Downtown Truckee Thursdays return in June

Downtown Truckee Thursdays 2010 will kick off June 17 and continue through Aug. 19 from 5-9pm.

The 10-week series was launched three years ago by the Truckee Downtown Merchants Association in an effort to highlight and revitalize the town and underscore a Think Local mentality. Offering a host of children's activities, live music, art, the Foothills Farmers Market, a beer garden and vendors of all ilk, this lively weekly event is for locals and visitors.

"It's something the community really responds to," Andy Mond, Truckee Thursday's event manager, said in a press release. "Truckee Thursdays is an event that truly brings alive the Think Local, Be Local, Buy Local premise in a low-key way that is fun and entertaining for the whole family."

With free parking, folks stroll through the downtown district, popping into shops, sampling food and wine, listening to music at the train depot and catching up with friends and neighbors. Partnering with Kidzone Museum, kid-friendly activities abound including a bounce house, arts and crafts and much more.

Last year the 10-week event attracted more than 7,000 attendees and event organizers expect a 50 percent increase this year. The summer-long event is funded by the Truckee Downtown Merchants Association, the Town of Truckee, DBI Beverage and through sponsorships and participating vendor fees.

For more information about participating in Downtown Truckee Thursdays either as a vendor, entertainer, nonprofit or sponsor, contact info@truckeethursdays.com

Docents needed at Tahoe City Field Station

Do you love Lake Tahoe and have an interest in learning more about the lake? Do you enjoy science, learning new information, and sharing your knowledge?

Residents who would like to help people learn about the region's environmental assets and challenges are needed to serve as volunteer docents at the UC Davis Eriksson Education Center. The education center is located at the Tahoe City Field Station, commonly referred to as the Historic Fish Hatchery, just east of downtown Tahoe City at the corner of Lake Forest Road and Highway 28.

Visitors to the center include school groups from the greater Lake Tahoe-Truckee region as well as area residents and basin visitors.

One three-hour training course and a copy of the UC Davis Docent Training Manual will provide docents all the information they will need to discuss the historic hatchery site, fish of Lake Tahoe, local environmental issues and scientific research in the region. No prior experience is necessary and all are welcome.

The docent training class will be at the UC Davis Field Station on June 26 and June 30 from 1–4pm.

To RSVP for one of these training dates, contact Heather Foslund, AmeriCorps member at (775) 881.7560, ext. 7483 or email hfoslund@ucdavis.edu.

For more information about the docent program, contact TERC

education coordinator Heather Segale at (775) 881.7562 or email hmsegale@ucdavis.edu.

South Shore launches summer with slew of activities

The South Shore Summer Series launches the season June 10-13 with a weekend of live music, culinary delights, paddle-wheeler race, concerts and competitions stretching across the shore from Camp Richardson Resort on the west to Zephyr Cove on the east.

Guy Fieri, Food Network superstar and host of NBC's "Minute To Win It", brings his "Rock 'n' Roll Culinary Tour" to Harrah's Lake Tahoe's South Shore Room June 11. Fieri describes his show as "cooking, music and all the things I can't say or do on TV."

Blue Öyster Cult, listed in VH1's countdown as one of the greatest hard rock bands of all time and cited as a major influence by other acts such as Metallica, will perform in Harrah's South Shore Room June 12.



The Ren Faire returns for two weekend in

June at Camp
Rich.
Photo/Provided

The 50th anniversary of the opening of the original Playboy Club is June 10. To celebrate, Playboy has invited 50 venues in 50 cities to party with them simultaneously on the exact date the first Playboy Club opened in Chicago in 1960 . Vex Nightclub at Harrah's Lake Tahoe is among the chosen elite. The search for the 50/50 Playboy Bunny title will conclude June 10 at Vex. Tickets are $10 in advance or $20 for men and $10 for women at the door.

Multi-talented world welterweight champion Manny Pacquiao will perform with his band and friends at Harrah's Special Events Center June 12 at 7:30pm. Tickets are $49.50 to $199.50, available at Harrah's or online.

