Free shuttle makes Apple Hill easy to visit

El Dorado Transit will once again operate the free Apple Hill Shuttle, every Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 5pm, Oct. 3-25.

For the second consecutive year, shuttle parking will be available at a second parking lot in Camino. Free shuttle parking will be offered at Schnell School in Placerville and the U.S. Forest Services Placerville Ranger Station, just off Highway 50, on Eight Mile Road in Camino.

The Apple Hill Shuttle is the ideal way to visit some of El Dorado Countyâ€™s most popular orchards, ranches, wineries and family attractions, during the peak of the harvest season, without the headaches of traffic and parking. Visitors get on and off the shuttles as many times as they like at any of 29 designated shuttle stops throughout Apple Hill.

El Dorado Transit will operate five buses and a trolley on a continuous loop, every 15-20 minutes from two satellite parking lots just off Highway 50 in Placerville and Camino. Schnell School is located at 2871 Schnell School Road, 0.1 miles north of Highway 50. The Placerville Ranger Station is located just south of Highay 50 in Camino at 4260 Eight Mile Road.

For more information on the Apple Hill shuttle, call (530) 642.5383 or go to www.eldoradotransit.com.

SLT postal workers rewarded



Employees at the main branch of the SLT post office.

By Kathryn Reed

An injury rate of 76 percent below the average for post offices is one reason the employees of the main office in South Lake Tahoe were honored by the Occupational Safety and Heath Administration.

A slew of dignitaries expressed their appreciation for the hard work of the staff at the Al Tahoe Boulevard facility. About 20 of them were on hand for the festivities Tuesday morning.

Ken Nishiyama Atha, regional administrator with OSHA, said the Voluntary Protection Program that this office is part of helps keep workersâ€™ compensation and medical costs down.

VPP is a combined effort of management and employees to make a safe work environment.

As SLT City Manager Dave Jinkens pointed out, safety is not something management can dictate â€“ it takes cooperation.

Greg Seely, VPP coordinator of the Western area of the US

Postal Service, said the South Tahoe office is in rare company. Fewer than 100 workplaces are at a five star level like the Tahoe post office.

OSHA has had the Voluntary Protection Program since 1982, with the USPS being part of it the last five years.

Boys & Girls Club Golf Tournament

The Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe Golf Tournament is Oct. 12 at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, Stateline.

Every dime of every $195 entry fee goes directly to the Boys & Girls Club to continue its work with local kids since Edgewood Tahoe has donated the course. The player fee has also been reduced by $55 from 2008.

Lots of prizes are part of the draw, including a one-week trip to Hawaii, $10,000 for a hole-in-one, and a 42-inch Sony flat screen TV. Thereâ€™s more:

* Rounds of golf at Tahoe/Reno areaâ€™s top courses

* A ski trip to Steamboat Springs

* Sports memorabilia

* Golf equipment

* Wines and spirits

* Stays at top area hotels

* Divine 9 Ticket To Paradise (one round of golf at each of

the 9 Carson City/Valley courses)

* Certificates for area restaurants, attractions, activities and merchandise

Along with all the great prizes, raffles and auction items is a round of golf at Edgewood Tahoe, the site of the annual American Century Championship, the celebrity event on NBC Sports. And players have their choice of format, either Best Ball or Scramble, with prizes awarded in both categories. In addition to $10,000 for an ace on all par 3s, thereâ€™s also closest-to-the-pin prizes on each par 3.

All golfers have a shot at the Grand Prize Raffle, a one week stay at a Marriott Vacation Club of their choice, including Maui, Kauai, St. Thomas, valued at $3,500-$4,000; courtesy of Christopher Klesh, a vacation lifestyle consultant who helps travelersâ€™ dreams come true for 10 cents on the dollar. Destination possibilities can be viewed at www.LifetimeLeisure.net.

Golfers also receive a gourmet breakfast buffet and a half dozen Titleist ProV1 balls as tee prizes, a box lunch, beverages on the course and an awards reception with hors dâ€™oeuvres.

