Truckee Donner PUD working to curb irrigation waste

The Truckee Donner Public Utility District is offering irrigation efficiency programs to make watering more efficient while maintaining beautiful gardens.

Available to qualifying customers, these programs will also help district customers comply with state prohibitions against wasting water, which include rules against overspray irrigation and watering for 48 hours after measurable precipitation.

More than 60 percent of the district's summertime water use is attributed to irrigation. Experts estimate that as much as 50 percent of that water is wasted due to overwatering caused by inefficiencies in irrigation methods and systems.

The following are outdoor water saving programs offered by the district:

Wired Rain Sensor – Eligible customers receive a free rain sensor which will turn off irrigation controller during precipitation and delay re-start depending on how much rain has fallen.

Rain Sensor Rebate – Eligible customers receive up to a $20 rebate to install a wireless sensor or specific manufacturer's rain/weather sensor to improve watering efficiency.

Installation + Tune-up Rebate – Eligible customers receive an additional rebate up to $50 when they have a rain sensor installed by an irrigation/landscape professional with an irrigation system tune-up.

Go online for full program details.

ZC club introduces youngsters to tennis



Tennis pro Rob Wheatley helps Bryant Pakes learn the volley while Kayden Pakes watches. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

Youngsters took over the courts at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club for two days.

Rob Wheatley, the teaching pro at the club, led the annual Kids Clinic on June 20-21 with the help of a dozen volunteers from the club.

The free event was co-sponsored by Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department and the nonprofit Zephyr Cove Tennis Club Foundation.

Children’s scientific day camps offered

The Tahoe Institute for Natural Science’s nature day camps for children start in July.

Entomologists ages 6-12 will spend time playing games, searching for wildlife and reflecting on the day’s adventure, as well as bonding with fellow campers. Camps are divided into two age groups, with each doing age-appropriate scientific events.

Day camps in South Lake Tahoe are July 20-23, from 9am-1pm for ages 6-8. Cost is $150 or $125 for Tahoe Institute for Natural Science members. For ages 9-12, the camps are July 6-10 from 9am-1pm. The cost is $280 or $245 for Tahoe Institute for Natural Science members.

Camps for those in the North Shore-Truckee area are July 13-17 from 9am-1pm. This is for ages 6-8. Cost is $150 or $125 for Tahoe Institute for Natural Science or KidZone Museum members.

For more information about TINS Nature Camps, contact James at James@TINSweb.org or 775.298.0064.

Tennis club going country for a day



While wearing cowboy boots won't actually be allowed on the tennis courts, all other country related apparel is encouraged at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club's July Hump Day.

The theme for the July 8 event is Country Fried Hump Day.

This Hump Day Mixer will include barbecued chicken, raffle prizes, and an adult doubles round robin for all ability levels. The tennis is semi-serious because the emphasis is on fun. Play starts at 5:30pm.

The mixer costs $10 for club members, $15 for non-members, and $5 for spectators (meal only). Membership is $80 per year. To join, go online or do so the night of the event.

Participants of Hump Day events are encouraged to bring a side dish or dessert, as well as beverage of choice. No advance sign-up is required.

Zephyr Cove Tennis Club is on Warrior Way off Highway 50 in Zephyr Cove. The nonprofit Zephyr Cove Tennis Club Foundation is hosting the event.

Tricks to predicting the weather

By Graham Averill, Outside

I was stumbling around in the middle of the night, lost in a wicked snowstorm on the Appalachian Trail and all I could see with my headlamp was a wall of white. I knew an A.T. shelter was a mile through the woods and the interstate was five miles in the other direction, but I was blinded by the snow. I pictured myself hiking in circles, eventually curling up in a ball like the man from the famous Jack London story.

My death would be humiliating, considering I was only seven miles from the nearest Waffle House. I never should've believed the farmer and his bean jar, I thought.

For as long as people have wondered if they should bring an umbrella, there have been folksy ways of predicting the weather. That famous ground hog, the stripes on a wooly worm, the shape of persimmon seeds—all of that folklore we have used to forecast long-term weather patterns. Some farmers insist the number of fogs in August foretell the number of snows in winter. They put beans in a jar for every fog they count, then go on the local news and say it's going to be a dry winter.

Take it from me: You should not make backpacking plans based on the number of beans in a farmer's jar.

Read the whole story

Alpine County increasing network of trails

By Kathryn Reed

Building a trail from Turtle Rock Park in Markleeville to Grover Hot Springs seemed like a simple enough of an idea. Then the proponents hit the wall of bureaucracy.

“Basically we discovered that it was going to be a big ordeal or a lot of challenges to create the trail. There were some big expenses we were not prepared or able to cover,” Andy Lovell, president of the Alpine Trails Association, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

However, the Alpine Trails Association members have penetrated the bureaucratic wall and are on course to make their dream a reality. Memorandums of understandings are being worked on with landowners. It’s possible that trail will break ground in 2018, with completion in 2020.

The association formed in summer 2013 with the main desire of creating that one trail. The U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and California State Parks own the land where the trail would be built. Each has a process, criteria, rules, regulations and hoops to abide by or jump through. It’s not just taking a shovel to the ground, the trails group has learned.



Alpine County's trail network is growing. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The 47-member Alpine Trails Association has not been deterred. The group spent the better part of 2014 creating a 501(c)3 nonprofit, recruiting members, taking classes, reaching out to other established groups like the Tahoe Rim Trial Association and Carson Valley Trails Association, and building relationships with the land owners.

"We have become much more adept at what we are doing because of the lessons given by people in more knowledgeable associations," Lovell said. "It's good if all trials are made in the same way with the same expectations of the people who use them."

Now, trails the Alpine group hadn't thought about are getting built.