The first stop of the X-Dance Action Sports Film Festival is June 10-12 and features the top international films on wakeboarding, surfing, mountain biking, skateboarding, snowboarding and skiing at Tahoe's MontBleu casino. 968 Park Hotel will host the VIP Opening Night Party, to meet and greet the athletes, filmmakers and the godfather of action sports Warren Miller.

Mark Twain's Wild West Weekend at Zephyr Cove Resort springs into action with frog jumping, poetry reading, interactive stories from Mark Twain, and a mini-triathlon for kids June 12-13. The event's highlight is a Mark Twain Lecture Dinner that Saturday and includes a four-course meal with guest speakers Robert Stewart, author of "Aurora, Nevada's Ghost City of Dawn," and Robert Hirst, general editor and official curator of the Mark Twain Project and Papers. Tickets are $100.

The Great Lake Tahoe Sternwheeler Race churns the waters June 13 as the annual battle between Nevada's M.S. Dixie II and

California’s Tahoe Queen continues. The M.S.Dixie II leads the series 8-5. www.zephyrcove.com

The fifth annual South Shore Lake Tahoe Geocaching High Tech Treasure Hunt is June 12-13, with nearly 50 prizes stashed throughout the area waiting to be stalked by an anticipated 350-500 ambitious GPS-wielding trackers. Geocaching is an affordable family-friendly activity – it’s $20 to rent the GPS for the weekend.

The Valhalla Renaissance Faire, June 5-6 and 12-13, at Camp Richardson Resort brings to life the authentic pleasures and pageantry of an Elizabethan country fair.

The inaugural Great Lake Tahoe Chili Cook-off is sanctioned by the International Chili Society, along with live music and Craft Faire complement the weekend festivities held at MontBleu Resort Casino & Spa. Winners of this event are eligible to compete in next fall’s ICS World Championship Cook-off.

Take a step back through time and relive the adventures and rigors of the early pioneers as they forged their way west with the annual Highway 50 Wagon Train. The historical re-enactment of the Great Western Migration is June 5-13, ending in Placerville.

In celebration of its 150th Anniversary, the National Pony Express Association will conduct a re-ride of the Pony Express Trail, June 6-13. The 1,966 mile route follows the Pony Express National Historic Trail through California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas and Missouri.

The Tahoe Derby Dames, Lake Tahoe’s only flat track roller derby league, play a demo bout at Bijou Park in South Tahoe for the Roller Derby June 12.

The 46th annual DeCelle Memorial Lake Tahoe Relay race, June 12, consists of 72 mile, seven-person running relay around

Lake Tahoe. Each member runs 8-12 miles. This is a nonprofit event and proceeds benefit the local high school running programs.

Chickenfoot to headline concert at Harveys

Chickenfoot, the hard rockin' supergroup featuring Sammy Hagar, Joe Satriani, Chad Smith and Michael Anthony, return to the scene of their hit Northern Nevada debut for a blowout concert at the 2010 Lake Tahoe Summer Concert Series at Harveys Outdoor Arena in Stateline on Sept. 11.

Aaron Hagar and The Wabos open the show. Tickets go on sale this May 28 at 10 a.m. via TicketMaster outlets, www.ticketmaster.com and www.apeconcerts.com.

Chickenfoot first performed together at a Sammy Hagar concert in Las Vegas in 2008. Following the show, which included a three-song Chickenfoot set with versions of Led Zeppelin's "Rock and Roll," Traffic's "Dear Mr. Fantasy" and the hard-driving blues nugget, "Going Down," it was clear that the chemistry was there. Their first album was released in June 2009 to critical acclaim and strong sales. A follow-up CD is planned for release later this year.

Tickets are $59.50 in advance and $65 at the door, plus applicable service charges. Tickets available at all Ticketmaster locations and online at www.apeconcerts.com and www.ticketmaster.com.

