California parks’ history subject of display at state museum

The California State Capitol Museum, managed and operated by California State Parks, is featuring an exhibit about the diversity of state parks and its early pioneers, as well as how the system continues to evolve and promote environmental awareness while meeting the public’s demand for recreation, experiences in nature and preservation of cultural heritage.

“A Most Glorious Heritage: The Grandeur and History of California State Parks” officially opened Sept. 30.

This exhibit chronicles the rich history of the California State Parks system since its inception in the 1860s through today. With the collective help of a dedicated staff including more than 24,000 volunteers, California State Parks provides an unrivaled hands-on experience for an estimated 72 million annual visitors.

Transporting visitors to the “redwoods” of a state park, a re-created park scene transforms the State Capitol’s Archives Exhibit Room into the beauty of the outdoors. The v exhibit will include photos of California ’s most iconic parks, including state beaches, recreation areas, off-highway vehicle parks, state historic parks, and monuments. Movie and video clips, as well as oral histories from state park employees, will be featured on monitors.

Additionally, the exhibit will showcase the uniform of Harriet Weaver, parks’ first female ranger as well as information about various types of parks, ecosystems, site restoration efforts, historic preservation efforts and the important role California State Parks has played in the movie and film industry. The exhibit will also include a time line of the

individuals, groups, activists, organizations, agencies and pivotal moments instrumental in the building and preserving the California State Parks system.

Planned in coordination with a one-hour movie showcasing California State Parks currently in development and scheduled to be released later this year, the exhibit demonstrates the vision and collective commitment it has taken over time to build the California State Parks system.

The “A Most Glorious Heritage: The Grandeur and History of State Parks” exhibit is located in the Archives Exhibit Room (Room 105) of the State Capitol Museum, and will remain on display through Sept. 1, 2011.

The California State Capitol Museum is managed and operated by California State Parks under contract to and supported by the California State Legislature. Open daily from 9am to 5pm for guided and self-guided tours of the Capitol Building and its extensive outdoor gardens, the museum is located in the California State Capitol, in downtown Sacramento on 10th Street between L and N streets. Admission is free. For more information, call (916) 324.0333 or visit the website.

Ed Foundation providing ‘extras’ to S. Tahoe students

By Kathryn Reed

Excited energy fills the rooms. Youngsters are eager to get outside and start pedaling.

These 22 Bijou Community School students are willingly

extending their school day. They are part of the weekly Bike Club.

Other classrooms are also abuzz after school each week as teachers and parents volunteer their time to lead one of the 10 clubs. Ballet and cross country skiing will be added in December.



Jackson Trew, 5, has his helmet fitted by Pete Fink. Photos/Kathryn Reed

“One teacher is doing a computer class. There were so many who wanted in she’s doing it every Tuesday instead of every other,” explained Principal Karen Tinlin.

These clubs – which range from sports to rocketry to cooking – are in their second year. Participation keeps growing – with half of the student body in at least one club. The offers change, too, to keep things fresh and relevant.

Supplemental dollars have long been the source of keeping schools filled with the extras, that generations ago were considered the basics.

One of the key funding sources for students in Lake Tahoe Unified School District is the Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation. This nonprofit volunteer-run foundation is all about providing cash with few strings attached.

The Ed Foundation is paying for these after-school programs.

“We want to generate something that won’t otherwise be able to be done because of the current economics in the school district and No Child Left Behind’s focus on test scores,” said Chris Campion, president of the Ed Foundation.

But a check is not just written. Each school must apply for the money, explaining in detail where it will go and how it will benefit students.

For the past few years the Ed Foundation has been working with the school sites on enrichment programs like the after school clubs at Bijou. Before that the Foundation was responsible for spending thousands of dollars to keep class-size reduction in lower grades.

“Well, LTEdF is wonderful. Do I need to say more? Also, this year, Dr. Greg Bergner, a LTEdF member, is doing our Rocketry Club,” said Kathy Haven, an active Bijou parent. “He approached us after seeing my presentation for the foundation. So, now LTEdF is giving us financial backing and a volunteer to boot.”

Although the clubs are designed to be fun, education is still part of the mix. Before anyone goes riding around the South Tahoe neighborhood where Bijou is located, parent volunteer and bike guru Pete Fink makes sure helmets are fitted correctly, brakes are in working order and students know the rules of the road.

This is Hannah Lucas’ second year in the bike club. The 8-year-old has learned the importance of checking tires for flats before heading out.

The Foundation gets the bulk of its money through the annual Food Fest. The Oct. 15 event is casual, centered on eating and drinking with friends. Membership is another form of income. Donations are always accepted.

Other things the Foundation has funded are the Mad Science program out of Sacramento doing presentations at all the elementary schools, money for music/choir groups, and mini-writing sessions for eighth-graders.

