

Preparation key to working out in the winter

By Kristi Jouett

Does the cold weather stop you in your tracks? Maybe not if you are a winter sports enthusiast, but what if you aren't? Maintaining your fitness goals can be challenging when you're shoveling snow to get out of your driveway – or even to get into your car. But remember: shoveling snow is exercise.



Kristi Jouett

If you're someone who goes into hibernation with the bears during winter, I'm here to offer some tips that will help you stay motivated throughout the colder, darker months.

No. 1: Plan ahead. John Wooden, a member of basketball hall of fame, once said, "Failing to prepare is preparing to fail." Winter months require a little more effort, so planning ahead based on weather conditions may help maintain motivation.

No. 2: Dress for success. Like summer, winter offers an array of exercise choices, but may require an extra layer of clothing.

No. 3: Make it fun. Pull out the Yaktraks, snowshoes, or cross country skis. Consider inviting a friend. It also helps to make a game plan for each day in an effort to maximize time spent doing an activity or workout. Even in the snow, you'll

find exposed rocks that can be used as exercise platforms. Get creative and make nature your snowy playground.

No. 4: Keep your workouts outside. Tahoe offers many blue sky days even in the winter. More and more evidence suggests exercising outside has more health benefits than indoor activity. In a 2017 study published in the ACSM Health & Fitness Journal, Kelsey Brown and Dixie Stanforth found that “green exercise” or exercising outside leads to “increased exercise enjoyment” and “stronger exercise adherence.”

No. 5: Make a commitment to yourself and keep it. You only let yourself down when you skip a workout. Maintaining a level of fitness takes a lot of work and does not always come easy. Keep that in mind when you feel like skipping a workout on that cold, blustery winter day. The hardest part of any workout is simply getting there. Show up.

Kristi Jouett is a certified fitness instructor with Tahoe Fit, a partnership between Barton Health and Lake Tahoe Community College offering a variety of daily fitness classes around South Lake Tahoe.

Free avalanche beacon seminar on North Shore

Apenglow Sports in Tahoe City is putting on a community avalanche beacon seminar and practice session at the Tahoe City Winter Sports Park Sports on Dec. 13 at 6pm.

This event will help attendees better understand avalanche beacon function and the recent technological advancements of these vital backcountry tools.

The evening is free to attend and will last approximately two hours. The event will begin with an outdoor component that will cover both basic and multiple burial scenarios, as well as over-arching safety themes. During this hands-on practice, Alpenglow Sports will have a small fleet of beacons on hand for practice, and knowledgeable experts will be available to teach proper avalanche beacon usage. If you own your own beacon, we encourage you to bring it for practice.

Bring a headlamp, warm clothing and dress for winter conditions.

The group will then move indoors where Café Zenon will be offering an egg roll and craft beer special for \$8. Our guiding experts will be available for follow up questions, and to share their knowledge.

South Shore to be part of annual bird count

Tahoe Institute for Natural Science will be putting on a Christmas bird count on Dec. 17 from 8am-5pm.

This annual count is widely regarded as the largest and oldest citizen science project in the world. Each year, from Dec. 14-Jan. 5 tens of thousands of volunteers head out into the winter to count birds for a day. This tradition goes back to 1900, and in the intervening years, these birders have built a database on bird populations that is unmatched by any other wildlife census.

Local participants will meet at Alpina Coffee Cafe on Emerald Bay Road in South Lake Tahoe at 8am. The group will bird at

Cove East and then split into smaller groups to bird at other areas.

Ways to keep Tahoe-Truckee backcountry wild

By Jill Sanford, Moonshine Ink

As the snow settles from our most recent storm, the Tahoe/Truckee backcountry community is buzzing with anticipation for those remote, untouched lines and the fresh tracks they dream of all summer long.

Each winter more people opt to earn their fresh turns by hiking the local mountains rather than riding lifts, and increased use in the backcountry year-round has led to more opinions weighing in on the management of these areas.

Enter the Winter Wildlands Alliance, a national organization that advocates on behalf of non-motorized winter recreation on public lands. According to the WWA, the number of backcountry skiers is projected to increase by anywhere from 55 to 106 percent by 2060.

Read the whole story

Local CalFire office transitions out of peak fire season

Recent rains and cooler temperatures across the region have lowered the threat of wildfires allowing CalFire's Amador–El Dorado Unit to transition out of peak fire season effective today in Amador, El Dorado, Sacramento and Alpine counties.

CalFire will continue to maintain staffing to meet any potential threat, as well as maintaining the ability to strategically move resources to areas that remain at a higher threat level. CalFire will also continue to monitor weather conditions closely and still has the ability to increase staffing should weather conditions change or if there is a need to support wildfires or other emergencies in other areas of the State.

Statewide, CalFire and firefighters from many local agencies responded to more than 6,000 wildfires within the state responsibility area that burned nearly 505,000 acres. In the Amador–El Dorado Unit, CalFire responded to 232 wildfires that charred 2,268 acres.

A leading cause of wildfires this time of year is from escaped landscape debris burning.

