Stateline bike path opens up another world



Users of all ages enjoy the trail at Rabe Meadow. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – It's being called a game changer. And it just might challenge the Camp Richardson trail as the go-to path for pedestrians and cyclists on the South Shore.

The 2.2-mile section of the Stateline-to-Stateline bike path that goes from Rabe Meadow to Round Hill Pines beach officially opened this week.

One day this path will link the actual state line on the South Shore to the state line on the North Shore.

Not one tree had to be removed on the Rabe Meadow section. The

route meanders through a large tract of U.S. Forest Service land. For the most part it follows trails that already existed. The difference now is there is pavement.

But there are still trails that are dirt, so it has not ruined what has always been a popular access point to Nevada Beach. It has opened up the area to other types of users and now goes farther.

Curves in the trail make it more interesting than if it were a linear path.

By the end of the month signs are expected to be in. Some are directional signs, others will be interpretive. A larger sign will be at Rabe Meadow showing the trail and the distances to different points of interest.

Without signs, as was the case last weekend, one can get slightly off course. Once at Elks Point Road there is a sign toward Nevada Beach – the correct route. Going right leads to the commercial area. (Don't stop in at the Wyndham resort, they don't know anything about the trail – even though it's been talked about for years, written about a ton and the first phase completed a year ago.)

The point to cross the road is slightly down toward Nevada Beach. Once across the street it's a clear shot to Round Hill Pines.

For those who are adverse to hills, just keep looking at the scenery. This new section of trail swerves around Round Hill. The climb isn't so noticeable until it's time to descend to Round Hill beach.

Along the way are benches that offer views and a chance to rest if need be.

Added late was the trail to that beach. It was going to drop people onto the road. This addition, which is to the right and

above where vehicles drive, is a pleasant, safe way to get to the sand.

(Any day the U.S. Forest Service will release who will be running the concession at Round Hill Pines. Local USFS officials are citing the National Defense Authorization Act of 1997 as to why they can't ever release the names of the people/businesses that bid on the proposal except for the winner.)

A short spur leads to Highway 50 just west of the Bourne Meadow.

This bike path is a collaborative project spearheaded by the Tahoe Transportation District.

A cost savings on the project of $800,000 will allow for Laura Drive behind Lakeside Inn casino to be worked on next summer. Still to be determined is if it will be a separated bikeway or a bike lane.

"Concurrently, we are working with Edgewood on the right-of-way to do final design of the section of (Highway) 50 in front Edgewood and Lake Parkway," Alfred Knotts, planner with TTD, told *Lake Tahoe News*. Building it is a few years out.

(One day the Greenway Bike Path in California will be built and connect with what will be the true starting point of the Stateline-to-Stateline trail.)

Construction on the Incline to Sand Harbor section of the Stateline-to-Stateline trail, which is just more than 3 miles, is expected to start in 2015. It's in the environmental phase. Lakeside and mountainside routes are being studied. It goes mostly through Nevada State Parks and Nevada Department of Transportation rights-of-way.

"There is no fatal flaw with either one. It depends on how the document shakes out and the public comments we get," Knotts

said.

A feasibility study was done that came up with three possible routes for the path from Round Hill to Sand Harbor. No money is in the coffers right now to continue with designing that main link. But planners are looking at options.

Douglas County will be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the trail on the South Shore.

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, go east on Highway 50. Turn left on Kahle Drive in Stateline. Park immediately to the right. Bike trail starts at far end of the lot. At the first Y, stay to the right. At the T, follow the sign toward Nevada Beach. Cross Elks Point Road to continue to Round Hill Pines. Once at Round Hill Pines, cross the road and follow the path toward the beach. At the next intersection, left goes to the beach; right goes to Highway 50 where the trail ends.

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Pumpkins are multi-dimensional gourds

By Mandy Kendall

With All Hallows Eve nearly upon us, I thought I would explore some fun ways to use those ever present pumpkins and take a

look at some alternatives for treats and Jack-o'-lanterns, too.

With the avalanche of corn syrup drenched candy that kids are likely to be presented with on Halloween, how about being a treater with some alternative treats to offer.