“We are taking a more broad-based approach to providing enrichment for all of the kids to increase their curiosity, to increase their ability to dream what they want to do with their lives,” Campion said.

Food Fest details:

Website

Date: Oct. 15

Hours: 6:30-10pm

Location: Harveys Convention Center, Stateline

Cost: $35 in advance, $40 at the door

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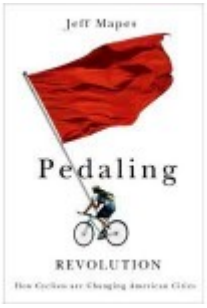
A book for those planning, building bike paths

By Kathryn Reed

“We would no more build a system for the bicycle that ends every few blocks than we would build an arterial for motor vehicles that detoured traffic every 800 meters.”

That is from a 1999 paper written by two employees of the city of Davis. It was reprinted in the book “Pedaling Revolution:

How Cyclists are Changing American Cities” by Jeff Mapes. I bought the book last year when it came out thinking it might provide me insight into what other areas are doing in regards to human powered two-wheelers.



I am amazed at how other places in the United States and the world are trying to understand bicyclists and saddened Lake Tahoe planners don’t embrace the philosophy of the quote above.

The need for connectivity was illustrated time and again. It’s a word local planners use but those of us on bikes know doesn’t exist much in Tahoe.

Mapes is a reporter for the *Oregonian* newspaper in Portland who took time to explore the cycling culture beyond his back yard.

He talks about Amsterdam. He talks about Davis. He talks about New York City. He talks about the suburbs.

What makes this book worth reading is that he experienced what he wrote about – it wasn’t just a bunch of interviews. He delved into some of the history of cycling, where it is today, and where it might be going.

It is dry, though. This isn’t one of those fun travel books. It’s not a fun book. And it will never fall into the travel genre. In fact, it took me a long time to read the 274-page paperback. Still, though, it’s one of those books that is worth reading for anyone who has anything do to with planning that involves cyclists and for anyone who wants to change the way their town or region is connected.

“Pedaling Revolution” shows what can be done when people work cooperatively.

It’s amazing that just 100 miles away in Davis that town “helped pioneer traffic signals that were sensitive enough to be activated by cyclists and, at one problematic intersection, a green-light phase for cyclists only.”

A study was done in 2006 in Portland that found bicycle related businesses generate $63 million a year. But an economist from there told the book’s author, “The larger point was that bicycling allowed residents to save vastly larger sums of money.”

A resident of Oregon is quoted as saying, “My wife and I often sit out in front and have a cocktail and watch the bikes go by. I guess I like looking at bikes more than cars.”

Clearly, that sentiment is not embraced by Tahoe-ites who block access to trails.

Mapes has found congestion in cities is leading the push to create a more congenial cycling atmosphere. But there have been setbacks. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg wanted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion in Manhattan by establishing an $8 surcharge on some motorists.

“By April of 2008, however, congestion pricing was dead. It was killed by Democrats in the state assembly engaged in a Byzantine political war with Bloomberg and responding to opposition from motor-vehicle commuters in the suburbs and outlying neighborhoods of the city,” Mapes writes.

The book also points out feeling unsafe is the No. 1 reason people don’t get on a bike.

“As long ago as 1996, the U.S. surgeon general, in a landmark report on physical activity, said 53 percent of people who had cycled in the previous year said they would commute to work by bike if they could do so on ‘safe separated designated paths’.”

Amen.

Two other passages that stuck with me are: “In America, we spend more on dental research than traffic safety research.” And “… we don’t even like to own up to the full toll of automotive mayhem, which is the equivalent of two jumbo jetliners crashing every week and killing everyone aboard.”

Author explores humans’ relationship with world

By Susan Skorupa, Reno Gazette-Journal

It is all so simple:

“We are born and we die. No one cares, no one remembers, and it doesn’t matter. This is why we laugh.”



It’s one of 12 statements that form the backbone of The Gnoll Credo’s basic tenets, from “If you can’t eat it, wear it, wield it or carry it, leave it behind,” to “Stay alive. Hopeless battles are hopeless. Dead is dead,” to the final urging of “Die biting the throat.”

The declarations open J. Stanton’s book, “The Gnoll Credo,” (100 Watt Press, $10.95 paperback), a novel that explores humans’ relationship to the rest of the world and other creatures, where civilization has taken us and what it’s taken from us.

“I started writing what later became the first page. The credo itself,” said Stanton, a Lake Tahoe-area writer and publisher

of home and arcade video games and other media. “I thought, ‘It will be interesting.'”

Read the whole story

Heavenly’s new leader bullish on ski resort’s future

By Kathryn Reed

Pete Sonntag comes across as a man who would rather be answering questions on a chairlift in between runs than sitting in his spacious office.

