Mountain bike patrollers needed for Tahoe area

The Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park Backcountry Patrol organization is recruiting patrollers to serve in the 2011 season.

The volunteer patrollers offer a valuable service to all trail users as ambassadors to the sport of mountain biking and the Tahoe area.

Currently in its 10th year of operation, and recently incorporated as a nonprofit organization, the patrol is part of the International Mountain Bicycling Association's National Mountain Bike Patrol program. The 20 or so active patrollers are responsible for approximately 2,000 contacts during the summer season. These are usually questions about the park history, trail recommendations, or riding etiquette; but the patrollers are also ready to fix a flat tire, bandage a wound, or assist with an emergency evacuation.

The patrol operates primarily out of Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park on the East Shore, including the world famous Flume Trail. The patrol also partners with the Tahoe Rim Trail Association to cover other areas of the Tahoe Rim Trail around the lake.

Training for new patrollers has been scheduled for orientation on April 30 and field training on June 18. There will also be first aid/CPR training available for those who need it.

The organization relies on donations, grants, and special events such as the TRT Ultra Marathon and the Great Tahoe Flume Race for funding. For more information on becoming a patroller or supporting the patrol, go online or email info@tahoebikepatrol.org.

Successful crime free housing program in South Tahoe

To the community,

Lake Tahoe Crime Free Programs had its Crime Free Multi-Housing Program conference on April 11 at Aston Lakeland Village Beach & Mountain Resort. Thank you to Jerry Bindel and his staff for providing exceptional guest service and to Grandpa Manny of Taqueria Jalisco for a delicious lunch.

We now have certified over 60 participants and have the support of South Lake Tahoe Police Department and Douglas County Sheriff's Office. This program is in over 2,000 cities, 12 countries, 44 states, including California and Nevada.

Tim Zehring, executive director of the International Crime Free Association, gave a "borderline riveting" presentation as one evaluation stated. Guest speakers included members from South Lake El Dorado Narcotics Enforcement Team (SLEDNET) and Tri-County Gang Task Force.

Contact laketahoecrimefreeprograms@msn.com or go online for further information.

Come join us in taking an active stand against illegal activity.

Melanie Raulston-Arnold

3-day trail guide workshop in May

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association and U.S. Forest Service's third annual regional guide training is May 13-15 at Granlibakken Conference Center in Tahoe City.

In order to meet the needs of the public and to provide the best possible experience on the trail for all types of users, the TRTA and USFS aim to continue developing and hosting a high-quality, regional guide training each spring. This training provides volunteers and professional guides the skills they need to be competent, responsible wilderness guides who know how to lead a group, whether in an urban or a remote setting. This comprehensive training, offered to the general public gives eager outdoors people the skills to not only be successful in their outdoor pursuits, but also to be knowledgeable and excellent volunteer or paid guides.

New this year, being offered to organizations is the chance to market their opportunities on Saturday afternoon. New guides are encouraged to sign up for Foundations of Guiding (Track A) led by experienced TRTA guides and partner organizations. Interpretation (Track B) is aimed toward those that specifically want to learn interpretive skills. This track will be instructed by USFS staff from the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit that specialize in interpretation and education.

If you are interested in being a guide for the Tahoe Rim Trail Association or another organization, this is the training for you.

All participants over 18 years of age are welcome to attend, regardless of background or level of ability.

Dates: May 13 at noon to May 15 at 1:30pm.

Cost: $165 per person for all three days of training.

The cost includes all meals from Friday dinner to Sunday lunch and dormitory style lodging.

Registration: The deadline for registration is April 30. To register, go online. For more information, please call the TRTA office at (775) 298-0012.

Harrah’s employees spend night at Bread & Broth

Volunteers from Harrah’s Heroes (Harrah’s Employees Reaching Out) spent a day helping Bread & Broth volunteers serve those in need a hot meal on a cold night.

Bread & Broth is able to continue its mission of feeding the hungry of South Lake Tahoe in large part because of the generosity of the local community.

A $250 sponsorship through the Adopt-A-Day of Nourishment program covers the cost of food and beverages for the approximately 100 people who visit each Monday evening. To find out how your family or business can Adopt-A-Day of Nourishment, contact Connie Blue at midwest2tahoe@yahoo.com or (530) 544.4945.

Forest Service to spruce up Meeks Bay property

By Susan Wood

With all the new, proposed development activity happening on the West Shore of Lake Tahoe, the Meeks Bay Resort is in line for a face lift starting this spring and going through fall.



The U.S. Forest Service is planning a number of improvements at Meeks Bay Resort. Graphic/Provided

The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is proposing a project to remove power lines, retrofit utility equipment, stabilize the slope with vegetation and make irrigation improvements – among them, the creation of water basins used to collect runoff. Massive stormwater runoff makes indentations where it channels into the lake. These best management practices – essentially known as erosion control methods – will use $250,000 under the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act.

The U.S. Forest Service owns the lands and the buildings at the resort, while the Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada

operates the seasonal venue under a permit with the federal government.

Even with the Forest Service managing 75 percent of the land around Lake Tahoe, the federal agency still recognizes the desire among user groups to have access to the lake.

“Lakefront access is a big role of the Forest Service,” said LTBMU Landscape Architect Ashley Sommer, who’s spearheaded the project.

