

Genoa trail provides plenty of recreation sans snow



Views into the farm lands of the Carson Valley dominate the trail. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

GENOA – Layers were coming off relatively quickly – it was that warm. The ground was barren, even the higher elevations didn't have much white stuff. It's not supposed to still be hiking season.

Five us and that dog named AJ ushered out 2017 with a hike instead of a snowshoe. And today, the same trek would be possible. Things might be different later this week, but because the hike was outside the basin, odds are it will still be do-able this weekend and beyond.

With Mother Nature being spastic this winter, one has to climb a bit for snow, or drop in elevation to hike. We chose the latter on New Year's Eve.

The Eagle Ridge Loop (6.5 miles) is part of the larger Genoa Trail System. A number of options are available, including connecting to the Tahoe Rim Trail.



Barb gets a better view from the one rock outcropping along the way. Photo/Kathryn Reed

It's like a different world from Tahoe. Pine trees still dot the landscape, but they are more dispersed and intermingled with other flora. The brown grasses provide their own beauty. With the expansive views, it's easy to see across the valley to the Pine Nuts.

Trail markers at key locations were welcome, especially since none of us had been there before. We also had **printed out a map**, which was good for deciding where to park, start and have our bearings on the trail.

Much of the route is single track, hardpack dirt. It's in great condition.

Mountain bikers are allowed here; a few were making their way up as we were descending. The climb (elevation gain is 1,775

feet) would have had me pushing the bike, and the narrowness of the trail at times would have made me uncomfortable. But mountain biking isn't my sport, either.

The one creek crossing quenched AJ's thirst, though bring water for your canine companions because they'll need it. A substantive wood bridge ensured us two-leggeds didn't have to get wet.

The only real downside to the hike is that it requires walking on pavement to get back to the car, including a stretch along Jacks Valley Road. Still, the shoulder is wide enough to feel safe.



A mountain biker makes his way up the Eagle Ridge Loop.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

—

Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 50 east to Stateline. Take Kingsbury Grade to the Carson Valley. Turn left on Foothill Road. Go through Genoa, then turn left on Centennial Drive.

Park at the corner of Snowshoe Lane. The trailhead is at the end of the lane.

Injury keeps Ganong out of 2018 Olympics

While the U.S. Olympic Team is still not solidified, one Lake Tahoe area skier is definitely not going – **Travis Ganong**.

The 29-year-old ski racer from Truckee tore his ACL in a race this season.

At the 2014 Games Ganong barely missed the podium. He placed fifth place in downhill and 23rd in super G.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Tahoe woman earns Ironman recognition

A Lake Tahoe woman has been named an Ironman All World Athlete for 2017.

Judy Anderson of Carnelian Bay earned the honor in the women's 50-54 age bracket.

The designation is earned by competing in multiple events and earning age group ranking points during the 2017 season. Racers were rewarded for their top three performances

throughout the year with the combined points determining the champion for each division.

The 52-year-old attorney in 2017 competed in the Ironman in Boulder, Colo., Santa Rosa, Los Cabos, Mexico.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Amateur Tahoe curlers being led by Olympian



Curling is becoming a popular year-round sport in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Edith Loudon

By Terra Breeden

Even though there isn't any snow on the ground, winter sports are still thriving in South Lake Tahoe. Curling, a team sport played on ice, is sliding into popularity with the club Lake

Tahoe Epic Curling leading the movement.

“It’s like shuffleboard or chess on ice. There’s a lot of strategy involved,” Lake Tahoe Epic Curling Club President Edith Loudon told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Curling originated in Scotland during the 16th century and the winter sport hasn’t gone out of style in the centuries since. Curling tournaments called “bonspiels” are played all over the globe and the sport is even an event in the Winter Olympics.

The game consists of two teams of four players competing against one another. Players push 42 pound curling stones across the ice to a target of rings that are 140 feet away. The object of the game is to knock your opponent’s stones away and get closest to the center ring to score points.

“The purpose is to outwit your opponent and beat them at their own game,” Loudon says. “You can be competitive on the ice, but the club is really a big family and we have a lot of fun off the ice too.”