Lessons about adventurer come to life for Tahoe group

By Laurie Brazil

The enthusiastic and impassioned Carolyn Treanor recently treated guests and members of Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra to the history and background of adventurer and educator Richard Halliburton (1900-1939).

Among many of his accomplishments, he was the author of seven books, all of them New York Times bestsellers. They included: “The Royal Road to Romance”, “The Glorious Adventure”, “New Worlds to Conquer”, “The Flying Carpet, Seven League Boots”, and “The Book of Marvels” – with several remaining on the list until 1938.



Halliburton mingled with the California nobility of his time and among his credentials he was also a cultural ambassador, bringing home to Americans some knowledge of the existence and traditions of foreign people and in turn returning a sense of his own country’s values to the locales he explored. Through the Sea Dragon Expedition he hoped to create a symbolic cultural link between Asia and America, and to show that many societies might meaningfully and peacefully co-exist in one world.

The Sea Dragon 2 Expedition Home Project will commission the building of a Sea Dragon replica in order to trace and complete Halliburton’s failed and fatal attempt to cross the Pacific in March 1939.

Sea Dragon 2 will sail across the Pacific from Hong Kong to

Treasure Island in the San Francisco Bay in 2014 for the 75th anniversary celebration of the opening of the Golden Gate International Exposition, also known as the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair. Treanor stated, "Our goal for the 'Chase the Horizon Project' is to produce a 13-part adventure series and children's animated series with the focus on world geography, history, and culture. The adventure series will be based on the 20th century adventurer Richard Halliburton and the 21st century adventurer Tim Bailey."

Treanor would like to inspire anyone to become involved in this project and she is willing to share her information with any group.

For more information about this event, call Carolyn Treanor at (775) 691.2527 or click here.

Laurie Brazil is a member of Soroptimist International Tahoe Sierra.

Whittell High boys compete in 'beauty pageant'

By Tracy Owen Chapman

ZEPHYR COVE – Whittell High School recently crowned Mr. Whittell and in the process raised $2,000.

It was put on by the senior class for Safe and Sober Grad Night. It is a "beauty pageant" for WHS boys.



Sam Harris is this year's Mr. Whittell. Photo/Tracy Owen Chapman

It begins with an active wear competition, followed by talent and formal wear. Finally, there was a question/answer portion where the boys gave less than serious answers.

This year's competitors were: Cody Nelson, Chris Crawford, Sam Harris, Turner Yates, Miguel Nava, Kevin Novotny and Adam Laub.

Active wear was anything from Harris doing a Poi dance with LED light balls under a black light, to Novotny stacking cups and Yates eating Twinkies.

The talent competition had Laub dancing to music from different eras, Novotny pantomiming behind a screen, Yates playing guitar and singing, and Nelson doing a series of quick changes into various silly outfits.

The highlight was Harris dancing to Beyonce's "Single Ladies." He did the entire dance from her video and brought the house down.

Finally, in the formal wear portion, the boys dressed up and came on stage with escorts and danced, or just strutted around.

Laub won Mr. congeniality; Novotny won Viewer's choice; Nelson was runner-up; and Harris was named Mr. Whittell.

Open mic nights return to Valhalla

The Bare Bones Open Mic nights offer a creative stage for musicians, writers, comedians and other performing artists of all ages.

The entertainment takes place at the Valhalla Grand Hall stage on the South Shore starting at 7pm on May 25, June 29 and Aug. 17. There's a variety of music, comedy, and spoken word and the event is free of charge.



Andrea Wexelblatt of Tahoe Writers Works on an Open Mic Night. Photo/Provided

Tahoe Writers Works is a group of writers, poets and other individuals who are interested in the craft of writing. Once a month they venture out to the Valhalla site to raise money to support the club. Wine and snacks are available at the event and small donations are appreciated.

Bare Bones Open Mic Nights are offered as part of the annual

Valhalla Arts, Music and Theatre Festival. The festival continues through Sept. 30.

