

El Dorado County seeks volunteers for ombudsman program

The El Dorado County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is looking for volunteers who are interested in becoming certified long term care ombudsmen.

Certified ombudsmen are advocates who visit residents of long-term care facilities, identifying complaints and concerns. They investigate any complaints and work with the staff of the facilities to resolve problems; advocating from the resident's point of view.

There are more than 40 Long Term Care facilities in El Dorado County.

The program is currently recruiting participants for the training course that begins in May.

To find out more, call (530) 642.4860.

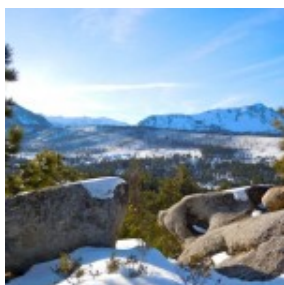
Panoramic views of Tahoe without a ton of exertion

By Kathryn Reed

Easy, fun, scenic. Scampering up Twin Peaks on snowshoes encompasses all of these elements.

It's one of those jaunts that is great on a day when you want

a little exercise outdoors, but don't have a ton of time. Of course the snow conditions always play a role in how long an excursion will take.



Hiking Twin Peaks in South Lake Tahoe is worth the views.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

But it's also one of those sojourns when on a warm day it's worth lingering a bit. The views are some of the best for so little effort. The top is an ideal lunch spot and place to sit with a book or just meditate a while, remembering why Lake Tahoe is so special.

Starting off from the Echo View Estates neighborhood off Sawmill Road in South Lake Tahoe, we follow the well-established trail.

Beneath us the snow is firm. It's nice to have the claws on the shoes so we don't slip. Although the route is not extremely steep, it is definitely uphill without any plateaus to change the pitch.

Crossing the terrain filled with conifers and boulders, we come to what is a fun 4-wheel drive road in the summer. Being a road, it's wide enough to walk side-by-side.

Fully exposed, we welcome the sun on this chilly late

afternoon January day. Turning around, the views of the Sierra unfold. The ridges look uninviting in some ways. Maybe it's just me imagining how much more work they are to climb than this little hill that's practically in my back yard.

In the summer we hit both peaks – it is called Twin Peaks, after all. On the other side is the tower with the warning light for aircraft. From there, is a view to Lake Tahoe Airport, Lake Tahoe Golf Course and Meyers. But it takes a bit of bushwhacking through the Manzanita in summer. That prospect sounds horrible on snowshoes; plus, not enough daylight exists to tempt it this day even if we wanted to.

Instead, we saunter up by the massive granite boulders to take in views of Lake Tahoe to our right. Angora Ridge with her barren trees from the 2007 fire by the same name is stark against the brilliant white snow. Mount Tallac hovers beyond.

It's been awhile since I've been up here. I had forgotten the majestic views it offers. It won't be long between this visit and my next one.

Getting there:

From the Y in South Lake Tahoe, continue on Lake Tahoe Boulevard. Turn left on Sawmill Road. Park immediately in the lot to the left.

Yes, I start off a neighborhood street, but I'm not going to be responsible for cluttering up a residential neighborhood. And this way, you get even more exercise.

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Hight brings home bronze in X Games halfpipe

By Lindsey Sine, U.S. Snowboarding

ASPEN -- Kelly Clark of Mt. Snow, Vt., opened up a new chapter for women's snowboarding Saturday night, stomping out a huge 1080 to become the first woman to land the maneuver in a competition, and earning her the gold in the Winter X Games halfpipe.

"It's been an incredible night. To have a victory lap like that and an opportunity to try a trick I've been working on for a long time and to set it down here at the X Games, it's a great night," Clark said.

Clark was joined on the podium -- as well as in a celebratory ground tackle after her historic run -- by Kaitlyn Farrington of Sun Valley, Idaho, with the silver and Elena Hight of South Lake Tahoe who took bronze.

Clark, who hasn't won an X Games gold since 2006, set the tone for the night, landing a solid run one to put her in a first place position that she would carry the remainder of the competition. But everyone in the crowd was waiting for something other than a win -- her much anticipated 1080 that she had landed in practice earlier in the week.