The project also calls for installing about 200 feet of paved road to make the lake more accessible to users. The cabins Meeks Bay Resort rents out will become more accessible with walkways that resemble the work the agency has done at the Nevada Beach Campground.

“In the total picture, the contribution to our facilities is important as we’re able to go in and upgrade,” LTBMU spokeswoman Cheva Heck said.

This prime property comes with a history, too. The Kehlet House – which is rented out mostly in the summer – is eligible for the National Registry of Historic Places. The two-story home with seven bedrooms was the living quarters of the Kehlet family, who originally owned and ran Meeks Bay Resort.

There is a concern improvements come at a price.

Ed Porras, the general manager hired by the tribe to run the resort, expressed a little concern the work would flow into their peak summer season and be disruptive.

“Our initial feeling is (the planning) is a little last-minute. But through a series of meetings, we’ve made it quite clear – repeatedly – that this is not a light situation because we’re concerned about the financial impact,” Porras said.

A more acceptable time line for the tribe and the resort

management was finalized that involved spring and fall, and Porras hopes that time line is honored.

The work is intended to be completed by 2012.

“When it’s over it will be a plus. The improvements should be nice, and we look forward to the Forest Service work,” he said.

Porras characterized the resort’s business as “resilient,” adding last year’s sales and bookings were the best since 2003 – even in this tough economy.

“With the economy, I think people are finding value for their vacation dollar. Instead of spending $25,000 to go to Europe. They can come to Tahoe for $3,000,” he said.

More than $2 million in improvements coming to Genoa

Douglas County commissioners decided last week to use redevelopment money to improve parts of the Carson Valley in an effort to increase tourism.

The commissioners, who also act as board members of the Redevelopment Agency, will spend $1.5 million just in Genoa to put power lines underground, add parking, signage, sidewalks and lighting.

Another $625,000 has been allocated to build a trail east of Genoa to David Walley’s Resort.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

UK betting company buys Cal Neva sportsbook

By Jason Hidalgo, Reno Gazette-Journal

William Hill PLC, a land-based bookmaker and online betting company in the United Kingdom, announced Thursday it is acquiring Northern Nevada-based Club Cal Neva Satellite Race and Sportsbook Division and Southern Nevada-based American Wagering Inc., in a $39 million deal.

The deal will give William Hill its first presence in the United States and a strong foothold in the Nevada sports betting market.

The acquisition will add Cal Neva's 31 sports book locations and American Wagering's 77 sites, which operate in Nevada as Leroy's, to William Hill's large sports betting portfolio.

William Hill first approached American Wagering in late November after deciding to look at land-based gaming in the U.S. about nine months ago. American Wagering established its Leroy's brand in 1978, and its technology is licensed by big casino operators such as MGM Resorts, Boyd Gaming and Wynn. Cal Neva, meanwhile, decided to approach William Hill in January.

The CEOs of Cal Neva and American Wagering welcomed the acquisition, citing William Hill's wider range of betting products as a good way to increase bettor interest. These include William Hill's expertise in what's called "in-running" betting, which allows bettors to wager on events or matches that are still in progress.

Read the whole story

State puts brakes on taxpayer-funded cars for legislators

By Jim Sanders and Torey Van Oot, Sacramento Bee

BURBANK — California legislators no longer will receive a car, gas and maintenance paid largely by taxpayers.

The state's independent compensation commission voted Thursday to replace the existing program in December with a $300 monthly allowance to defray legislators' costs of driving their personal vehicles.

Commissioner Chuck Murray, who was replaced as chairman Wednesday night, noted that California is the only state to provide all lawmakers with a vehicle of their choice. The program is overly generous, he said.

"We feel the pendulum has swung too far to the left, and we're trying to bring it back to the middle," Murray said. "The way they reimburse for cars went out in the private sector eight to 10 years ago."

Switching to a set car allowance, costing about $432,000 annually, would cut the state's current expense for legislative cars roughly in half, according to Commissioner John Stites II, who pushed the idea.

Read the whole story

Chase real estate agent to be on TV show

With a firm footing in the Lake Tahoe and Reno real estate markets, Chase International Realtor was the perfect choice to discuss current housing trends on a regionally televised talk show.

As a guest on “Lawyers, Guns and Money”, Sandi Solomonson’s television debut will be aired on Reno’s KRNV on April 24 at 4:30pm, and rebroadcast April 26 at 10:30pm.



Sandi
Solomonson

When asked if she was nervous about the bright lights, cameras and queries of hosts Scott Freeman and Dave Houston, Solomonson said no.

“I felt pretty comfortable and prepared,” she said in a press release, adding that her experience as a professional jazz singer helped her overcome any stage fright.

“Lawyers, Guns and Money” has been on the air for 16 years. The show focuses on current issues and people of interest in Northern Nevadan.

Solomonson said program viewers will learn about first-time

home buying options in Reno, as well as the state of the luxury market at Lake Tahoe.

Ski report: Rain may be moving in



Oh, what a difference five years makes. Fourteen inches of snow fell on April 17, 2006, in Tahoe City.

It’s sunny this morning, but rain could come later today. High is supposed to be 58 degrees in South Lake Tahoe.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.