

Pony Express to carry real letters in re-enactment

The Pony Express will ride again in June for annual re-enactment.

In addition to being able to see the riders along various parts of the trail – including Lake Tahoe – it's possible to have a letter delivered this way.

Mail will be carried by horseback by more than 700 riders from St. Joseph, Mo., through Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and California between June 15-25. This is the same number of days it took 155 years ago. Riders will come through the South Shore on their way to Sacramento.

For \$5 letter may be carried. Each will receive a special commemorative postmark. For more info, go online.

Shift toward renewables a conundrum for Calif.

By Kim Smuga-Ottoksmugaotto, San Jose Mercury News

FOLSOM – California's electrical grid has a problem – a nice problem, but a problem nonetheless: The state often has too much power.

Nearly 23 percent of California's energy now comes from renewable sources such as wind and solar, and the state is on

track to reach its goal of generating one-third of its energy from renewables by 2020. But feeding all that green energy into the Golden State's grid – without overloading it – has become a major challenge.

That's because the state's aging natural gas plants aren't nimble enough to turn off when the sun starts shining and then quickly switch back on when it gets dark. And while the technology to generate clean energy is growing by leaps and bounds, efforts to store the power haven't kept up.

Power grid operators work in the grid operation center at the California Independent System Operator in Folsom, Calif., on Monday, March 9, 2015.

The dilemma has forced the energy industry to rethink the way we make and use electricity. And utilities are having to recalculate how much they should charge for electricity at certain times of the day.

Read the whole story

USFS to train bike trail crew leaders

TAMBA will be hosting a U.S. Forest Service-approved crew leader training course the weekend of April 11-12 in South Lake Tahoe.

The Forest Service has stringent training requirements for volunteer crew leaders to ensure the safety of volunteer crews. This training may also be accepted by other land manager agencies.

First Aid and CPR certification is also required of crew leaders. It is not included in this course, but will be offered separately.

There is no cost for TAMBA volunteers (contact TAMBA for the discount code), and \$40 for others.

The class is limited to 20 people. Register online.

Jitloff captures 6th national title

By USSA

SUGARLOAF, Maine – Giant slalom specialist Tim Jitloff (Reno) threw down on bumpy snow at the Nature Valley U.S. Alpine Championships to take his third national title in a row ahead of first run leader Tommy Ford (Bend, Ore.).

Former University of Utah racer and current Team Geronimo member Nick Cohee (Gardnerville) took third.

“It was fun,” said Jitloff, who was a favorite going into the race. “We’re all really tired here, but anytime you can come back and see little kids who want to be doing what you’re doing is huge. That’s what these are all about.”

Jitloff was second after the first run behind Tommy Ford, who was going for his ninth national title. Ford put down a solid second run, but couldn’t hold first place – bobbling a bit on the on the last face. This was Jitloff’s sixth U.S. Alpine Championships win.

Jitloff’s season had its ups and downs. He took a couple of

top 10s in World Cups, but it wasn't quite what he had hoped. For the man who competes closely with Ted Ligety in training, he couldn't keep up when it came to race day. But he still kept a good attitude – looking for the next race, the next result.

“The last two races I had at the end of the year on the World Cup did not go how I wanted it to go, so I was a little bummed out,” said Jitloff about his DNF in Kranjska Gora and a disappointing 19th in the World Cup Finals. “If I can end the year on a win—a national title—that’s always awesome and something to be proud of.”

Behind the podium, Mark Engel (Truckee, CA – U.S. Ski Team) put down the fastest second run, finishing in fourth place. David Chodounsky (Crested Butte, Colo.) was fifth. Hig Roberts (Steamboat Springs, Colo.) took sixth, Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) seventh, Jack Gower of Great Britain eighth, Seppi Stiegler (Jackson Hole, Wyo.) ninth and Michael Ankeny (Deephaven, Minn.) was 10.

SLT Library embracing Tai Chi, book reading in 1 day

Friends of the Library in South Lake Tahoe is hosting two diverse events April 25.

World Tai Chi and Qi Gong Day is being celebrated at 10am. Worldwide, people in hundreds of cities, spanning 80 nations, will come together for healthier bodies. Qi Gong originated in China more than 3,000 years ago. Qi means life force energy. Gong means work. Qi Gong means working with life force energy. Qi Gong's flowing movements mimic the movements of nature,

especially the fluidity of water. Come try something new.

At 1pm, author Jackie Boor will present ""LOGAN: The Honorable Life and Scandalous Death of a Western Lawman. Boor is the great-granddaughter of this historic sheriff and has unearthed the untold story of his 1906 murder. Dealing with rowdy miners, drunken gamblers, and even Wild West legends like Wyatt Earp was a routine part of the job for onetime Sheriff Logan. This is a story steeped in local history. There will be a question and answer session, book sale and signing to follow.

The library is at 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.

Then and now: Early PR for South Shore

On March 24, 1955, Sacramento City Councilman Clarence Azevedo addressed his City Council to extend an invitation to attend the Sportorama at the Memorial Auditorium to be held that May. Participating in Sportorama were several South Shore businesses which organized a booth at the event.

Here is a flyer about Sportorama provided courtesy of Dave Kurtzman.

This was 10 years before the city of South Lake Tahoe was incorporated.

The grand door prize for visitors to that booth was an expense-paid weekend at Lake Tahoe, as detailed in this typewritten promotion page from 1955.

The often-mentioned Playland Motel later became the Highland

Inn, just recently gutted and now being remodeled, next to Carrows Restaurant near the state line.

