Add eye candy to spring garden with bulbs

By Melinda Myers

Shorten the winter season with the help of spring flowering bulbs that you plant in fall. These beauties often provide the first bit of color, fragrance and winter relief each year.

Look for new and unique ways to incorporate bulbs into your landscape. Create a seasonal water feature with a river of blue scillas and grape hyacinths meandering through the garden. Welcome visitors with a front door or walkway garden that blooms from early spring through early summer and is loaded with crocus, tulips, daffodils and allium.

Don’t overlook those shady spots. Many of these locations provide enough early season sun, before the trees leaf out, for bulbs to grow and flower. Use more shade tolerant spring bloomers like snowdrops, grape hyacinths, scillas, anemones, daffodils, fritillarias and Camassias in shady areas among hostas, ferns and other shade tolerant perennials.

Whether you’re new or experienced, growing bulbs is an easy endeavor. Just follow these simple steps to a beautiful spring garden.



Dutch Master daffodils, Involve tulips and Muscari provide several layers of color in the garden. Photo/Longfield Gardens

Selection

Purchase bulbs that are dense and firm, and free of bruises or mold. Shop early for the best selection. Mail order sources will ship your bulbs at the proper planting time. If you buy locally, store the bulbs in a dry, well-ventilated and cool 60-degree location until it’s time to plant.

Don’t let deer, rabbits and chipmunks dissuade you from planting. Include hyacinths, grape hyacinths, scillas, glory-of-the-snow, fritillarias, alliums and Camassias that the animals tend to overlook.

Design ideas

Include a variety of bulbs for added color throughout spring. Early bloomers like Glory of the Snow, crocus, early tulips and daffodils, and grape hyacinths (Muscari) are followed by

mid-season daffodils and tulips along with fritillarias. Late spring blooming tulips and alliums finish off the spring display.

Combine several bulbs that bloom at the same time to double the floral impact or at different times to extend the color throughout the spring. You can create your own combinations or look for prepackaged combinations prepared by experts. Low growing White Splendor anemone along with Ocean Magic grape hyacinth make a striking combination for under shrubs. The yellow blossoms of Dutch Master daffodils, pink Involve tulips and purplish blue grape hyacinths will give you several layers of color in the garden.

Or add a bit of eye-catching red to the garden throughout the spring with the Really Red collection of tulips. Red Emperor starts things out in early spring, followed by Oxford and ends with double-flowering Red Princess and Sky High Scarlet.

Location

Plant bulbs in well-drained soil for best results. Avoid areas such as next to the dryer vent or against the south side foundation of your home that tend to warm up early in spring or experience a winter thaw. These bulbs often sprout too early and subsequent cold temperatures can limit or eliminate their bloom.

Reduce maintenance and boost your garden’s beauty by mixing bulbs with perennials. Once the bulbs are done blooming, the neighboring perennials mask the fading bulb foliage.

When and how to plant

Increase growing success in poor soils by incorporating several inches of compost, peat moss or other organic matter into the top 12 inches of soil. This improves drainage in clay soil and the water-holding ability of sandy and rocky soils. Then be sure to incorporate a low nitrogen, slow release

fertilizer.

Wait to plant your bulbs until the soil cools. This is any time after the night temperatures are consistently 40 to 50 degrees, but several weeks before the ground freezes.

Plant spring blooming bulbs three times as deep as the bulb is tall. Water thoroughly to remove air pockets and encourage fall root growth. Add a layer of mulch to conserve moisture, suppress weeds and reduce the risk of early sprouting.

So break out your trowel and garden gloves and get busy planting. You'll be glad you did when spring arrives and your yard and garden are filled with a rainbow of beautiful flowers.

Melinda Myers has over 30 years of gardening experience and has written more than 20 gardening books, including "Small Space Gardening." She hosts the Great Courses "How to Grow Anything: Food Gardening For Everyone" DVD set and the nationally syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" TV and radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Longfield Gardens for her expertise to write this article.

