in this genre. Bacon is the author of “Desert Kill Switch,” a fast-moving mystery and the second book in his Nostalgia City mystery series. Book sale and signing to follow.

High meadow a bike ride back into history



Old buildings are the reward at the end of the 4.5-mile trek. Photo/Bob Sweatt

By Bob Sweatt

After reading a recent article about the Forni Meadows land acquisition from private ownership to the U.S. Forest Service, I, along with a couple friends, decided to check it out. The transfer of ownership included 835 acres nestled above Highway 50 off Wright's Lake road.

The Forni family used the meadow for cattle grazing during the summer months. There are still remnants of the cattle ranch along with four small cabins standing, one of which is supposed to have been built in 1862. Although all these cabins

looked the same and it is hard to see how one of them would survive so many hard winters, I will go with the information that was published. It is also possible that the original cabin is in another location, but most all of the meadow is visible. The article did say there were buildings as well as two barns; I didn't see any barns, only four small buildings.



The Eldorado National Forest took possession of the land this month. Photo/Bob Sweatt

Finding the road to start the trek was relatively easy. I simply went to Google earth, found the Meadows (upper and lower) and went back to Wright's lake road where an old road split off at the top of the grade going up Wright's lake road. This is approximately 25 miles from the Y in South Lake Tahoe. It is FS Road 11N28Y.

The road up to the meadows is a typical mountain road, with lots of ruts and debris. By the way, you will only be able to go about 0.3 miles before running into a gate, so you might as well park on Wrights Lake since there is a marker there saying no motorized vehicles.

We elected to take our bikes and ride the 4.5-mile trek. The grade is a little steep at first with a lot of sand, so take it easy. Toward the top, about 1.5 miles from the meadow, the road levels out and is much easier. Along the way you will be treated to wildflowers and views of meadows and mountains. The elevation at the meadow is 7,560 feet, so the flowers were still pretty good, however a trek two weeks earlier would have been much better for the flower display.



Views are delightful for most of the way. Photo/Bob Sweatt

There is one little spring that runs across the road when you get to the meadow. On the way out I was pleasantly surprised to see something jump in front of me which had a lot of yellow. At first I thought it was a salamander, but after finding it, it turned out to be a frog. Hmm, I wondered, could this be the endangered Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog which is supposed to reside here? Well, when I got home I sent a pic to a friend who did identify it as the rare little fella. What a way to exit the meadows.

Another treat was running into a covey of quail on the way up which had to include, I’m thinking two dozen little chicks.

These guys were small enough that they had recently hatched. Mom and dad were not very happy with us, and kept very close to us to make sure we didn’t get any closer.

Letter: SLT Moose Lodge sponsors dinner

To the community,

Thank you to the men and women of the South Lake Tahoe Moose Lodge who generously donated $300 to sponsor Bread & Broth’s Adopt A Day of Nourishment on July 9.

According to Scott Blumenthal, governor Moose Lodge No. 1632, “A fabulous experience once again. Loved serving our community with love and food. And really good food too.”

The Loyal order of Moose Lodge 1630 and the Women of the Moose Chapter 408 once again joined with B&B to provide a wonderful meal to members of our South Shore community. As a non-profit fraternal organization, the Moose Lodge, along with promoting fellowship among its members also promotes service to the community.

By sponsoring a Monday meal every year, the Moose Lodge is helping to ease hunger and improve the quality of life for others.

Joining Scott were fellow lodge members Christi Olmstead and Angie Keil, who arrived ready to host a wonderful dinner event. After helping to serve the barbecue chicken dinner to the evening’s guest, Scott added, “Nice to hear the thankfulness and gratitude.

God bless our community!” B&B is also grateful to the SLT Moose Lodge and Women of the Moose for their giving spirit and commitment to serving others.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Court removes from ballot measure to split Calif.

By Maura Dolan, Los Angeles Times

The California Supreme Court decided unanimously Wednesday to remove from the November ballot a measure aimed at dividing California into three states.

The decision was a defeat for Tim Draper, a Silicon Valley venture capitalist considered an eccentric entrepreneur who spent $1.2 million on the measure.

Four years ago, the wealthy Atherton resident spent $5.2 million promoting a measure that would have split California into six states. It did not qualify for the ballot.

Read the whole story

South Lake Tahoe cops: Phish

fans filthy



SLTPD officers say Phish fans left this garbage July 17. Photo/Provided

Phish started its summer concert tour in Stateline on July 17 by leaving a foul smell next door in California.

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department sent out this tweet the next day, “@phish Please help spread the word to your following to help protect our National Treasure and respect our residents/visitors. We will be out issuing citations.”

Officers were issuing citations on Tuesday night, but couldn’t keep with all the debris. Empty alcohol bottles and other trash were found throughout the streets near the outdoor venue at Harveys across the state line.

