Harvest Festival coming to South Lake Tahoe

There will be a Harvest Festival Oct. 27 from 10am to 5pm at the South Lake Tahoe recreation complex.

There will be games, free stuff for kids and families, chili cook-off, cake walk, checkers tournament and more.

The center is at 1082 Rufus Allen Blvd.

For more information, go online.

Scotts Lake provides a variety of recreation options

By Kathryn Reed

HOPE VALLEY – Tree trunks stand like centurions from an era long ago. It's as though they are keeping secrets – possibly the stories of explorers from another century.

With each day that passes, the water level at Scotts Lake is receding. At an elevation 8,012, the conditions look more like spreading drought conditions at sea level than an alpine lake.

The edge of the lake is muddy, with cracks in it where it has dried. Grasses that are normally under water almost don't look real. The tree trunks that are showing are well below the high water mark.



All-terrain enthusiasts romp near Scotts Lake. Photos/Kathryn Reed

A pipe almost blends in with the rocks. Presumably this would take water to the west fork of the Carson River.

Balls of lichen grow on downed wood and are stuck to the mud. They look like loofa sponges. We don't touch them.

Friends come here to fish. It doesn't look like much of a fishing spot – at least not on this September Saturday. And the road there isn't one I would have wanted to drive with trailer in tow.

There are two main ways into Scotts Lake. One is to hike in from the Big Meadow trailhead off Luther Pass. We met a few people at the lake who did this.

It was Frank Riley's description in "Tahoe Blues" about hiking to Scotts Lake and his encounter with a bear that made me want to know where it was. It's in Alpine County on the edge of El Dorado County. Waterhouse Peak is nearby.

We opted for the route that involved a lot less work.

We drove in. The Jeep needed to get some 4-wheel drive action other than when white stuff is on the ground. It's not a particularly challenging route, but at one spot on an offshoot from the main trail to the lake Sue thought she and AJ should get out of the vehicle.

The topo map describes this as a dirt road or bike path, possible 4-wheel drive needed. I would not take my bike up this road.

We are not the only ones who opted to use gas-powered means to get to our destination. Campers who are in RVs close to Highway 88 are playing on their four-wheelers.

They move on and we have the lake to ourselves. It’s quiet, desolate and tranquil as the sunlight shimmers on the lake. A gentle breeze sends little ripples toward the shore.

A few aspens are turning yellow. Fall is definitely in the air.

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, go west on Highway 50. Turn left onto Highway 89. Go until it dead-ends in Hope Valley. Turn right onto Highway 88. Make a right onto an unnamed road that has a cattle guard. (If you hit Blue Lakes Road, you went too far.) Veer to the right. Keep veering to the right and then start the climb.

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Brown signs bill to keep

state parks open for 2 years

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

SACRAMENTO – Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation Tuesday setting a two-year moratorium on closing state parks in the wake of a scandal in which some parks officials hid surplus funds while facilities were threatened with being shuttered.

The legislation by Assemblyman Bob Blumenfield, D-Woodland Hills, was in response to the discovery in July that some parks officials had concealed about $54 million in unspent funds even as the governor was proposing to close 70 parks because of a budget shortfall.

“Rogue bureaucrats lied to all of us,” Blumenfield said Tuesday. “The governor acted swiftly and appropriately to remove them. Now, after signing this bill, we can move forward.”

The bill provides $10 million to match private donations to keep specific parks open, an additional $10 million to other parks at risk of closure, and a like amount to address maintenance needs that threatened to close some parks.

In addition, the state Park and Recreation Commission will get more money under AB1478 to oversee management of the Parks and Recreation Department to help ensure there are no more financial shenanigans.

The governor also signed a bill that requires the parks department to create a plan for increasing private revenue for state sites. It would allow Californians to apply a portion of their state tax refund to the parks in exchange for an annual park pass.

Assemblyman Jared Huffman, D-San Rafael, wrote the measure, AB1589, which also requires more accurate and transparent

accounting for park system finances. The changes provide “a serious ‘reset’ to an agency that desperately needs it,” Huffman said.

