

LTWC caring for 9 bear cubs

By Riya Bhattacharjee, NBC

It's been three months since the adorably cute baby bear Tahoe arrived at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care center, capturing the imagination of hundreds across the country.

The story of her survival – she was mysteriously left on a doorstep one night and transported to LTWC – is a happy one, thanks to her caretakers Tom and Cheryl Millham, who bottle-fed her and looked after her every need.

Now, the Millhams have their hands full with eight new bear cubs at LTWC, the only place in California licensed to care for wild bear cubs.

No one really knows the reason for so many black bear cubs showing up at once. All the cubs are orphans with one exception, Meyers, who was hit by a car at 5 months old.

Millham hopes that all nine cubs will be ready to go back into the wild in about seven months.

Until then, this is home.

LTWC is getting ready to move to a bigger \$10 million, 27-acre space nearby and has already raised \$3 million towards it.

The center relies entirely on donations, which funds everything from food – it costs about \$800 per week to feed growing cubs – to special cages and medicine.

Read the whole story

3 wooden boats damaged at Tahoe Keys Marina

A wooden boat owner was arrested Friday after allegedly striking three other classic wooden boats with his vessel.

Steven Rovarino of Reno was arrested on charges of boating under the influence on July 25 at 5:50pm. His boat was also impounded.

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies were calling it a night on their boat patrol when they were flagged down regarding the incident. This led them to discover the same boat had allegedly hit three boats.

No one was injured.

The boats were at Tahoe Keys Marina for the annual wooden boat show.

As of Monday no dollar amount had been assessed to the damage.

"These old wooden boats are built like tanks. There was no breaching of hulls," Sgt. Michael Seligsohn told *Lake Tahoe News*. "They are also pieces of art. There was a lot of ornamental damage done."

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Bike thieves targeting Truckee area

There has been an increase in bike thefts in the Truckee area in the last three weeks.

While there is not a direct pattern , most have involved more expensive bikes being stolen. The thieves have cut cables on bikes locked to vehicle racks, taken bikes from porches, and taken a bike from an unlocked garage.

Officers said owners did not record the serial numbers in many of the cases so even if another agency locates the bike, finding the owner would be difficult.

Anyone with information on the thefts, is asked to call 530.550.2320.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Personnel changes at Barton, STPUD

South Lake Tahoe will be without two key players by the end of August.

Monica and Paul Sciuto have taken jobs in Monterey.

Monica Sciuto is director of Public Relations, Marketing & Patient Experience at Barton Hospital. Her last day is Aug. 8. She will be the project manager for Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula in their marketing department.

Paul Sciuto will be leaving his job as assistant general manager at South Tahoe Public Utility District at the end of August. He will be deputy general manager and director of operations and maintenance for the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency.

Leanne Wagoner, outreach coordinator at Barton, will fill in for Sciuto in the interim.

In other changes at Barton, Steve Neff has been hired as chief financial officer. He replaces Dick Derby who is retiring after 14 years. Neff starts in mid-August.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Injured hiker rescued near Eagle Falls

An injured hiker was rescued early Monday morning after having hurt her leg Sunday near Eagle Falls.

A helicopter landing at the Vikingsholm parking lot about 1:30am July 28 got the attention of campers in the area.

The call came in to El Dorado County sheriff's search and rescue about 6:45pm Sunday from the father of one of the hikers. But it wasn't until about 8 that a more definitive location of the couple was secured.

CareFlight was sent up to see if the two could be extricated, but there was no place for the helicopter to land. The search and rescue team started hiking in about 10pm.

“We put a large team together in case we had to carry a patient a long ways,” Sgt. Michael Seligsohn told *Lake Tahoe News*. “One of the keys to this whole thing is the reporting party advised that both were experienced hikers, they advised they had taken care of first aid needs and were in a good place to stay the night if necessary.”

Names and hometowns of the hikers were not available, nor are the extent of injuries known. The person was taken to Barton Memorial Hospital.

Some of the search team came from the Horsetail Falls area because there had been a call there earlier on July 27. The people needing help walked out on their own.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Sand Fire 65% contained



A USFS fire truck leaves the El Dorado County Fairgrounds on July 27 headed back to

the fire. Photo/LTN

The Sand Fire burning in El Dorado and Amador counties is 65 percent contained.

Since starting July 24 it has scorched 3,800 acres, and leveled 13 houses and 38 outbuildings.

Evacuations are still in place for hundreds of people. Ponderosa High School in Shingle Spring is the evacuation center.

The fire started when a vehicle drove over dry vegetation.

On the fifth day of the fire, El Dorado County set up a hotline will be available from 7am–7pm, Monday–Friday – 530.642.7263 or email sandfire.edcservices@gmail.com.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Sand Fire animal rescue coordination lacking



El Dorado County Fairgrounds
has plenty of room to take

more horses from the Sand
Fire. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed and Susan Wood

PLACERVILLE – Lack of communication is affecting people who have horses in the Sand Fire area.

The CalFire recording says the El Dorado County Fairgrounds is not accepting horses and that instead they will be taken to Rancho Murieta, but that is not the reality.

Twenty-eight horses were at the fairgrounds as of Sunday afternoon. There are eight more stalls to accommodate at least 20 more horses and a 2-acre pasture nearby. Lead volunteer coordinator of the effort, Kevin Banks, told *Lake Tahoe News* with what's been lined up in El Dorado County, about 60 to 100 more animals can be taken in.

