

Elusive Sierra Nevada red fox spotted in Yosemite



The rare fox saunters through Yosemite National Park. Photo/NPS

By Sarah Larimer, Washington Post

A Sierra Nevada red fox was recently spotted in Yosemite National Park for the first time in almost 100 years.

“We are thrilled to hear about the sighting of the Sierra Nevada red fox, one of the most rare and elusive animals in the Sierra Nevada,” Yosemite National Park superintendent Don Neubacher said in a news release. “National parks like Yosemite provide habitat for all wildlife and it is encouraging to see that the red fox was sighted in the park.”

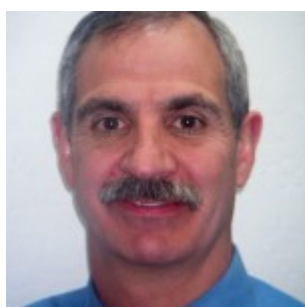
Motion-sensitive cameras captured pictures of the animal roaming in the northern portion of Yosemite on Dec. 13 and Jan. 4, according to the National Park Service. Crews have set up “hair snare stations” in the area as well and hope to be able to perform genetic analysis that will help them learn more about the fox population.

Sierra Nevada red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes necator*) are smaller than other members of the fox population, and have darker fur. NPS officials estimate that there are fewer than 50 Sierra

Nevada red foxes in North America, making it “one of the rarest mammals” on the continent.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Borges Chiropractic in South Lake Tahoe turns 30 this month.

- Truckee Bike Park's dual slalom is getting extended this year in preparation and in collaboration with Sky Tavern for a Nor Cal regional dual slalom series.

- Christian Smith will talk Feb. 17 at 6:30pm about his journey to heal cancer naturally after being diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma stage 3, level 3 and given a 10 percent chance of survival. The free talk is at Safe Haven Chiropractic, 3170 Highway 50, Suite 1, Meyers.

- According to Phocuswright, U.S. travelers spent \$23 billion on vacation rentals in 2012.

- Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce's Feb. 10 Tech Tuesday is How to Get Customers to Your Site. The talk is from 5-7pm at the chamber office in Stateline. It's free for members, \$15 for others. For more info, go online.

DRI seeks opportunities to boost snowpack

By KOL0-TV

As the dry weather pattern continues in Northern Nevada, scientists at the Desert Research Institute are keeping their eyes on the skies and watching for any and all opportunities to help turn things around.

So far, they've used their equipment along the crest of the Sierra for about 68 hours this season.

Climatologists say that while they have no evidence that winter will stay dry, they also don't have any evidence it will turn around.

Read the whole story

TRTA hosting trail talks

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association's Trail Talk Series features diverse speakers and topics related to the 165-mile Tahoe Rim Trail.

These once a month presentations are free and open to the public.

The schedule:

- **Feb. 25, 6-8pm – Equine First Aid, Colic & Muscle Abnormalities Seminar:** Two vets from Large Animal Veterinary Services will present on equine-specific topics regarding what every rider should consider when riding in the backcountry. Topic highlights include: Planning and preparing for your ride, equine first aid, common backcountry problems and treatment, vital signs, colic and muscle abnormalities. The talk is at Cabela's Reno.
 - **March 11, 6-8pm – Dogs on the Trail:** Veterinarian Kathleen Fisher of Washoe Valley Veterinary Hospital will present on important information that all dog owners should consider when on the trail with their canine friends. She will touch on planning and preparing for your trail experience, canine first aid, and common backcountry problems and treatment. The talk is at Cabela's Reno.
 - **April 28, 6-8pm – Geology of the Tahoe Rim Trail:** Friends of the Library of El Dorado County Library will be hosting a talk on the geology of the Tahoe Rim Trail. Local geologist and TRTA board member Dave Schnake will provide an informative, non-technical talk on the enormous geological forces which formed Lake Tahoe as well as virtually take people around the Tahoe Rim Trail and discover the geological variety which can be found around the trail. The talk is at the South Lake Tahoe Library.
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Opinion: Fox faux news forces

rare apology

By Leonard Pitts Jr., Miami Herald

Tucker Carlson said on Fox that more children die of bathtub drownings than of accidental shootings. They don't.

Steve Doocy said on Fox that NASA scientists faked data to make the case for global warming. They didn't.

Rudy Giuliani said on Fox that President Obama has issued propaganda asking everybody to "hate the police." He hasn't.

John Stossel said on Fox that there is "no good data" proving secondhand cigarette smoke kills non-smokers. There is.

