Caesars to launch online poker site this week

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

Caesars Entertainment's online poker website, using the World Series of Poker brand, will launch Thursday morning, company officials said Monday.

Caesars Interactive will capitalize on the brand with online tournaments feeding into the company's annual competition at the Rio that runs from late May to mid-July.

The site, WSOP.com, will launch with a variety of poker games, including stud and Omaha hi-lo as well as Texas hold 'em. And unlike its lone competitor – Station Casinos' Ultimate Poker – it will offer Mac-friendly computer compatibility.

Only residents or visitors to Nevada will be eligible to play, but Caesars – which is the parent company of Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Harveys – is supporting efforts to enable "shared liquidity" that would involve compacts to allow players from others states to play in Nevada's games.

Read the whole story

No charges filed in death of pedestrian in Truckee

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

TRUCKEE – A Truckee woman who struck a pedestrian while riding

her bicycle – causing injuries leading to the man's death – will not be charged.

Nevada County Deputy District Attorney William Cornell has determined the findings in the case do not support filing a criminal manslaughter charge, according to a spokesperson.

The bicyclist, Petra Borhani-Bakker, 24, who was arrested on suspicion of riding under the influence of alcohol following the July 4 accident in Truckee, also will not face that charge, the district attorney's spokesperson said.

Read the whole story

CDC: Drug-resistant bacteria a growing threat

By Brady Dennis and Brian Vastag, Los Angeles Times

The nation faces "potentially catastrophic consequences" if it doesn't act quickly to combat the growing threat of antibiotic-resistant infections, which kill an estimated 23,000 Americans each year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned Monday.

In a 114-page report, the agency detailed for the first time the toll that nearly two dozen antibiotic-resistant microbes are taking on humans – ranking the threat of each as "urgent," "serious" or "concerning." Should the trend continue, it said, some infections could become essentially untreatable.

"More than two million people are sickened every year with antibiotic-resistant infections, with at least 23,000 dying as a result."

“If we’re not careful, the medicine chest will be empty when we go there to look for a life-saving antibiotic,” CDC Director Thomas R. Frieden told reporters Monday in a telephone news conference. “Without urgent action now, more patients will be thrust back to a time before we had effective drugs.”

One family of bacteria atop the agency’s “urgent” list of infections is carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE), which typically strike patients in medical facilities and have become resistant to nearly all existing antibiotics. Known as the “nightmare bacteria,” CRE cause life-threatening diarrhea. They have continued to proliferate, showing up in medical facilities in 44 states, including the National of Institutes of Health’s Clinical Center in Maryland, where seven people died from one type of CRE in 2011 and 2012.

Likewise, Neisseria gonorrhoeae, which causes the sexually transmitted disease gonorrhea, has begun showing resistance to the antibiotics typically used to treat it, the CDC said. The condition, which can cause severe reproductive complications, shows up in an estimated 800,000 cases annually in the United States.

Read the whole story

Ironman to impact drivers on North Shore

Expect highway closures and traffic delays in the North Lake Tahoe area on Sept. 22 because of the inaugural Ironman Lake Tahoe race.

Northbound Highway 89 will be completely closed from Fairway Drive in Tahoe City to Squaw Valley Road from 7am to 5:30pm on race day. Southbound Highway 267 will be closed from Northstar Boulevard to Kingswood/Commonwealth Drive in Kings Beach from 8:30am to 4pm. Highway 28 will be closed in both directions in Kings Beach from Fox Street to the Highway 267 intersection from 6:30-9:30am during the athletes' transition from swim to bike.

The eastbound Interstate 80 off-ramp to Highway 267/89 and the Highway 89 on-ramp to westbound I-80 will both be closed from 6:30am to 3:30pm.

Access to residential streets from the highways will be closed at several locations as well. There will be traffic-control operators and CHP officers stationed on intersections around the lake during the race. Detours will be available and roadside electronic message boards deployed around the course.

Competitors will start at Kings Beach State Recreation Area for the swim course, then transition into the bike ride along highways 28, 89 into Truckee and onto 267 over Brockway Summit and then back down to Highway 28, repeat the loop, and then continue onto Highway 89 again before finishing at Squaw Valley. From there they'll run down to Tahoe City and back on the Truckee River bike path adjacent to Highway 89 before crossing the finish line at Squaw. Competitors have 17 hours to finish, with the last swimmers in the water by 7am, the bike course closing at 5:30pm and the run course closing at midnight.

Series of holiday runs on South Shore for all ages

Tahoe Tri Club has teamed with South Lake Tahoe to host three family races in a series called Run Through the Holidays.

The three races will be themed to match each of the holidays coming up this fall. The events will infuse fitness and fun into what can often be a stressful time of year.

