Massive Truckee pool to open in 1 month

Truckee’s $9.2 million aquatic center is scheduled to open Labor Day weekend.

The 26,000-square-foot facility includes a 10-lane, 25-yard pool and a warm-water (90 degrees) pool that is designed for senior fitness, rehab and a place for kids to hang out.

The kids’ feature of the warm pool is that it has two slides.

It also has two lanes for lap swimming.

The center plans to offer traditional swim programs, along with diving and water polo.

There are indoor and outdoor areas for parties or be places to just hang out.

The Truckee-Donner Recreation & Park District is in charge of the swim center. It is located next to the Truckee Community Recreation Center at 8924 Donner Pass Road.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Martis wetland restoration to begin

Middle Martis wetland restoration projects will take place starting Aug. 10 and last through October.

Trail access in some areas of Waddle Ranch may be disrupted

for short periods. Construction crews may escort bikers and hikers through the restoration site.

The Truckee River Watershed Council is sponsoring the restoration of Middle Martis Creek with several partners and funders. The middle Martis restoration project will restore 40 acres of meadow as well as several reaches of the creek.

When completed, the project is designed to:

- Restore wetlands on the north side of Highway 267;
- Improve water quality by reducing of excessive erosion;
- Preserve existing wetlands and riparian areas on south side of Highway 267;
- Protect existing roads including Highway 267, Sawmill Flat Road, and the Waddle Ranch access road.

Spinal cord injury inspires fund-raising swim



Mark Bender, with his family, wants those with spinal cord injuries to

live full lives. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

“When we meet real tragedy in life, we can react in two ways – either by losing hope and falling into self-destructive habits, or by using the challenge to find our inner strength.” – Dalai Lama

Mark Bender chose to find his inner strength when his life was turned upside down three years ago. While body surfing in Hawaii a wave threw him to the ocean’s floor. He is now a quadriplegic.

Out of the tragedy he started a nonprofit called Finding HUP. The goal is to help others like him get back into “the mix” – as in doing some of the things they could do when they were able bodied.



Ric Llewellyn

Part of the inspiration for the nonprofit came from hitting roadblocks with not finding equipment to do the things he wanted to do. He knew he couldn’t be alone.

Finding HUP’s name comes from the cycling world where the crowd yells “hup, hup” to cyclists passing by. Bender used to be a competitive cyclist. He has learned to use a hand bike.

Bender’s friend Ric Llewellyn, a former South Lake Tahoe resident and brother of longtime local Randy Llewellyn, is on a quest to raise money for Finding HUP.

“Finding HUP is about helping others, getting back into some sort of athletic endeavor,” Llewellyn told *Lake Tahoe News.*

Promoting adaptive athletics, proving scholarships, equipment and resources to go to camps for people who are paralyzed is what Finding HUP is about.

Llewellyn on Aug. 24 plans to swim from Emerald Bay to Nevada Beach as a fundraiser for the charity. This is 8½ miles.

“The rules for marathon swimming it that it has to be a minimum distance and you have to do it without a wetsuit,” Llewellyn explained. “I want it to be a legit marathon swim.”

The goal is to raise awareness about the foundation as well as money for it. Bringing attention to spinal cord injuries in general is also part of the plan.

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Notes:

· To donate, go **online**.

· More info about Washington-based Finding HUP is **online**.

CHP rescues pelican in Truckee near I-80



A pelican gets a free ride to safety by the California Highway Patrol. Photo/Provided

