S. Tahoe woman tearing it up at XTERRA competitions

By Jessie Marchesseau

Spending three hours dragging yourself and your bicycle over rocks, streams and mountains, swimming through cold and choppy waters, and scrambling down trails of dirt, sand and mud may not sound like your typical Sunday stroll.

Unless, that is, you are XTERRA athlete Heather Lyman.

Lyman, a South Lake Tahoe resident, will be competing in the XTERRA World Championship race in Maui today.



Heather Lyman of South Lake Tahoe is competing today in Maui. Photo/Kevin Joell

XTERRA races are essentially off-road triathlons. They involve open water swimming, mountain biking and trail running. A sort of competition of outdoor enthusiasts. And Lyman is good at it.

“You’ve got to realize, this is her first year, and look at where she is,” Eufay Wood, personal trainer and co-owner of

Sierra Athletic Club, said. “She has a lot of natural skill.”

Not only did the 30-year-old qualify for the World Championship race, but Lyman also took home the top spot in the women’s 30-34 age group at the XTERRA USA Championship race in Ogden, Utah, in September.

She started the season with a third-place finish in the women’s amateur division of the EXTERRA Real in Granite Bay in March. Her time of 2 hours, 24 minutes, 27 seconds earned her second place in her age group. She followed that performance with a fifth-place finish in the amateur division and third in her age group at the XTERRA Pacific in Santa Cruz.

The Tahoe City race in June brought Lyman back to her home turf where she earned her first win of the season, taking the top spot in the 30-34 age group, second among the amateur women. She had hoped to continue the season with a strong finish at the August race in Incline Village, but a torn MCL forced her out of competition for nearly two months.

Though she says her knee still bothers her a little, it did not keep her from winning yet again at the Championship race in Utah. At just more than 3 hours, 5 minutes, Lyman was first in her age group and second in the amateur division.

Finishing in the top five of every race and overcoming a midseason injury would be a feat for any athlete. The fact that Lyman managed it without adhering to a formal training regime speaks loudly to the natural skill Wood mentioned.

Lyman generally does some sort of workout seven days a week, often more than one sport, but she is not shy about taking a day off if her body is tired. She trains with Wood twice a week in the gym, however prefers to do the majority of her training outdoors. She even admits to watching YouTube videos for tips on swim technique.

What Lyman may lack in strict workout regimes, she makes up

for in sheer determination.

“Her work ethic is beyond comparison,” Reve Ramos said. “She prepares better than anyone I know currently.”

Ramos met Lyman a little more than a year ago at one of the spin classes he instructs at Sierra Athletic Club. Ramos has been teaching and coaching sports nearly all his life and has seen some great athletes, but says Lyman is truly unique. She has already inspired other women in spin class to follow in her footsteps.

“One thing that really drives me is that I’m super competitive,” Lyman said, and added with a laugh, “It’s kind of annoying.”

But she did not set out to win. Not in the beginning, anyway. She entered a race last summer just for fun and because it was a good way to get into shape. She finished third in her age group, and was hooked.

“I always feel like I accomplish something by the time I cross the finish line. All that hard work that goes into it feels good when you actually come across the line and know, first of all, that it’s over and that you can do it,” Lyman said.

Looking to the future, she hopes to compete at the professional level eventually, and a good finish at the World Championships in Maui could go a long way in helping her achieve that goal. The race, which consists of a one mile rough-water swim, an 18.3 mile mountain bike ride and a 6.1 mile trail run, attracts more than 600 athletes from 28 countries. A top finish in the amateur division could earn her serious bragging rights.

Ramos, who has watched his own daughter become a professional athlete, says he believes this is just the beginning for Lyman: “Above all, she has the sweetest, gentlest heart, but it roars like a lion.”

Tacqueria Jalisco helping raise money for TACCD

Taqueria Jalisco is the place to be Oct. 25 to help celebrate TACCD's 30-year anniversary.

