North Shore gearing up for long July 4 weekend

North Lake Tahoe plays host to a number of Independence events and celebrations beginnng July 2.

“The Fourth of July holiday traditionally brings thousands of visitors to North Lake Tahoe,” Bill Hoffman, executive director of the Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitor Bureau, said in a statement. “And this year is proving to be no different. Our drive market, especially the Bay Area, Sacramento and Northern Nevada, already has reservations on the books, many taking a few extra vacation days to enjoy all the lake has to offer.”

Incline Village pulls out all the stops with a multi-day celebration, scheduled for July 2 through July 4, called Red, White and Tahoe Blue. Special events include a 4th of July concert, flag raising, special lunch for veterans, patriotic chalk drawing contest and ice cream social for children, parade, dress-up-doggie contest, opening ceremonies and rubber ducky race. The festivities culminate with the Fourth of July Fireworks at 9:30pm.

Fireworks get under way at Kings Beach July 3. The show starts at 9:30pm and can be best seen from the Kings Beach State Recreation Area. There’s also a Viewing Party at the North Tahoe Event Center, starting at 6:30pm on the water in Kings Beach. For $10 attendees get entry to front row fireworks, live music and dancing, along with a no host bar and food available for purchase throughout the evening.

The Village at Squaw Valley hosts new releases and summer classics as part of its Summer Movie Series July 1 at dusk. Flicks are shown in the plaza on the big screen under the stars. The Squaw Valley 4th of July Fine Arts and Crafts

Festival is July 2-4, while the resort's popular Mountaintop Stargazing is July 2-3. There is also a Family Disco Skate Party scheduled for July 2 at the High Camp Ice Pavilion.

The holiday weekend also starts on July 1 at the Village at Northstar in Truckee with a Family Golf Clinic at 4pm, followed by the annual Outdoor Movie Night (every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night through Aug. 28), with the "Bee Movie", "Little Giants" and "Earth" running over the July 4 holiday weekend. The resort is also hosting Kid's Adventure Day Camps, giving parents some solo time, with interactive learning experiences that involve nature hikes, games and activities.

Tahoe City's 64th annual fireworks celebration begins at 9:30pm at Commons Beach July 4. Prime viewing spots are from the beach, where family picnics are popular, as well as various locations throughout town along North Lake Boulevard.

On the West Shore just outside of Tahoe City, Granlibakken Lodge has got a Western barbecue July 4. Guests here get a special rate when they stay two nights with the third night free and can walk or ride bikes to the Tahoe City fireworks.

It's an old-fashioned July Fourth Holiday Celebration in Truckee July 4 with a morning Truckee Firecracker Mile fun run and walk for all ages followed by a 10am hometown parade in historical downtown along Commercial Row.

Taste of Tahoe raising

thousands of dollars to fight cancer



With Taste of Tahoe at the halfway point, more than $30,000 has been raised. The money goes toward the South Shore's Relay for Life event, which raises money for the American Cancer Society.

The South Shore's Relay for Life is Aug. 7-8 at Kahle Community Park in Stateline.

Each week a restaurant on the South Shore has volunteered to be the featured dining establishment. The eatery donates a part of the profits to Taste of Tahoe.

Other businesses and media outlets, like *Lake Tahoe News*, have stepped up to the plate to give to this cause either with money or advertising.

For more information about Taste of Tahoe, click here.

Animals, children steal show at El Dorado County Fair

By Kathryn Reed

PLACERVILLE – Brooks & Dunn are right, cowgirls don't cry.

With bodies flying, sheep stomping on or near them, and the crowd whopping it up, it was the young girls who got up, dusted themselves off and looked like they were ready to ride

the bulls in the pen behind the arena. The boys, well, a few of them left in tears.

Mutton bustin’ can be a rough sport.



Megan Ehle, 7, of Placerville is off to a fast start in mutton bustin'. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The announcer assured everyone at the El Dorado County Fair on Friday that every child was there because he or she wanted to be – not because their Wrangler-Roper-Stetson clad parent wanted them to be.

Broken into age groups 4-5 and 6-7, girls and boys compete together. Several of the little ones didn’t look quite old enough to be riding. It didn’t appear much would have stopped them.

Megan Ehle, 7, had a big grin on her face after her first mutton bustin’ contest. A little scratch near her elbow will be a reminder of the day’s fun.

Across the fairgrounds the animals are the ones being judged.

When Jennifer Weber, 16, first started raising swine it was difficult when auction day would come. Even though she knows

she’ll be in tears today when 6-month-old Sammy is sold, the paycheck will be welcome.

She and her Hampshire took first place on Friday in senior showmanship. Weber would take the pig for walks on her family’s 6 acres in Shingle Springs. Some of its favorite foods include blackberries and Jelly Bellies.

To those who didn’t grow up on a farm or don’t live on one now, the judging for the goat milking champion was eye opening. Mammaries are the big deal in this competition.

Plenty of farm animals are on display – beef cattle, swine, turkeys, chickens, rabbits, guinea pigs and goats.

For those who don’t want to mess with animals, there is the mechanical bull. Plus, there’s a ton of meat to eat.