By Alejandra Reyes-Velarde and Ryan Sabalow, Sacramento Bee

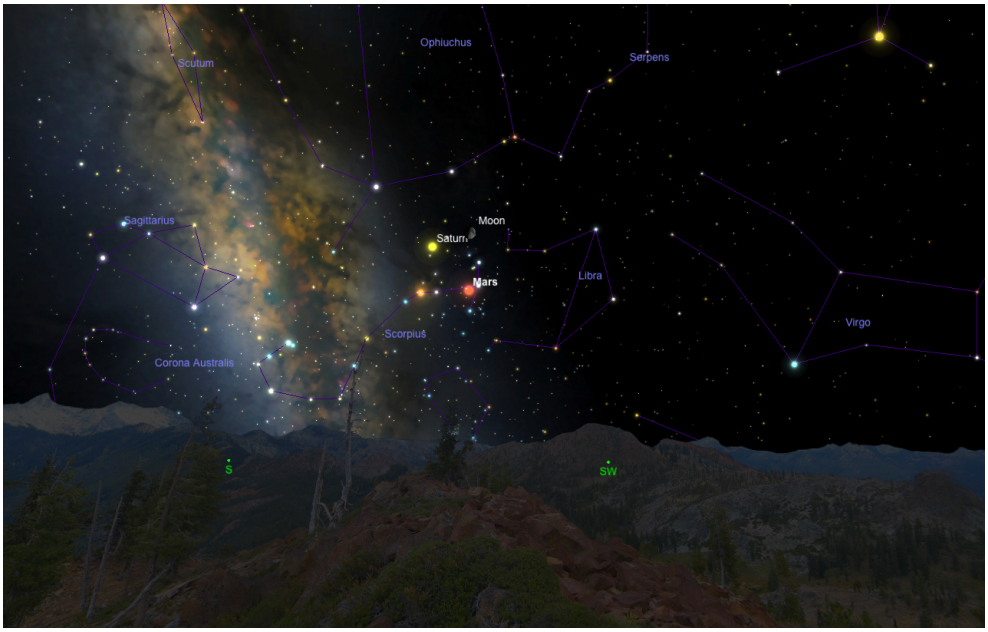
A California Highway Patrol officer, a former falconer, captured a pelican wandering near westbound Interstate 80 in Truckee this week.

The CHP got a call about an injured bird on the highway. Officers arrived about 7:15pm Tuesday to find the pelican on a hill beside the freeway. When CHP Officer Troy Griesemer approached the bird, it flew off between the first and second lanes on the highway, dodging a car to get to the other side, he said.

After Griesemer caught the pelican, it was placed in the back seat of the car and taken to the CHP office, where it sat for about an hour.

Read the whole story

Star Guide: Mars and meteors in August sky



Simulation Curriculum: 9:30pm Aug. 11, 2016 – the moon, Mars and Saturn in conjunction.

By Tony Berendsen

Mars is in Scorpio about 69 million miles from the Earth fading in brightness from its close approach of 47 million miles on May 30. Still the brightest object in the southern horizon the bright red color of Mars makes it easy to find in the early evening; it is a fast moving planet in the night sky, too.

The red planet orbits the sun at 54,000 mph, but the Earth's orbital speed of 67,000 mph zooms past it causing retrograde (when Mars moves from the east to the west in the sky) and then, as the Earth begins to round the sun in our orbit, Mars returns to its normal movement of west to east and seems to

speed up a little due to our vantage point.

Over the next few weeks it will move quickly eastward passing between Saturn and the bright red star Antares. You can see this if you go out and visually mark the location of Mars and Saturn every few nights. To help find Mars and Saturn the moon will point the way on the evening of Aug. 11 when it will mark the upper corner of a triangular conjunction made by Saturn, Mars, and the waxing gibbous moon.

An added bonus to being out under the night sky watching Mars is the best meteor shower of the year. The Perseid meteor shower is a favorite of many, often producing up to 60 meteor streaks an hour, but this year we may see even more. Scientists predict the Earth will be passing through a fairly dense clump of comet Swift Tuttle debris this year doubling the number of meteors per hour. Material shed by Swift Tuttle as it warms from the energy of the sun fills an orbital path that the Earth passes through every year causing the meteor shower.

Perseid meteors are fast moving and come from the area of the constellation Perseus. Traveling thousands of miles per hour falling into the Earth’s atmosphere particles of comet dust no bigger than the tip of your finger create this dazzling light show. They can appear in any part of the sky but will trace back to Perseus.

The peak of the shower is the night of Aug. 11 and the following morning of Aug. 12. In the early evening of the 11th the moon forming its triangle with Mars and Saturn will outshine some of the meteors, but if you wait until the early morning after the moon sets (about 1:30am) the sky will darken improving conditions for meteor watching. I plan to watch for Perseids the week before the peak to avoid the bright moon since the Earth will already be in the debris stream.