Social media impacting backcountry decisions

By Paddy O'Connell, Adventure Journal

"Hold my beer and watch this." The famous last words of a redneck, as the joke goes. But, could "take my picture and post this" be the last words of millennial backcountry skiers

and snowboarders? It would seem very possible.

The latest human factor in avalanche terrain decision-making is the pressure of social media and the influence of an omnipresent digital group dynamic.

At the International Snow Science Workshop at Breckenridge, Colo., earlier this month, State University of New York at Plattsburg Associate Professor Jerry Isaak presented his paper "Social Media and Decision Making in Avalanche Terrain." Isaak explained that decision-making and risk-taking in backcountry terrain is highly influenced by heuristic issues. Our human desire to be accepted by those we respect or seeking the acceptance of those we want to notice us will many times silence that cautious internal dialogue. We convince ourselves to engage in dangerous activities due to social influence. In the digital age, Kodak Courage has morphed into Facebook Fame and Instagram Celebrity. And that social influence is omnipresent. We carry it in the smartphone in our pocket.

In his paper, Isaak describes acceptance and social facilitation as the major heuristic influencers of backcountry "digital natives," millennial off-piste practitioners who are experts in the creation and consumption of social media content.

Read the whole story

Star Guide: Unwrapping the cosmos

By Tony Berendsen

A lifelong passion for science and astronomy began for me with the gift of a Christmas telescope when I was a child. My parents did a pretty good job picking out the telescope I got, but that was 1959, there really wasn't much to pick from in those days.

Today things are very different. There is an abundance of optical systems, mounts, computer drive systems, eyepieces, and cameras, all of them just one mouse click away. That's the easy part, more difficult is which one to buy.

In the next two Star Guide articles I'll offer suggestions for good telescopes to buy that I guarantee will delight the receiver. Also, I am partial to Celestron telescopes, they aren't the only manufacture of telescopes, but in my experience they are the best.

The first thing to consider when buying a scope is what will it be used for, and at what level of expertise: novice, intermediate, or advanced.



Telescopes can make an perfect gift. Photo/Provided

If the scope you plan to give will be used for daytime and nighttime observing, a refractor might be the best way to go, but for these two articles I'll concentrate on nighttime usage only, recommending reflecting telescopes with larger apertures (larger mirror size) that will collect and focus more light to the eyepiece, making dim celestial objects easier to see.

Let's start with the novice and divide into two levels, child novice and adult novice. This is an important distinction since a child novice may be excited to receive a scope at first, but not stick with it as much as an adult might, so a smaller investment might be wise.

For the child novice, a small table top reflecting telescope is a great way to go. I suggest **Celestron's First Scope**. The scope comes ready to use after easy assembly right out of the box. Prices vary slightly depending on options; from $49 to $59. The scope is very easy to use, and uses standard 1.25-inch eyepieces. The night after Christmas your novice can see stars, the moon, and with a little practice, and help from parents, see planets, too.

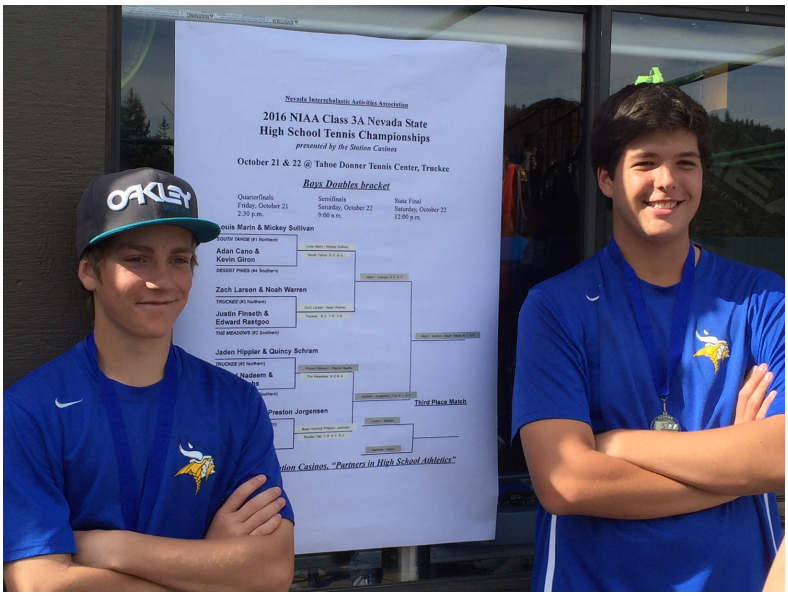
For the adult novice, add a tripod, a computerized navigational system, a little larger aperture and you have the **Celestron 114LCM**.

