Roar of Cascade Falls lures hikers in

By Kathryn Reed

Songbirds sing a tune that seems to say, “Welcome to our little piece of paradise.”

We smile as we enter their world.

Soon the roar of Cascade Falls fills our ears.

In the distance we see it cascading into its namesake.

A lone fishing boat is on the glass-like water of Cascade Lake.



Hiking to Cascade Falls provides stunning views of Cascade Lake with Lake Tahoe behind it. Photos/Kathryn Reed

It’s only April and the trail to Cascade Falls is clear. We start at a reasonable hour on April 20 and nearly have the path to our ourselves – except for the birds flitting about. Coming back, well, the route was a bit more crowded.

One guy in a party of two couples was carrying a mini music

device. How annoying. Why pollute the outdoors with “unnatural” sounds? Why hinder communication with friends?

Glad he was not where we chose to soak up the sun on sprawling slabs of granite. The cadence of the water on the rocks was music to our ears.

Not a cloud in the sky.

Summer in Tahoe in April? We smiled again. The views of Cascade Lake and Lake Tahoe are fabulous on this jaunt.

With the lack of snow this winter it will mean waterfall season will come early and be bit short-lived. Driving down Highway 50 the previous weekend gave us a glimpse of the always-mesmerizing Horsetail Falls. It made us realize we better start getting in our waterfall hikes now.

It’s a relatively short hike to Cascade Falls. Beauty is everywhere. What can be challenging is having a dog on a leash who wants to go faster than you over the rocks because it tests your balance. It’s the up and down over the rocks that can provide some difficulty.

Many people on the trail who were a decade or two older than us had poles. I would recommend using them to anyone who likes a bit more stability.

This is definitely a hike to do this time of year, early on a weekend day and take water – it’s exposed.

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, go north on Highway 89 through all the hairpin turns. Before Emerald Bay, park to the left at the Bayview Trailhead. The campground is not open yet, so parking is near the gate.

The trailhead is at the far end of the campground. A sign points left to Cascade Falls and right to Desolation Wilderness.

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S. Tahoe residents discard 61 lbs. of drugs

Sixty-one pounds of prescription medication were turned in last weekend in South Lake Tahoe. This is the most collected in the since this program was started.

On April 27 the South Lake Tahoe Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration provided the public its sixth opportunity in three years to take back unwanted prescription drugs and collected

Northern California and Central Valley residents turned in 18 tons of unwanted and expired medications at 211 collection sites manned by 147 federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies that partnered with DEA on the event. Nearly 68 tons has been collected from the Central Valley and Northern California since September 2010.

According to the DEA, the National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day this past Saturday collected 50 percent more pills than the previous one, demonstrating the American public’s continued appreciation and need for the opportunity to discard unwanted, unused and expired prescription drugs from medicine cabinets, bedside tables, and kitchen drawers.

Nationally, 742,497 pounds of prescription medication were collected and destroyed.

Improv workshop, show at LTCC

The Lake Tahoe Community College Theater Department's Random Acts of Improv group is bringing in television performers Rick and Laura Hall for a musical improvisational workshop and live performance May 18 in the Duke Theatre.

Laura Hall (musical director for TV's "Whose Line Is It Anyway?") and her actor-musician husband, Rick (HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm"), will share their musical improvisation techniques in the workshop from 12:30-4pm.

They'll then take the stage at 7:30pm with LTCC's improvisation group, Random Acts of Improv, for a night of comedy on the fly.

For more information about the improv show and workshop, call (530) 541.4660. ext. 240 or email boulanger@ltcc.edu.

Kentucky Derby is more than a horse race

By Sam Dean, Bon Appetite

As far as we're concerned, the mint julep is as important to the Kentucky Derby as the horses, or the jockeys, or whatever

it is everyone seems to be cheering about while we launch our faces into another leafy sprig of mint. It's the quintessential Southern drink—the sweaty climate calls for a serious cool-down, and only a region with a sentimental attachment to its landed gentry would think to drink booze out of silver cups.

But man, what a name! "Schlep" is the only other (not totally obscure) word in the English language that ends in -lep, and even that wears its Yiddishness on its sleeve. So how did the julep trot into our native tongue?

