Kingsbury Grade gardens to be featured

Lake Tahoe Historical Society is looking for gardens to feature in its bi-annual garden tour in July 2015.

The South Lake Tahoe group has several gardens on Kingsbury Grade.

If you know of a garden on or near the Kingsbury Grade area that should be considered for next year's tour, call Catherine Whelan at 530.544.3259.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Bruno

Bruno is a classic American bulldog – stocky and strong-looking.

He weighs about 80 pounds, but since he's only 10 months old, he will probably put on another 20 pounds. He is a friendly, social and active dog who will do best in a family where he receives a high level of attention.

American bulldogs bond strongly with their owners. Bruno will do well with good training, exercise, and socialization.

Bruno is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm and vaccinated. He 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.

Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

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

Bike Coalition angry with Measure R spending

By Kathryn Reed

Money for bike trails or their maintenance was reduced by $10,000 on Friday by the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority board.

The money is going to the Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District. Two of the three JPA board members are also on the TPRID board – El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago and Judy Clot. South Lake Tahoe City Councilwoman JoAnn Conner is the third JPA member.

At the annual financial meeting of the JPA board on July 25 there was an agenda item to up the TPRID allotment to $60,000 this year, a $10,000 increase. At the January board meeting TPRID will be tasked with bringing a proposal as to why it should receive even more money from Measure R funds beyond the stipulated $50,000 and this additional $10,000.

Voters in 2011 approved Measure R to replace Measure S, which was passed in 2000. South Shore residents on the California side pay $18 per year in property taxes for the measure. It sunsets in 2030.



Measure R allows old bike trails to be overhauled,

like this one in South Lake
Tahoe. Photo/Provided

Measure R loosened how money could be spent.

The key changes from S to R included giving ball fields $500,000 upfront. This is because the number of fields that Measure S was to build was never going to happen. The new wording allowed improvement to existing fields. It also allowed existing bike trails to be rehabbed. Bike trails would get more money after the fields got theirs, including any excess that would arrive via increased property taxes and/or bond refinancing. It was a gamble the bike community was willing to take – that there would be sufficient money.

The resolution says, "If funds remain after all of the above authorized and necessary funding has been provided for renovation of separated bicycle trails as provided in Facilities paragraph #5 and all of the above authorized and necessary funding has been provided for maintenance of bicycle trails as provided in Services paragraphs #3 and #4, such funds may be used, with the concurrence of the Bicycle Advisory Committee, for other bicycle related facilities, services, and/or programs within the CFD that promote and/or enhance bicycling within the CFD."

Here is a copy of the resolution.

It does not say Tahoe Paradise or any other entity can tap into the funds.

Chuck Nelson, president of Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition, read a letter to the JPA board last week admonishing it for taking money from the bike community, especially without consulting the Bicycle Advisory Committee. The committee makes recommendations to the JPA board about how Measure R bike money should be spent.

John Upton, the lone staff member for the JPA, agreed the

committee should have been consulted and said it would be going forward.

However, he and the three board members – especially Santiago and Conner – got into a debate with Nelson about what Measure R really says. Santiago and Conner were adamant that they could spend "extra" money however they want.

"Why does there need to be constant argument that the bike community is being cheated?" Conner said in a heated voice. "I really wish we could look at the bigger picture. I'd like to see an attitude of cooperation rather than argumentative."

Upton, Santiago and Nelson were on Santiago's one-time KTHO-AM 590 radio show prior to the 2011 vote. During the more than 20-minute show the three discussed where "extra" money goes. Bikes was the answer – at least at that time.

Despite the tiff over where money should be going, there are several bike projects in the works.

Shay Navarro, who is on the Bicycle Advisory Committee of the JPA, gave an overview of the work being done throughout South Lake Tahoe. This includes work behind McDonald's at the Y, the trail behind Motel 6-Meeks, and near Harrison Avenue. Replacing the Trout Creek and Upper Truckee River bridges are also part of these projects.

All of the work should be done by the end of August.

If the work comes in under budget, the JPA board voted to spend $10,000 on a pilot snow removal program the bike committee wants to embark on. The committee plans to ask South Lake Tahoe for matching funds, of which Conner said should not be a problem to secure.

Santiago said the county is finalizing a contract to have snow removed on the Pat Lowe bike trail in Meyers.

She added that county staff is looking at a way to connect the

Pat Lowe trail to the corner of Pioneer Trail and Highway 50. There is about a 200-foot gap that needs to be filled. This would be across California Tahoe Conservancy land, which Santiago said would not be a problem. (She sits on that board.)

“Caltrans is saying (they) don’t want you to do it because then (they) would have to put in a crosswalk,” Santiago said. “I say screw them. We have a connectivity issue.”

Caltrans this summer is slated to put in a crosswalk that goes north-south across Highway 50 at that intersection. Extending the bike trail would require one going east-west on Pioneer.