Mandy Kendall

Here are a few ideas for healthier snacks for those trick or treaters:

• mini boxes of raisins

• sesame seed bars

• granola bars

• popcorn (uncoated if possible)

• small packs of trail mix

• pretzels (uncoated if possible)

• Clementines with Jack-o'-lantern faces draw on with a Sharpie. These are a fun way of getting kids to look at fruit in a different way.

Once you've made your Jack-o'-lantern what can you do with all that pumpkin flesh?

Pumpkin face mask – Pumpkin is full of vitamin A, vitamin C and zinc is good for sun-damaged, dry or sensitive skin. Take a couple of tablespoons of pureed pumpkin. Add a touch of

honey and a dab of milk, apply to face for fifteen minutes then wash off. You can also use canned pumpkin, just make sure it pure pumpkin and not pie filler!

Pumpkin hair mask – Pumpkin is also a great hair conditioner. Blend 1 cup fresh cooked pumpkin (or canned pumpkin) with four tablespoons of coconut oil in a food mixer. Apply to your hair, cover with a shower cap (or plastic wrap) and leave on for 30 minutes. Then rinse thoroughly. (Courtesy of Organic Authority.)

Alternative uses for pumpkins

Pumpkin bowl: Small sugar pumpkins make great bowls. Just cut off the tops, scoop out the seeds, rub the insides with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Put the lids back on and bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Remove lids, turn pumpkins upside down and bake another 25 minutes. Once they are cool you can use them like a bowl … which is edible.

Table décor: Glue fall flowers-leaves (real or fake) to pumpkins to use as table decorations for your holiday table or as give as gifts.

Plant pot: Use a cleaned out pumpkin as a pot to grow pumpkin seeds in.

Bird feeder: String up carved pumpkins as bird feeders. You could even put the seed and guts for the birds to eat.

Pumpkin potpourri: I thought this was a great idea.

Frosty the pumpkinman: This is my favorite.

Family fun

Pumpkin bowling: Remove the stem from the roundest pumpkin you can find. Set up some kitchen paper towel rolls, or stack up bathroom tissue rolls as bowling pins. It’s all the more fun as it never rolls straight.

Guessing games: Play guess the weight of the pumpkin for prizes.

Mystery bowls: Fill covered bowls with mystery items and have the kids (big kids too!) stick their hands in and try to guess what's in there. You could fill the bowls with peeled hard boiled eggs, cold pasta, chopped up Jell-O, mini marshmallows, and other slimy foods or objects and ask guests to guess what's in there. You could tell them it's "body parts" for extra yuck factor.

Alternative Jack-o'-lantern: These make a great alternative to pumpkin lanterns.

You can use white light electric tea lights or multi color changing tea lights for a more ghoulish effect. (I found some on Amazon just as an example.)

Until next time … Happy Halloween!

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe, which aligns wellness seekers with their ideal wellness provider. If you have questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and well-being topic, drop her an email at connect@healthconnective.com or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.

Letter: Paid parking does not encourage recreation

To the community:

Recreation has been identified as the “new” vision for South Lake Tahoe.

Recreation in Tahoe is not a new idea. For as long as I can remember our marketing slogan was: Tahoe – America’s All Year Playground.

That was until the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority wonks decided to brand South Lake Tahoe “Tahoe South” and put up cartoon drawings on billboards in the Bay Area that invite visitors to “Cross Over to the Wild Side”.

We’d probably be well advised to get back to basics.

For a community that is defining its economic future as recreation, a parking program that clearly deters access to the lake seems contrary to our stated mission.

Putting $2 per hour parking meters at El Dorado Beach, Venice Drive and in front of the privately owned Lakeside Beach and calling it a user fee seems to lack vision. The beach attendance at Lakeside this summer was down by more than 50 percent. The $55 parking tickets that overzealous parking enforcement employees were writing just added to the mass exodus. The many businesses at Lakeside Beach are reporting a substantial decline over last year’s sales. In addition, all businesses near paid parking have become the front counter for the parking complaint department.