Playing spots, hole sponsorships, and hole-in-one promotions are all available by contacting the Boys & Girls Club at (530) 542-0838 or email: khouser@bgclt.org. For a registration form: www.bgclt.org.

Spin a Yarn

Spin a Yarn, the first Saturday of each month from 1-3 pm, South Lake Tahoe Branch Library, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd. Stop by this informal gathering of knitters and crocheters, and get to work on your winter projects! All ages and experience levels are welcome. Help us create hats for the Caps for Kids Dec. 4th due date. Call (530) 573-3185.

5th annual Mutt Strut Poker Run

The Fifth Annual Mutt Strut Poker Run is Oct. 11. With a 1.2 mile walk, building your poker hand along the way, you and your pooch will get a little exercise and maybe make a new friend.

At the party at Timber Cove Marina, enjoy music,raffle drawings, games, and of course the grand prize announcements for the best poker hands. Prizes have been donated by local businesses including restaurants, pet supply stores, spas, and tanning salons. Proceeds benefit ACT’s spay-neuter program and the El Dorado County Animal Shelter.

Registration is 11-11:30 am at Top It! Frozen Yogurt, 3600 Lake Tahoe Blvd., at the Super 8 Motel, near Ski Run Boulevard in South Tahoe.

To keep the event affordable for all, we have lowered our requested donation for the first poker hand to $10, $25 for three hands. This includes snacks, giveaways and one raffle ticket per hand. Call (530) 400-4766 or email

info@tahoeanimals.org for more info.

Animal Coalition of Tahoe is an all-volunteer, nonprofit corporation that sponsors several fundraisers each year to support a spay-neuter program for south Tahoe residents, plus 10 percent of all funds raised are donated to the El Dorado County Animal Shelter.

Meeting next month about prescribed burn in Round Hill

The U.S. Forest ServiceÂ will host a public meeting Oct. 6 to describe upcoming prescribed fire operations in the Round Hill area. The meeting will be at Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District Station 3, 193 Elks Point Drive, Zephyr Cove from 6-7pm.

The Forest Service plans to conduct prescribed fire operations on 79 acres bounded by Highway 50 to the east, Round Hill Pines resort to the north and Elks Point Road to the west and south, including Round Mound. The areas has recently been treated to remove excess fuels and restore forest health. The prescribed fire operation will include pile burning to remove excess woody materials, as well as understory burning – low intensity fire on the forest floor.

The Round Hill prescribed fire operation is expected to last a few days. Because Forest Service crews will not begin prescribed fire operations until conditions are right, it is difficult to provide much advance notice. The Forest Service does maintain a notification list. To be added to this list or hear updates on prescribed fire plans, call (530) 543.2600.

Elks back out of American Legion deal



By Kathryn Reed

Because the top brass of Elks nixed the local branchâ€™s desire to be housed in the same location of the American Legion, itâ€™s back to square one.

The American Legion building across from Meekâ€™s Lumber in South Tahoe is more than 60 years old. The Elksâ€™ building was razed a year ago after the California Tahoe Conservancy bought the land.

American Legion Post 795 was given the land by Stella Van Dyke Johnson, one of the early settlers of Tahoe and whose descendants are still in the area.

Both nonprofits wanted to erect a building that could seat 200 people to be used for community events, wedding receptions and other activities.

Now the American Legion hopes to build a hall behind the current structure. Architects are working on the plans. Itâ€™s likely to cost about $120,000 and the Legion has $40,000 in the building fund.

Once the hall is erected, renovating the current structure will be next on the to-do list.

Currently, the American Legion hosts an open mic night on Mondays. Bands play periodically. The parking lot is used June-October each Tuesday for the farmers market. Crafts fairs are a regular in the lot, too.

The Legion hopes the current recruiting drive will keep the local chapter viable for years to come. It has 120 members. The veterans group does not want the local chapter to be disbanded like the Veterans of Foreign Wars was. That occurred earlier this year because membership had dwindled so significantly.

