

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



K-Lou

K-Lou is a 15 month old Shih Tzu girl who likes to play with other gentle dogs. She is very sweet, but has a few challenges – she is not yet house trained, and she needs to learn manners and gain some confidence. She is also a little shy of new people to start with, especially men.

Plus, she will need regular grooming. She was very matted when she came to the shelter and had to be clipped really short. The right owner should be patient and committed to her care and training.

K-Lou is spayed, microchipped, tested for heart worm, 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.

Magic of Vikingsholm comes alive through stories from woman who lived there



Beverages were served throughout the day in the morning room; a room not on the regular tour. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

EMERALD BAY STATE PARK – An iconic gem of Lake Tahoe describes Vikingsholm as well as Helen Smith.

Smith spent her first 14 summers staying at what is now a castle within the California State Parks system. At the time, it was the private summer residence of Lora Knight. Smith's mother was a friend of Knight's so that's how they had the opportunity to summer at Lake Tahoe.

Smith, upon hearing the State Parks in 1953 bought the more than 200-acre parcel that included all the land in Emerald Bay up to the highway, made her way back to Lake Tahoe to see what the estate looked like.

She was taken aback a bit that no one knew much about the property. By this time furniture had been removed from some of the rooms. State Parks thinking at the time of acquisition was to tear down the buildings and return the land to its natural state or make it a campground.

Activists got involved and saved what is now a treasured jewel.



Helen Smith's goal is to ensure Vikingsholm's history keeps being told and that there will be money for its upkeep.

"This is considered one of the top cultural resources in the

State Park system behind Hearst Castle," Heidi Doyle, executive director of the Sierra State Parks Foundation, said.

(This wasn't the only time the furniture was removed. In 2007, during the Angora Fire the house was evacuated.)

Smith, who is now in her 80s, was not comfortable letting the rich history of Vikingsholm disappear so she started the docent program. She gave tours for 42 years, retiring in 2009. But it wasn't an easy job to get because the thinking at the time was that this kind of work wasn't meant for women.

This is the fourth summer she has been a part of special fundraising events where guests get to see some of the rooms that are normally off limits as well as have the opportunity to ask Smith questions.

The intimate evening includes wine and light snacks. The emphasis is getting a chance to relive part of this history as well as contribute to the restoration of the site via the price of admission. Sodding the roof so it's like it was in Mrs. Knight's era is the current fundraising project.

The electrical system is next. Mrs. Knight had electricity and running water at Vikingsholm when it was built in the late 1920s.

"I would like to see an endowment so the house is kept up," Smith told *Lake Tahoe News*. "With a building as old as this, there are problems. It's continuous upkeep."

Besides seeing the library, Mrs. Knight's top floor and a room off the kitchen, stories not heard on the regular tour are told, like how some people came to Vikingsholm in the winter of 1951-52 for Thanksgiving but weren't able to leave until Easter because it was an epic snow year.

While stories abound about Mrs. Knight and her guests being rowed to Fannette Island for tea, the truth, Smith said, is

this seldom occurred. This is largely because it was not an easy endeavor to take all the cooking devices to the island, plus most of the guests were older and the island is rocky.

This was the era when guests were expected to dress for all three meals. This meant dresses for the women and and coat and ties for the men.

At what is now the boat-in campground was Emerald Bay Resort. Smith said Frank Lloyd Wright visited the area before Mrs. Knight.

“He was interested in building a bridge from the resort to the island,” Smith said.

Smith stays in the caretakers quarters when she is town. The rest of the year she is in Palo Alto. She and her late husband lived on the Peninsula for years. Smith obtained her doctorate in teaching from Stanford. The special tours are her way of continuing to teach about a bygone era as well as an opportunity to help preserve a slice of Tahoe’s history.

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Notes:

- The next event at Vikingsholm with Helen Smith is Aug. 27 at 5pm.
 - Cost is \$60.
 - Tickets are available **online**. A limited number are available.
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Opinion: California is falling apart

By Patt Morrison, Los Angeles Times

On July 19 the collapse of a “functionally obsolete” bridge shut down nearly 50 miles of Interstate 10. What was the problem? Too much rain, too little infrastructure. Infrastructure? Don’t stop reading: Your life, literally, depends on infrastructure. Steven P. Erie, a political science professor at UC San Diego, says that if California infrastructure were a student in his class, he’d give it an “F.” His many books – the latest is “Paradise Plundered,” about San Diego’s civic failings – detail the scale of California’s governance mess and the massive task of remedying our la-de-da attitude that freeways and airports and levees built 60, 80, 100 years ago will last forever.