Below is a Harvey's Wagon Wheel advertisement (provided by Lake Tahoe Historical Society), which I estimate to be from the same era. Harrah's was yet to open.



– Bill Kingman

No trail – no problem on snowshoe trek

By Kathryn Reed

KIRKWOOD – Destination – unknown. Trail – none. Wow factor – off the charts.

Some of my most memorable moments have been when I had no idea where I was going. The journey, the discovery, the not knowing what lies ahead – it can be adrenaline pumping, mesmerizing and almost always comes with a story to tell.

This sense of adventure enveloped us as we forged through the woods on virgin snow earlier this month.

Craig broke trail for the four of us. A view – that's his big thing. And he delivered.

The day started with Plan A having to be scrapped because the south-facing ascent was all dirt. We wanted a snowshoe. Back in the truck and up the road a bit we went before we pulled over on the other side of Highway 88 to be on a north-facing route.

It's not supposed to be this difficult to go on a snowshoe in early March, especially near the Carson Pass.



Snowshoeing into the wilderness near Carson Pass brings dynamic views. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Early on we had to cross a stream. I don't trust my balance, especially with wearing a small pack that has snowshoes dangling off the back. Donna was gracious enough to get a picture of my back side as I crawled across. Fortunately, the other 12 crossings were not a big deal and allowed me to remain upright.

It didn't take long before we came across a mini waterfall that in some ways seemed out place on this trek.

We kept seeing this tall black peak that none of us had noticed before in all the times we had been in this area. The map told us it was Black Butte, elevation 9,031 feet. We headed in that general direction.

Snow consistency varied throughout the route – from powdery to heavy to crunchy to deep.

Not only did we not see anyone on our way up, there were no other tracks. It was as though we had been transported to the middle of this perfect oasis. It was one of those days that will be hard to top.

We kept going up. It was not a difficult ascent. The views were always picturesque. Red Peak seemed to be constantly behind us. Eventually Caples Lake, too, was visible when we turned around.

The rocks gave the area personality. They should have been under snow, especially the ones we passed on our way up.

Lunch was on an outcropping of rocks at 8,740 feet. Black Butte was directly to our right.

It was like a tease just sitting there – so close and yet so far. Another day, perhaps without snow, we'll reach the top of Black Butte. It was only 2.5 miles to get to our lunch spot. In all, we went 5.7 miles.

Instead of retracing our steps, we went over the other side of the rocks toward Woods Lake where we saw tracks from cross country skiers. The lone person we saw that Sunday was on skis by the lake.

A little glissading was in order, but it wasn't necessary. It just added to the fun.

We gingerly scampered across a small section of Woods Lake. At the time it was frozen, with just a little melting around the edges. I'm sure now three weeks later based on the warm

weather we've had the conditions are much different.

Then it was time to follow the creek back to where we came from. More beauty.

It was just one of those magical days in the greater Lake Tahoe area when you can't imagine living anywhere else.

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, go west on Highway 50. Turn left onto Highway 89 toward Hope Valley, turn right onto Highway 88 at Picketts Junction. Park on the left where it says Woods Creek Fishing Access. Then start walking. We were not on the road long. Good luck.

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Opinion: What if the drought is permanent?

By Dan Walters

California's prolonged drought drew a bit of official attention last week.



Dan Walters

The state Water Resources Control Board tightened, ever so slightly, water conservation rules on local water agencies and users.

Two days later, Gov. Jerry Brown and legislative leaders announced a \$1.1 billion drought response plan, mostly old wine in new bottles with little immediate effect.

Underlying these tepid responses are assumptions that the drought is still a temporary condition and that mild steps will suffice without major economic or social disruptions.

But what if the drought continues for many years or is even permanent? Shouldn't we be thinking about alternatives?

Read the whole story

TRPA gets grant for vehicle charging station strategy

By Associated Press

The California Energy Commission has awarded a \$200,000 grant to help develop a plan for the expansion of charging stations for electric vehicles around Lake Tahoe.

The commission recently approved the money for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency to assess the current situation and identify public and private locations where additional charging stations would best serve the public.

Karin Edwards, manager of TRPA's sustainable communities

program says it's important to have a strategy to make electric vehicle travel convenient for local residents as well as visitors to the Truckee-Tahoe area.

She says it's also necessary to identify ways to make sure travelers from the San Francisco Bay Area can get the charges they need to make it to the lake.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Kahle Community Center is having an Easter egg hunt April 3 at 11am for kids 6 and younger. Bring a basket to collect eggs.

- NAMI El Dorado County is providing free monthly support group meetings in South Lake Tahoe starting June 9 at the South Lake Tahoe Library, 1000 Rufus Allen Road, from 6-7:30pm. Meetings are the second Tuesday of every month. Support is free for family members who have a loved one living with a serious mental illness. For more info, email f2fnami@gmail.com.

- Here are the Lake Tahoe-El Dorado and Sierra roadwork schedule from Caltrans for this week.

- The Family Resource Center, Sugar Pine Foundation and Vail employees will be planting sugar pines behind the fire station at Golden Bear in South Lake Tahoe on April 11 from 10am-noon. For information, contact DeAnne Hooper at 530.542.0740 or dhooper@tahoeefrc.org.

- The South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center's 12th annual Cinco de Mayo festival at Heavenly's California Lodge is May 1 from 5-10pm. Tickets are on sale at the center for \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Children 6 to 12 years old will be admitted for \$10 and children younger than 5 are free. For more info, call 530.542.0740.