The LCM telescope is a great introduction into the modern astronomical telescope world for less than $350. It uses standard 1.25-inch eyepieces, is light and portable, and very easy to assemble. Most important, it uses a sophisticated computerized navigational system, the same type of system used on Celestron's expert level telescopes that are much more expensive. So driving this telescope around the cosmos is a great way to test a novice's ambition. The telescope can also be used as a camera by adding a **NexImage Solar System Imager** for the moon and bright planets.

Tony Berendsen runs Tahoe Star Tours. He may be reached at

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STHS doubles team wins state title



Mickey Sullivan and Louis Marin

South Tahoe High's boys' tennis team defeated Boulder City in the finals 6-1, 6-2.

Louis Marin and Mickey Sullivan beat Truckee in the semifinals 6-3, 6-3, and went on to become the champions.

Marin finishes his high school tennis career as one of the most decorated South Tahoe high School tennis players. He has won a singles regional championship, two doubles regional championships, and a doubles state championship.

Sullivan returns next year with two doubles regional championships, and a doubles state championship.

Head Coach William Davenport said, “Years of hard work paid off for Louis and Mickey when they dominated the opposing teams today. They are now recognized as the champions they have always been. I’m proud of what the entire team accomplished this year.”

– Provided to Lake Tahoe News

Tahoe resorts not popular with Ski readers

Lake Tahoe area ski resorts didn’t fare well in the annual readers’ poll by *Ski* magazine.

The October issue talks about the top 50 ski resorts. It’s divided between the West and East coasts. Whistler-Blackcomb took top honors for the West, while Tremblant in Quebec was the East’s best.

Mammoth – which clearly isn’t a Tahoe resort – is the top California ski area at No. 22.

Heavenly Mountain Resort came in at No. 24. The top three strengths listed were scenery, off-hill activities and après. The main weaknesses were snow, challenge and terrain variety.

Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows was No. 25. Strengths include challenge, terrain variety and après, while weaknesses were service, snow and overall satisfaction.

At No. 27 was Northstar. Positives included kid friendliness, grooming and terrain parks; while negatives were character, scenery and terrain variety.

Tahoe resorts didn’t do well in the individual categories either. Not one made it in the top 10 for accessibility, character, dining, lifts, lodging, service, snow or value.

Top 10 finishes included:

· Après: Heavenly – No. 6

· Challenge – Squaw – No. 9

· Grooming – Northstar – No. 10

· Kid friendliness – Northstar – No. 9

· Off-hill activities – Heavenly – No. 4

· Scenery – Heavenly – No. 3

· Terrain variety – Mammoth – No. 8; Squaw – No. 10.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Reno’s Jitloff finding balance in ski racing world



Tim Jitloff hanging out in his Jacuzzi, one of his sponsors, at home in Germany. Photo/USSA

By Megan Harrod, USSA

He speaks fluent German and lives in Bergen am Chiemsee, Germany. These two things alone make Tim “Jit” Jitloff of Reno unique among his teammates. Like the Europeans, Jitloff is a commuter in his job as a professional ski racer.

However, Tahoe was his playground as a child, and he was lucky enough to have local legends like Daron Rahlves and recently retired teammate Marco Sullivan to look up to on the mountain.

“I watched them growing up and they inspired me to become a ski racer,” Jitloff remembered. “Marco gets embarrassed when I say that because he thinks I’m joking, but he truly had an impact on me wanting to succeed.”