3 Yosemite bears killed by

vehicles in 3 weeks

By Guy McCarthy, Union Democrat

Three bears have been killed by vehicles in Yosemite National Park in the past three weeks, and park staff are urging motorists to obey posted speed limits.

More than 400 vehicle-bear collisions have occurred in Yosemite since 1995, according to park staff and the website KeepBearsWild.org. Vehicle-bear collisions are now one of the leading causes of black bear mortality in Yosemite.

There are 300 to 500 black bears in the park and they are especially active near Crane Flat, in Yosemite Valley and along Tioga Road each spring, summer and fall, according to biologists.

Read the whole story

Invasive clams tracked by their DNA

By Ben Coxworth, New Atlas

The sooner that you know an invasive species is present in your local environment, the better the chances that you can control it before it becomes unmanageable. It was with this in mind that researchers from the University of Illinois recently detected the presence of a species of invasive freshwater clam, by looking for its cast-off DNA in lake water.

Working in collaboration with colleagues from Rice University,

the University of Notre Dame and UNR, the scientists performed an eDNA assay – eDNA stands for “environmental DNA,” and refers to DNA that is passed into the environment in the form of excretions and other biomaterials.

Read the whole story

Paiute cutthroat trout return to native waters



A Paiute cutthroat trout is caught and measured. Photo/USFWS

By Kathryn Reed

Two years after an Alpine County creek was chemically treated, native Paiute cutthroat trout have returned to those waters.

That was the whole purpose of treating Silver King Creek and its tributaries from Llewellyn Falls downstream to Silver King Canyon. The lower reaches of Tamarack Creek, Tamarack Lake Creek and Coyote Valley Creek were also treated.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife used rotenone, a fish toxicant, to kill off the nonnative fish that had been stocked there since the early 1990s.

This summer the agencies restocked Silver King Creek with 86 native Paiute cutthroat trout. This is the only place in the world where this fish is a native.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife website, the Paiute was listed as endangered on March 11, 1967, and reclassified as threatened on July 16, 1975.

Ultimately, the plan is to put fish back in their historic range below Llewelyn Falls.

The irony is the transplanted fish are likely descendants of fish that originally came from Silver King Creek. It was in 1946 that the Eastern Sierra Packers Association and the U.S. Forest Service took 401 fish from Silver King Creek to North Fork Cottonwood Creek.

It is Cottonwood Creek where the fish came from this summer.

“We have a long-term dataset showing a substantial decline in the population in Upper Fish Valley,” said USFWS biologist Chad Mellison said in a press release. “The team decided we needed to augment this population with other donor populations including North Fork Cottonwood Creek. Secondly, we needed to conduct population assessments in North Fork Cottonwood Creek to determine if the population there was viable enough to support transplantation to Silver King Creek.”

Mellison has been working on the project for 16 years.

Ski resort leads crowdfunding to snub Vail

By Natalie Obiko Pearson, Bloomberg News

A tiny Canadian ski resort forged by Scandinavian miners chasing an 1890s gold rush has become the unlikely recipient of a record equity crowdfunding raise, tapping into powder hounds' quest to fend off a wave of consolidation led by Vail Resorts.

Investors are lining up to buy a piece of Red Mountain Resort in Rossland, British Columbia, drawn by its rebellious pitch of "Fight the Man, Own the Mountain." The web-based campaign, the first by a ski resort, appears to have struck a chord with skiers anxious about a flurry of acquisitions that has put 39 resorts in the hands of just three corporations.

"Consolidation sometimes has the potential of stripping the soul and heritage out of these old-school resorts," says Howard Katkov, chief executive officer of Red Mountain Ventures, who's publicly taken jibes at the purpose-built villages and ubiquitous clock towers found at resorts like Vail and Whistler Blackcomb. "It's about preserving what we consider an endangered species." Vail didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Read the whole story

Trailhead first step to new

Douglas County trails

Douglas County completed construction of the Martin Slough Trailhead on Buckeye Road east of Heybourne Road this fall.

The trailhead includes eight parking spots and is the first phase of an overall project to complete the Martin Slough Trail. When complete, the Martin Slough Trail will provide a 2.6 mile paved multi-use path connecting Jake's Wetland in Minden to the Gilman Ponds in Gardnerville.

The path will offer the public alternate access to Minden Elementary School, Gardnerville Elementary School, and Carson Valley Middle School, allowing pedestrians to avoid the congestion along Highway 395.

A grant from the Nevada Department of Transportation Transportation Alternatives Program provided \$615,238 for construction, which was matched \$25,000 by Douglas County, Gardnerville, and Minden. Another \$25,000 was provided by the Dean Seeman Foundation and \$100,000 by the Ranch at Gardnerville.

A portion of the trail is also going to be constructed by the Carson Valley Inn across their property.

In November 2015 Douglas County received a \$106,836 grant from the Nevada Division of State Parks to construct a trailhead on Buckeye Road to access the trail. The original schedule called for both the trail and trailhead to be constructed this year, however the trail has been delayed due to the lengthy federal process to acquire all necessary project clearances.

The grant for the trailhead was set to expire Dec. 31, which necessitated that the county complete the trailhead prior to beginning the trail.

Construction on the trail is expected to begin late next

summer.