Legion Cmdr. Blair Clark said one issue with his group is the aging membership. Many are from the World War II generation, some from Korea, a few Vietnam and a recent vet from the Iraq conflict.

Not all veterans qualify for American Legion membership. A service member â€“ current or honorably discharged â€“ needs to have served during a time of conflict.

The American Legion was formed by Congress in 1919, a year after World War I ended. Worldwide there are 3 million men and women in the Legion.

The Legion also has the Auxiliary, which is mostly female spouses of members, and the Sons of the American Legion.

Someone is onsite at the Highway 50 facility starting at 4pm Thursday-Sunday to answer questions about joining the Legion or using the facility. For more information, call (530) 541.8788.

Record highs 2 days ago, record lows coming



Richard Durr of Alpine Chimney Sweep gets a fireplace ready to go in anticipation of winter temps arriving this week.

By Kathryn Reed

Bundle up because Mother Nature is turning the sweat beads of last weekend into icicles.

Record highs dropped throughout the region on Saturday and Sunday. Record lows could be broken later this week.

A cold front is moving into the Lake Tahoe region today. A wind advisory is in effect on the lake until 8 tonight.

â€œIt could be hazardous driving in the higher elevations,â€ meteorologist Brian Oâ€™Hara with the National Weather Service in Reno said of the north, northwest winds.

A dusting of snow is expected in the 8,000 to 9,000 foot

levels.

â€œWe may see some flurries at lake level, but nothing sticking because the ground is pretty warm,â€ Oâ€™Hara said.

Warm is an understatement after a weekend of hot.

South Lake Tahoe broke records on Saturday and Sunday that had been set in 2003. Saturdayâ€™s high of 85 was 3 degrees above the old record, while Sunday's high of 85 was 4 degrees above the previous record.

Other record highs from Saturday:

Markleeville â€“ high 90, had been 89 set in 2003;

Truckee â€“ high 86, tied with 1999;

Reno â€“ high 93, had been 91 set in 1963;

Virginia City â€“ high 85, had been 83 set in 1999.

Record highs from Sunday:

Markleeville â€“ high of 91, had been 87 set in 1933;

Reno â€“ high of 93, had been 92 set in 2003;

Virginia City â€“ 83, had been 82 set in 2003.

Record low temps could be broken in Truckee and South Lake Tahoe this week. Oâ€™Hara says Friday morning is the best bet to do so. On Oct. 2, 1950, Truckee hit a low of 20 degrees. On that same day in 1977, South Lake Tahoe recorded a low of 24 degrees.

The forecast is for the mercury to be darn close to those below freezing temps for the next few mornings.

Oâ€™Hara said by the weekend the weather should be close to normal â€“ highs in the 60s around the lake.

The weather guy said this hot to frigid weather is all because a strong high pressure system had been sitting over the area for a while and now the cold front is blowing in.

Scholarship opportunities for students, women

Application forms are available for the Womens' Opportunity Award Scholarship and the Violet Richardson Award Scholarship, which are sponsored by Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe and Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra.

The Violet Richardson Award, which is a monetary award, is open to young women 14-17 years of age. Applications may be picked up at Whittell High School, South Tahoe High School, El Dorado County Library, Douglas County Library and online at www.sitahoesierra.org or www.sislt.org . This application is due Dec. 1.

The Women's Opportunity Award Scholarship is a monetary award open to women who are heads of household and are returning to the workplace or school and need financial assistance. This application can be picked up at Lake Tahoe Community College, both Douglas and El Dorado County libraries or online and is due Dec. 9.

For any further details, please call (530) 318.5356.

Celebrating First Amendment



Kim Wyatt, publisher of Bona Fide Books in Meyers, sends a reminder that this is Banned Books Week.

The American Library Association provides a list of banned and challenged books. (http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/banned/frequentlychallenged/challengedclassics/index.cfm)

Wyatt says, “Celebrate the First Amendment and our freedom to read by picking up a banned book.”