The I-10 bridge washout makes me think of the adage, “For want of a nail, a horseshoe was lost, for want of a shoe, a horse was lost, and ultimately a kingdom is lost – all for want of a nail.”

It’s bridges, it’s pavement; we have difficulty expanding our airports and ports. California, and particularly Southern California, used to be a world leader in physical infrastructure, and we’ve gone from the top of the pack in 1960 to the bottom. We have been asleep at the wheel. We’re like Rip Van Winkle when it comes to infrastructure maintenance.

Read the whole story



Three Dog Night deserves better recognition

By John Charles Lewis

In 1970, a young and talented piano player from England found himself as the opening act for a band that, according to ThreeDogNight.com “from 1969 through 1974 achieved more top 10 hits, moved more records and sold more concert tickets than any other band”, including the Beatles, Rolling Stones, The Who and Led Zeppelin.

That’s just part of the story of the journey of Three Dog Night’s show Saturday night at MontBleu Casino in Stateline.

Back in 1967, a 17-year-old songwriter named Bernie Taupin was writing songs that soon would be recognized as masterpieces, including the first charted hit for the 1970 opening act for Three Dog Night, Elton John.

According to Song Facts, Taupin said, “The original lyric was written very rapidly on the kitchen table of Elton’s mother’s apartment in Northwood Hills in the suburbs of London, if I recall, on a particularly grubby piece of exercise paper.” Taupin wrote “Your Song”.

On Aug. 1, Three Dog Night brought its headlining show back to Caesars in Tahoe. OK, it's not the 1970s anymore, so now it's the MontBleu Resort, but nonetheless, the show gave the aging crowd a chance to relive their youth as the crowd returned to their celebrity ball as they celebrated their youth and danced to the music.

Three Dog Night was formed in 1967 by three talented vocalists: Chuck Negron, Cory Wells and Danny Hutton. Negron is no longer with the band, but Wells and Hutton and original guitarist Michael Allsup we're all in fine form, along with longtime members Paul Kingery on bass and Pat Bautz on drums. Eddie Reasoner replaced long time member Jimmy Greenspan on keyboards after Greenspan passed away last year from cancer.

The show had many highlights, including a soulful cover of Randy Newman's "You Can Leave Your Hat On" as well as solid renditions of their timeless hits "Out in the Country", "Joy to the World", "One" and "Shambala".

Three Dog Night has always been known for its ability to recognize the talents of other songwriters, and no example is more profound than with the 1970 album "It Ain't Easy", which included another Newman cover in "Mama Told Me (Not To Come)". Their version of this song at Saturday's show was spot on. Mid-song they stopped and told a story of a family friend who claimed this song would be a great rap song. After a quick attitude adjustment and change of outfits, they turned this former No. 1 song into a very entertaining rap song, and when they asked the crowd which version they liked better, surprisingly, the reaction was even.

On side two of "It Ain't Easy", they recorded "Your Song", which was being played in John's set list when he was Three Dog Night's supporting act as an unknown, undiscovered piano player and aspiring songwriter.

Interestingly, Three Dog Night was considering releasing "Your

Song" as their next single back then, but they chose not to so they could give John a chance to release it as the "B-side" to his first single, "Take me to the Pilot", which he did in 1971. Interestingly, "Your Song" became Elton's first hit song, it was later inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, and more than 20 years ago Elton John was elected to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, a well-deserved honor Three Dog Night still awaits.

Next Saturday night, Elton John headlines the much larger Harveys outdoor arena in Stateline and Three Dog Night shares the bill with Nazareth at the Choctaw Grand Theater in Durant, Okla. It would have been fitting to have Three Dog Night on the bill with John at Harveys, allowing John to return the favor from when Three Dog Night recorded his song "Lady Samantha" in 1969 when no one had heard of Elton John. This way he could help turn a whole new generation on to some of the most pure and classic rock from when rock 'n roll mattered. John could also help expose two new Three Dog Night songs, highlights from the show last night, to a whole new generation of potential fans. The catchy lick in "Heart of Blues" and the powerful vocals from "Prayer of the Children" deserve to be heard.

Maybe next summer the local Tahoe promoters can help John return a much-deserved favor. Who knows, maybe John can even make a phone call to Cleveland to ask why Three Dog Night is not the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, an honor that is definitely deserved based on statistics alone.

Site lets Californians tattle on water wasters

By Associated Press

California is launching a website that lets residents tattle on water wasters, from neighbors with leaky sprinklers to waiters who serve water without asking.

California has multiple restrictions on water use, including banning washing cars with hoses that don't shut off and restricting lawn-watering within two days of rainfall. But enforcement varies widely across the parched state.

Residents can send details and photos of water waste at savewater.ca.gov. Complaints are then sent to local government agencies based on the address of the offense.