For more information, call (530) 541.4975 or click here.

Olympian Bahrke to judge Tails in Tahoe

Two-time Olympic freestyle medalist Shannon Bahrke will be the guest of honor at the inaugural Tails in Tahoe weekend June 5-6.

The two-day event will include a host of pet-related activities aimed at raising awareness about animal well-being and funds for the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe. Events will be in Tahoe City and the River Ranch Lodge.

Bahrke, a native of Tahoe City who most recently won a bronze medal at the Vancouver Olympics, is an avid animal lover and will be honored with a homecoming celebration by the North Tahoe/Truckee community.

“I am truly honored and humbled to have a homecoming in my honor,” Bahrke, a 1998 graduate of North Lake Tahoe High School, said in a press release. “I come from such a wonderfully supportive community and I am so excited to share my Olympic success with everyone. I certainly was the one who stood at the top of the course and skied, but what I don’t think people realize is every person from Tahoe has had a hand in getting me there. Helping animals is one of my passions and to be able to do this while I’m back home is amazing.”

The weekend kicks off on June 5 with the K-9 Encounters Pet

Expo at the Boatworks Mall Green in Tahoe City. Activities will include Humane Society pet adoptions, a dog wash, a Kids Pet Art Show, the North Tahoe Frisbee Fetch Championships, an agility demonstration by the Ready 2 Run Agility Club, an “Ask a Trainer” session by Ace K-9 Academy, the Strut Your Stuff with Your Mutt Fashion Show and the Hometown Hero presentation to Shannon Bahrke. Live music and an outdoor BBQ will complement the afternoon activities, which run from noon-3pm.

On June 6, the River Ranch Lodge hosts the Seventh Annual Truckee Duckee Derbee and the Dogz in Dudz Contest on its outdoor deck. The rubber duck races are called the “most unpredictable two minutes in Tahoe,” as the rubber duckies must negotiate the fickle currents and eddies of the Truckee River. Cost to sponsor a duck is $10 and the top five ducks are awarded a portion of the overall pot.

The Dogz in Dudz Contest precedes the Derbee and prizes will be awarded to the most stylish and creative canines. There is no cost to enter the contest. All canine companions are encouraged to wear their favorite K-9 T-shirts (think Black Dog, Big Dog, Naughty Dawg). A special prize will be awarded to the crowd favorite.

Live music, a huge raffle and an outdoor barbecue add to the festivities.

Bahrke, who has two canine companions, will serve as the head judge for Dogz in Dudz Contest.

The TDD pre-race party starts at 2pm with live music and registration for Dogz in Dudz. The costume contest will start at 3pm followed by the TDD at 4pm.

For more information and pet-friendly accommodations go to gotahoenorth.com or call (530) 581.0181.

Historic Hotel del Coronado a modern-day attraction

By Lisa Huard

CORONADO – California's Travel and Tourism Commission predicts the number of visitors to California will increase by nearly 3 percent this year. It's anticipated that visitors will spend about $92 billion on food, lodging and other expenses.

That would be a 5 percent increase from 2009, with many of these individuals coming to California from Europe and Canada.

It's amazing talking to visitors, especially from out of the United States, to hear their expectations about what California has to offer. Recently a Soroptimist from Denmark visited the Lake Tahoe Basin. She couldn't comprehend how big just California is.

She thought she could do day trips to San Francisco, Death Valley and Yosemite. We have such opportunities that we should all spend more time traveling in California and really seeing what it has to offer. Keeping dollars in Lake Tahoe isn't such a bad idea either.

Tahoe-ites live in a beautiful place and we love to visit other unique locations. One region I highly recommend is the San Diego area. There is an incredible amount to do throughout the county. This includes theme parks such as Sea World, LegoLand, San Diego Zoo, to beautiful beaches, Old Town, and my favorite, Coronado Island.

As a teacher and aficionado of knowledge I can see that this "island" is in fact a peninsula. So who made a mistake?