Brown also signed another Huffman measure reshaping the state Department of Fish and Game to provide greater emphasis on conservation, including a change in its name to the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The bill – which some Republicans opposed as an attempt to de-emphasize hunting – also provides for creating an environmental crimes task force to help prosecute crimes against wildlife, and authorizes the department to partner with nonprofit groups and accept funds for additional conservation programs. Brown signed AB 2402 “to improve the management of state fish and wildlife resources,” according to a statement by his office.

In all, the governor signed 49 bills Tuesday, including legislation protecting tenants in properties that wind up in foreclosure or default.

One measure allows a tenant holding a lease to keep possession of the rental unit until the lease expires. Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner, D-Berkeley, wrote that bill, AB2610. The governor also signed a bill requiring rental applicants to be given notice if a property owner is in default on the mortgage of a home before a lease is approved. Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, is the author of SB1191.

Ex-CHP officer arrested by El

Dorado deputies

A former California Highway Patrol officer has been arrested in El Dorado County on stolen property charges.

During the past several weeks, El Dorado County sheriff's detectives have been working numerous burglary investigations throughout the county involving stolen firearms.

Detectives on Sept. 26 searched a residence at 4500 Wendsan Lane in Placerville.

Deputies said former CHP Officer Michael Rupley was in possession of stolen firearms. He was booked into the El Dorado County Jail on charges of receiving stolen property.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

STHS students place 3rd at international forestry competition

South Tahoe High School seniors Emily Barnett and Tyler Myers took third place at the 9th annual International Junior Foresters' Competition in Russia.

Their field research project The Effects of Fire and Forest Thinning on the Biodiversity of Understory Plants in the Lake Tahoe Basin was one of 52 projects presented by students from around the world.

The students were honored during a large concert celebrating

Day of the Forest Worker in Moscow, during which the head of the Russian Federal Forestry Agency, V.N. Maslyakov, presented their prizes.

The competition, which was Sept. 12-14, 2012, is hosted by the Russian Federal Forestry Agency. This annual event brings together youth from nations around the world to promote and reward young scientists for their interest and efforts in the environmental field and encourage international dialogue concerning forestry issues.

This was the first time the United States participated in the competition.

Barnett and Myers' project grew out of their participation in the U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit's Youth Conservation Corps.

Governor signs bill to fund quagga mussel inspection program

By Lisa Lien-Mager, Association of California Water Agencies

Gov. Jerry Brown has signed ACWA-sponsored legislation designed to combat the spread of invasive quagga mussels.

SB215, authored by Sen. Bob Huff, R-Diamond Bar, extends the sunset of the successful mussel inspection program led by the Department of Fish and Game and the Department of Food and Agriculture. Previously set to expire at the end of this year, the mussel inspection program was first created in 2007 to allow the state to conduct inspections of vehicles and water

bodies and order quarantines of any infested water bodies. The law also authorizes the state to implement measures to prevent and eradicate infestations, including education.

Quagga mussels are an invasive nonnative species that breed very fast, have no known predators, and can quickly colonize new areas within California waters. Once they infest a water body, they cover piers, boat launches, and water intake facilities. There is no effective eradication method, and the cost to manually remove these mussels from water intake screens and pipes is millions of dollars per year for the state's water system operators.

The state has created an ongoing prevention and education program to help keep these unwanted guests away, including a marketing campaign to get recreational boaters and others to pay attention to the hidden cargo that they may be carrying. The cost to run the program and inspections is estimated at close to $10 million total for both departments combined through the end of 2014.

Despite the price tag during a difficult budget year, the Legislature determined the short-term investment of special funds was worth the cost to help avoid a long-term serious infestation in state waters that could cost billions of dollars in damage and repair costs.

"We are pleased that Gov. Brown and the Legislature recognized the importance of continuing this aggressive program to combat the spread of invasive quagga mussels," said ACWA Executive Director Timothy Quinn in a statement. "S 215 will ensure that the current and effective efforts continue uninterrupted."

Hot Rod of the Year belongs to Tahoe resident

By Thom Taylor, Hot Rod

Lake Tahoe's Tom Gloy was awarded the Goodguys Tank's Hot Rod of the Year for 2012 for his channeled Deuce roadster.