The site went online Thursday as the latest conservation initiative. More than 300 agencies have signed up to see the details of water waste tips. Many local agencies already had their own reporting sites.

Tipsters wary of being outed as the neighborhood snitch can remain anonymous.

Nevada seeks to keep drones grounded during fires



Drones can put firefighting
aircraft at risk.
Photo/Nevada Division of
Forestry

The Nevada Division of Forestry is warning people to keep drones on the ground during a fire so firefighters can better do their job.

“If they fly, we can’t,” Nevada Firewarden Bob Roper said in a statement. “It’s a major risk to pilots, ground personnel and aircraft. There may also be civil and/or criminal consequences that Nevada operators need to know about.”

Often a temporary flight restriction is put in place around wildfires to protect firefighting aircraft. No one other than the agencies involved in the firefighting effort can fly any manned or unmanned aircraft during the restrictions.

According to the NDF, even if there are no restrictions, operating a drone could still pose a hazard to firefighting aircraft and would violate federal aviation regulations.

“If you endanger manned aircraft or people on the ground with an unmanned aircraft, you could be liable for a fine ranging from \$1,000 to a maximum of \$25,000,” said FAA Administrator Michael Huerta. “Know the rules before you fly. If you don’t, serious penalties could be coming your way for jeopardizing these important missions.”

Nev. expects to get NASA drone contract

By Daniel Rothberg, Las Vegas Sun

NASA could soon be testing drones in Nevada airspace.

As one of six designated drone test sites, the State of Nevada is in the process of securing a contract to host the agency while it researches unmanned aerial vehicles. Tom Wilczek, who works with the aerospace and defense industries in the Governor's Office of Economic Development, expects to have an agreement within two months.

The contract would give NASA the freedom to use the Nevada test site for UAV-related projects, such as developing an air traffic management system for drones. NASA is also expected to conduct a demo flight in Nevada as part of its testing for unmanned aircraft. The state has not determined where the testing would take place, but there are several locations throughout the state with good conditions for operating unmanned vehicles. They include Creech Air Force Base, Nellis Air Force Base, Fallon Municipal Airport, Reno-Stead Airport, Boulder City Airport and the Nevada National Security Site/Desert Rock Airport.

Read the whole story

Riders eager for S. Lake Tahoe bike park



Not everyone needs the pump track to be completed to enjoy riding at what will be Bijou Bike Park. Photo/John Spinola

The pump track at Bijou Bike Park can't be built soon enough for some people.

Some riders have been checking out the action at Bijou Community Park since work began July 15. By the end of August everyone will have the opportunity to ride at the park.

Alex Fowler Elite Trax/PumpTrax USA is overseeing the work. This is the same firm that designed the 2008 and 2012 Olympic BMX tracks and will build the 2016 Olympic track.

The 5-acre bike park will have two pump tracks with a BMX track in the center.

The bike park has been talked about since 2011. The nonprofit

Bijou Bike Park Association was formed to be the main force behind the project.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Truckee institutes 4 safe surrender sites

Truckee Fire Protection District staffed stations are now safe surrender sites for newborns.

First created in January 2001, the Safely Surrendered Baby Law was signed permanently into state law in January 2006. The law's intent is to save lives of newborn infants at risk of abandonment by encouraging parents or persons with lawful custody to safely surrender the infant within 72 hours of birth, with no questions asked.

From Jan. 1, 2001, to Dec. 31, 2014, 685 newborns have been surrendered in California, and 73 newborns were surrendered during the 2014 calendar year. This is compared with 164 infants abandoned since 2001, five of which occurred in the 2014 calendar year.

The four stations are located at:

- 11473 Donner Pass Road, Truckee
- 10277 Truckee Airport Road, Truckee
- 10900 Manchester Drive, Truckee
- 53823 Sherrit Lane, Soda Springs.

Calif. missed a year's worth of rain since '12

By Avaneesh Pandey, International Business Times

California – currently facing one of the worst droughts on record – has accumulated a rainfall “deficit” of about 20 inches since 2012, according to a new NASA study. In other words, the difference between actual rainfall in the state and the rainfall expected on average is now equivalent to a whole year's worth of precipitation.

Although California has typically seen wide annual fluctuations in rainfall, the wet years balanced out the dry ones during non-drought periods. However, the latest precipitation data gathered by NASA shows that California accumulated a deficit of almost 13 inches between 2012 and 2014, and another 7 inches during the 2014-2015 wet season.

According to the study, this lack of rains can be attributed to the absence of “atmospheric rivers” – narrow, water vapor-rich jets that travel through the atmosphere, typically from west to east – over the eastern Pacific Ocean.

Read the whole story