K’s Kitchen: Cookies worth sending overseas

By Kathryn Reed

When a notice would come in the mail that I had a package, I knew I would be having cookies for dinner that night.

Poor, starving college students can live off very little. Cookies – oh my, I don’t think I ever shared them. I hoarded them in my room, hid them from roommates and savored them – even the crumbs.



I was lucky. Not only did I get goodies sent to me from mom, but my three older sisters kept me well stocked, too.

I can’t say I’ve been as good about sending stuff to my nieces and nephews. This past weekend I was able to hand deliver homemade cookies to two of them. Veronica has graduated, but I’ve seen her set up in Beijing and she isn’t making cookies for herself. With her home for a few days, I was able add to her full suitcase.

Oliver got his hand delivered, too – and whole for a change. See, I don’t package the cookies well, so they end up being crumbs. Still good. Just a different consistency. It’s something he likes to tease me about.

This version is ideal for adding to ice cream.

Jacqueline is going to have to wait her turn – two more years – before she is on the cookie rotation. Hopefully, Chris won’t ever be back on it. He was getting cookies while in Iraq with

the Army.

Mine are in the freezer. But don’t ask me to share. I’m still not really good about that.

The recipe comes to me via my sister, Pam. She often uses white chocolate and macadamia nuts. I’m not a big fan of nuts in my cookies, so I use white or semi-sweet chocolate.

Yummy Cookies

2/3 C shortening

2/3 C butter, softened

1 C granulated sugar

1 C brown sugar, packed

2 eggs

2 tsp vanilla

3 C flour

1 tsp soda

12 oz. package chocolate morsels

Mix the first six ingredients. Then blend in the flour and soda. Stir in chocolate chips. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes.

Library book sale

The Friends of the Library Book Sale in South Lake Tahoe is Nov. 5 from 10am-3pm. The library is on Rufus Allen Boulevard.

Cold, snow moving into Lake Tahoe Basin

While a storm like the one that blasted the East Coast is not supposed to hit the region, fall is going away this week and in its place will be winter.

It could make for an uncomfortable night of trick-or-treating. The National Weather Service in Reno is saying the cold front will move in tonight.



October's storm covered Mount Tallac; more snow is coming. Photo/LTN

“However, fast movement of the front and limited moisture will result in minimal amounts of rain or snow accumulation,” weather folks report.

The worst day – as defined by the amount of snow and level of temperatures – will be Thursday. Six to 12 inches could fall in the Sierra, with snow in the Carson Valley, according to the National Weather Service in Reno.

That system is expected to stick around through next weekend.

“Anyone planning travel through the Eastern Sierra or over Sierra passes Thursday into Friday morning or late in the weekend should closely monitor the latest forecasts and weather statements,” the NWS says.

After today’s high being in the low 60s in the Lake Tahoe Basin, it’s expected to drop to 46 on Tuesday with that night’s low being in the teens.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Lecture on combining literature and wilderness

Saturday Mornings, the award-winning morning discussion and lecture series collaboration of Sierra Nevada College and Incline Village Parks & Recreation Senior Programs continue this fall.

College faculty and other knowledgeable locals present bite-size offerings of intellectually stimulating material to pique people’s interest and challenge their sensibilities.

An optional continental breakfast will be provided for $3.

Sierra Nevada College Professor Katie Zanto has been nominated as one of L.L. Bean’s top 10 Outdoor Heroes based on her work founding the Adventure Risk Challenge Program—a place-based program that integrates wilderness challenges with a rigorous literacy and leadership curriculum. Zanto is an educator, who, fueled by a great dedication to the environment, has created a variety of unusual unique opportunities for youth to discover

their own passion and love for the outdoors. It is Katie's broad interpretation of environment that is unique, which she blends into all areas of her work.

She speaks Nov. 12 from 10am-noon at Sierra Nevada College, Prim Library, Room 213, 999 Tahoe Blvd., Incline Village.

For details, contact Debi Noonan at (775) 831.1314, ext. 7420, dnoonan@sierranevada.edu.