In talking with the BLM about trails, the group learned the federal agency had a shovel ready project – just no one to build it. This was the 1.1-mile interpretive loop around Curtz Lake in Markleeville. This trail was finished at the end of May. A couple signs still need to be installed.

The association wrote a proposal to the BLM earlier this year to expand the trail system in that area and into the Indian Creek Recreation Lands. BLM agreed to it and now the association is tasked with 11 miles of trail work. This is one reason why the Grover project has been pushed back a few years.

"The most important thing is to connect Turtle Rock to the interpretive trail. It is just over one mile," Lovell said. "It will tie in our entire trail system. Turtle Rock will become the hub. It will connect from there to all the Indian Creek Recreation Lands trails."

The Alpine group and BLM have agreements for the trail builders to work on an eight-mile loop that connects Indian Creek Reservoir, the East Fork of the Carson River, Curtz Lake and Summit Lake.

Lovell had high praise for BLM in regards to how easy the agency has been to work with as well as the ability to use their tools.

A $10,000 grant that was awarded last week to the trails group by Alpine County will pay for a shed and tools. This in turn will mean the group can invite more people out on trail building days because there will be enough tools for volunteers.

This is the first grant the association has received. Members plan to keep writing more so the trail system in Alpine County continues to grow.

“We have other plans to expand that trial system on the Eastern Slope of the Sierra in Alpine County,” Lovell said. “We are hoping to connect with Woodfords and Markleeville.”

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Notes:

· For more info about the Alpine Trails Association, email Andy Lovell at ata.andyl@gmail.com.

· The group also has a website.

· Workdays are in the spring and fall on Tuesday and Saturdays from 9am-2pm.

Bare slopes have Chile looking like Tahoe

By Javiera Quiroga, Washington Post

With 15 years’ experience working as a waitress at the resort, Pereira can’t remember the last time the slopes were this barren by mid-June. The only snow to be seen is the fake variety, put down last week for a photo shoot.

“In all my years here, the snow has never taken so long to arrive or the season so long to start,” Haydee said as she stood in the deserted restaurant.

Santiago, which sits below the ski resorts, has seen just 1.2 centimeters of rain this year, 86 percent less than normal, and there is none forecast for at least another seven days. The situation gets more complicated for Valle Nevado and the other ski resorts in the Andes mountains by the capital in a week or so, when package tours start to arrive from countries such as Brazil.

People began skiing toward the end of May last year, with the resort officially opening June 14. This year there isn’t so much a shortage of snow, as a complete absence.

Read the whole story

TAMBA looking for crews to

build trails

Work is under way on the second phase of Corral Trail Enhancement Project in partnership with TAMBA and the U.S. Forest Service. This means more berms jumps and rollers.

Volunteers are needed to help with the work and donations to help cover some of the costs. Trail days are June 23, June 25 and June 27. Meet at 9am at the lower parking lot. Wear study shoes, long pants and long sleeves. Bring a bike and helmet to test ride. The day ends at 4pm, but working only part of the time is fine.

The new Snapdragon Trail in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park is expected to be done by mid-July.

People are needed to work on the trail June 24. Meet at 9am behind the Tunnel Creek Cafe in Incline Village. It’s a three mile 4-wheel drive caravan-carpool up to the worksite. Bring a bike and helmet if you want to leave early. Trail days will go to about 3pm. Bring a lunch and water and wear long sleeves and long pants.

Cycling event to impact traffic near Truckee

Sections of highways 49, 70, 89 and 267 will be used during USA Cycling junior national road races on June 24. Motorists should expect delays throughout the day.

There will be seven races for the various age groups starting at 7:30am and concluding at about 8:30pm.

On the shortest course, 70 km, riders will start in Loyalton and finish at Northstar. The longer courses will start and finish at Northstar and race along Highway 89 into Sierra County, loop around and then head back on Highway 89 toward Truckee onto Highway 267. Delays could be up to one hour for motorists traveling Highway 89 between Truckee and Sierraville.

Electronic message boards have been placed along the routes advising motorists of the delays. The California Highway Patrol will provide traffic control during the races, which will include rolling closures of intersections as cyclists come through.

For more information, go online.

Carson City trail network to be dedicated

The official opening of the Kings Canyon/Waterfall Trailhead will be celebrated June 24 at 8:30am.

Located at the western end of Kings Street, the facility on Carson City Open Space and U.S. Forest Service land provides multi-use road and trail access for off highway vehicles, bikes, hikers and equestrians. The trailhead also features a newly refurbished Fireman Memorial that honors the three firefighters who lost their lives battling the 1976 King Fire.

The new trails, kiosk and memorial are the result of a collaboration of federal, state and local agencies working together to enhance recreational access while improving safety and water quality.

The waterfall area has become an extremely popular recreation area in Carson City. A new trail was built in 2010, and a few years later, the Great Basin Institute AmeriCorps program, in collaboration with the USFS, added an additional trail loop for the hiking public from the waterfall trailhead.

In the spring of 2014, Carson City Public Works requested assistance from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection to formalize the trailhead and trails, install water quality improvements and provide public education regarding the importance of the creek to the city’s drinking water supplies.

Great Basin Institute AmeriCorps provided hundreds of hours of volunteer labor and contracted hundreds of hours of trail crew time to construct the trail and build the erosion control enhancements. NDEP provided funding for the kiosk panel, fencing to assist in guiding the users, signage on the trail and timber materials to improve and stabilize the slopes. The U.S. Forest Service’s Carson Ranger District provided pavers to enhance the trailhead to better present the Memorial and interpretive theme. The Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) provided many hours of conservation crew time to construct the trailhead and place the two kiosks, completing the trailhead in May.