Wildfire burning in Tahoe National Forest

Smoke from a forest fire burning in Placer County could be seen while driving on Highway 50 toward the basin and it is filling the sky in Reno.

As of 8:30 Sunday night about 800 acres had burned in the Tahoe National Forest. The American Fire is burning in the heavily forested area of Deadwood Ridge, about 17 miles northeast of Foresthill.

The cause is under investigation. It started about 4:50pm Aug. 10.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

OxyContin maker knows docs who overprescribe

By Scott Glover and Lisa Girion, Los Angeles Times

Over the last decade, the maker of the potent painkiller OxyContin has compiled a database of hundreds of doctors suspected of recklessly prescribing its pills to addicts and drug dealers, but has done little to alert law enforcement or medical authorities.

Despite its suspicions, Purdue Pharma continued to profit from prescriptions written by these physicians, many of whom were prolific prescribers of OxyContin. The company has sold more than $27 billion worth of the drug since its introduction in

1996.

Purdue has promoted the idea that the country's epidemic of prescription drug deaths was fueled largely by pharmacy robberies, doctor-shopping patients and teens raiding home medicine cabinets. The database suggests that Purdue has long known that physicians also play a significant role in the crisis.

Purdue's database, which contains the names of more than 1,800 doctors, could provide leads for investigators at a time when they are increasingly looking at how reckless prescribing of painkillers contributes to addiction and death.

Purdue has said little about the list since it began identifying doctors in 2002.

Read the whole story

Hike retraces steps of Donner Party

Hikers can travel the footsteps of early emigrant's journey across the Sierra Nevada mountains Oct. 5-6 by participants in the 21st annual Donner Party Hike.

Participants can choose from seven hikes on Saturday, and a walking tour on Sunday. All hikes offer insight into emigrant history from local area guides, along with invigorating recreation and beautiful scenery.

New this year, is the Summit Meadows hike which travels along Lake Van Norden with stops to see rocks with mortars and other remnants of emigrants passing through.

In addition to the new hike, there are six other hike options of varying length offered that Saturday. Explore the Dutch Flat Donner Lake Wagon Road and 1913 Corridor Lincoln Highway with views of petroglyphs, old roadside billboards and the China Wall. Hike up Roller Pass and/or Mt. Judah to see where wagon trains were winched up over the granite. Discover pristine High Sierra Lakes.

Following the Saturday hikes, participants can enjoy a hamburger lunch and a presentation by Ethan Rarick, author of "Desperate Passage – the Donner Party's Perilous Journey West". This up-to-date narrative history of the Donner Party provides a compelling look at this frontier drama.

Sunday starts with a more relaxed walking tour departing from the Donner Camp Picnic Area, located on 2.5 miles north of Truckee on Highway 89. Following the walking tour where guides will detail the Donner Party's encampment, participants will drive to Donner Memorial State Park to hear more about the Donner Party, the Pioneer Monument, visit the Murphy's Cabin Site, and enjoy entrance to the museum offering a historical movie about the Donner Party.

Saturday's hikes begin and end at the Mt. Judah Lodge at Sugar Bowl Ski Resort. Guides will lead groups of approximately 10-20 people to interpretive spots giving detailed historical information focused on emigrant and area history.

Space is limited for all events and reservations are required. Early registration for the Saturday hikes is $45 ($50 after Sept. 20) per hiker and includes a guided hike, commemorative ball cap, hamburger lunch and afternoon presentation. Sunday's walking tour is $15 and includes the guided walk and entrance to the Emigrant Trail Museum. A two-day hike package is $60 ($65 after Sept. 20).

Complete hike descriptions and registration forms can be found online or by contacting the Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce

at (530) 587.8808.

Lecture to focus on brain health

Insights into Brain Health is the topic of a Sept. 5 lecture in Incline.

The Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation presents world-class experts from the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in a community forum on Alzheimer’s, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson’s.

Although the event is free, seating is limited so reservations are necessary – email jeane@parasol.org.

The event is from 5:30-7:30pm at the Donald W. Reynolds Community Non-Profit Center, 948 Incline Way, Incline Village.