Santiago said the Sawmill Road bike trail and Lake Tahoe Boulevard enhancement projects should be done by the end of the grading season.

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Notes:

The JPA board will continue its July 25 meeting to Aug. 1 at 9am in the downstairs conference room at Lake Tahoe Airport to discuss the annual audit.

Opinion: Bottled water makes less sense in a drought

By Michael Hiltzik, Los Angeles Times

As California’s drought really starts to bite — the mandatory water use restrictions approved by the state last week are just the beginning — questions are bound to be raised about the indescribably wasteful use of water to retail bottlers.

The sale of bottled water to most Americans, who have access to cheap and safe tap water from municipal systems, is a marketing scam, and environmentally devastating besides. As Peter H. Gleick of the Oakland-based Pacific Institute showed in 2007, it took the equivalent of 17 million barrels of oil to produce the plastic bottles for American buyers in 2006. That would be enough to fuel 1 million American cars and light trucks for a year.

“Bottled water requires energy throughout its life cycle,” Gleick has written. “Energy is required to capture, treat, and send water to the bottling plant; fill, package, transport, and cool the bottled water; and recycle or dispose of the empty containers.”

Consider the unnecessary energy usage in shipping, say, Fiji Water to these shores from a Pacific island dictatorship 5,000 miles away, all to satisfy the marketing thirst of the product’s distributors, Lynda and Stewart Resnick of Beverly Hills. And while you’re cradling that shiny square bottle in your hands, keep in mind that 30 percent of Fiji’s 800,000 residents don’t have access to clean drinking water themselves.

Read the whole story

Technology taking a toll on cyclists

By Ian Austen, New York Times

PÉRIGUEUX, France – In terms of technology, Greg LeMond, the three-time Tour de France winner, was a pioneer. In an age

when steel still dominated, LeMond rode bikes made of carbon-fiber composites, then an exotic material mostly used by the military.

At this year's Tour, carbon fiber is the only material used for bikes, and it has also replaced aluminum in wheel rims. The strength, lightness and the design flexibility offered by carbon fiber have ensured its dominance. And its most extreme form, the special aerodynamic time-trial bicycle, was on display Saturday in the 20th stage.

But there has been a catch. Unlike steel or aluminum, carbon fiber does not bend in crashes. Rather the bikes and wheels frequently shatter, often hurling riders to the road and, many fear, increasing the severity of injuries.

"Anyone in a team who's being honest with you will tell you how frequently their bikes are breaking; everybody knows," said Mark Greve, a physician and assistant professor of sports medicine at Brown University who studied injuries to 3,500 competitive cyclists. "Few people in the public appreciate how many bikes a pro team will go through in a season, because they break for one reason or another. The bikes, they completely explode."

Having conquered professionals, who ride frames that retail in the United States for $5,000 to $6,000 with forks, carbon fiber is making its way to increasingly affordable models available to the more casual riders.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• The annual Gatsby Festival returns to the Tahoe Tallac Site on Aug. 9-10. The event is free from 10am-4pm. For more info, call 530.544.7383.
• The North Lake Tahoe Wedding Faire at Squaw Valley is Aug. 24 from 11am-3pm.

• Bodie State Historic Park's annual Friends of Bodie Day is Aug. 9.

• This video is from the state Water Board about lawn care.

• Here are the El Dorado-Tahoe and Sierra roadwork schedules from Caltrans for this week.

Sand Fire animal rescue coordination lacking



El Dorado County Fairgrounds has plenty of room to take more horses from the Sand

Fire. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed and Susan Wood

PLACERVILLE – Lack of communication is affecting people who have horses in the Sand Fire area.

The CalFire recording says the El Dorado County Fairgrounds is not accepting horses and that instead they will be taken to Rancho Murieta, but that is not the reality.

Twenty-eight horses were at the fairgrounds as of Sunday afternoon. There are eight more stalls to accommodate at least 20 more horses and a 2-acre pasture nearby. Lead volunteer coordinator of the effort, Kevin Banks, told *Lake Tahoe News* with what's been lined up in El Dorado County, about 60 to 100 more animals can be taken in.

He was busy working the phone near the arena of the fairgrounds on July 27 securing spots and trying to find out why El Dorado County Animal Services wants animals to go farther than they have to.

Banks showed up at the fairgrounds on Saturday to do what he could. He said there is no official plan in place that he is aware of for people to deal with animal evacuations in a case like this.

The fire started July 25 when a vehicle drove onto dry vegetation. The blaze has burned 3,800 acres and is 50 percent containment, with 10 houses and seven outbuildings lost. Evacuations and road closures are still in place.



Rita Uhren and Chris Navratil clean stalls at the fairgrounds where they are caring for evacuated horses.

It is burning in the wine regions of El Dorado and Amador counties. Unlike Saturday, the smoke on Sunday afternoon was not visible nor could one smell it in the American River canyon.

One inmate firefighter was hurt.

Small animals – like domestic pets, goats and sheep – are being housed at Ponderosa High School in Shingle Springs.