Oftentimes, it’s those childhood ski heroes that can make all the difference in an athlete’s career—exemplifying how the right mix of passion, determination, grit and perseverance can lead to places never imagined. Like, for instance, the biggest

stage in the sports world: the Olympics.

Jitloff is one of those well-rounded athletes who understands the responsibility professional athletes have to exemplify for the next generation of little shredders. He works to show kids that things like humor, honor, kindness and respect are what make people great. While these are character traits that not every professional athlete possesses, hang with Jitloff for a day and you'll notice it straight away. His gratitude and professionalism shine through.

There's life off the mountain, too, and Jitloff—who plays guitar—is inspired by musicians from all walks of life, including Jimmy Page, Dave Gilmour and Bob Marley, but also businessmen like Elon Musk and Richard Branson.

"I like people who do things their own way and create," said Jitloff. Makes sense, as Jitloff tends to take the offbeat path.

You've likely seen or heard buzz about a newer ski company on the market: Croc Sports, an Austrian-Finnish company started in 2015. And chances are you've heard that buzz because the Californian-born, Tahoe-raised Olympian and seven-time National Champion, Jitloff is the newest member of the Croc team. While in Norway in April for an on-snow training camp, Jitloff ski-tested with Croc Sports. With the switch and his healthy and strong physical condition, Jitloff—often fastest amongst his teammates in training sessions—hopes to translate this speed to race day and find his way back into the top 15 in the world in giant slalom, and onto the podium in 2017.

Jitloff must have a love affair with Italy, as his career-best results—two fifth-place Audi FIS Ski World Cup finishes —have taken place in Alta Badia and Sestriere, Italy. Last season, Jitloff placed seventh at Alta Badia—his best finish of the 2016 season. These results are something of which he's proud.

"I'm a giant slalom skier, so I am proud of my strong results

in Alta Badia the last three years," he recalls. "Alta Badia, for me, has a special place in my soul because it defines the GS art. When I go there, it makes me better."

But Jitloff is quick to note that skiing is not everything. Things like languages, music, culture and history help Jitloff to find balance in his often chaotic life on the White Circus. Seeing situations with a different perspective, remaining open-minded and calm help him to deal with the daily challenges of the life of a professional athlete.

Growing up in Truckee, he shred with his two older brothers and their friends at Alpine Meadows and felt like nothing was impossible. He credits his parents as his biggest supporters and says that they encouraged him to relentlessly pursue his dreams—never standing in the way and always allowing him to find his way. For Jitloff, Truckee was a fantastic little mountain town for kids to grow and learn about nature and the mountain lifestyle.

"It shaped me into who I would become and the time skiing around Tahoe was a cornerstone in my life," Jitloff recalls.

This love for the mountains has translated to Jitloff's new life in Bergen am Chiemsee, where he lives with his fiancé, Anja, whom he'll marry next summer. There, he often mountain bikes and holds himself to high conditioning standards. For Jitloff, conditioning is key.

"Everyone has talent, but talent can only bring you so far. You have to be willing to work harder than everyone else and put yourself through a lot of pain to be able to reach the top," he said. "My journey is a work in progress, but I enjoy the process and I think that's what keeps me strong."

It's hard to reach an elite level in any sport without sacrifice, and alpine ski racing is definitely no exception to this rule. Between travel, on-snow training, racing and conditioning, ski racing is an incredibly full and grueling

lifestyle. It is, in fact, your life. Your teammates and coaches become a second family—and, at times, more like a first family. Whether it's leaving your loved ones at home for extended periods of time or missing key life events because you have a race on the other end of the world—that's the life of a ski racer. You have to love it. Live it. Breathe it. And these athletes do. One sacrifice for Jitloff that sticks out in his memory was missing his high school graduation for a ski camp. At the time, he'd have rather been skiing, but was also bummed to be missing a major life moment. These days, Jitloff stresses the importance of balancing his personal life with his sporting life—a contributing factor to his decision to live in Europe.