Discovering the island

I consider myself lucky to live in Tahoe and even luckier as my closest friends have a home on Coronado Island. Once you arrive, put on your walking shoes or grab a bike, and just enjoy. This resort destination has a lot to see and to learn about. On this particular visit I wanted to learn more about the history of the area, its development as a resort community and what there is to do.



Hotel del Coronado

In a short period of time, Coronado has gone from an island that was separated from shore by a small channel known as the Spanish Bight to a peninsula of some of the most expensive property in the state. It’s filled with swanky hotels, lovely eateries, shops and a community of year-round residents and vacationers from all over the world.

How did of this all come about? It was during the 17th century that Spanish explorer Sebastian Vizcaino discovered a group of islands 17 miles off the coast of Southern California. He named them Las Yslas Coronadas, which translated means the crowned islands. Explorers did little with the beach until the 19th century. At that time it became a safe harbor by whalers to build hide-houses to live in as they worked.

Once Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, massive land grants were provided in the state. With vast land grants came the great rancheros and haciendas of the time.

In 1846, Don Pedro Carrillo was the lucky guy whom was granted the island in the Port of San Diego. He owned this property

for a short amount of time and flipped it for $1,000 to Bezer Simmons who was an American captain of a trading ship.

The island then changed hands several times during the next 39 years until it was purchased by Elisha S. Babcock Jr., Hampton L. Story, and Jacob Gruendike for $110,000. Babcock then invited Heber Ingle and Josephus Collett to become investors. In 1886 this group of men organized the Coronado Beach Company. They are to this day considered the founding fathers of Coronado Island.

Becoming a resort area

The group of investors envisioned a resort community on the beach like no other; a destination resort that would have visitors from all over the world. The island was quickly divided into lots, railroad tracks were laid, and infrastructure developed. They would move visitors by land and by water as they also created the San Diego and Coronado Ferry Company in 1886.

Babcock and Story were businessmen who knew how to spin information to their financial benefit. They even leaked their own news story about a proposed hotel on Coronado Island. This new hotel would be the focal point of tourism in the area.

The divided parcels ranged in price from $500- $1,600 and on the day of the auction they sold 350 lots totaling $110,000 ; their original purchase price of the entire peninsula.

Today, the amount they paid for the entire island would be equivalent to one-eighth of the least expensive home I found on the Island.

The investors began to concentrate on the design and construction of the new hotel. The Beach Company hired James and Watson Reid as the architects of the Hotel del Coronado. Work began almost immediately. The Hotel del Coronado was completed in early 1888 and officially opened its doors to the

public on Feb. 19 that year.

As construction of the Hotel Del began, Coronado Island moved forward in establishing itself as a year-round community. It had its first school session in January 1887 and was located in the walled tent area on Seventh Street until construction of the first schoolhouse was completed the following year. A boating club, athletic club and baseball club soon followed.

It was in July 1889 that John D. Spreckels (Spreckels of sugar plantation in Hawaii and shipping fame Spreckels) became an investor in the Coronado Beach Company, buying out Hampton L. Story's interest. Spreckels continued to buy controlling interest in the company over the next three years and became the sole proprietor of the Hotel del Coronado. He also established the famous Tent City and the sale of North Island to the U.S. government in 1917.



Hotel Del's Tent City

Hotel del Coronado became one of California's most popular destinations. The resort community further increased the number of visitors with the rise of Tent City. Just imagine, a beautiful beach, incredible weather, and then a makeshift city out of white tents at the foot of the Hotel Del for summer fun. This was the perfect destination for the middle class who might have found the cost of leisure in Tent City more within their means than the Hotel Del at the time. Swimming facilities, carnival booths, a Ferris wheel, a children's bull fight, sailing, all sorts of activities for the entire family brought visitors galore from around the world between 1900 and 1939.