After an unsuccessful try in run two, she dropped into a victory lap for run three, and on her third hit she aired out a moment that will go down in the history books of her sport's progression.

"I've been working on it for a long time and it's just amazing to be part of a sport that's progressing, and to do that [1080]. I hope it does a lot for women's snowboarding," Clark said.

After beating Olympic gold medalist Torah Bright at the European X Games last March, Farrington has been on fire winning her way to the tops of Dew Tour and Grand Prix podiums. And so it was only fitting that the Sun Valley native make her way onto her first X Games podium in Aspen with a silver finish.

Following a tough spill in the pre-competition practice Saturday night, Hight managed to pick herself up, wrap the elbow that was giving her trouble and put down a solid run for the second X Games bronze medal of her career.

“I always come out to here to have fun and it’s just good to do this in front of this crowd,” said Hight.

Official results, 2011 Winter X Games, Aspen, Jan. 29, 2011

1. Kelly Clark, Mt. Snow, VT, 92.33
2. Kaitlyn Farrington, Sun Valley, ID, 85.66
3. Elena Hight, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 80.00
-
6. Gretchen Bleiler, Aspen, CO, 27.66

Holland takes bronze in X Games snowboardcross

By Lindsey Sine, U.S. Snowboarding

ASPEN -- Nick Baumgartner of Iron River, Mich., held nothing back Saturday as he put the pain of a broken collar bone on the back burner to take his first Winter X Games gold medal.

Reigning X Games snowboardcross champ Nate Holland's of Squaw Valley five-year winning streak came to an end as he finished in third to take bronze.

Baumgartner was a powerhouse in each of his heats throughout the day. In spite of his injury, he was still able to manage fast pull starts and keep his lead out on the course.

"Fifteen screws and a plate, but nothing was holding me back today," Baumgartner said.

The day was a special one for Baumgartner, whose son Landon made it out to watch his dad compete in person for the first time. According to Baumgartner, that was a huge motivation for him throughout the day.

"Knowing that my boy was at the bottom was so phenomenal," Baumgartner said as he held Landon in celebration of his victory. "It got me down here every time just coming around the corner knowing that he would be watching. To win is unreal. I am so happy to do this in front of my boy."

Holland's reign as the master of the SBX course would come to an end at some point, and that was today for the two-time Olympian who held an X Games record for the most consecutive wins in any sport winning his fifth X Games gold medal in 2010. This year, he'll be adding bronze to the collection and says he is just fine with that.

"It is kind of bittersweet, but I can't complain." Holland said. "I had an amazing streak there – five-in-a-row – and I am on the podium today. I gave it my all and that is all I can ask of myself."

Holland's day started out in classic form for the X champ as he took the first spot in heat one. But out of the gate in heat two, he sat in fourth position the entire run before a wobble threw third-place Graham Watanabe of Sun Valley, Idaho, off course and allowed Holland to move to the big final.

In that final heat, Holland sat in fifth about half way through the course before throwing it into another gear and making up two spots for the third-place finish.

Following Holland in fourth was two-time Olympic champ Seth Wescott of Sugarloaf, Maine, and completing the stack of U.S. men in the big final was Jonathan Cheever of Saugus, Mass. According to Wescott, his plans to take in a first X Games gold medal were thrown off by a board switch-up.

"We tried running a new board for the last run and it just did not move. It was an all or nothing choice, and it ended up being nothing. I couldn't even pull up on them in the draft," Wescott said. "It's time to ride powder and just enjoy snowboarding because it's fun."