The focus is more about the themes, costumes, and having fun while improving health. A 1k (0.6 miles) kids distance is included at each event to provide an opportunity for confidence-building in young participants by being able to finish a first race.

The first run, called Tahoe's Freakin' Fun Run, will be Oct. 13 at the Lake Tahoe Community College playfields, and will be centered around Halloween festivities. Participants are encouraged to dress up in Halloween costumes and run for their lives from zombies, ghosts and goblins. Registration begins at 8am, with the official event starting at 10am.

The second run will be Nov. 17. Named the South Tahoe Turkey Trot, this event is themed around Thanksgiving. This event will be at Bijou Community Park kicking off at 10am, with registration beginning at 8am.

The series will wrap up with the Jingle Jog Hot Chocolate Run where participants show their holiday spirit and receive a piping hot commemorative mug of cocoa as they cross the finish line. Hot cocoa will also be available on the run course to help fuel all the Santas, elves and reindeer as they race along. This event will be at Lakeview Commons on Dec. 15 beginning at 10am, with registration starting at 8am.

All three events will offer a 1k (0.6 mi) fun run for kids

ages 3-13, a 5K and a 10K run for all ages and ability levels. Prizes will be awarded for Best Costume and Most Challenging To Run In along with other fun awards like the Hydra category where three or more participants have to be physically connected for the entire race. Additionally, the fastest runners in each age group and category will receive accolades.

Proceeds will help support the Tahoe Kids Triathlon Team and the Development Team of the Tahoe Tri Club. For more information, call (530) 307.3316.

Food waste a contributor to green house emissions

By Kiera Butler, Mother Jones

A full third of the world's food is wasted. According to a report from the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, discarded food accounts for a staggering amount of planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, if food waste was a country, its 3.3 gigatonnes of emissions would make it the third highest-emitting country in the world, after China and the United States.

What exactly makes all that waste and its emissions?

It’s not just consumers throwing dinner scraps away. Some food spoils before farmers can harvest it, other food goes bad on its way from the farm to the market, and still more food ends up rotting on supermarket shelves. Looking at emissions of uneaten food from farm to table, the researchers found that food wasted at the consumer phase had the highest carbon footprint. That’s because by the time food gets to that stage, it’s already accumulated emissions from production, harvest, and distribution.

In other words, when chuck food that you buy at the supermarket, you’re throwing away every part of the process that has gotten it there, as well.

Some kinds of food waste create more emissions than others. Wasted fruit, for example, has a relatively small ratio of food waste to carbon emitted. Meat’s ratio is much larger. That’s because meat production is exceptionally carbon intensive.

Read the whole story

Restoration brings out charm of Ward Creek Park



The trail through the meadow, left, before restoration; and after work was completed. Photos/State Parks and LTN

By Kathryn Reed

TAHOE CITY – A thick overgrown forest with logging roads that became gullies during the wet season that would then carry sediment into Ward Creek and Lake Tahoe.

That was what these 179 acres near Tahoe City were like in the early 1980s when the McClatchy family deeded the property to California State Parks.

Today, Ward Creek Park is probably the least used state park in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Restoration began in 2009, with the network of trails completed in 2012. Still to come this fall are interpretive signs.



Nathan Shasha points out a newly planted sugar pine. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Part of the restrictions with the land is no pavement can be put in and a campground cannot be developed.

It was the Angora Fire of 2007 on the South Shore that freed up money for this project. Reducing hazardous fuels has been the mantra in the basin since then. And that is what enabled State Parks to turn this plot of land into something officials want to promote and no longer worry about being a fire hazard.

“We tried to keep the larger trees,” Cyndie Walck with State Parks explained. “There was massive thinning to decrease the fire hazard.”

This area was commercially logged in the 1930s and 1960s, so many of the large trees were already long gone.

The 12- to 15-foot-wide roads went straight up. This is just the opposite of how trails are designed, so they have been rehabbed. This will prevent erosion. And in a few years the shrubs will grow in and the rocks and logs used to make the roads impassible will not be noticeable. Much of the infill needed came from the neighboring California Tahoe Conservancy project at Blackwood Canyon. The roads in places were 2 feet below grade.

Two stands of more dense trees were left.



Stairs now allow access to Ward Creek. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“The best thing for habitat is variability in age and density instead of treating the park all the same,” Walck said.

The Sugar Pine Foundation has planted thousands of trees in Ward Creek Park. And the grove of ferns adds to the diversity.

A network of about 3 miles of trails meanders through this once secret gem. While some of the user-created trails are gone, the things people like most are still there. This includes access from the bike trail along Highway 89 to the park, two locations to get to Ward Creek, and trails that connect to the U.S. Forest Service trails that lead to Stanford Rock, and a connection to the Tahoe Rim Trail. The upper part of the watershed is where the Sherwood chairlift at Alpine Meadows is.