Tahoe Area Coordinating Council for the Disabled is partnering with five South Shore restaurants to raise money for the next 30 years.

Each restaurant on their designated night is giving a percentage of proceeds to TACCD.

Coyote Grill's turn is Oct. 27.

Getaway Café, Ernie's Café and Passaretti's have already had their respective nights.

Leaf peepers find perfection throughout Hope Valley

By Kathryn Reed

HOPE VALLEY – It's here – that kaleidoscope of color Mother Nature dazzles leaf chasers with each autumn. This may be the peak weekend for colors in and around the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Cresting Luther Pass near the cutoff for Armstrong Pass on Highway 89 the cars are parked on both sides of the road

Saturday. Cameras are out. People are smiling and going “ooohhh” and “aaahhh”. Yellow and orange dominate the landscape.



Elephant's Back from a trail off Highway 88. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Looking across Hope Valley, pockets of aspens look like swatches of paint samples interspersed with the green conifers.

While some of the aspen leaves are still green, most have turned, with others already brown or fallen.

Some areas are like a carpet of leaves.

We pull over again, this time off Highway 88. Crossing a downed barbed wire fence we enter another aspen grove on the far side of the valley.

It’s one of those Tahoe bluebird days so the aspens are even more electrifying when looking up.

People seem mesmerized by the leaves dancing in the gentle breeze. A different type of fool’s gold, perhaps.

Jane Welles is near the highway painting what I’m photographing. Each fall she drives from her home in Nevada City to spend a few days capturing the Sierra autumn on

canvas.

Driving up Highway 88 the usual line of cars is not at the old house. Colors here are past their prime – but still worth a stop.

We turn around.

Sue suggests we take a road to the left (about 4.3 miles west of Pickett's Junction). We stop a little ways up, though the Jeep would have been fine to continue on the road. We wanted a little exercise.

A woman along the way said ahead is a meadow, while back at the Y would lead us to a lake. Oh, that meadow – the views to Elephant's Back are magnificent.

Time for a bite to eat at Hope Valley Café. (It's beyond Sorensen's on the right.) Leesa Lopazanski has owned the place for the last four years. Pie is still a reason to go. But don't expect to get the recipe. She's not sharing.

We recommend the pumpkin – which she makes Southern style, with buttermilk.

"It makes it more fluffy," Lopazanski said.

It's not like any other pumpkin I've had before. Order a piece to go; we wish we had.

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EPA approves pesticide to

fight zebra, quagga mussels

By Melissa Wiese, Sacramento Business Journal

Marrone Bio Innovations Inc. has gotten approval for its biopesticide against invasive freshwater mussels, after testing in Canada and the Colorado River.

The Environmental Protection Agency gave approval for the Davis-based company's Zequanox, which was derived from a common microbe found in soil and water, according to the company. Until now, there had been no environmentally safe, targeted ways to eliminate invasive zebra and quagga mussels.

"The addition of Zequanox to our product portfolio marks an important milestone for the company, as we expand beyond our agricultural roots into the fast-growing industrial and commercial water markets," said Pam Marrone, founder and chief executive officer of Marrone Bio Innovations, in a statement.

USFS to resume controlled fires on South Shore

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews are scheduled to resume prescribed fire operations near Meyers on the south side of the intersection of Pioneer Trail and Highway 50 on Oct. 24, weather permitting.



In addition, operations may resume in the Angora Fire area. Both operations may continue through the week.

Residents and visitors can expect to see smoke from these prescribed fire project areas. Smoke may be visible on Highway 50 in Meyers, as well as near the Angora Fire area. The Forest Service strives to minimize the impacts of smoke on local communities. Smoke-sensitive residents should consider staying indoors and keeping doors, windows and outside vents closed.

Grants to help with Tahoe area water issues

By Reno Gazette-Journal

More snow, cleanups along the Truckee River and projects to fight quagga mussels have been approved to help keep the Truckee River, Lake Tahoe and other reservoirs pristine.