Official results, 2011 Winter X Games, Aspen, Jan. 29, 2011

1. Nick Baumgartner, Iron River, MI
2. Kevin Hill, Canada
3. Nate Holland, Squaw Valley, CA
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4. Seth Wescott, Sugarloaf, ME
5. Jonathan Cheever, Saugus, MA
8. Graham Watanabe, Sun Valley, ID
10. Shaun Palmer, South Lake Tahoe, CA
11. Ross Powers, Stratton Mountain, VT
15. Jayson Hale, Sierraville, CA
17. Alex Deibold, Manchester Center, VT

Bahrke earns first World Cup podium

By Freddy Perryman, U.S. Ski Team

CALGARY, Alberta -- Olympian Scotty Bahrke of Squaw Valley earned his first World Cup podium Saturday, finishing third. His career best finish came on the eve of the World Championships in Deer Valley Resort.

After finishing on the bubble in qualifying, Bahrke competed in Saturday's finals throwing first a full double full-full, which he followed up with a stellar double full full-full.

"It's pretty wild, standing up there," exclaimed Bahrke. "I don't know if it's really quite hit me yet. I'm really excited."

"He has made a lot of impressive changes to his jumping and his takeoff over the summer," said Freestyle Aerials Head Coach Todd Ossian. "It's nice that all that hard work can pay off."

For the World Championships, Bahrke intends to keep his aerial assault plan the same with the two different quad twisting doubles.

"I want to keep the same mindset," said Bahrke. "I was really happy with landing the two jumps."

Bahrke was the only U.S. male to make the finals in Calgary. Just missing this 10 person final were Americans Dylan Ferguson of Amesbury, Mass., in 11th and Ryan St. Onge of Winter Park, Colo, 12th.

Following her top qualification for Saturday's finals, the two-time Olympian Emily Cook of Belmont, Mass., had a tough final. She finished sixth after two sketchy landings. Despite not getting the result she was hoping for, Cook had an excellent week in training and qualification. She was the only American woman who qualified for the finals.

Official results, FIS Freestyle World Cup, Calgary, Jan. 29, 2011, Aerials

Men

1. Warren Shouldice, Canada, 244.90
2. Renato Ulrich, Switzerland, 243.01
3. Scotty Bahrke, Squaw Valley, CA, 229.57
-
11. Dylan Ferguson, Amesbury, MA
12. Ryan St. Onge, Winter Park, CO
21. Matthew DePeters, Hamburg, NY

Women

1. Shuang Cheng, China, 187.23
 2. Mengtao Xu, China, 186.65
 3. Olga Volkova, Ukraine, 175.40
 -
 6. Emily Cook, Belmont, MA, 127.95
-

Anderson 7th in X Games snowboardcross

By Lindsey Sine, U.S. Snowboarding

ASPEN, CO – Lindsey Jacobellis of Stratton Mountain, Vt., nailed her fourth gold in a row Saturday, making her the first woman to four-peat in X Games history. Callan Chythlook-Sifsof of Girdwood, Alaska, finished right behind her teammate to take the silver in snowboardcross.

"This is my second go at a four-peat and it feels good to finally get it," Jacobellis said. "I was just trying to get out in front and stay out of traffic so that I could pick whatever line I wanted."

Jacobellis was a standout through all her heats, but in the final she laid on the pedal to push herself well ahead of the pack of female riders behind

her and stayed there till she crossed the finish line. Jacobellis credits her aggressive riding style to the fact that she's always keeping up with the guys.

"I grew up riding with my brother and he never let me go the easy way out. Now I'm chasing the rest of the guys on the team," Jacobellis said. "They give me all the confidence I need. It helps a lot when you have something that helps you like that."

Another thing Jacobellis felt giving her the edge on the competition Saturday was a summer full of change for the Olympic silver medalist.

"I didn't snowboard more than two days this summer in Mt. Hood. I was surfing, biking and working out here and there. I loved it. I came back in the fall and I have never had so much

fun,” Jacobellis said.

Right behind Jacobellis was her teammate Chythlook-Sifsof, who said she was happy to be able to medal in the event, let alone come in right behind Jacobellis.

Just like their male teammates, Jacobellis and Chythlook-Sifsof are now moving along to the Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix at Park City’s Canyons Resort Feb. 11-12.

