Opinion: Plan to rough it a bit after disaster

By Tracy Franklin

This is the fifth of a series of articles highlighting emergency preparedness. Use these tools to prepare yourself for an emergency. More information is available in the city's website.

Choosing comfort over inconvenience:

Coping with the impact of a disaster is never fun. However, much of the inconvenience and discomfort the disaster causes can be reduced by planning alternative ways to take care of your needs.

Acquiring emergency supplies:

At first glance, the list below may seem totally overwhelming. At second glance, you'll find that you probably already have many of these items.

Lighting:

Caution: The use of candles is no longer recommended as a source of emergency light. Experience shows they are responsible for too many secondary fires following the disaster. Additionally, they are very dangerous in the presence of leaking natural gas.

• Flashlights and extra batteries

• Camping lanterns—store extra fuel, wicks, mantles and matches

• Lightsticks—these can provide light for 1 to 12 hours and can be purchased at many camping supply

Cooking:

Caution: Never burn charcoal indoors. This could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

• Camp stoves, sterno stoves, or barbecues – store extra propane, charcoal or sterno, lighter fluid, and matches,

• Fireplaces–do not use until the chimney and flue have been inspected for cracks. Sparks may escape into your attic through an undetected crack and start a fire.

• Paper plates and cups

• Plastic utensils

• Paper towels

Pets:

Always keep a week's supply of food and water for your pet on hand. Toilet bowl water is an excellent supply of water for pets following an emergency event.

Protecting stored foods when the power goes out is very important.

• Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.

• A full refrigerator will maintain safe temperatures for up to six hours.

• A full freezer will maintain safe temperatures for up to two days.

Foods to be concerned about are categorized into groups:

• Potentially hazards foods are the most important. These include meats, fish, poultry, dairy, eggs, soft cheeses, cooked beans, cooked rice, cooked potatoes, cooked pasta,

custards, puddings, etc.

• Some foods may not be hazardous but the quality may be affected. These foods include salad dressings, mayonnaise, butter, margarine, produce, hard cheeses, etc.

• Some foods are safe. These are carbonated beverages, unopened bottled juices, ketchup, mustard, relishes, jams, peanut butter, BBQ sauce, etc.

How do I know if the food is unsafe to eat?

• You cannot rely upon appearance or odor. Never taste food to determine safety.

• Some foods may look and smell fine but they've been warm too long, food poisoning bacteria may have grown enough to make you sick.

• If possible, use a thermometer to check the temperature of the foods. If potentially hazardous foods are colder than 45 degrees, they are safe.

Sanitation:

• The lack of sanitation facilities following emergency events can quickly create secondary problems unless basic guidelines are followed. If the water lines are damaged, or is suspected, do not flush the toilet.

• Avoid digging holes in the ground and using these. Untreated raw sewage can pollute fresh ground water supplies. It also attracts flies and promotes the spread of diseases.

• Store a large supply of heavy-duty plastic bags, twist ties, disinfectant and toilet paper.

• A good disinfectant that is easy to use is a solution of one part liquid bleach to ten parts water.

• If the toilet is not able to be flushed, it can still be

used. This is less stressful for most people than using some other container. Remove all the water. Line bowl with a heavy-duty plastic bag. When finished, add a small amount of deodorant or disinfectant, securely tie the bag, and dispose of it in a large trash can with a tight fitting lid.

• Portable camp toilets, small trash cans, or sturdy buckets lined with heavy-duty plastic bags can be used. Those with tight fitting lids are best.

Emergency information:

Obtain a battery powered radio and supply of extra batteries.

South Lake Tahoe emergency preparation:

As part of the city's initiative to increase communications, we will be offering a 12 part monthly series during 2013 highlighting emergency preparedness. Use these tools to prepare yourself for an emergency.

Tracy Franklin is the public information officer for South Lake Tahoe.

Van Sickle trail work volunteers needed

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association will celebrate American Hiking Society's 21st annual National Trails Day on June 1 at Van Sickle Bi-State Park at Stateline.

It will be a trail building day. The Tahoe Rim Trail Association will provide hard hats, trail building tools, expert crew leaders and lunch.

To participate, register online at or contact Lindsey Schultz at (775) 298.0239 or trails@tahoerimtrail.org. The first 100 volunteers to register online will be entered into a raffle.

The event begins in the back of the Harrah's Lake Tahoe parking lot at 9am.