He was busy working the phone near the arena of the fairgrounds on July 27 securing spots and trying to find out why El Dorado County Animal Services wants animals to go farther than they have to.

Banks showed up at the fairgrounds on Saturday to do what he could. He said there is no official plan in place that he is aware of for people to deal with animal evacuations in a case like this.

The fire started July 25 when a vehicle drove onto dry vegetation. The blaze has burned 3,800 acres and is 50 percent containment, with 10 houses and seven outbuildings lost. Evacuations and road closures are still in place.



Rita Uhren and Chris Navratil clean stalls at the fairgrounds where they are caring for evacuated horses.

It is burning in the wine regions of El Dorado and Amador counties. Unlike Saturday, the smoke on Sunday afternoon was not visible nor could one smell it in the American River canyon.

One inmate firefighter was hurt.

Small animals – like domestic pets, goats and sheep – are being housed at Ponderosa High School in Shingle Springs.

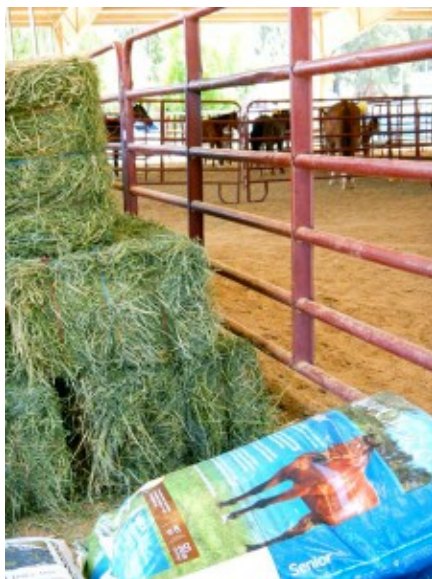
The fairgrounds has the horses.

Helping Banks on Sunday with the horses were Rita Uhren, Jamie Buetler and Chris Navratil. Navratil works for Nickers Horse Sitting. They are coordinating efforts, secure boarding, cleaning stalls, feeding animals and making sure horses have water.

One stud was a bit restless and had to have his pen reinforced so he wouldn't get out.

"My horse was evacuated during the Santa Cruz fire, and I just thought that I should help out here while their houses are being threatened. These are beautiful animals," Uhren told *Lake Tahoe News*.

A couple of the horses are unidentified because they got loose and it wasn't their owner who brought them to safety.



Donations of feed for horses is needed.

Lee's Feed & Western Store in Shingle Springs has been the primary store to donate supplies – mostly hay and other food. The store is also accepting donations that will be passed along to those caring for animals rescued from the Sand Fire.

Banks and Buetler didn't give much credit to the coordinating agencies. They said county Animal Control, which *Lake Tahoe News* is trying to reach, and South County Large Animal Rescue have provided misinformation on space and are sending people down to a Sacramento-area facility.

SCLAR, which is based in Somerset, does not self-deploy, but instead has to be requested by Animal Services.

SCLAR told *Lake Tahoe News* animals are usually taken to a predetermined location, and that is usually Rancho Murieta, though some will go to the fairgrounds or a ranch that an owner requests.

Aimee Vukovich, director of SCLAR, said horses, pigs and goats have been picked up from the Sand Fire.

“We provide transportation for animals that are in danger where people evacuate and whatever reason they can’t get them out,” Vukovich told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We try not to leave anything behind.”

She did not have a count on the number of animals they have retrieved.

Nev. casino revenue hits \$11.2 bil. for fiscal year

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY — Nevada casinos reported revenues of \$11.2 billion last fiscal year, up 2.9 percent from the prior year.

The increase was due mainly to baccarat. Casinos won \$1.6 billion on baccarat games, a jump of 18.3 percent compared to the prior fiscal year and an all-time high.

“Baccarat is driving the bus,” said Michael Lawton, senior research analyst for the state Gaming Control Board, which released figures July 25 for the 12-month period that ended June 30.

Read the whole story

Family refuses to give up search for son

By Juniper Rose, Sacramento Bee

The missing-person fliers for Vernon “Cody” Matthews hang at trailheads, campgrounds and businesses from Placerville to Tahoe.

It has been six weeks since the 23-year-old UC Berkeley senior disappeared after telling his parents he was going for a day hike. Matthews’ family members say they’re not giving up the search and will add to the 600 fliers that already have been posted throughout El Dorado County and along the Highway 50 corridor.

“Because there is no evidence that he is dead, we are choosing to believe that he is still alive,” said Matthews’ father, Vern Matthews.

Vern and his wife, Cyndi Matthews, lived in Southern California before their son’s disappearance from the family cabin in rural El Dorado County. Cyndi Matthews has since taken early retirement, and the couple have moved to the cabin so they can search full time.

Read the whole story

17 structures lost in Sand

Fire



Roads are closed near the fire for safety reasons.
Photo/Bill Kingman

Ten houses and seven outbuildings have been reduced to ash in the Sand Fire that is burning in rural El Dorado and Amador counties.

The 3,800-acre blaze is 35 percent contained. The fire started July 25 when a vehicle drove onto dry vegetation.

Highway 49 is open, but several roads in the Fair Play and Plymouth area are closed. More than 1,000 people have been evacuated. A shelter is set up at Ponderosa High School and animals are being taken to the El Dorado County Fairgrounds in Placerville.

Smoke is drifting east through the Highway 50 corridor and into Truckee.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report