As the new leader of Heavenly Mountain Resort, he’s eager to get on the mountain – he skis and snowboards. After all, the former Vail ski and snowboard school director has only skied his mountain 1½ days.



Heavenly GM Pete Sonntag is eager to make some turns. Photo/Kathryn Reed

When he spent the summer of 1997 in Reno many of his days were on the trails in the basin, climbing most of the higher peaks.

Having started his job in August, he's been familiarizing himself with the area via his running shoes and bicycles. He's passionate about cycling – road and mountain.

It's not just the outdoor terrain Sonntag is getting used to. He headed west knowing Lake Tahoe can be a difficult work environment.

"I did come in knowing there were challenges," Sonntag said in a wide-ranging sit down interview with *Lake Tahoe News*.

He believes the resort has a strong team in place so he's relying on those players to steer him through landmines before he gets a feel for the lay of the political and regulatory landscape.

"I want to have a positive impact on our company and community," Sonntag said. "I would say we're in a period of transition in our company. We are actually looking to make the company stronger. That's reflected in restructuring at the highest level."

Sonntag reports to Blaise Carrig, former chief operating officer at Heavenly, who is co-president of the Mountain Division. Sonntag's titles are general manager and vice president. He is running the day-to-day operation at the bi-state resort.

Sonntag says a similarity between them is being competitive. A couple things setting the two men apart are Sonntag will live at the lake, while Carrig lived in the valley. Sonntag has children – ages 6, 8 and 10. Plan to see the Sonntag gang at the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena a lot – the kids are big into hockey.

Sonntag expects being in the community as a dad will allow him

to hear plenty of “unfiltered feedback.”

He’s optimistic Heavenly will have another profitable winter. Although on-mountain figures were good for Vail Resorts last season, the company’s overall numbers were down because of the real estate sector.

Still, Sonntag believes the ski industry is rebounding.

“I feel like it’s the strength of the brand at each (Vail-owned) mountain, which is built on great guest service,” Sonntag said. “People still value time with their family. A ski vacation is incredible. It’s a valuable way to spend time with your family.”

Looking forward, Sonntag won’t point to what the next improvement to the resort will be beyond the Feb. 1 opening of Tamarack Lodge near the top of the gondola.

“Every year we need to look at what needs to be done immediately, then three to five years, and what might be done in 20 years,” Sonntag said. “It’s an ongoing conversation. There are a lot of ideas.”

He said it would be a matter of prioritizing the ideas, and analyzing the impacts to the company and guests.

“We’re bullish about the future,” Sonntag said.

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2 workshops to help parents understand costs of college

Parents are invited to attend a free one-hour College Planning Relief workshop hosted by Beatrice Schultz of Truckee-based

Westface Financial. This workshop will highlight the specific steps of financial preparation for college.

The workshop will provide parents with advice on how to budget for the total cost of college, how to maximize financial aid qualifications. Additionally, Schultz will dispel myths of public versus private schools, and offer insight regarding best practices for school selection.

Similar to credit cards that offer airline miles, hotel points or money back offers, the SAGE Scholarship Program, a joint venture of College Planning Relief and SAGE Scholars Inc. offers a similar program that builds college scholarship money.

The educational workshops will be Oct. at 6pm at the North Tahoe High School and Oct. 20 at 6pm at Truckee High School.

These one-hour workshops are complimentary, but reservations are requested by calling (530) 725.8599 or sign up online.

Musical-comedy ‘I Say Nevada’ in Minden

Saturday Night Live meets the Sierra when the Dakota Organization and the Brewery Arts Center Performing Arts Collaborative (BACPAC) bring “I Say Nevada” to the CVIC Hall in Minden on Oct. 15-17.

Tickets may be purchased at the Copeland Cultural Arts Center, 1572 Highway 395, or by calling (775) 265.2942 or email at thedakotaorganization.com. Ticket prices are $17 for general admission, and $10 for seniors and students.

Local author and musician, Bob Reid (of Me and Bobby McGee) conceived this hilarious romp through Nevada. The production rocks the foundations of the Capitol dome with this new revised version of his original creation. Directed by BACPAC's Karen Chandler, this musical sketch comedy lampoons the politics and the culture of the Silver State and is perfectly timed for Nevada Day and some pre-election fun.

This show was a hit in Carson City in 2008 and has been updated to the "Government Bailout Edition."

Performances are scheduled at the historic CVIC Hall, 1602 Esmeralda, Minden on Oct. 15 and Oct. 16 at 7:30pm with a matinee performance on Oct. 17 at 2pm.

A portion of the proceeds of this performance will benefit the Alzheimer's Association.

Low-cost plants available at Nevada forestry nursery

The Nevada Division of Forestry State Tree Nursery in Washoe Valley still has a great selection of low-cost, conservation plants available for fall planting.

Fall is an optimum time for planting. Warm soils encourage root growth before the ground freezes.