“It’s a complete watershed with recreation,” Walck told *Lake Tahoe News*.

California Conservation Corps members did much of the work.



Ferns create a diverse landscape. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“We maintained all the major access points to the park,” Nathan Shasha with State Parks said while walking along some of the trails. He oversaw the construction.

While there is a larger loop, it’s not just one trail. Several offshoots are part of the network.

One spot leading to Ward Creek now has stairs to help with ease of access and to prevent erosion. Before people scrambled up and down a steep embankment.

The first part of the trail from the Rideout Community Center is designed to comply with American with Disabilities Act requirements.

Different types of material were used to get people across the meadow. Part is boardwalk. This elevated path allows water to freely flow under it in the spring or other wet times.

The boardwalk then becomes a turnpike that has logs on the sides and a coarse trail.

The goal was to be able to experience the meadow without impacting it.

Sod plugs have been put in to help restore the meadow.

Walck and Shasha have pictures of what the meadow looked like before the work. At times it was impassable because of the amount of water. People would ride bikes and make grooves. Water would pond.

Restoration work was designed so the water will flow more evenly, this in turn should restore the water table. And with an elevated trail it keeps people from harming the ecosystem.

—-

Notes:

• Getting there: From South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 89 north. Turn left on Timberland Lane. Turn right at the Rideout Community Center. Park. Trail starts in the right rear of the center. There is also access a bit farther up off Timberland; with a gate on the right.

• Parking is free.

• Mountain bikes OK.

• Dogs on leash OK.

Opinion: Calif. education battles resume

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

California is simultaneously implementing two major – even

historic – changes in its 6-million-student public school system, and all adults involved pledge that they have the best interests of those kids at heart.



Dan Walters

They may be telling the truth about their motives.

Nevertheless, the adoption of Common Core academic standards and Gov. Jerry Brown's plan to give more money to districts with large numbers of poor and English learner students are venues in which old adversaries can renew their old power struggles.

Once again, parents, reformers, unions, administrators, school board members, etc., are sparring over such issues as academic standards, testing, teacher accountability and charter schools.

Read the whole story

Christmas tree season already under way

By Tina Susman, Los Angeles Times

ARLINGTON, Va. – It was 90-plus degrees outside, but there was

a distinctly wintry feel in the second-floor lobby of a hotel overlooking the Potomac River.

Perhaps it was the rows of Christmas trees, standing tall and straight as tin soldiers. Or maybe the wreaths displayed on stands, like perfect leafy doughnuts, or the velvet bows and sparkly ribbons.

The only thing missing was Santa Claus.

The height of summer might seem a strange time for this event, but there is method in the apparent madness of the annual gathering of the National Christmas Tree Association.

It gives tree growers a chance to swap ideas on how to confront some of their biggest challenges, such as the popularity of fake trees – "permanent trees," as folks here call them. It offers vendors the chance to find buyers for everything from color-enhanced trees – yes, some are painted – to tree stands.

It also determines which of the firs, spruces and cypresses on display in the lobby will be crowned "grand champion," an honor that guarantees its grower a visit to the White House to present First Lady Michelle Obama with the official Blue Room tree. The runner-up is known as the "grand reserve," and its grower gives a tree to the vice president.

"It's a very big deal," Vicki Smith said. "It's sort of like the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show for Christmas trees."

Read the whole story

Fitness retreats have nothing to do with indoor gyms

By Tyler Graham, Bloomberg

Instead of going to a gym, Erwan Le Corre climbs trees and shoulders heavy logs. And on your next vacation, he wants you to join him.

Le Corre's Santa Fe, N.N.–based MovNat is one of a handful of fitness outfitters offering getaways centered on the notion that our Stone Age genes are a mismatch for our Google-age environment. Unlike spa-centric wellness retreats from the likes of Canyon Ranch, these strenuous multiday excursions in places such as California, Kenya and Thailand aim to reconnect the office-bound, white-collar set with the motions our bodies were intended to make in the natural world.

At MovNat's outposts in Costa Rica, Mexico and Spain, for instance, days are spent mastering what Le Corre classifies as the basics of human movement: climbing, crawling, jumping, running, swimming and lifting. Le Corre says his approach helps reverse the damage done by our sedentary lives.

The day might begin with a group outing into the forest, where a MovNat-certified instructor teaches participants how to properly crawl through the underbrush or vault over a branch blocking a trail; later, you might find yourself lifting 50-pound logs or scaling a tree, branch by branch.

Each movement Le Corre champions engages the entire body, he says, rather than targeting a specific muscle group like most gym workouts. If a client is unable to perform a given activity, trainers will modify the task accordingly.

The 150 spots at this year's PrimalCon, as the event is known, sold out almost immediately, spurring him to add dates in

South Lake Tahoe and Austin.

Read the whole story