Author helping others become published

Have you ever wanted to write a novel and not known how to begin? Or maybe you’ve written fiction and you’d like help polishing your manuscript?

Regardless of where you are in your writing process, South Lake Tahoe author Todd Borg is putting on a writing workshop

that may be helpful.

“The Hook, the Twist, and the Cliffhanger” workshop is designed to help move people from the beginnings of a story, then to a completed novel, and from there to publication and finding an audience.

The workshop is a three-day weekend, Nov. 16-18 at the Sacramento Fine Arts Center.

More information and complete details including how to sign up are online on the “Workshops” page.

NV Energy board, stockholders score with Buffett’s purchase

By Eli Segall, Las Vegas Sun

Warren Buffett’s purchase of NV Energy will be a financial bonanza to the utility’s stockholders, and the board of directors is no exception.

Filings with the Securities Exchange Commission show that each of the Las Vegas power company’s 10 board members holds tens of thousands of shares in the utility and is poised to cash in big on Buffett. His MidAmerican Energy Holdings Co. reached a deal in late May to buy NV Energy for $23.75 per share, or $5.6 billion cash.

NV Energy President and CEO Michael Yackira, one of the highest-paid executives in the Las Vegas Valley, will collect $21.2 million from the buyout, far more than the other board members. He’s followed by Chairman Philip Satre at $2.7 million, former Station Casinos executive Glenn Christenson at

$2.5 million and Las Vegas attorney John O’Reilly at $2 million, according to a filing last month with the SEC.

Read the whole story

Eydie Gorme – 1928-2013

By Bob Thomas, AP

Eydie Gorme, a popular nightclub and television singer as a solo act and as a team with her husband, Steve Lawrence, died Aug. 10. She was 84.

Gorme and Lawrence were regulars at Harrah’s Lake Tahoe South Shore Room in the 1980s.

Gorme, who also had a huge solo hit in 1963 with “Blame it on the Bossa Nova,” died Saturday at Sunrise Hospital in Las Vegas after a brief, undisclosed illness, said her publicist, Howard Bragman.



Eydie Gorme

Gorme was a successful band singer and nightclub entertainer when she was invited to join the cast of Steve Allen’s local New York television show in 1953.

She sang solos and also did duets and comedy skits with Lawrence, a rising young singer who had joined the show a year earlier. When the program became NBC's "Tonight Show" in 1954, the young couple went with it.

They married in Las Vegas in 1957 and later performed for audiences there. Lawrence, the couple's son David and other loved ones were by her side when she died, Bragman said.

"Eydie has been my partner on stage and in life for more than 55 years," Lawrence said in a statement. "I fell in love with her the moment I saw her and even more the first time I heard her sing. While my personal loss is unimaginable, the world has lost one of the greatest pop vocalists of all time."

Soon after their marriage, the pair had landed their own TV program, "The Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme Show," which was a summer replacement for Allen.

Not long after that, however, Lawrence entered the Army, and Gorme went on the nightclub circuit as a soloist until his return to civilian life two years later.

After his discharge, Lawrence and Gorme quickly reteamed, and their careers took off.

She is survived by Lawrence, her son David and a granddaughter. Her other son with Lawrence, Michael, died of heart failure in 1986 at age 23.

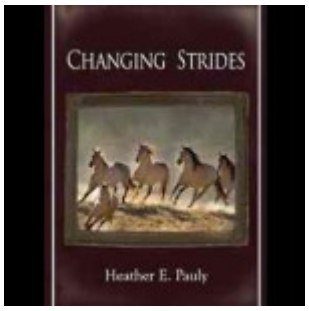
Teen writes worthy coming of

age book

By Kathryn Reed

Writing a coming of age book is no easy feat. Writing a book with the main character as the opposite sex is not easy. Writing compelling dialogue and description – again, not easy.

Heather E. Pauly was able to do all of the above in “Changing Strides.”



And while many authors have accomplished what Pauly has done, a key difference is their age. Pauly is 16.