Aromas of all sorts fill the grounds, ranging from sizzling beef to kettle corn.

The four-day event that wraps up Sunday is worth going to multiple days because there is so much going on. Music genres run the gamut – some professional, some competitive.

Demonstration halls are filled with baked items, photographs, knitting, quilts, canned goods and more that were entered by county residents to be judged. Some of the amateur photographs look like the shooter should consider switching professions, they are that good.

At the games of chance and carnival rides is where most of the teenagers could be found.

To find out what is going on at the fair on Saturday and Sunday, click on schedule.

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Hot August Nights expanding to Long Beach

By Ray Hagar, Reno Gazette-Journal

Hot August Nights officials said Thursday that the region's largest special event will begin in Long Beach, Calif., in 2011 before coming home to Lake Tahoe and the Reno-Sparks area.

Both mayors of Reno and Sparks said they fear that expanding the special event to Long Beach might be the precursor to the event eventually leaving Northern Nevada.

Hot August Nights, a celebration of classic cars and rock 'n' roll, began in Reno in 1986. Organizers estimate that it brings in 800,000 people and $3.5 million to the Reno-Sparks area each year.

It will expand to Long Beach next year after widespread requests from cities wanting part of the event in their communities, said Bruce Walter, Hot August Nights executive director.

Read the whole story

Community garden takes root

in South Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Hands covered in dirt, a trowel being passed around, plastic containers of tiny produce, laughter and learning. It's all part of the recipe to create a community garden behind Mt. Tallac High School.

Dirt in five raised beds made of bamboo are gently being molded into rows. Miniature holes are dug with what's called the tiny shovel. In go the spinach, lettuce, radishes, carrots, basil and cilantro.



Bijou and South Tahoe High students start a community garden. Photos/Kathryn Reed

A net covers the beds to prevent critters from munching on the veggies.

This is all part of the final project for a group of students in AP Environmental Science at South Tahoe High School.

Mostly, though, it's eight students in the Friday Night Live club from Bijou Community School doing the work.

Danny Reyes, a junior at STHS, spearheaded the project to get the younger students involved. He and a few of his friends who were part of the planting project on Thursday are mentors to the FNL kids.

Once a week the older students do a team building activity with the FNL group.



Catheryn Linkul plants cilantro.

“I like making more things for the Earth,” Catheryn Linkul said. If the fourth-grader’s mom lets her, she hopes to be able to check on the garden this summer.

Dana Tumbaga said the idea is to get the community involved in the garden. People who help with it this summer will be able to have some of the harvest.

Reyes said the students are working it out among themselves on



Danny Reyes makes sure the work is

getting done.

a rotating basis to ensure the garden is cared for.

Wynonna part of Lake Tahoe Music Festival lineup

In addition to being once named “Top Female Vocalist of the Year” by the Academy of Country Music, Wynonna has also been referred as “the greatest country singer since Patsy Cline” by Rolling Stone Magazine. And this year she is making history at the Lake Tahoe Music Festival by being the first country music performer in 28 years to join the festival lineup.

“An Evening with Wynonna” takes place at Northstar-At-Tahoe July 31 as part of the season’s 2010 three-week concert series July 22–Aug. 7.

Known as one of country music’s most popular and well-respected artists, Wynonna will share her intimate and charismatic stage show with festival attendees.

“Adding a country star to our concert series is a first for us but we wanted to do it right and Wynonna fits the bill perfectly,” Lisa Krueger, chief executive officer of the Lake Tahoe Music Festival, said in a press release. “In the past five years we’ve booked our concert lineup based on feedback from attendees and in our last annual survey a majority of respondents asked for country music and we listened. Wynonna’s a talented and industry-recognized sensation who goes beyond country, offering a diverse musical range that we’re certain our attendees will embrace.”

Ever since her record-breaking, quintuple platinum debut solo CD, 1992's "Wynonna," which reached No. 1 on the country chart and loomed in the top five of Billboard's "Top Albums" chart, the singer has remained a recognizable, yet unpredictable icon. Wynonna's latest album, "Sing: Chapter 1" pays homage to country, rock, blues and soul-baring standards originated by legendary artists that have formed the unique soundtrack to her own life.

In addition to Wynonna, the Lake Tahoe Music Festival's 2010 season builds upon the growth of the past two years and brings America's 40th Anniversary Tour, Natalie Cole and Michael McDonald along with Broadway's Best with Debbie Gravitte and Simply Sinatra featuring Steve Lippia. The festival also adds two "Strictly Classical" concerts July 21 and 28 featuring the premiere of the Orchestra Academy and guest soloists and Academy instructors Ariana Ghez, principal oboist for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Jerry Grossman, principal cellist for the Metropolitan Opera.

Tickets for Wynonna are $42 for general admission and $54 preferred and are on sale online or by phone at 877-772.5425.

Effort under way to promote river friendly landscaping

In an area that features some of Mother Nature's finest work, Truckee homeownership has its joys and unique responsibilities.