South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena is home the area’s only curling club. Photo/Edith Loudon

Lake Tahoe Epic Curling holds “Learn to Curl” classes and bonspiels on Sunday evenings from 5:30-8 at the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena. Classes are led by Loudon, a longtime curling competitor and former Olympic athlete.

Loudon, a native of Scotland, was a member of Great Britain’s

Olympic curling team and competed in the 1998 Winter Games in Japan. It was an important year for curling; the first year the game was considered a full medal sport. Previous Olympics had only featured curling in demonstrations.

Great Britain's team went on to finish fourth in the 1998 Olympics (just outside of the medal zone after losing in the semi-finals to Canada, the country that took home the gold that year). However, Loudon says that competing in the Olympics was incredible.

"I felt very privileged to be in that position," Loudon says. "It was one of the most awesome experiences of my life."

A polished ice rink can be intimidating to newbie curlers, but Loudon feels comfortable on the ice. She grew up curling in Scotland where the game is popular. Her whole family curls competitively. Both her younger sister and brother have represented Great Britain in the Winter Olympics.

After the 1998 Games, Loudon competed on Scotland's curling team and went to the World Curling Championships in North Dakota in 2002 where her team won gold. Loudon later worked as a volunteer in the 2006 Winter Olympics in Italy where she met Eric Hazard, a fellow curler, who trained her to use curling software and would later become her husband.



Beginning curling classes are offered regularly. Photo/Edith Loudon

“Within about five minutes of meeting he realized what I knew about curling and we got married seven years later,” Loudon says.

Three years ago, Loudon moved to South Lake Tahoe to live with her husband, who owns a house near Heavenly, and quickly became involved with Lake Tahoe Epic Curling.

“South Lake Tahoe is one of the most amazing places to live,” Loudon says. “I love the changing seasons, the scenery, and I learned to ski here, which I love too.”

Lake Tahoe Epic Curling was founded in 2013 by Loudon’s husband, Hazard, and Ray Sidney, a South Shore local involved in the tech industry. Sidney is an avid fan of curling and purchased all of the equipment and curling stones for the club. At \$5,000 a set, curling stones aren’t cheap, but Sidney wanted to bring the sport to his hometown. Thanks to Sidney’s generosity, Lake Tahoe Epic Curling has state of the art curling equipment and over 30 members.

Curling has a long season that runs from September through May. There are three leagues in a season: a fall, winter and spring league.

Loudon says that although curling is a new sport in California, it is gaining momentum every year.

“In California there’s fresh and new energy,” Loudon says. “People are really enthusiastic about the game and just want to have fun on the ice.”

The next “Learn to Curl” class will be Jan. 28 from 5:30-8pm at South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena. Those who want to try curling can sign up **online** and attend the class for \$20. All you need to bring is shoes with good tread, warm clothes and enthusiasm. Loudon suggests attendees don’t wear tight jeans because they make it hard to bend on the ice.

The last “Learn to Curl” class was in December and more than 40 people attended. Since then, the club has gotten 12 new members, all of whom attended the “Learn to Curl” class.

“It was a lot of fun,” says Nancy Kehro who attended the December class and is now a club member. “I love the camaraderie of curling and everyone is so nice. Just come and give it a try.”

Mountain lion sightings continue in ZC area



The mountain lion is in the bottom center. Photo/Robert Felton

We live in Elks Point and I walk my dog every morning up to the bike path and then to Nevada Beach or Round Hill Pines Beach. Friday morning my dog ran over the path and up the hill, which she usually does to chase squirrels.

But as I looked up to where she had stopped there above her was a mountain lion.

We have friends who run early in the morning and they think they saw the lion three days ago. Thought it was a large dog, but when they shined their torches on it – the eyes were green-gold so they think now it was the cat.

– Robert Felton, Zephyr Cove

Squaw's Bennett headed to

Winter Olympics

By U.S. Ski & Snowboard

For the second-straight day, Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) led the way for the U.S. Ski Team, finishing 17th on the famed Lauberhorn downhill course at Wengen, Switzerland, on Saturday.