Built by Roy Brizio Street Rods in South San Francisco, the traditionally styled roadster is anything but traditional. The body has been narrowed through the cowl, grille and windshield. They also sectioned the radiator shell 3 inches.

To get Gloy down low in the seat, the floorboards were radically lowered – more so than any other hot rod to roll out of Brizio's shop.

Out back, the rear quarters were filled and smoothed and the rear wheels tucked tightly against the channeled body.

The custom Brizio chassis features torsion bar suspension from Moal Coachbuilders, a Magnum 5-inch dropped axle, Wilwood brakes, custom 18 and 16-inch ET knockoff wheels, a 302-inch, Hilborn EFI Ford crate motor and Tremec 5-speed.

Bay area body & paint specialist Darryl Hollenbeck of Vintage Color Studio shot the mid-1950s Porsche blue that perfectly contrasts the red leather interior stitched by Sid Chavers, also of San Francisco.

Gloy was a racecar driver for over 25 years, having collected a Trans Am World Championship as well as a Formula Atlantic title. He drove in six IndyCar races including a start in the 1984 Indy 500 finishing 14th. He wanted more than a show car, and to prove it he recently drove the roadster over 2,000 miles from his Nevada home to Indy to accept the award.

6-week caregiver class in South Lake Tahoe

The six-week Aging and Caregiving Series begins Oct. 8.

Classes are designed to assist caregivers of all stages, while providing professional knowledge on aging related topics.

The Monday classes will be at Embassy Suites in South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, click on the flyer.

TRTA’s building season to extend into October

Tahoe Rim Trail Association’s building season is coming to a close. Volunteers are needed for two major projects: Rim to Reno and Daggett Summit.

Workdays are every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 9am-4pm. No trail building experience is necessary.

Rim to Reno project volunteers will build new trail segments connecting existing trails in the vicinity of Mount Rose and creating a new system that includes loop trails along with the connector trail to Reno. The last work day is Oct. 20.

This is the fourth trail-building season of the multi-year Daggett Summit project, which will connect the Tahoe Rim Trail with the Van Sickle State Park, re-route the TRT off of paved roads, and provide stunning views of Lake Tahoe. Work goes on every Tuesday or Saturday through Oct. 13 at the Kingsbury North Trailhead.

To join a volunteer work crew, register online. For questions, contact Lindsey at (775) 298.0239 trails@tahoerimtrail.org.

Brown OKs election-day voter registration for future contests

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

Californians will someday be able to register to vote on election day under legislation signed into law Monday by Gov. Jerry Brown.

Assemblyman Mike Feuer, D-Los Angele,) wrote the measure to increase voter participation in elections. The current law says voters must register at least 15 days before an election.

“Voting – the sacred right of every citizen – should be simple and convenient,” Brown said in a statement. “While other states try to restrict voters with new laws that burden the process, California allows voters to register online – and

even on Election Day.”

The measure becomes law Jan. 1, 2013, but election-day voter registration will not begin until after the California secretary of state begins operating Vote-Cal, a much delayed statewide voter database, which will allow real-time verification of whether applicants are registered in other counties.

VoteCal is not expected to be up and running until 2015, said Nicole Winger, a spokeswoman for the secretary of state.

“This new law will help assure that all eligible Californians will have the chance to determine who speaks for them in Washington, Sacramento and their hometowns,” Feuer said in a statement Monday. “By recognizing the importance of increasing voter turnout in our state, we are improving the democratic process in California.”

The measure was opposed by many Republican lawmakers, including Assemblyman Tim Donnelly of San Bernardino, who felt the change, combined with a new online voter registration system, would lead to voter fraud. “A free and secure election system is the bedrock of a constitutional Republic,” Donnelly said. “Along with the new motor-voter process of registration, same-day registration and the new online registration system, our elections are becoming less and less secure.”

Brown’s signature will allow California to join 10 other states that allow some form of election-day registration, including Connecticut, Idaho, Minnesota and Wisconsin.