Many live close to bodies of water such as Donner Lake, the Truckee River, and Donner and Alder Creeks. However, many of these properties may actually have a negative impact on the

region’s water quality. The Truckee River Watershed Council and the Sierra Nevada Alliance have kicked off a River Friendly Landscaping campaign to help remedy the situation.

“Basically, the Watershed Council is asking homeowners to voluntarily install erosion control on their properties,” Andy Otto, director of Land Use Compatibility Programs, said in a statement. “When implemented correctly, these landscaping methods will help reduce soil erosion, prevent storm water runoff and stop pollutants from eventually making their way to the Truckee River. If they get to the water, the pollutants cause harm to the watershed and to the fish and animals that feed there.”

The Watershed Council and Sierra Nevada Alliance have identified neighborhoods where they hope homeowners will jump onboard the River Friendly Landscaping program. These neighborhoods are close to sensitive lakes and streams. The following property types are of special interest: homes on steep slopes, sites with highly compacted soil, and homes that are close to surface water. There are four identified neighborhoods: north shore of Donner Lake, Tahoe Donner, and the Truckee River corridor in Placer County, and along East and West River Streets. Evaluations will be given on a first come, first serve basis. While any homeowner in any neighborhood can participate in the program, homes in the focus areas will be given priority.

Interested property owners are encouraged to call (530) 550.8760 to schedule a free site evaluation. Based upon the assessment, an engineering consultant will design a plan with recommendations (free of charge) for the property based on erosion control issues. When the project is completed, River Friendly Landscaping staffers will once again visit the property. Upon certification of completion, the homeowner will be eligible for up to a $400 rebate.

In addition to reducing sediment and pollution in the Truckee

River, a native plant/low maintenance landscaping makeover may increase property value and aesthetics.

The program has been funded by California through the State Water Resources Control Board.

An informational mixer is slated for June 19 from 4-6pm at the Truckee Donner Public Utility District's Patricia S. Sutton Memorial conservation garden. Call (530) 550.8760, ext. 4 to RSVP to River Friendly Landscaping or just show up. You can also visit www.truckeeriverwc.org for more information.

Clinic for businesses seeking loans

A business loan clinic will be conducted June 22 from 9:30am–12:30pm at Lake Tahoe Community College.

Lenders will be present that support SBA lending programs that include:

* Business loans for business owner occupied commercial real estate and business equipment

* $500 – $2 million businesses loans for existing businesses with historic repayment ability

* $500 – $250,000 businesses loans for existing businesses

* Unsecured loans up to $25,000 available

* Free technical assistance

* All owners must be present to apply

Loans for start-ups businesses (less than two years in operation) require the clients to receive business counseling from a technical assistance provider before approved loans are disbursed. The counseling is free. The Greater Sacramento Small Business Development Center, the Nevada Small Business Development Center and the Nevada Microenterprise Initiative will have representatives available to schedule counseling. The loan clinic is for existing businesses only.

Begin the day with “Secrets to Success: Blue Ribbon Winners Workshop” featuring Melodie Ulman of Freshies, Jana Spano of Sealed with a Kiss and Ashley Mattila of Marcus Ashley Galleries. The workshop will be before the loan clinic from 8–9:30am at the Lake Tahoe Community College, in the Creekside Room.

Seating is limited. Call (775) 588.1728 to RSVP for one or both workshops.

Lake Tahoe South Shore and North Lake Tahoe chambers of commerce, California and Nevada Small Business Development Centers, government agencies, banks, non-bank lenders, a certified development company, and the Future Business Leaders of Lake Tahoe Club are the hosts.

Live painting performance in South Tahoe



Michael Pukac will be in South Lake Tahoe Fourth of July weekend for the closing of his solo exhibit “Steampunk Fantasy Art.”

Cosmic Creations Tattoo is bringing back the Los Angeles-based artist.

Well known in the Los Angeles art scene for his live painting performances, his studio work basks in the land of unicorn powered zeppelins, narwhal chases, and

DJs spinning on hot air balloon rides. Close your eyes and swim into a steampunk Atlantis wonderland. He crossbreeds different genres, eras, and conventions of painting into phantasmagorical anti-epics that exist in the air or in the sea. The show has already been up for about a month and will be closing this 4th of July weekend with Pukac doing some live painting.

Cosmic Creations is at 949 Balbijou Road, South Lake Tahoe.

Cool Black Kettle, Midlife Crisis to play county fair



Fair-goers from the Lake Tahoe region will surely recognize the names of a couple of popular local bands at the fair this year – Midlife Crisis band and Jesse Kalin and the Cool Black Kettle Band.

Jesse Kalin and the Cool Black Kettle Band is an infectious rock band based out of South Lake Tahoe where they play often at Cabo Wabo and many other venues. They play June 19 at 1:30pm, 4pm, and 5:30pm on the Wells Fargo Stage.

Midlife Crisis' lead singer,Tullio Sarra went to school in Tahoe and has spent much of his life in the local music scene. But it wasn't until a casual jam session with a bunch of guys at the Crossroads Coffee Shop in Somerset that the five-piece Midlife Crisis band was born.

They play June 19 at 5:30pm, 7pm, and 9:30pm on the Wells Fargo Stage.