For millennia humans have watched the night sky. We have

charted the paths of planets, proper motion of stars, and the subtle wobble of the Earth: precession. We have watched Venus climb above the morning horizon only to retreat and rise again in the evening and have seen Mercury do the same. There is no need of a telescope to notice these things; we need only our eyes. Our naked eye watching has helped scientists understand our place in the Cosmos, and sometimes a spectacular cosmic sight like Mars and meteors speeding across the sky.

Tony Berendsen runs Tahoe Star Tours. He may be reached at 775.232.0844 or tony@tahoestartours.com.

National park jewels draw record crowds



With this being the centennial celebration of the National Park Service, visitors are flocking to popular parks like Yosemite. Photo Copyright 2016 Carolyn E. Wright

By Brad Branan, Sacramento Bee

Visitors light up as they step off tour buses at Tunnel View and see Yosemite Valley for the first time. Half Dome and El Capitan, those towering walls of granite, demand attention. From miles away, visitors can watch water pour from Upper and Lower Yosemite Falls and Bridalveil Fall. The Merced River and the meadows provide a peaceful retreat.

“It’s a park that captures the wonder of the world, that changes you by being there,” President Obama said during a visit to Yosemite in June. “There’s something sacred about this place.”

As the National Park Service celebrates its 100th birthday Aug. 25, visitors are about to break attendance records at Yosemite and other parks for the second year in a row. More than 4 million people visited Yosemite last year, the highest total ever, and the number of visitors through June of this year eclipsed last year’s total for the same period. Likewise, more than 307 million people visited Park Service properties last year, and this year’s figures suggest another record in the making.

Read the whole story

Twin Lakes – a journey along

a water-filled trail



A waterfall descends from the far side of Twin Lakes. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

We almost didn't make it to the lake. There were so many pretty places along the stream that called out it was hard not to stop and just take it all in.

It was one of those hikes where the journey truly surpassed the destination. And the destination was stunning, especially with the multi-legged waterfall in the distance cascading down the granite wall.

While there were some wildflowers along the route, this excursion is more about the water.

The end point was Twin Lakes in Desolation Wilderness.

Round-trip is it six miles, though we did a little loop at the end that took us closer to Wrights Lake to make it more like a seven-mile day.

Starting out the terrain is lush. The tree canopy provides a shady route. This is where the bulk of the flowers are.



Wildflowers sprout from the granite. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The climb is gradual, though there are some granite steps that might make those with knee issues want poles.

Dirt gives way to granite. In some ways this is reminiscent of hiking to Horsetail Falls. But there isn't so much rock that AJ needs her booties.

What's better about this trail compared to Horsetail is that people have outlined with rocks where to go or built cairns. The markers are definitely needed at various locations.



An abundance of water is throughout this trail. Photo/Kathryn Reed

While Twin Lakes looks inviting, the temperature is icy. The wind makes it necessary to put the layer back on that was removed on the way up.

Coming down, Wrights Lake, essentially the starting point, looks so tiny and far away. With starting at about 7,000 feet and going up nearly 1,300 feet, the expanse below is vast.



Pyramid Peak is a constant landmark during the hike. Photo/Kathryn Reed

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Getting there:

From the Y in South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 50 west for 20.7 miles to Wrights Lake Road. Turn right. Follow signs for Twin and Grouse lakes. After 8.8 miles there is a big parking lot. The trailhead begins just below the parking lot.

Notes:

· There will be a free wildflower and natural history hike on Aug. 13 at 10am starting at the Twin Lakes trailhead. It will last about an hour.

· This is rated a moderate hike.

Sunset Campground bald eagle closure lifted

The Eldorado National Forest announced this week that the partial closure of Sunset Campground in Union Valley for the protection of a bald eagle nest and eaglets has been lifted.

After intensive monitoring by wildlife biologists, it has been determined that the eaglets have now fledged the nest.

Campsites 1-61 in Sunset Campground will be available to the public on a first come, first served basis until they are re-added to the reservation system on Aug. 16. At this time, these sites will be available **online**. There are a total of 131 campsites at Sunset Campground.

Bill would end ban on bikes in U.S. wilderness

By Michelle L. Price, AP

More than 100 million acres of America's most rugged landscapes designated as wilderness are off-limits to mountain bikers, but two Utah senators have introduced legislation that would allow bikers to join hikers and horseback riders in those scenic, undisturbed areas.