Fall plantings with an already established root system will be more tolerant of the summer heat. Take advantage of this time to come visit the Washoe Nursery before it closes for the winter on Oct. 16.

The nursery will be open to the public from 8:30am to 3pm

Thursday through Saturday. Plants are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

For a list of available species, please call the nursery at (775) 849.0213 or visit the website. Most species are available in D-pots for $2.25.

The nursery is designed to assist landowners by providing plant material suitable for conservation uses such as, but not limited to, windbreaks, soil erosion control, water conservation and wildlife habitats. Plants purchased at the Washoe Nursery must be used for conservation purposes as provided for by NRS 528.105.

The plants are all grown and maintained at the nursery and are conditioned to survive Northern Nevada’s cold winters and hot summers. The nursery is located in Washoe Valley at 885 Eastlake Blvd.

Facebook the movie is more than being friends



The Social Network

Rated PG-13

4.5 bagels out of 5

By Howie Nave

First off, I have to admit it’s pretty surreal posting daily on the very social networking site that has been turned into a movie. It’s also trippy that had Facebook creator Mark Zuckerberg (played eerily to perfection by Jesse Eisenberg) learned better social skills when it came to the opposite sex, he probably wouldn’t have invented the social network known as Facebook.

You can bet that MySpace founders Tom Anderson and Chris DeWolfe would have wished for that.

“The Social Network” is not just about Zuckerberg, but also about the obstacles that were created as the money and popularity started rising. The movie is explained in a narrative format with flashback scenes giving us a peek into the environment as to how it was invented. The movie is edited in a way that it moves along at a pace that keeps the viewer interested even if you’re not into the high-tech geeky stuff. One moment you’re on campus thinking that Facebook was a means to checking out the hot chicks on campus and then speeds forward to the present where your friends are suing you for untold millions and then back to Zuckerberg’s awkward behavior in a social environment getting ready to create the world’s premiere social device to connect people from around the world.



In essence, the movie is less about the genius of the invention but more about those who you thought were your friends and then want to back stab you in any way they can. Ultimately money is to blame as the stakes became higher than anyone could have imagined – not to mention bragging rights for historical reasons.

At the heart of this movie is actor Jesse Eisenberg who's come a long way from "Adventureland," "Zombieland" and on-land movies such as "The Squid and the Whale." He not only has Zuckerberg's characteristics down, but also has an uncanny resemblance giving "The Social Network" almost the look of a documentary.

What's interesting is at its core Facebook was first conceived and limited to is fellow Harvard students, but was expanded to other colleges in the Boston area before becoming the network phenom that it is today. And to think had he not been dumped by his girlfriend, Erica (Rooney Mara) and getting drunk pulling off an all-nighter creating the seed of what was to come we might not be communicating here at all now would we?

Directed by David Fincher and written by Aaron Sorkin (creator of TV's "The West Wing") "The Social Network" also surrounds itself with a top-notch supporting cast that includes Andrew Garfield as Eduardo Saverin, Facebook's co-founder, Josh Pence and Armie Hammer as two brothers who claim Zuckerberg stole their idea and Justin Timberlake in a first-rate job as Napster founder Sean Parker. But it's Eisenberg as the nerdy Zuckerberg who manages to be the most interesting of the lot as is Sorkin and Fincher who have crafted a modern day classic within our lifetime.

"The Social Network" is rated PG-13 for sexual content, drug and alcohol use, language and clocks in at two hours.

Howie Nave is host/emcee/manager of The Improv at Harveys. You

can hear him Monday-Friday 6 to 10am on KRLT FM-93.9.

Hollywood film director at LTCC for 2 events

Lake Tahoe Community College Theatre Arts Department presents film producer David Wisnievitz on two consecutive Mondays in the Duke Theatre.

Both evenings are free of charge and open to LTCC students and the community.

Wisnievitz has worked in a variety of positions on a number of major films, including “Selena,” “Searching for Bobby Fisher,” and “Training Day,” starring Denzel Washington. He is also an Emmy Award-nominee.

On Oct. 18, 7 to 8:30pm, Wisnievitz will be speaking about the film industry. Whether your interest is in acting, directing, producing, screenwriting, technical and design, or just as a fan of film, Wisnievitz’s insider insights into the business will illuminate this sometimes mysterious, and always fascinating industry.

On Oct. 25, 7 to 10pm, the LTCC Theatre Department will be conducting an “Auditioning for Film” workshop. Participants will have the opportunity to go through the audition process and receive feedback from Wisnievitz. There is a limit of 15 participants and interested people must be 17 or older. Those interested in participating should register in advance by sending an email to Susan Boulanger, director of theatre, at Boulanger@ltcc.edu. Indicate age range and male/female. Those not participating in the audition are welcome to attend the

workshop and observe.