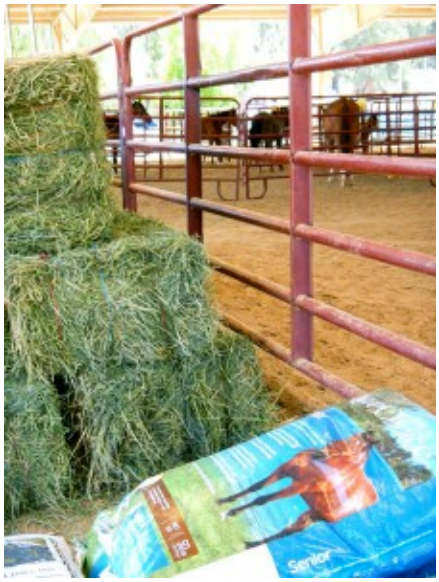
The fairgrounds has the horses.

Helping Banks on Sunday with the horses were Rita Uhren, Jamie Buetler and Chris Navratil. Navratil works for Nickers Horse Sitting. They are coordinating efforts, secure boarding, cleaning stalls, feeding animals and making sure horses have water.

One stud was a bit restless and had to have his pen reinforced so he wouldn't get out.

"My horse was evacuated during the Santa Cruz fire, and I just thought that I should help out here while their houses are being threatened. These are beautiful animals," Uhren told *Lake Tahoe News*.

A couple of the horses are unidentified because they got loose and it wasn't their owner who brought them to safety.



Donations of feed for horses is needed.

Lee's Feed & Western Store in Shingle Springs has been the primary store to donate supplies – mostly hay and other food. The store is also accepting donations that will be passed along to those caring for animals rescued from the Sand Fire.

Banks and Buetler didn't give much credit to the coordinating agencies. They said county Animal Control, which *Lake Tahoe News* is trying to reach, and South County Large Animal Rescue have provided misinformation on space and are sending people down to a Sacramento-area facility.

SCLAR, which is based in Somerset, does not self-deploy, but instead has to be requested by Animal Services.

SCLAR told *Lake Tahoe News* animals are usually taken to a predetermined location, and that is usually Rancho Murieta, though some will go to the fairgrounds or a ranch that an owner requests.

Aimee Vukovich, director of SCLAR, said horses, pigs and goats have been picked up from the Sand Fire.

“We provide transportation for animals that are in danger where people evacuate and whatever reason they can’t get them out,” Vukovich told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We try not to leave anything behind.”

She did not have a count on the number of animals they have retrieved.

Concert to bring world sounds to the stage

Acclaimed performers from Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, Bay Area and Tahoe-Reno region will perform as the sun goes down during Trails and Vistas World Concert at Sand Harbor on Sept. 6.

Performers include SambaDá, Scarlet Rivera, flutist Ann Licater, 30-piece San Jose State University Symphony Orchestra, Emily Tessmer and Kurt Beckering.

The evening will also include InnerRhythms Dance Theatre and aerialists from Tahoe FLOW Arts Studio. Artist Susie Alexander will be doing several performance paintings inspired by the evening’s music.

World Concert is a fundraiser for Trails & Vistas, a Truckee nonprofit organization that produces creative art experiences in nature. This year Trails & Vistas will present art hikes at Spooner Lake on Sept. 6-7 as well as Art in Nature field trips for more than 300 third-grade students.

World Concert tickets start at $23. They are available through the Shakespeare Festival Box Office (948 Incline Way in Incline Village, or call 800. 747.4697 or go online. The concert is at 6:30pm, gates open at 5:30pm.

Nev. casino revenue hits $11.2 bil. for fiscal year

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – Nevada casinos reported revenues of $11.2 billion last fiscal year, up 2.9 percent from the prior year.

The increase was due mainly to baccarat. Casinos won $1.6 billion on baccarat games, a jump of 18.3 percent compared to the prior fiscal year and an all-time high.

“Baccarat is driving the bus,” said Michael Lawton, senior research analyst for the state Gaming Control Board, which released figures July 25 for the 12-month period that ended June 30.

Read the whole story

Family refuses to give up search for son

By Juniper Rose, Sacramento Bee

The missing-person fliers for Vernon “Cody” Matthews hang at trailheads, campgrounds and businesses from Placerville to Tahoe.

It has been six weeks since the 23-year-old UC Berkeley senior

disappeared after telling his parents he was going for a day hike. Matthews' family members say they're not giving up the search and will add to the 600 fliers that already have been posted throughout El Dorado County and along the Highway 50 corridor.

"Because there is no evidence that he is dead, we are choosing to believe that he is still alive," said Matthews' father, Vern Matthews.

Vern and and his wife, Cyndi Matthews, lived in Southern California before their son's disappearance from the family cabin in rural El Dorado County. Cyndi Matthews has since taken early retirement, and the couple have moved to the cabin so they can search full time.

Read the whole story