Volunteers of all skill levels and physical abilities are welcome. No prior experience necessary. Volunteers will receive free lunch provided by REI and the TRTA. The event will conclude at 4pm with a volunteer party at Explore Tahoe with free food and drink.

Gretchen Wilson to take stage in Stateline

Country music's "Redneck Woman," Grammy-Award winner Gretchen Wilson will kick up the dust May 31 at Lake Tahoe's MontBleu casino.

The hard-singing country music star has charted 13 times, including the Grammy Award-winning single "Redneck Woman." Wilson's anthems are as real as her album titles imply; most noteworthy being "Here to Party," "Work Hard, Play Harder," "All Jacked Up," "One for the Boys" and "I've got Your Country Right Here."

She's sold more than 8 million records worldwide. Her latest album, "Right on Time and Under the Covers" was released in April with critical acclaim. Her MontBleu performance begins at 9pm.

Tickets are $45 and $55; 888.829.7630.

More than quarter of El Dorado, Placer homeowners under water

By Hudson Sangree, Sacramento Bee

The number of Sacramento-area homeowners who owe more than their homes are worth continued tumbling in the first three months of this year, real estate tracking firm Zillow reported this week.

In the first quarter of 2013, there were 140,857 homes in so-called negative equity in the Sacramento region, the Seattle-based firm reported. That was down from 156,840 homes in negative equity in the fourth quarter of 2012, it said.

Rising prices, caused by a limited supply of homes for sale and more homebuyers entering the market, are pushing thousands of area homeowners into positive equity.

Zillow's negative equity forecast predicts the number of homeowners who are underwater on their mortgages will continue falling this year, freeing 40,000 more homeowners from negative equity by the first quarter of 2014.

In the four-county region, Sacramento County remained the most underwater. Nearly 42 percent of Sacramento homeowners with mortgages owed more than their homes were worth in the first quarter, Zillow said.

In Placer and El Dorado counties, about 29 percent of homeowners were underwater.

In Yolo County, 37 percent of homeowners remained in negative

equity in the first three months of this year.

About 15 percent of homeowners in the region still owe at least double what their houses are worth, while about 34 percent are only slightly underwater, Zillow said.

N. Nevada woman trying to make equestrian history

By Arianna Bennett, KTVN-TV

A Reno woman will attempt to make Nevada history Saturday by becoming the first person to travel the Nevada Discovery Trail solo on horseback.

Over the next four weeks Samantha Szesciorka, her dog Bella and her horse Sage will be alone in the wide-open Nevada desert trekking 450 miles on the Nevada Discovery Trail.

It’s an adventure this trio has been preparing for for years.

“I feel really ready. We’ve been getting gear and training and riding for three years now. So we’re about as prepared as you can get,” Szesciorka said.

Their path goes from the Utah border in Baker, Nevada to the California border at Lake Tahoe; passing through mountains, deserts, ghost towns and historical sites along the way.

“We have such diversity in terrain in Nevada. I can’t wait to just get out there,” she said.

It will be a mental and physical challenge, under the hot desert sun in a dry and often hostile environment. But it’s

nothing these two can’t handle. Samantha is an Army veteran who served a tour in the Middle East.

And Sage is uniquely qualified for this adventure – he’s a wild mustang. He comes straight out of the Nevada wilderness.

“They are self-sustaining. The strongest survive. And he’s one of them,” says Bonnie Matton of the Wild Horse Preservation League.

And that makes Sage the star of the trip.

Samantha, along with a dedicated group of volunteers, crew members and activists, is hoping Sage will bring awareness to the issue of wild horses in Nevada and encourage adoption.

“We want to have an adventure, but I also want to show people- ‘look what mustangs can do. They’re great riding horses. Take it from me, I’ve ridden one across the state!'”

Szesciorka will have a satellite tracking device with her during the ride so you can monitor her progress on her website.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Raley’s, Bel-Air and Nob Hill stores will offer discounted tickets from June 1-July 21 to the 24th annual American Century Championship, the celebrity golf tournament at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, July 16-21.

• Incline High School’s Jordan Jones will receive UNR’s most prestigious scholarship – the National Merit Scholarship. She

will be studying biology starting in the fall.

• Royal Gorge is offering tours of the property so people can find out more about the land. More info is online.

• The slope side condominium suites at the Village at Squaw are receiving $1.2 million in renovations this summer.

• Lake Tahoe came in second in a poll of 14,560 members of MissTravel.com, the travel dating website. Lake Michigan was No. 1 and Lake Havasu No. 3.

