Big Springs Gardens open to public again

By Sacramento Bee

Don Phillips didn’t want to leave his mountain paradise. Now he doesn’t have to go – and we’re welcome to visit.

Almost a year after Phillips announced the permanent closing of his Big Springs Gardens near Sierra City, the lush retreat is again open to the public.

“We’re working to keep the place open forever,” said Phillips, who turned 86 in October. “That was my dream.”

Nicknamed “Monet in the Mountains,” Big Springs has attracted more than 20,000 visitors up Highway 49 for brunch or barbecue and a stroll through 113 acres of amazing gardens and Sierra forest. Its beauty draws many painters who – like legendary French impressionist Claude Monet – find unmatched inspiration in the mix of flowers and water. With the 8,600-foot Sierra Buttes as a backdrop, its high country setting just makes it more precious.

Read the whole story

Alligator stories at Zephyr Cove library

The Douglas County Public Library in Zephyr Cove presents Alligator Stories and Crafts on July 16 at 1:30pm.

Miss Carol will read “Zack’s Alligator” by Shirley Mozelle. Children will sing songs, watch an alligator grow, go on a gator hunt, and make a craft to take home. For ages 3 and up; young children should be accompanied by an adult.

Sign up by July 15.

The Douglas County Public Library is located at 233 Warrior Way. For more information, call (775) 588.6411 or visit douglas.lib.nv.us.

Tahoe Shakespeare Fest puts on abridged version

By Forrest Hartman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival begins a six-week run today and, for the first time in the organization’s history, it’s doing so without a William Shakespeare-penned production on the schedule.

There’s no “Hamlet,” no “Romeo and Juliet” and no “Taming of the Shrew.” Rather, the company has opted for a three-person homage to the Bard, “The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged),” and a lengthy concert series featuring everything from classical music to rock and blues.

Organizers admit the situation isn’t ideal, but they promise the quality of the entertainment will be solid and that they’re working to bring full-scale Shakespeare back to Sand Harbor as soon as possible.

Read the whole story

Area photographers’ work on display in Minden

Nine photographers share their images for the month of July at the Holiday Inn Express in Minden. This “mini-gallery” is being coordinated through the Minden Holiday Inn Express by the Carson Valley Arts Council and Copeland Cultural Arts Center.



July focuses on local photography. August will showcase members of the Carson Valley Artist Association, and September will bring nine different photographers, most of whom are members of the Carson Valley Photo Club.

Photographers participating in the July exhibit include Eddie Ford, Tim Ford, NJ Thompson, Bonnie Mahl, Nancy Hulsey, Kathy Port, Manny Diaz, Dean Ward, and Tamyra Crossley.

Wild West Weekend at Squaw

This weekend, Squaw Valley saddles up again for Wild Wild West Weekend with a host of Western-themed events high in the Sierra. Wild Wild West Weekend offers adults and kids the opportunity to channel their inner-cowboys at the High Camp Corral for western-style fun. Pony rides, a petting zoo, authentic western-style BBQs, and two days of live music are all part of the wild weekend July 10-11.

Both days of the Wild Wild West Weekend feature Western-style barbecuesfor lunch and dinner, pony rides, paintball shootouts and a petting zoo taking place all day at the High Camp Corral.

For more information on Wild Wild West Weekend at Squaw Valley, call (5300 583.6985 or visit www.squaw.com.

Slew of acts booked at Valhalla for July

Variety of acts to take over Tahoe Tallac Site on the South Shore in July during the annual Valhalla Music and Art Festival.

The hot, spicy sounds of New Orleans comes to Valhalla on July 9 with The Bayou Boys performing at the Boathouse Theatre at 7pm. The music will transport the audience to the swamps of the Louisiana bayou with its blend of Zydeco, New Orleans Rhythm and Blues and Cajun.

Keeping it traditional is Ron Bombardier who sings in Cajun French, Creole French and English. Ticket prices are $15 for adults, $10 ages 13-17, and 12 and under $5.



Dream Spirit

Next on the lineup at the Tallac Historic Site is the Folsom Lake College Afro-Cuban Funk Band (ACF) on July 10 at the Boathouse Theatre. The 7:30pm performance will feature the music of West-Africa and Cuba with influences from funk, rhythm and blues, jazz, ska and reggae. The musicians have coalesced around the idea that “going global” is not a phenomenon limited to the economic and geo-political realms. The heart of ACF’s musical performances is improvisation. Tickets are $10 for adults and $5 for kids.

On July 12, Ann Thennes returns for the Summer Trans Dance Series with her expression and meditation through dance. It’s a free event and starts at 6pm at the Grand Hall. Thennes works with the elements, energies, rhythms and animals that surround the Tahoe basin and has experience in classical ballet, West African dance and free form dance meditation.

Tahoe Improv Players take the Boathouse Theatre stage on July 13 at 7:30pm. Skits n’ bits are made up on the spot from themes suggested by the audience. Tickets are $10 for adults and $5 for children.

For celtic, classical and folk music with some renaissance and pop sprinkled on top, head to Dream Spirit Baroque Band on July 14 at 7:30pm at the Boathouse Theatre. The folk chamber music is easy listening music representing different cultures and eras.

Don’t be afraid to visit Tahoe Mystery Writer Todd Borg who’ll be hanging out at the Twin Cabins from July 16–22 from 10am to 4pm.

For a complete summer festival line up, click here or call (530) 541.4975.