So maybe you can see why serious people – a category excluding those who rely upon it for news and information – do not take Fox, well...seriously, why they dub it Pox News and Fakes News, to name two of the printable variations. Fox is, after all, the network of death panels, terrorist fist jabs, birtherism, anchor babies, victory mosques, wars on Christmas and Benghazi, Benghazi, Benghazi. It's not just that it is the chief global distributor of unfact and untruth but that it distributes unfact and untruth with a bluster, an arrogance, a gonad-grabbing swagger, that implicitly and intentionally dares you to believe fact and truth matter.

Many of us have gotten used to this. We don't even bother to protest Fox being Fox. Might as well protest a sewer for stinking.

But the French and the British, being French and British, see it differently. And that's what produced the scenario that recently floored many of us.

Read the whole story

Hard Rock launches new era at Lake Tahoe



Lake Tahoe Hard Rock could become a destination unto itself on the South Shore. Photos/Denise Haerr

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – To be successful in the ranching and casino industries takes some of the same qualities. It's about successfully herding your product (cattle or people). It's about providing an experience that is above the rest – indulging in a prime cut of beef, being at a place you want to keep returning to.

Jon and David Park are embarking on a journey to be both rancher and casino purveyor. And in some ways their divergent enterprises are crossing paths.



Brothers David and Jon Park spent \$60 million revamping what was a dilapidated casino.

On Wednesday the brothers were beaming as the doors flew open on their \$60 million investment of what is now Lake Tahoe Hard Rock. The 539-room hotel casino was essentially stripped to the studs and reinvented into a totally different experience from what was the Horizon.

In many ways the Hard Rock is returning to its roots. The vintage Stateline property opened in 1965 as Del Webb's Sahara Tahoe. Elvis played at the Sahara 106 times. His suite is being renovated, but is not ready to be rented.

"We are modernizing it without taking the Elvis out of it," Don Marrandino, who is running the property, said.



Elvis used to be a regular when this was the Sahara.

In the lobby is the original poster from one of Elvis' shows in the 1970s in Lake Tahoe. The cocktail performance cost \$20 and included two drinks.

That showroom he played in is likely to be reinvented. Most recently it was where the movie theaters were. Marrandino wouldn't even hint at who might be the first to perform at the new venue.

"We have to build it first," he told *Lake Tahoe News*.

When that will take place remains to be seen. Old components of the former showroom still exist below the floor of the movie theaters.



Mojo Green christens Vinyl on Jan. 28.

Siobhan Fajayan, director of marketing, told *Lake Tahoe News* it's possible the larger music venue will resemble the Joint in Las Vegas.

For now, though, Vinyl – the old Cabaret – will suffice as the music venue. It holds a few hundred people if they all stand. The stage looks temporary or at least portable.

Music is everywhere – even in the elevators. Lyrics from Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven" are on the back railing.

Even the door handles throughout the property are guitars.



Memorabilia curator Warwick Stone watches as Michael Jackson's glove is installed.

Memorabilia is a huge part of what this property and all Hard Rocks are all about. Michael Jackson's glove in the lobby of the hotel was not finalized until 4:20pm – just a few hours before the doors opened to the public.

Warwick Stone is tasked with managing the \$7 million rotating collection. From his studio in Las Vegas he puts together the various exhibits.

He used to be a tailor in the rock 'n' roll industry. The leather jacket he designed for Freddie Mercury of Queen in 1982 is one item he would love to have back to be able to

display at one of the Hard Rock properties.

The attention to detail is evident throughout the hotel-casino; down to the woman installing Jackson's glove who was using tape to remove any lingering lint. Menus are not stuck in sticky plastic. Some napkins were imprinted with lips; under them it says "Jenny 867-5309". Every name tag lists that employee's favorite band.

Another venue not yet open is the convention center space. The two large ballrooms are expected to be online in early February.



Every room has been renovated.

Rooms are in coral-rust, grey tones. They are modern, but tasteful. Bathrooms are small, but that's what the norm was 50 years ago when the goal was to get people out of their rooms and onto the casino floor.

Half bottles of wine from Madrona Vineyards of Camino are in

the rooms. Those needing a larger bottle can find them downstairs in the steakhouse.

The entire dining experience is designed to transform what the South Shore is used to.



Seafood at the Oyster Bar is available 24 hours a day.

Chairs in each venue are comfortable, with the cushy ones outside Fire Break the most enticing. Here people can enjoy a variety of seating – inside and out – that looks out onto the casino corridor and up to the mountains.

Ten of the 20 beers that will be on tap at this restaurant are ready to be consumed. This restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

The Oyster Bar is open around the clock and serves crawfish harvested from Lake Tahoe. Using locally sourced food is a goal of Executive Chef Jonathan Snyder, who is a 1991 graduate of South Tahoe High School.