The city made the case early on that this parking program was all about the money. The projected income for the city was $312,900 and was identified as enough revenue to preserve two

police positions that would be lost if we didn’t raise that amount. The city then proceeded to spend/borrow more than $300,000 plus staff time to install the meters and the dozens of pay to park signs that for reasons not completely clear face into the street where they are not visible to the driver. This may begin to explain the estimated 2,000 tickets that were written this summer. The $312,900 projected profit will not be realized; however, city management is calling the program a success. Forty percent of the more than $300,000 investment in the kiosks sat mostly vacant as parking customers for Venice Drive and Paradise Avenue never materialized.

The city is now probably thinking that they need to find a new home for those 13 kiosks that were not performing in two locations. Moving them to the airport would allow city staff and council members to better understand the hardship that minimum wage seasonal workers faced when their free parking was replaced by the $10 per day fee. An estimated 150 workers found themselves scrambling to find free parking at Nevada casinos and in residential areas.

City sponsored programs that are solely designed to generate income should not harm local businesses and displace low wage workers.

On Nov. 5, the City Council will be reviewing the paid parking program. This will be their opportunity to listen to the community and decide to keep or dismantle the program or let the voters decide with a city sponsored ballot initiative. If a ballot initiative is not volunteered, it will require just 836 registered voter signatures for citizens to advance an initiative to the ballot.

Peggy Bourland-Madison, committee member Tahoe 4 Tahoe

Poll: Majority in U.S. favor legalizing pot

By Adam Serwer, MSNBC

A majority of Americans support legalizing marijuana, a first in more than 40 years of Gallup polling the question.

In 1969, when President Richard Nixon first directed significant federal resources toward interdicting marijuana smugglers at the U.S.-Mexico border, only 12 percent of Americans supported legalization.

According to Gallup, 58 percent of Americans now support legalization, up more than 10 percent in just the last four years.

Two states, Washington and Colorado, legalized recreational marijuana use following statewide referendums in 2012. Perhaps sensing the size of the shift in public opinion, the Obama administration announced in August it would allow such states to continue their experiment with legalization – marijuana is still illegal under federal law – as long as they follow certain guidelines.

Read the whole story

Letter: Apologies for drag show cancellation

To the community,

Live Violence Free owes our community an apology for the postponement of our Drag for Love show. It is unfortunate that due to unforeseen scheduling complications our hard work and effort towards making the show a success has fallen short.

We deeply apologize for any and all inconveniences that the cancellation of the show has caused anyone, especially all of our supporters. We'd like to thank all of the groups and businesses that have dedicated their time and services to us for the show; the South Tahoe High School Ally club, the Sierra Foothills AIDS Foundation, Lake Tahoe Pride, Lake Tahoe Community College faculty and staff, our local performers, the Family Resource Center, and our Live Violence Free Heart volunteers.

We look forward to hosting this event in the future and encourage our community to continue to support our agency and its mission for a violence free community.

If you have purchased a ticket, please feel free to call me at (530) 544.2118, ext. 7628 for a full refund.

Thank you,

Diana Meza Cabrera, Live Violence Free

Questioning economic benefit of harvesting beetle-infested trees

By Science Daily

A recently published study by U.S. Forest Service researchers evaluates potential revenues from harvesting standing timber killed by mountain pine beetle in the Western United States.

The study shows that while positive net revenues could be produced in West Coast and Northern Rockies states with active timber markets, the central Rocky Mountain states of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming – which have the largest volume of standing dead timber – would not generate positive net revenues by salvaging beetle-killed timber.

A mountain pine beetle epidemic in the Western United States has left mountainsides covered with dead pines, especially lodgepole pine, with most of the timber and land affected on national forests.

Policymakers and forest managers are considering increasing timber salvage rates on these lands as a way to address potential wildfire threat, hazards from falling trees, and visual impact, but first need to assess the broader economic ramifications of putting more timber on the market in areas where mills have closed and markets have waned over the two last decades.

Research Forester Jeff Prestemon and fellow scientists with the Forest Service Southern Research Station Forest Economics and Policy unit and with the Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center were asked to evaluate the circumstances under which salvaging pine beetle-killed timber would be cost-effective. The researchers used an economic

assessment model to estimate potential salvage volumes, costs and revenues from programs that would encourage salvage of standing dead timber, summarizing findings by state and owner groups.

Read the whole story

Study: Brain flushes toxic waste during sleep

By Meeri Kim, Washington Post

While we are asleep, our bodies may be resting, but our brains are busy taking out the trash.