Gondola to link The Ridge with Heavenly

Getting to the slopes of Heavenly Mountain Resort is about to be much easier for guests at Ridge Resorts.

After three years without a gondola going between the lodging property at the top of Kingsbury Grade and Stagecoach chairlift, the Hilltrac Skier Express is expected to be operational Dec. 23.



The gondola between Ridge Resorts and Heavenly will open in December.

The eight-person gondola sits on a track about 10 feet off the ground and will look much like Heavenly's Gondola on the other side of the resort. This is the same type of contraption the St. Regis at Deer Valley uses to transport its guests.

"It will give the Ridge Tahoe an elevated status as far as accommodation properties in the South Shore. It is the only lodging property that sits on Heavenly ski resort that will be ski-in, ski-out," Teri Sweeney with Ridge Resorts said of the gondola.

The old chairlift between the two entities was taken out in 2008. It required guests to walk across the parking lot. The gondola will drop people off closer to the ski resort chairlift.

Ridge Tahoe guests need only carry their room key to be able to use the new gondola.

– Kathryn Reed

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Kitty Meow is a nice cat who would love a lap to call her own. She is very friendly and has a big purr.



She is litter box trained and would prefer an indoor only home.

Kitty Meow is spayed, microchipped, 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.

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

Opinion: Brown needs to unleash a public works blitz to create jobs

By George Skelton, Los Angeles Times

Don Perata remembers the mood and expectations when the Legislature passed a massive $37-billion public works program in 2006.

The mood was jubilant, the former Senate leader recalls. Legislators had acted in a very rare bipartisan fashion. And the expectation was that the record-size bond package – pushed hard by then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger – would rapidly begin the rebuilding of California's decaying infrastructure, creating tens of thousands of jobs.

"Everyone was feeling good about what happened. It was one of the high points of my time in the Legislature," the Oakland Democrat says.

“The common goal was to get the projects out now and don’t let them get stuck with the bureaucrats arguing over whatever they argue about. We had just begun to realize that something was wrong with the economy.”

Voters overwhelmingly approved four bond proposals – for transportation, housing, education and flood control projects. They also passed a fifth bond for water facilities that had reached the ballot through the initiative process. That upped the total bond package to an unprecedented $43 billion.

“There was a sense of urgency,” Perata says, “and then we lost it.”

Five years later, only roughly half of the authorized bonds have been sold. And of the amount sold, about 30% has not been spent.

So much for pump-priming the economy in a severe recession.

Read the whole story

Lectures focus on healthy lifestyles

Billed as “holiday makeover presentations”, the Nov. 7 5:30-7pm presentations are free.

Topics include “Skin Fitness” and non-surgical approaches to facial rejuvenation with Ronald M. Gemberling and “Healthy Diet and Exercise 101” with Paula Crenshaw. The doctors will answer questions afterward.

RSVP to (530) 544.7744.

The talk is at 2209 South Ave., Ste. D (across from Barton Memorial Hospital main entrance).

Candy, pumpkins dominate Halloween rituals

The observance of Halloween, which dates back to Celtic rituals thousands of years ago, has long been associated with images of witches, ghosts and vampires. Over the years, Halloween customs and rituals have changed dramatically. Today, Halloween is celebrated many different ways, including wearing costumes, children trick or treating, carving pumpkins, and going to haunted houses and parties.



The average age for trick-or-treaters is 5 to 14, with the potential number in the U.S. in 2010 being 41 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Illinois produced an estimated 427 million pounds of the vined orange gourd last year. California, New York and Ohio were also major pumpkin-producing states, each with an estimate of more than 100 million pounds.

Some places around the country that may put you in the Halloween mood are: Transylvania County, N.C.; Tombstone, Ariz.; Pumpkin Center, N.C.; Cape Fear, N.C.; and Skull Creek, Neb.

In 2010, each U.S. resident consumed the equivalent of 24.7 pounds of candy.

Wiping out hodgepodge bike trail system on North Shore

By Katherine E. Hill

TAHOE CITY – Winter is approaching as the days grow cooler, but crews are continuing to work to complete a section of the region's growing network of bike trails before weather puts a halt to their work.