Jitloff believes progressing through life with constant learning and growth is what really matters in the end. We asked him three questions on what he believes makes a champion.

Ski team: In your words, what makes a champion?

Jitloff: A champion is not just someone wins. A champion is someone who stands for something. Someone who has some substance. Who you are as a person—the real you—is what matters. You can win everything there is to win, but things like humor, honor, kindness and respect are what makes people great. I don't put stock into what you win; I put stock into who you are and how you treat people. That, to me, is a champion.

Ski team: Do you remember the first time you felt like a champion?

Jitloff: I can honestly say that I don't feel like a champion. I feel like a really lucky kid from Tahoe who got to grow up and follow his dreams. I have had amazing support on so many levels in my career. To be able to what I love is what makes me feel like a champion.

Ski team: What is the biggest piece of advice you have for aspiring kids who want to be sitting where you are today?

Jitloff: In the end, the journey is what matters. The end goal is not everything.

Jitloff kicks off the 2017 season at the World Cup opener giant slalom in Soelden on Oct. 23.

Tahoe area ski resorts gearing up to open

Between Mother Nature and snowmaking, Lake Tahoe area ski resorts are setting their opening dates.

While these are not locked in Sierra cement, so to speak, this is what some of the resorts are forecasting:

- Mt. Rose Ski Tahoe: Oct. 31
- Boreal: Nov. 4
- Squaw Valley: Nov. 11
- Alpine Meadows: Nov. 11
- Northstar: Nov. 18
- Heavenly: Nov. 18
- Kirkwood: Nov. 18
- Homewood: Dec. 9.

Hwy. 89 undercrossings built to save animals

Two undercrossings designed to help reduce animal-vehicle collisions on a busy 25-mile stretch of Highway 89 between Truckee and Sierraville have been built.

The $2.8 million project is the second in a series of planned mitigation and research efforts by the Highway 89 Stewardship Team. The highway goes through the Tahoe National Forest, which covers more than 1,300 square miles of woodland, valleys and lakes, and is home to many different kinds of wildlife, including the Loyalton-Truckee mule deer herd.

Prior to the construction of the undercrossings, more than 1,000 mule deer died in the last 27 years along Highway 89in the Loyalton-Truckee area.

According to the Western Transportation Institute, every year in the United States roughly 200 people are killed in as many as 2 million wildlife-vehicle collisions at a cost of more than $8 billion.

In addition to the undercrossings, crews installed 1.3 miles of fencing along both sides of the highway to guide animals to safe passage under the highway.

CalFire lifts burn suspension

Effective this week the burn suspension in Amador, El Dorado, Sacramento and Alpine counties has been be lifted by CalFire.

Those possessing current and valid agriculture and residential

burn permits may resume burning on permissible burn days. Agriculture burns must be inspected by CalFire prior to burning until the end of the peak fire season. Inspections may be required for burns other than agriculture burns.

CalFire burn permits will be required until the end of peak fire season.

Pile burning requirements:

· Only dry, natural vegetative material such as leaves, pine needles and tree trimmings may be burned.

· The burning of trash, painted wood or other debris is not allowed.

· Do not burn on windy days.

· Piles should be no larger than 4 feet in diameter and in height.

Wolf killed by Ore. poacher has ties to Calif.

By Ryan Sabalow, Sacramento Bee

As tensions rise in Oregon and Northern California over reports of wolves attacking livestock, a $15,000 reward has been issued for information that would lead investigators to the poacher who killed a mother wolf in southern Oregon.

On Oct. 6, investigators found a radio-collared female gray wolf known as OR28 dead in the Fremont-Winema National Forest near Summer Lake, Ore. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife spokesman

declined Friday to say how the wolf was killed, citing an ongoing investigation.

OR28 originated with the Mount Emily pack in northeastern Oregon, but in November 2015, left the pack and traveled to southern Oregon, said Michelle Dennehy, a spokeswoman for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. There, she bred with OR3, a male from the Imnaha Pack, and gave birth to at least one pup.

Read the whole story