Official results, 2011 Winter X Games, Aspen, Jan. 29, 2011, Women’s SBX

1. Lindsey Jacobellis, Stratton Mountain, VT
2. Callan Chythlook-Sifsof, Girdwood, AK
3. Deborah Anthonioz, France
4. Emilie Aubry, Switzerland
5. Alexandra Jekova, Bulgaria
-
7. Joanie Anderson, South Lake Tahoe, CA
9. Faye Gulini, Salt Lake City

Fundraiser for LTCC Theater Department

The Lake Tahoe Community College Theatre Arts Department is offering up a romantic cabaret Feb. 11 with “Loving You: A Musical Valentine.”

The musical cabaret will feature songs of love from Sinatra to Sondheim sung and danced by some of Lake Tahoe's most talented performers. A variety of desserts will be served beginning at 7:15pm. Entertainment will begin at 8pm.

This is a fundraiser for the upcoming Theatre Department production of "Chicago." Tickets are \$20 and include a dessert buffet. Tickets will be available for advance sale from the Theatre Department and performers, as well as at the door.

Decision on closing state parks expected in mid-February

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

After spending a century building the nation's largest and most majestic state park system, Californians are poised to do something unprecedented: Retreat from that legacy and start closing parks.

Years of budget cuts in the California State Parks system have resulted in widespread reductions in park hours, crumbling facilities and reduced staffing. But in the past few years, lawmakers have rejected widespread closures proposed by former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Now, however, the climate has changed. Gov. Jerry Brown's budget requires another \$22 million in cuts to the parks budget – a pittance compared with the \$25 billion state budget deficit, but a number that even strong parks supporters say is unlikely to be achieved without shuttering parks.

Brown also wants cuts of \$30 million to local libraries and \$32 million to local fairs.

Read the whole story

Founder of Jimboy's Tacos dies; sold sauce out of trailer in Tahoe

By Bob Shallit, Sacramento Bee

James Knudson, known to many as "Jimboy" because of the famous taco chain he founded, died Wednesday at the age of 95.

He remained active until being diagnosed with cancer a week ago and had "a mercifully quick end to what was quite a life," said Tom Boalt, general manager of Jimboy's Tacos and a longtime friend.

Mr. Knudson was born in Alberta, Canada, and grew up amid hardship in Minnesota. His father died when he was 2, leaving behind a wife and six children.

"They were literally the poorest people in their town," living in a barn, said Karen Freeman, Mr. Knudson's daughter and president of Jimboy's Tacos.

A tough childhood infused her father with a powerful will to succeed, she said.

Read the whole story

Pain McShlonkey Classic

March 26 will mark the much-anticipated comeback of The Pain McShlonkey Classic at Squaw Valley. This action packed on and off-mountain event will serve as a hilarious tribute to legendary skier Shane McConkey as pros and amateurs battle for the highly coveted Golden Saucer trophy and bragging rights.

Celebrated for his playful spirit, McConkey was the mastermind behind the original Pain McShlonkey Open that debuted in 2003. What began as a behind-the-scenes late-night race between competitors at the 1998 Winter X Games has evolved into a beloved event, attracting athletes from around the world.

Although the event was dubbed after one of McConkey's funny alter egos, Pain McShlonkey, there's no questioning McConkey's true character.

Festivities begin at 8am with the Extreme Small Mountain Snowlerblade Invitational where a select group of 30 pros will negotiate Squaw Valley's K2 on snow blades. Cheer on pros like Daron Rahlves, JT Holmes, Scott and Robb Gaffney and Jeremy Jones as they jockey for the podium.

At 1:30pm the pros will take on 30 amateurs during an anything-go Snowlerblade Chinese Downhill. The 30 amateurs will be selected via an online contest and lottery process. If selected, the registration fee is \$1.

The day will end with a rockin' after party at Squaw Valley's newly remodeled Bar One starting at 5pm. Tickets are \$25 and guests must be 21 or older to attend. Valid ID is required. Proceeds will benefit Protect Our Winters and the Shane McConkey Foundation.

Spectators are encouraged to dress up and celebrate the spirit of McConkey.

The Shane McConkey website has event details.