Park Prime is the high-end restaurant at the casino. It's definitely quieter than the raucous casino floor. The emphasis is not on musical memorabilia, but instead on fine dining.

While the beef isn't Parks', one day it might be.

"The long-term goal is to do that," Jon Park told *Lake Tahoe News* of his desire for his beef to be served at the restaurant. There are a few hoops to jump through to make that a reality.

Ranching has been part of the Park family's way of life in the Carson Valley since the late 1880s. For some, it still is – including the brothers.

People don't often associate ranching and Lake Tahoe. But remnants of that segment of the basin's past are still visible in some places. And in some ways it is prominent inside Park Prime.



Breaking in the table games on opening night.

Artwork on the walls is of images of the Parks' ranch in the Carson Valley. Old burlap sacks line another wall.

But this massive makeover looked like it almost might not happen. Final touches were still being made Jan. 28 – opening day.

“It was the hardest finish of my life,” Joe Stewart with SMC Contracting told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We went out the back door as they opened the front door.”

He had about five months to turn a 50-year-old hotel into something that looked brand new. Stewart was tasked with bringing everything up to code and then adding high-end finishes. The footprint is the same, but most of the property was stripped to the core.



The hotel-casino has 500 employees.

“The only thing we didn’t find was Jimmy Hoffa,” Stewart joked.

But construction is not done. The big concert venue, two more restaurants and the pool area are slated for the next phases.

The main goal, though, is to provide a quality product with incredible service.

Service – that was one of the mantras preached by everyone who spoke to the media before the property was opened to the public. It was working on Day 1 as every employee was smiling, asking if they could help and how you were doing.

10 winning wagers to make on the Super Bowl

By Case Keefer, Las Vegas Sun

The question of how betting action on proposition wagers stacks up to traditional methods, the point spread and over/under total, courses through town every Super Bowl.

The answer depends on who's asked. Some sports book directors say their shops' breakdown is 60 percent to 40 percent one way while conflicting reports indicate the inverse. Others shoot straight to the middle at 50 percent both ways.

Most have suspected that props would one day surpass the side and total for the last several years, but it's never indisputably occurred. By my completely unscientific and wholly personal measure, however, it's happened in 2015.

Read the whole story

Improv returns to LTCC campus

Random Acts of Improv returns to Lake Tahoe Community College's Duke Theater on Feb. 6 at 7:30pm.

This family-friendly show will feature seasoned improvisation performers, along with a few fresh faces. Willing kids will be invited on stage to help the performers.

Random Acts of Improv is the resident improvisation company of the Theater Arts Department at the college.

Admission is \$5 at the door. For more information, call 530.541.4660, ext. 240.

Kiwanis hosting concert in Carson Valley

For the third year in a row, the Kiwanis Club of the Carson Valley is organizing a concert to raise money for local causes.

Welcome All Veterans Everywhere, and the Douglas County Community and Senior Center will be the beneficiaries of the Feb. 21 event at the senior center on 1329 Waterloo Lane in Gardnerville.

The Soar Like an Eagle benefit concert is in conjunction with the Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce's annual Eagles and Agriculture week. Woodie and the Longboards will be playing a

mix of classic Eagles tunes and surf music.

Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$30 at the door, and may be purchased from any Kiwanis member, W.A.V.E. representative, from the Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce, or at the front desk of the Community/Senior Center.

For more information, call 775.339.8882.

Love of antibiotics is destroying their power

By Danielle Paquette, Washington Post

When our throats burn, we're conditioned to reach for antibiotics. When our noses run, we hound doctors for antibiotics. When we're too groggy to drive to the doctor, we search our medicine cabinets for leftover antibiotics.

Four out of five Americans are prescribed the drugs every year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Up to half of the estimated 258 million prescriptions are unnecessary, the agency reports.

"We need a total culture change," said Jesse Goodman, director of Georgetown University's Center on Medical Product Access, Safety and Stewardship and a former FDA chief scientist. "Patient and doctor must understand these drugs are precious resources. The more we use them, and the more unwisely, the more resistance."

President Obama announced a plan this week to nearly double

the amount of federal funding dedicated to fighting antibiotic-resistant bacteria, a national health threat the CDC says annually causes an estimated 2 million illnesses and 23,000 deaths. The president will ask Congress for \$1.2 billion as part of his annual budget request. Funds would be used to hasten the development of antibiotics and diagnostic tools, heighten surveillance for “superbugs” and curb the spread of antibiotic-resistant microbes in medical settings.

Read the whole story