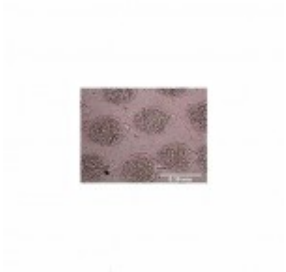
Unknown life form found at Fallen Leaf Lake

By Ky Plaskon, Capitol Public Radio

A Lake Tahoe area scientist has found an unidentified life form in Fallen Leaf Lake.

Now agencies in the area are trying to figure out what it is.

UNR professor emeritus, John Kleppe, pilots a remotely operated vehicle, or “ROV,” into the frigid depths of the South Shore lake. Particles whiz by the ROV’s lights like stars.



Life form

found at Fallen Leaf Lake. Photo/Capitol Public Radio

“It is sort of amazing because when you think about it no humans have seen a lot of what we see. It is like walking on the moon,” said Kleppe.

He discovered a 3,000-year-old hidden forest still standing. He says it’s evidence of past mega droughts. As if that’s not strange enough, he has found something living in the forest.

“What we are seeing here is a thing, which is like a balloon of green jell and it will eventually look like a baggie and then like it is creating a gas in it and then float away,” said Kleppe.

He’s collected samples and sent them to scientists who disagree on what they might be. Last week he got confirmation that they are not jellyfish. Researchers don’t yet know whether they are plants or animals or a combination of both. Researchers are trying to figure out if they are an invasive species that should be wiped out. Kleppe doesn’t think so.

“They only found them in very clean lakes that were high altitude, maybe it is a natural indicator of clarity. Wouldn’t that be a concept. In other words, you wouldn’t want to get rid of them, you would want to observe them,” said Kleppe.

He had only found them in July in the ancient submerged forest until last year when one of the blobs actually attached itself to his pier.

“We should know what they are and so far nobody does so I am going to find out,” said Kleppe.

Pilot survives crash near Martis Peak

A pilot suffered non life-threatening injuries after his plane crashed somewhere on Martis Peak near the Truckee Tahoe Airport on Thursday afternoon.

Crews say tough terrain at the crash site forced them to bring in helicopters to rescue the pilot.

The unidentified pilot was the only person aboard the plane when it went down about 3:30pm.

He was taken to Renown Medical Center in Reno.

— KTVN-TV

Lake Almanor area quake rattles Tahoe, Truckee

By Rosanna Xia and Robert J. Lopez, Los Angeles Times

More than three dozen aftershocks, ranging up to a magnitude 4.9, have been registered following a 5.7 earthquake about 150 miles northeast of Sacramento, officials said.

The first quake struck at about 8:47pm Thursday; its epicenter was about 27 miles southwest of the town of Susanville and seven miles west northwest of Greenville near Lake Almanor,

according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

People on Twitter told the *Times* they felt the quake in Sacramento and Lodi, as well as in Reno and on the northwest shore of Lake Tahoe.

Officials in Susanville and Sacramento said the quake set off a number of home and car alarms and rattled windows, but there were no immediate reports of damage.

Within minutes of the first quake, more than 7,000 people reported feeling it on the USGS website.

A Chico resident told the *Times* he felt a slow roll that lasted about 30 seconds.

Dozens of smaller earthquakes followed in the Greenville area, including a magnitude 3.5 temblor at 8:55pm, a magnitude 4.9 at 1:02am Friday, and a magnitude 2.5 at 5:36am, according to the USGS.

“House shook pretty hard,” one man near Truckee told the *Times.*

Duckee Derbee benefits Truckee-Tahoe animal shelter

The “most unpredictable two minutes in Tahoe,” the 10th annual Truckee Duckee Derbee, is set for June 9 at the River Ranch Lodge near Alpine Meadows.

The rubber duck races benefit the Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe. The afternoon’s festivities include live music provided by Angele and the Wildwood Band on the outdoor patio, a

barbecue, drink and food specials, raffle, Dogz in Dudz canine costume contest, and the “Cool Catz in Hatz” contest open to all attendees. Festivities run from 1-4pm, with the Dogz in Dudz starting at 2pm.

This year’s TDD is dedicated to the memory of fallen Alpine Meadows patrolman Bill Foster who was a key member of the resort’s Avalanche Rescue Dog program.

Cost to sponsor a duck is $10 and the top three ducks win cash.

For more information, call (530) 581.0181 or purchase a duck online.