The tents are now replaced with quarter-share condos that flank the property of the Hotel Del. The white Victorian-style architecture still attracts people by the droves year-round. The Coronado lifestyle is one you can own, even if it’s just temporarily, throughout the year.

Retaining its history

To this day, Coronado Island continues to host special events, famous people, and is a display for aviation wonders. It was here that early experiments in aviation occurred. This now “Navy town” is one of the great aviation arenas in the world. In 1911, famed aviator Glenn Curtiss found the area ideal for experimenting with his newly developed seaplane. He leased the land for three years from Sprekels. With much diligence, Curtiss performed the first successful U.S. seaplane flight and the first amphibian flight in the world. Curtiss also opened and operated the first U.S. military flying school.

And it was on North Island that several other aviation firsts occurred; the first nonstop coast-to-coast flight in 1922, the first mid-air refueling flight in 1923, and the departure of Charles Lindbergh in 1927.

This island setting is also well known to moviemakers. Through the years many films were made in Coronado and on North Island, including “Some Like It Hot”, “Dive Bombers”, and “Hellcats of the Navy”. Coronado Island was even nicknamed the Emerald City because the author of “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” used to winter here and he loved the fairyland-type atmosphere of the tents along the beach. I can just hear those munchkins now.

North Island was originally a joint Army/Navy base when the government bought the land from John Spreckels for $5 million. The Army then vacated its portion of the island in 1935 and the entire area then became Navy property. Today’s Navy’s post is a training facility for the Navy Seals. It’s pretty

interesting when you grab an early morning cup of coffee, walk down to the beach to watch the dolphins playing in the water and instead comes up on a Navy Seal and I'm talking about the kind with two legs.

So how does an island morph into a peninsula? Well, you sell land to the government for the purpose of training your Army and Navy personnel, get the Army Corps of Engineers to fill in the body of water separating North Island from Coronado to allow for more construction, and there you have it; a peninsula. Coronado Island still sounds better than Coronado Peninsula.

Modern conveniences

Again, there is so much to see and do while on the Island. What could be better than grabbing the bikes, heading to Clayton's Mexican Takeout on Orange and 10th, and heading to the sand in frontage of the Hotel Del to sit and eat your egg burrito at the shore? Well, let me see.

Add in sitting on the clean sand, watching the waves and the lighthouse at Point Loma and then over your head is the sight and sound of two F14 Tomcats cracking through the sky on approach just practically over your head. Sitting with my friends, Glenn said, "That's the sound of freedom." Great saying for a great sight.

The attractions of the island are numerous. There's the Hotel Del Coronado, Museum of History and Art, Coronado Playhouse with six productions a year, Art in the Park which happens at Spreckels Park the first and third Sunday of each month, Coronado Ferry Landing which will hook you up with restaurants and shops. You can attend concerts in the park, and take tours galore highlighting both on and off island sights. You can even take a Gondola Tour that cruises the canals and waterways of the Coronado Cays in Venetian style, catch the Old Town Trolley, or take the Ferry to the Gaslamp Quarter.

To find out how you can begin your island adventure, start by contacting the visitor center or the Coronado Chamber of Commerce.

Event for frontline staff working the summer in Tahoe

North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce's annual Summer Recreation Luncheon is June 9 with an 11:30am registration, and buffet lunch staring at noon, at Sunnyside Resort, 1850 West Lake Blvd. in Tahoe City.

This event is geared to provide insight about summer happenings, including events, festivals and activities, to frontline, front desk and concierge employees, along with business owners and managers. Attendees can give a brief presentation at the event, as well as provide 80 brochures or other pieces of collateral to be distributed during the lunch.

This event sells out, so early sign ups are recommended. Deadline to register is June 4. Cost is $25/person for chamber members and $30/person for non-members and includes lunch.

For more information about the event, to register or provide collateral, call Kym Fabel, North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce manager, at (530) 581.8764 or kym@puretahoenorth.com. To download a registration form, click to www.NorthLakeTahoeChamber.com, then Programs and Documents.