The proposal is controversial within the biking community and opposed by conservationists who say bikes would erode trails and upset the five-decade notion of wilderness as primitive spaces.

The bill from Sens. Mike Lee and Orrin Hatch, both Utah Republicans, would give local officials with the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and other federal management agencies two years to decide in each wilderness area if bikes will be allowed. If no decision is made within two years, the bike ban would be lifted in that area.

The legislation, which has not yet had a hearing, comes from somewhat unlikely sponsors. Hatch and Lee both represent Utah, where outdoor recreation and mountain biking are big business, but are supporters of the GOP state's push to takeover public lands controlled by the federal government – something environmentalists and outdoor recreation groups oppose.

Lee, who said he's a former mountain biker, said his bill takes on what he sees as another overreaching federal regulation that hamstrings locals and that there's no evidence that mountain bike tires cause any more erosion than hikers do.

At issue is a part of the 1964 Wilderness Act restricting the use of "mechanical transport" – bikes, all-terrain vehicles and cars – in those 100-plus million wilderness acres in 44 states. It's the only blanket ban on bicycling in the federal public lands system.

The ban on "mechanical transport" doesn't include wheelchairs, which are allowed as part of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Lee notes that skis, rock climbing gear, kayaks, which are also allowed, "arguably involve some type of mechanical action" and help people move about.

While mountain biking wasn't a popular sport when the law was passed, they will alter the character of those spaces and are tough on trails, said Alan Rowsome with the Wilderness Society, a Washington, D.C.-based conservation group.

Rowsome said that only about 10 to 12 percent of all U.S. public lands are protected under the Wilderness Act, one of

“the bedrock environmental laws we have in this country” setting aside some areas as sacrosanct.

That includes tens of thousands of acres of forests, valleys, lakes and peaks around Lake Tahoe, that “if mountain bikers could start riding those trails, they would be in Seventh Heaven,” said Ted Stroll, president of the Sustainable Trails Coalition, a nonprofit that’s working to overturn the ban.

Stroll said the wilderness ban on bikes leaves riders in Colorado on dirt forest roads from Crested Butte to Aspen instead of more scenic single track trails. In North Dakota, he said, about 100 miles of one bike trail are bookended by wilderness zones, leaving bikers to make detours at both ends to avoid the protected areas.

The International Mountain Bicycling Association doesn’t have a position on the bill and is still reviewing it, according to President Mike Van Abel, but the association’s 40,000 mountain bikers are divided on the idea.

Some mountain bikers don’t want to upset longstanding political alliances with conservation groups and say bikers should instead focus on working with interest groups and lawmakers to negotiate and move the boundaries of wilderness areas to allow bikes on trails.

“Wilderness is the first time we as a species decided to put the needs of nature above the needs of man,” said Ashley Korenblat, the owner of a bicycling tour company based in the mountain bike Moab, Utah, a red rock mountain biking playground. “We don’t need to ride our bikes everywhere.”

Korenblat, a former chair of the International Mountain Bicycling Association, said there are few trails in wilderness areas that would be fun to ride, but “the last thing the bike industry wants to do is have a big fight with the environmental community.”

Surprising benefits of training in the heat

By Meaghen Brown, Outside

One of the highest sweat rates ever recorded was that of marathon runner Alberto Salazar at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. In the months leading up to the games, which were expected to be oppressively hot, the marathoner was put through a regimen of temperature acclimation training with the goal of helping him adapt to running in the heat. While Salazar placed only 15th overall, the program was deemed a success, physiologically speaking—vitals taken after the race found that Salazar's hormonal and thermoregulatory systems were completely normal. His body had compensated by causing him to sweat at an incredibly high rate—about three liters per hour, compared to the roughly one liter per hour for an average human.

Researchers have been looking at the effects of heat on athletic performance for decades, and their results have been consistently surprising. Studies have found that, in addition to an increased rate of perspiration, training in the heat can increase an athlete's blood plasma volume (which leads to better cardiovascular fitness), reduce overall core temperature, reduce blood lactate, increase skeletal muscle force, and, counterintuitively, make a person train better in cold temperatures.

In fact, heat acclimation may actually be more beneficial than altitude training in eliciting positive physiological adaptations, says Santiago Lorenzo, a professor of physiology at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and a former

decathlete at the University of Oregon.

Read the whole story