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority has approved eight grants totaling $724,427 from its Truckee River Fund. The money comes from customer billings and will augment $393,000 being spent by other groups on these efforts.

Since the Truckee River Fund was created in 2005, TMWA has provided $7.1 million in 75 grants that have been matched by $5.8 million in funds from the grantees.

Read the whole story

Thunderbird Preservation Society eager to be thankful

An anonymous donor who presented $25,000 to the Thunderbird Preservation Society has offered a second donation for the same amount on the condition the public can match it by Thanksgiving.

The Preservation Society, a nonprofit corporation maintains the historic Thunderbird Lodge and Yacht.

The importance of maintaining vintage Americana, specifically the lodge and yacht, was the subject of a fund-raising appearance by pilot Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger. Sullenberger’s presentation on Labor Day weekend inspired the initial $25,000 donation, followed by the concept of a second $25,000 gift, if matched, for a total of $75,000.

The nonprofit Thunderbird Preservation Society was organized to preserve and protect Lake Tahoe’s George Whittell Estate Thunderbird Lodge National Historic Site on the East Shore. The organization promotes public appreciation and education regarding the historical, maritime, architectural and cultural resources of the Lake Tahoe region through public tours, conferences, excursions, and forums.

For additional information on the fundraising initiative for the Thunderbird Lodge and Yacht, go online or call Bill Watson at (775) 848.6216.

Fanny Bridge on Placer County supes' agenda

The Placer County Board of Supervisors will be discussing the Tahoe City Fanny Bridge at its meeting next week.

The Oct. 24 session starts at 2pm, while the Oct. 25 meeting is at 2pm. Both are at Grandlibakken Conference Center.

Issues include:

* An update from the Community Development Resources Agency staff on the status of various development projects in Eastern Placer County;

* The Planning Services Division and the County Executive Office will give the board an update on the Tahoe Basin Community Plan. Under previous direction from the board, staff began work on the update in November 2010;

* Consideration of a resolution authorizing the director of the Placer County Public Works to sign an agreement with the Tahoe Transportation District for the Highway 89/Fanny Bridge Revitalization Project. The purpose of this project is to reduce congestion and improve safety and operations of the intersection of highway 89 and 28 in Tahoe City.

Artist reception-exhibit at Bona Fide HQ

On Nov. 5 at 6:30pm, Bona Fide Books is hosting a reception for Shelley Hocknell Zentner's collection "Written on the

Body” at Bona Fide HQ in Meyers.

The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments and entertainment will be provided.



Shelley Hocknell Zentner

“Written on the Body” is the first public exhibition of a group of oil paintings and figure drawings focusing on women. Zentner, a South Lake Tahoe resident originally from North Wales, U.K., has long had a fascination with the human form and what it reveals.

Zentner’s work will be on display at Bona Fide Books throughout November.

Bona Fide Books is a local independent press located at 1069 Magua St., No. 4, behind the Getaway Café in Meyers.

For more information, contact Kim Wyatt at editor@bonafidebooks.com or visit the website.

DEA bans chemicals used in

‘bath salts’

By Elizabeth A. Harris, New York Times

The Drug Enforcement Administration took emergency action on Friday to ban three synthetic stimulants used to make products that are marketed at head shops and on the Web as “bath salts,” but are actually used as recreational drugs that mimic the effects of cocaine, LSD and methamphetamine.

The emergency measure places these substances – mephedrone, methylenedioxypyrovalerone (MDPV) and methylone – under the D.E.A.’s most restrictive category for at least a year, while they study whether they should be permanently banned. This classification is reserved for substances with high potential for abuse and no accepted use under medical supervision.

These products, sometimes called plant food, are sold in powder or crystal form under names like Bliss, Purple Wave, Vanilla Sky and Ivory Wave. Though not approved by the Food and Drug Administration for consumption, they have become increasingly popular, especially among teenagers and young adults, the D.E.A. said.

Read the whole story