In the beginning (and likely a very early beginning, at that), the word was gul-ab, and the drink was Persian rosewater (*gul*=rose, *ab*=water). Gul-ab then moved through the normal channels (Arabic>Italian>French), until finally "julep" shows up in English, around 1400, in a surgical textbook called Lanfranc's Chirurgie (the old-timey word for "surgery"). There, it's described as a "sirup maad oonly of water & of sugre," mixed with more medicinal ingredients to make them easier to swallow. So by the 15th century, "julep" had lost its floral notes, and had moved into meaning any kind of soothing, sweet drink.

By the late 1700s, though, the Atlantic seems to have split the julep into two camps. In Europe, it was still a general term for a sweet drink, including something with medicinal properties, but hard-drinking Americans had codified it into a cold cocktail, served with sugar, ice, and some kind of aromatic herb. Speed up to 1804, when an American writer credited his love of whiskey to "mixing and tasting my young master's juleps." So we know that whiskey was a major component, but in the 19th century, juleps were also made with brandy and (surprisingly) gin.

While the popular idea of a mint julep may have dwindled into a bourbon-only drink these days, there is still some linguistic innovation going on: Andrew Knowlton, BA's

Restaurant and Drinks Editor, named his daughter Julep. (But it was more for the history of the word than anything—he and his wife were thinking of naming her "Rose," but decided to go for a more ancient version of the same. That said, he is a man who likes mint juleps.)

Our favorite julep, the Prescription Julep, is a throwback to those 19th-century recipes, with Cognac and rye replacing the typical bourbon (and a nod to the drink's medicinal roots in the name), but there's clearly a final frontier to cross for any true julep traditionalists out there: going back to the drink's rosy roots.

Placerville man going to prison on pot conviction

Robert Edward Mulready of Placerville was sentenced May 3 to 42 months in prions after pleading guilty to a variety of drug charges.

Mulready admitted to conspiring to cultivate and distribute at least 100 marijuana plants.

Court documents alleged Mulready traveled to California for the purpose of growing marijuana and that he sold the marijuana to individuals out-of-state because it was more lucrative than selling to local dispensaries. Documents also allege that Mulready received two packages filled with cash from out-of-state individuals.

A search of Mulready's house revealed several hundred marijuana plants, along with processed marijuana and packaging materials. Mulready also had more than $155,000 in cash at his

house, including numerous bundles of cash hidden in his attic.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Boxer not in lockstep with environmentalists

By Richard Simon, Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON – Barbara Boxer has long been one of the Senate's environmental champions, racking up perfect scores for each of the last five years on the League of Conservation Voters' report card on key votes.

But the Californian now finds herself on the opposite side of an issue from her usual environmental allies and some of her fellow Democrats. Environmentalists are upset because she is pushing legislation that would impose deadlines for environmental reviews of water projects, a move they see as "tilting the scales" toward rushed approvals.

"It's difficult to have one of your stalwart environmental champions working to undermine one of the bedrock environmental laws," said Friends of the Earth President Erich Pica, who, like other environmentalists, was conflicted about publicly taking on a powerful longtime ally.



Barbara Boxer’s moves are not sitting well with environmentalists.

“I say to my friends in the environmental movement, we can’t agree 100 percent of the time,” Boxer said.

At issue is the $12-billion Water Resources Development Act. The measure, coming before the Senate this week, is a rarity on hyper-partisan Capitol Hill: It was passed unanimously out of the Boxer-chaired Environment and Public Works Committee.

Boxer disputed any effort to weaken environmental laws but acknowledged that she was seeking to end delays to crucial projects, such as those needed to protect communities from flooding.

“The environmentalists don’t like to have any deadlines set so that they can stall projects forever,” Boxer said. “I think it’s wrong, and I have many cases in California where absolutely necessary flood control projects have been held up for so long that people are suffering from the adverse impacts of flooding.”

Although she said she was open to listening to the environmentalists’ concerns, in this case, “I don’t think this is legitimate.”

Boxer’s support for the bill puts her in a tough spot, trying to balance her devotion to environmental groups with her desire to attract Republican votes for a bill she considers

important to the economy and the environment.

The measure would authorize not only flood protection projects that have gained urgency after Superstorm Sandy, but also coastal restoration in the Florida Everglades and the Gulf Coast and projects aimed at promoting commerce on waterways. The bill is also expected to bring more money to Los Angeles and Long Beach for maintenance of their ports.