Washoe grinding rock tells stories about Tahoe’s past

By Kathryn Reed

Despite granite being the predominate rock in the Lake Tahoe Basin, it’s not the best hard surface to use for grinding nuts into food because it breaks down and erodes.

This is one reason the Washoe Indians are believed to have had more than their share of gallstones, Darrel Cruz said. Cruz is the tribal historic preservation officer for the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California.

Walking behind Lake Tahoe Community College near Trout Creek is what locals call Indian Rock. It is an Indian grinding rock whose age is unknown. But it’s likely the Washoe were using it into the 1950s before white settlers drove them out.



Darrel Cruz of the Washoe Tribe at the grinding rock behind Lake Tahoe Community College. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The rock is called Lam.

“This is where the women grinded up seeds and food,” Cruz explained. The pounding tool that made the large divots – some 6 inches in diameter and a few inches deep – is a Goommum. The action and end result is what a modern mortar and pestle would produce.

The Bissec was another rock used by the Indians. This was more for grinding and produced the more shallow indentations on the rock. A push-pull action was used.

Women would sit or kneel as they did their work in what was their outdoor kitchen of sorts. Cruz said his grandmother preferred to sit while she worked hour after hour.

This area in the meadow the Washoe call the Mutushahoo Watah. It’s not an exact location, but the general area.

“There would have been a camp site there for a large part of the summer,” Cruz said. “(How long they would stay) all depends on the available resources.”

With this particular spot next to the creek, it would provide fresh water for cooking and a swimming hole for the children. Just like today, bear and coyote would meander through. Snowcapped mountains are in the distance and a forest of trees sets the perimeter.

What’s changed is the surrounding development and occasional horn reverberating from Highway 50.



Indentations

in the granite are from the Washoe making food.

This rock in the middle of the meadow is there for anyone to see – and walk on. The Washoe prefer it not be a jungle gym, but they also know that with so much of their past on land they don't own, it's impossible to protect all facets of their history.

"We have so many of these places scattered all over," Cruz said of rocks like this one.

One day Cruz envisions working with the city and college to create signs explaining the history of the area and the rock in particular.

Until then, he hopes people will understand this slab of granite is more than just a rock to the Washoe people.

Students at LTCC and in Lake Tahoe Unified School District have been the beneficiaries of the rock being a teaching tool. To this the Washoe see no conflict or sense of disrespect.

"I think most of the Washoe people hold places like this as still important to them," Cruz said.

Sierra Club's annual food-wine-art event

The Tahoe Area Sierra Club is having a celebration of regional wine, food and art at the Tahoe Stonehenge House (1082 Mt.

Canary Drive, South Lake Tahoe) on July 22 from 5-9pm.

Tickets are $35 in advance and $40 at the door. The evening's events include a raffle and silent auction. This year's featured artist is Stateline photgrapher Dirk Yuricich, the featured winery is Wente Vineyards and beer is being provided by Mt. Tallac Brewing Company. Dory Smith wlll perform during the evening. Gourmet treats are by Two Sisters Catering.

Contact Jeanne at (530) 577.4945 for ticket information, or email stonehengerocks2010@hotmail.com. Click here for more information.

Wildfire summit at Harveys on July 9

Firefighting agencies, Nevada Fire Safe Council, University of Nevada and University of California Cooperative Extensions' Living with Fire program and others are hosting the inaugural Lake Tahoe Basin Wildfire Summit from 9am-5pm July 9 at Harvey's Casino in Stateline.

The goal of the summit is to motivate and empower residents to take action now to protect homes and communities from embers that can attack during a wildfire.

The summit will provide information and tools to assist residents to reduce wildfire risks to their homes and communities in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Speakers will provide an overview of fire issues in the Tahoe basin three years after the Angora Fire of 2007 destroyed 254 homes in Lake Tahoe.

Topics include Tahoe basin rules and resources for creating

defensible space around homes, how to improve the structural components of homes to better withstand wildfire embers, and how insurance companies rate homes for their fire hazards. Break out sessions will be held with staff from each Tahoe basin fire agency about specific concerns in their district in order to develop recommendations for reducing wild-fire risk in each basin community.

All residents and homeowners in the Lake Tahoe Basin are invited to attend. There is no cost, but registration is required. To register, go to www.livingwithfire.info/tahoe.

This summit is part of the Lake Tahoe Basin inaugural Wildfire Awareness Week July 3-11.

Camp Sunrise extends registration deadline

Children's parents now have until July 21 to register for Barton Foundation's annual children's bereavement camp – Camp Sunrise – set for Aug. 27-29 at Galilee Camp & Conference Center in Glenbrook.

There is no cost to attend.

Camp Sunrise is designed for children ages 7-14 who have experienced the death of a family member. These children receive grief education and support from trained councilors and social workers, and they are able to work through any bereavement issues they may have. The weekend is designed to leave them with a more positive outlook for the future.

The camp is funded by the Barton Foundation and is a program

of Barton Hospice.

Camp Sunrise is founded on the understanding that every child deserves the opportunity to grieve in a safe, supportive and understanding environment. The camp will be at Galilee Camp & Conference Center, beginning late afternoon Aug. 27 and ending midday Aug. 29.

Residents of the South Shore, Minden, Gardnerville and the Carson City areas may apply to attend.

For more information or to register, call (530) 543.5909, or visit www.bartonhealth.org/events.