For any fans that arrived, or tuned in late, they missed the show as Switzerland's Beat Fuez came out of the No. 1 start position and took home the victory. Norway's Aksel Lund Svindal was second, followed by Austria's Matthias Mayer in third.

Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah), competing in only his second downhill since returning from a knee injury, had some blazing top fast splits and made a miraculous recovery off the final jump and finished 28th. Kipling Weisel (San Francisco) made his World Cup downhill debut and finished 52nd. Jared Goldberg crashed midway down the course, but is OK.

Bennett secured his Olympic team selection Friday after finishing ninth in the alpine combined. However, he still has a shot to make the downhill team for the Games with a solid result next weekend in Kitzbuehel, Austria.

"The pressure is still on to throw some results down in downhill," Bennett said. "I want to compete in downhill (at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games). I think I'm skiing well, and I could have a good chance there if I keep skiing the way I am."

New fantasy sports game revives sports betting concerns

By Philip Marcelo, AP

BOSTON — A new daily fantasy sports game that lets users home in on a single NFL playoff game has some gambling experts wondering if the contest inches the industry closer to the territory of sports betting that remains illegal in most of the United States.

The “Showdown” variant offered by leading fantasy sports company DraftKings allows users to pick six athletes from two teams playing against each other in a real-life football game, racking up fantasy points based on stats like touchdowns, receptions and yards passing, rushing or receiving. That means users playing “Showdown” this weekend can wager on performances in the Jaguars-Steelers game Sunday without having to wait for the Saints-Vikings game to play out several hours later.

[Read the whole story](#)

Rail jam at Sierra in honor of fallen snowboarder

Sierra-at-Tahoe is dedicating an event in memory of local snowboarder Natasha “Tash” Sagucka. The USASA Jammin’ 4 Tash event will take place Jan. 20 on Broadway Trail.

Additionally, Sagucka will be commemorated each year on the last USASA Rail Jam event at Sierra.

Sagucka competed in USASA events for seven years, from 2000-07. As a tribute to her love of the mountains, she is able to be remembered in her most peaceful state: snowboarding.

Sagucka was ultimately a victim of acute lymphoblastic leukemia and passed away in early November.

A Rainbow Rail terrain park feature was made in her honor and will be incorporated into the setup. A cash purse of \$1,000 has been donated by Sagucka's mother, Margaret, in memory her involvement with USASA.

USASA members are invited to participate in honor of Sagucka. Sierra invites all interested to register; entry fees for non-members is \$45. Registration will take place in Solstice from 7:30-9am on the morning of the event. A portion of the proceeds go to the Leukemia Lymphoma Society Cancer Research for A.L.L to support further research. Other support comes Love Your Melon who is donating hats to all competitors and from USASA sponsors. The rail jam will take place at the bottom of Broadway near the West end of the Solstice Plaza – great for spectators.

Bowman, Wise packing bags for Winter Olympics



David Wise and Maddie Bowman will represent the Reno-Tahoe area in the Olympics – again. Photo/LTN

By Shawn Smith, NBC

David Wise of Reno and Maddie Bowman of Meyers will both have the opportunity to defend their freeski halfpipe Olympic titles.

The two gold medalists from the Sochi Winter Games qualified for PyeongChang at the U.S. Grand Prix at Snowmass, the fourth of five selection events for the U.S. Olympic ski halfpipe team.

Wise won the men's contest, topping a stacked field that included U.S. teammates Alex Ferreira, Aaron Blunck and Gus Kenworthy. In his winning run, Wise went huge and landed a technical sequence of tricks that included a switch double cork 1080 and double cork 1260s on both walls.

Read the whole story

Moon about to do something it hasn't done in 150 years

By Alex Harris, Sacramento Bee

Call it whatever you like – a blue red moon, a purple moon, a blood moon – but the moon will be a special sight on Jan. 31.

Three separate celestial events will occur simultaneously that night, resulting in what some are calling a super blue blood moon eclipse. The astronomical rarity hasn't happened for more than 150 years, according to Space.com.

A super moon, like the one visible on New Year's Day, is the term for when a full moon is closest to the Earth in its orbit, appearing bigger and brighter than normal.

[Read the whole story](#)