“It’s always hard for us to go after one of our champions, particularly someone like Sen. Boxer,” said Scott Slesinger, legislative director of the Natural Resources Defense Council. “We’re going to have to fight our normal allies if they’re going to be attacking what we think is one of the most important environmental statutes.” He referred to the National Environmental Policy Act, which requires extensive reviews of projects that could affect the environment.

Slesinger said Boxer’s legislation would establish deadlines for project reviews, leading to a “rush to judgment” on development that could cause significant environmental damage. Government agencies would face fines of up to $20,000 for failing to meet deadlines for project reviews, a requirement that he warned could lead to “slapdash” reviews.

“If the agencies are pressured into making decisions quickly, we will end up with projects that cause more harm than good,” said Melissa Samet, senior water resources counsel for the National Wildlife Federation.

Two of Boxer’s Democratic colleagues, Sens. John D. Rockfeller IV of West Virginia and Ron Wyden of Oregon, also have expressed concern about the “project acceleration” provisions.

But the senator says she is only seeking to end needless delays.

It’s not the first time Boxer has surprised her allies.

A few years ago, the stalwart liberal and frequent antagonist of big business sided with Republicans to champion a tax break for multinational corporations. She also defied the majority of her own party.

At the time, she was pushing a measure eagerly sought by California’s high-tech industry.

Webinars focus on wildfire protection

Community Wildfire Protection Plans and Fire-Adapted Communities are the focus of webinars on May 7 and May 14 put on by the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension.

The first one-hour, free webinar will be offered at 10am May 7 in conjunction with Nevada Wildfire Awareness Week that begins May 4. Participants will learn about the purpose and value of Community Wildfire Protection Plans and explore a digital template designed specifically for communities located in Washoe County. The template can easily be modified for use outside of Washoe County.

The next one-hour, free webinar will be offered at 10am May 14. Participants will learn about Fire-Adapted Communities, communities that can survive wildfires with little or no assistance from firefighters. This is possible because of how the homes are built and maintained, how vegetation is managed and the knowledge of residents.

For information on how to participate, visit the calendar online, or contact Sonya Sistare at sistares@unce.unr.edu or (775) 336.0271.

Bike ride meanders through Carson City

The 6th annual Tour of Carson City Bike Ride is May 5 at 9:30am.

The route tours around the perimeter of Carson City for a moderately paced 27-30 mile bike ride.

The event is free, though donations are being accepted to support Muscle Powered of Carson City to promote a more bike friendly community.

The ride will begin at Bike Habitat.

Call Denis for more info, (775) 267.5053.

Lack of keys prevents bear from driving off

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

It’s not unusual for bears – especially juveniles – to wreak havoc at winter’s end in Truckee, but it is surprising to see one at the wheel of a pickup.

According to the Truckee Police Department, a young bear entered the cab of the unlocked truck Wednesday evening and was unable to get out when the door closed behind it.



This bear forgot to get the keys. Photo/Truckee Police

Police officers arrived at the home on St. Bernard Drive in the Tahoe Donner subdivision and quickly released the frightened bear.

There was significant damage to the interior of the truck, authorities said.

Bear scat was also left inside. Police are encouraging residents and visitors to lock their vehicles and not keep any food or other scented items that could attract hungry bears to their cars.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Lake Tahoe’s West Shore Café and Inn has hired Mike Davis as executive chef and Stacie Krenicki as the property’s general manager. Both were most recently at Martis Camp.

• The U.S. Forest Service will talk May 4 at 4pm about the acquisition of the Hole in the Ground, Lola Montez and Castle

Peak acreage. The meeting will be at the Caltrans cafeteria in Kingvale.

• Caltrans is meeting to discuss rehabilitating or replacing the South Fork American River Bridge on Highway 49 in El Dorado County. The meeting is May 14, 6-8pm, Gold Trail Grange No. 452, 319 Highway 49, Coloma.

• MontBleu's summer outdoor concert series will kick off with the second annual Lake Tahoe Reggae Festival on June 29. The 5,200-seat outdoor amphitheater in Stateline will feature breezy Jamaican rhythms and reggae ska beats from headliners SOJA and Alpha Blondy, along with special guests Passafire, Stickfigure, Tomorrows Bad Seed and Island of Black & White.

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