The group that is hard to pigeonhole into a genre will be back Wednesday night. They are practically becoming regulars at the Summer Outdoor Concert Series.

One *LTN* reader who witnessed the pre-concert festivities in the casino corridor on Tuesday said it was more reminiscent of

New Year’s Eve.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Manage water where it falls for a healthier landscape

By Melinda Myers

Too much, not enough, and never when you need it. This is a common complaint of gardeners. Keeping and using water where it falls is the first step in managing this precious resource.

Planting and maintaining a healthy landscape is a good place to start. Trees, shrubs, groundcovers and other plantings improve water quality and reduce storm water runoff. The plants capture nutrients, preventing them from leaching through the soil. A dense covering of greenery and mulch helps prevent soil erosion and keeps phosphorous and other pollutants out of our waterways.



Native plants have deep root systems that open pathways through the soil and allow the water to penetrate the

soil surface, providing moisture to plant roots on the way to recharging groundwater. Photo/Melinda Myers LLC

Incorporate native plants whenever possible. Not only are most adapted to the local growing conditions, but many have deep root systems that open pathways through the soil. These openings allow the water to penetrate the soil surface, providing moisture to plant roots on the way to recharging the groundwater. And as the old roots die they add organic matter to the soil, increasing its ability to absorb rainwater.

Adding more organic matter in the form of compost will also increase the soil’s ability to absorb water; reducing surface water runoff into the street and storm sewer. Compost also helps capture contaminates so they don’t leach into our waterways or get absorbed by plants.

Capture rain falling onto your roof with rain barrels to use for watering containers and ornamental plantings. Start with a call to your local municipality. Some restrict the use of these water-collecting devices, while most offer incentives and rebates for including them in your landscape.

Make your own rain barrel from a food grade container or purchase one from your local garden center, retail outlet or online garden supply company. Select rain barrels suited to your landscape design. Purchase one of the more decorative barrels, turn a plain barrel into garden art with a bit of paint or mask it with a few plants.

And don’t worry about mosquitoes. Just toss a doughnut shaped cake of Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis (Bti) into the rain barrel. This naturally occurring bacteria only kills the larvae of mosquitoes, black flies and fungus gnats. It won’t harm people, pets, fish or other wildlife.

Consider adding these to areas subject to periods of standing water. One dunk provides control of a 100-square-feet surface of water for 30 days. The hole in the middle allows you to stake the dunk in place, preventing it from being washed away in heavy rains. It remains in place and provides control when the area is flooded again.

Add beauty and prevent surface water runoff with a rain garden. These gardens are located and designed to intercept the water running off walks, drives and the lawn before it enters the street and storm sewer. The water percolates through and is filtered by the plant roots and soil before entering the groundwater. Do a bit of research before digging in. Proper placement, soil preparation and plant selection are essential to success.

Managing water where it falls is not only good for your garden, but also the environment. You'll enjoy the beautiful surroundings and know you made a difference by incorporating one or more of these strategies in your landscape.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts he Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the nationally syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" TV and radio segments.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

· Check out this story about *Lake Tahoe News* Publisher Kathryn Reed in the *Tahoe Mountain News*.

· Agencies and organizations are working on a plan to improve traffic, parking, and year-round public recreation access from Camp Richardson to Tahoma. Take **this survey** by

Aug. 5 to share your thoughts.

· Julie Clayton has been hired as chief nursing officer for Barton Health.

· Friends of the South Lake Tahoe Library are having a book sale July 21 at 10am at the library. It will includes hundreds of previously read, some new, all loved books. Members get in an hour early.

· Lake Tahoe Community College hired Jonathan King to oversee Admissions & Records, Counseling, Athletics, and a number of other departments on campus that are front line to students. King comes from Southwestern College in Chula Vista where he's the dean of Counseling and Student Support Programs.

Hwy. 50 improvements made in Zephyr Cove

Nevada Department of Transportation crews on July 17 completed the installation of pedestrian safety improvements on Highway 50 in Zephyr Cove.

Previously, there was one constantly-flashing pedestrian crossing light at the intersection of Highway 50 and Lake Shore Boulevard.

NDOT has enhanced the pedestrian crossing with the following pedestrian safety improvements:

- The previous signal was replaced with two electronic flashing pedestrian crossing beacons, known as rectangular rapid flashing beacons, allowing pedestrians

to activate the signs to help stop traffic as they cross the street. Signals have also been placed in advance of the signal, giving drivers advance notice to stop for any pedestrians crossing ahead.

- Sidewalks were improved for safer and easier pedestrian travel.
- Overhead street lighting has been installed for enhanced visibility of pedestrians in the crosswalk.

The approximately $294,000 in improvements by Par Electrical Contractors Inc. began in early June and are aimed at enhancing safety for pedestrians crossing the highway, as well as for the as many as 20,000 drivers traveling the highway daily.