The teenager draws on her experience of living in Yerington and riding horses to create a story about a troubled 14-year-old boy who was sent away for the summer to live and work on his uncle’s ranch.

And while a veteran writer clearly did not write this, one with vision wrote it. The plot is compelling and believable.

There are sections that could have been developed more and where tighter editing would have helped the final outcome.

Still, Pauly has all the ingredients in the book to want to keep reading it.

If Pauly keeps writing, she will be an author many will want to read.

Then and (not) now: Public says no to Emerald Bay bridge



Caltrans once planned to put a bridge in at Emerald Bay. Photo/Bill Kingman/Circa 1960

In the late 1950s, Caltrans presented various plans for a bridge across the entrance to Emerald Bay and rerouting Highway 89.



What Emerald Bay looks like today via Google.

Strong public opposition prevailed, and that idea was dropped in the 1960s. This was prior to the Tahoe Regional Planning

Agency’s formation.

In the same time period, film manufacturer and processor Eastman Kodak declared that Emerald Bay was one most-photographed location in the world, second only to the Taj Mahal in Agra, India.

– Bill Kingman

Carmel combines laid back with classy



The Lone Cypress along 17-Mile Drive is more than 250 years old. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA – Nine wineries in three days – all by foot. A 17-mile ride instead of a drive. Oh, and that big expansive body of water known as the Pacific Ocean.

Monterey County is one of California's premier wine regions. The climate varies depending on if one is close to the coast or more inland. And this means a variety of wines are produced in this region.

While it's possible to visit the different tasting rooms by vehicle, it doesn't have to be that way.

The visitor's center in Carmel sells Carmel Wine Walk by the Sea tickets for $65. (We paid $50 for nine wineries Memorial Day weekend; the price has gone up and more wineries are expected to be added. Individual tastings are usually $10 each.) The ticket doesn't expire, but we opted to taste all nine in the three days we were there.

The tasting rooms are actually storefronts dispersed along the streets of Carmel. So it was easy for the four of us – Sue, Pam, Tom and me – to peruse shops and window-shop in between the sipping.

One winery is next to a 40-year-old cheese stop. We buy some snacks and the winery lets us eat as we sample their wines.

Peter Figge is pouring tastings in a small area that is attached to an art gallery. He's the winemaker for Figge Cellars and has been a vineyard manager since he was in college.

"You have 10 months to grow grapes and only six weeks not to screw it up," Figge told us of the winemaker's role in the finished product. "The expression of the fruit is more important than anything."

To work off some of what we have been drinking we get on our bikes to pedal the famous 17-Mile Drive in Pebble Beach that

has existed since 1881. We can ride there from Tom’s place at Carmel-By-The-Sea. Going on two wheels means free entrance.

Dressed inappropriately and not on high-end bicycles, we are still let in to the Lodge at Pebble Beach. We look around and decide if we stop to eat or drink this early we’ll never finish the loop.

We pedal on, but still there are more stops to take in the scenery. Endless pictures of the famous Lone Cypress are shot. The Monterey Cypress only grows in this area of the world. Some say this particular tree is more than 250 years old.

I think this is the first time I’ve been on these 17 miles of private property as an adult. As a kid my parents took endless guests here and I was stuck in the backseat. I had zero appreciation for what I was seeing. It’s nice to grow up to be able to embrace and appreciate the natural wonders that spill forth.

The sea air; those crashing waves; wind blown trees; sea creatures; and iconic landscape – it’s everywhere on this bike ride.

We stop at Spanish Bay to sit outside with a cocktail before we complete the circle. Cycling was the perfect way to see this famous stretch of California coastline.

I marveled at the pristine tennis courts at so many of the resorts. I’m sure most people were mesmerized by the exquisite greens and fairways of the golf courses.

Pam and Tom extend the ride and take us along other parts of the coast that are just as scenic, but less rugged.

Then there are the hours than can be spent walking on the beach as surfers attempt to catch a wave and people throw balls for their dogs or just sit listening to and watching the ocean.

Another morning Sue and I take in the Monterey Bay Aquarium. It’s another must-do while in this part of the state.

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