Tahoe City Public Utility District's network of bike trails that extend from Tahoe City to Dollar Hill, Olympic Valley and down the West Shore have long been a patchwork of trail systems that go for miles in some areas, with only small sections completed through Tahoe City. Work on the last lakeside sections that will connect the west and east ends of Tahoe City have been under way this fall, with the section from the Tahoe City State Recreation Area extending west in front of the Lighthouse Center to be finished before snow falls.



North Shore bike trails will soon be better connected. Photo/Katherin

e E. Hill

On the west end of town, the bike trail that meanders along Commons Beach ends abruptly at a pump station at the base of Grove Street, which forces pedestrians and cyclists to climb the steep hill at Grove to reconnect to a roadside path along Highway 28. The new section will extend east on the lakeside around the pump station, along the Tahoe City Marina property and the Boatworks Mall before connecting to the section at the Lighthouse Center. Work will continue on this section until winter and will continue in the spring. Work will be postponed again during the busy, summer months with the heavy use at the marina and then restart in fall 2012 when it will be completed, according to Kelli Twomey, TCPUD director of resource development and community relations.

The two sections being built now and a third recently completed section come at a cost of $3.3 million that was funded entirely by grants, Twomey said.

The missing sections will be welcomed by pedestrians and cyclists who find it dangerous to ride along Highway 28 in Tahoe City in order to connect to the bike trail system.

“Folks are anxious, especially with kids,” said Peter Underwood, owner of Olympic Bike Shop. “Riding through town has long been dangerous.”

Underwood said Tahoe City has long needed a dedicated bike trail, especially for families who often use trailers with small children. He also said that’s he lost rental customers when families discover they must ride along the busy Highway 28.

“This is a going to help our community in a lot of ways,” Underwood said. “It’s not just going to help our business, but to help people coming through town.”

Olympic Bike Shop opened in 1973 and rents 100 to 200 bikes a

day from July to early September. Underwood said that he often directs people to ride down Grove Street to pick up the bike trail along Commons Beach or to take Fairway Drive that runs behind the Tahoe City Golf Course and then cross Highway 89 to connect to the Truckee River bike trail.

Missing link in Homewood

Twomey also said that the last one-mile section to connect the bike trail through Homewood will be "shovel ready" by next spring, but that construction will likely be delayed until 2013 when Caltrans will be doing erosion control work in the same area.

Right now, the bike trail extends for 5.7 miles from Tahoe City to Cherry Street in Homewood, where pedestrians and cyclists must then continue on Highway 89, where there are no bike paths or shoulders, before picking up the paved trail again at Fawn Street. It then continues another 3.7 miles before ending in Tahoma just past Sugar Pine Point State Park.

Underwood said the missing section in Homewood was dangerous and that he often directs families not to ride down the West Shore for this reason.

The final route of the bike trail has not yet been determined, but Twomey said that the proposed route calls for continuing from Cherry Street along Highway 89 south to Trout Street. From Trout, the trail would follow Sans Souchi Terrace, connect to Silver Street and run through the interior of the parking area at Homewood Mountain Resort before connecting to the existing trail at Fawn. When completed, the TCPUD network will include 20 miles of trails.

More trails on the horizon

The TCPUD network ends near the top of Dollar Hill along Highway 28, but plans are in the works for a 2.5-mile section through California Tahoe Conservancy and North Tahoe Public

Utility district lands that would extend behind the Highlands and Old County neighborhoods. The Dollar Creek section, being developed by Placer County, would pave hiking and mountain bike trails that are already being used by local residents. The proposed trail should start near Dollar Drive on Highway 28, skirt past the eastern edge of the Tahoe Cross Country Ski Area, go by Dollar Reservoir and come out at Fulton Crescent Road in Carnelian Bay.

Public comments are now being accepted through the Placer County Department of Public Works with construction eyed for 2013, contingent on available funding, according to county officials.

Public comments on the Dollar Creek trail are being accepted at pkraatz@placer.ca.gov or in writing at Placer County Department of Public Works, Attn: Peter Kraatz, P.O. Box 336, Kings Beach, CA 96143.

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