A new study has found that the cleanup system in the brain, responsible for flushing out toxic waste products that cells produce with daily use, goes into overdrive in mice that are asleep. The cells even shrink in size to make for easier cleaning of the spaces around them.

Scientists say this nightly self-clean by the brain provides a compelling biological reason for the restorative power of sleep.

“Sleep puts the brain in another state where we clean out all the byproducts of activity during the daytime,” said study author and University of Rochester neurosurgeon Maiken Nedergaard. Those byproducts include beta-amyloid protein, clumps of which form plaques found in the brains of Alzheimer’s patients.

Staying up all night could prevent the brain from getting rid of these toxins as efficiently, and explain why sleep

deprivation has such strong and immediate consequences. Too little sleep causes mental fog, crankiness, and increased risks of migraine and seizure. Rats deprived of all sleep die within weeks.

Although as essential and universal to the animal kingdom as air and water, sleep is a riddle that has baffled scientists and philosophers for centuries. Drifting off into a reduced consciousness seems evolutionarily foolish, particularly for those creatures in danger of getting eaten or attacked.

Read the whole story

USFS to pile burn near Zephyr Cove

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews may begin prescribed fire operations north of Zephyr Cove this weekend.

Operations will take place across Highway 50 from the Skyland subdivision. Weather and conditions permitting, crews will burn approximately 1 to 5 acres per day and expect to continue operations into next week.

Due to the lack of California Air Resource Board declared burn days in California, operations previously scheduled in California have been switched with locations in Nevada.

Smoke will be visible on Highway 50. 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.

Forest Service staff will post road signs around the areas

affected by the prescribed fire, send email notifications, and update the local fire information line at (530) 543.2600, ext. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Internationally acclaimed celebrity chef Susur Lee of Lee and Bent restaurants in Toronto will serve as a guest chef this winter at the Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe.

• Advanced nutrition consultant student Dawn Sitchon is teaching four free classes in South Lake Tahoe starting Oct. 30. Topics are Eating for Health, Lean Protein and Clean Fats, Colorful Complex of Carbohydrates, and Sustainable Nutrition. More info is on the flyer.

• South Tahoe Middle School Club Live is sponsoring The Great Iris Bulb Planting on Oct. 26 from 10am-noon. This project is a part of the Make A Difference Day national day of service. The club intends to plant more than 500 iris bulbs around campus.

• Tahoe Tallac Association took first place for the best Lake Tahoe Marathon booth aid station. Runners did the voting. The Cub Scouts took second and Key Club third.

• The documentary “McConkey” about Shane McConkey will be shown at Peek Nightclub at Harrah’s Lake Tahoe on Nov. 1 at 8pm. Tickets are $10.

Tahoe resorts make upgrades for ski season

By Paul McHugh, Sacramento Bee

One might imagine that it’s all about snow and nothing else. But optimism is just as valuable a resource these days for skiers, snowboarders and resort operators in and around the region.

Last winter, both were in short supply. A few early storm dumps, backed up by snow-making, enabled an adequate holiday season. But New Year’s Day led straight into the dry months that left ski conditions marginal by March, forcing an early season closure on many slopes.



Many Lake Tahoe area ski resorts want to open before Thanksgiving. Photo/LTN file

However, this fall meteorologists predict a mild El Niño – in other words, an “average” winter, and an improvement from the previous season. That notion is seconded by folklorists who

cite signals as varied as early acorn drops, the coats on caterpillars and the gloss on black bear fur. The resorts are back to cultivating optimism and hoping for a robust run.

“Last season was challenging,” said Bob Roberts, CEO and president of the California Ski Industry Association. “I’d estimate we had a fall-off of about 12 percent (from the previous year’s attendance), for a total of less than 7 million visits to our resorts. Yet economic yields were still good, since early season-pass sales now establish a solid base. And new efficiencies in services, as well as expansion into summer operations, increasingly help most resorts to stay profitable.”

In preparing for the coming months, California resorts have generally been burnishing their appeal by expanding programs and making facility improvements, rather than by championing big-infrastructure additions that won headlines in seasons past. However, there are notable exceptions, including Sugar Bowl and feisty up-and-comer Sierra-at-Tahoe.

Read the whole story