

Ticks carrying Lyme disease a problem in Placer County

By Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

Ticks have tested positive for Lyme disease in Placer County.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Lyme disease symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue and skin rash. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart and the nervous system.

Anyone hiking or working in the country should exercise caution, according to the Placer Mosquito and Vector Control District.

Read the whole story

White 5-peats in superpipe with perfect run

By Colin Bane, XGames.com

ASPEN – Shaun White, who rides for Northstar, scored the first perfect score in Winter X Games history in Men's Snowboard SuperPipe finals on Sunday, winning his fifth consecutive gold medal – a first in Snowboard SuperPipe. The victory comes after a left ankle sprain that plagued him earlier in the week forced him to miss the Slopestyle event he had hoped to compete in.

"It's unreal," White said, after scoring 100 out of a possible

100 points on his final run. "I've been wanting that 100 forever. Thank you so much, everybody, tonight. I came here on a mission: I couldn't compete in Slope and it kind of broke me. I didn't know what to do. I was sitting around icing my ankle wondering if I could even ride tonight, and I kind of took out a little bit of that anxiety and anger that I couldn't compete in Slope in the pipe tonight."

White had already sealed up the win in Run 1 after posting a score of 94.00, beating out Swiss rider Iouri Podladtchikov, who came close with a 93.00, and Japan's Ryo Aono. But White was determined to unveil his newest trick, a frontside double cork 1260. He fell attempting the trick in Run 2, then nailed it on the final wall of his victory lap in a run that included a massive 18-foot backside air, a frontside double cork 1080, a Cab double cork 1080, a frontside stalefish 540, a double McTwist 1260 and the frontside double cork 1260. White is officially the only person to have ever landed a frontside double cork 1260 in competition.

"I was a little upset with my first front double 12 tonight because it just wasn't there and I put my face in the wall," White said. "I was just trying to shake that off and get back up and do it again, and it happened."

Read the whole story

State's first Nachtspektakel at Squaw

On Feb. 4 at 6pm Squaw Valley, Dynafit, and Alpenglöw Sports will host California's first Nachtspektakel ski touring event.

A Nachtspektakel (say-knocked-shpeck-tockle) is a traditional European-style ski event that bonds people through the sport of ski touring. A cultural norm in Europe, Nachtspektakel are new ways to combine skiing, beer and food that are sure to catch on in the States.

Ski tourers are invited on an ascent to Squaw Valley's High Camp, followed by food and drink.

Tickets are \$40 per person, cash only, and can be picked up at Alpenglow Sports in Tahoe City.

Come appropriately dressed with uphill gear, skis, skins, boots, poles and a headlamp. Bring warm clothes, and perhaps a change of clothes for drinks/dinner.

Beacons shovels probes not required but recommended. Alpenglow Sports will offer free rentals for the evening. Rentals must be picked up the afternoon before the event.

For more information, call (530) 583.6917.

TRPA board approves 2012 boat inspection fees

Fees are changing at Lake Tahoe for boats needing to be inspected.

The TRPA Governing Board at its meeting this month voted to not alter the Tahoe Only boat fee, while increasing watercraft inspection fees for boats coming from other water bodies or have never been inspected.

Another change is the addition of a new decontamination charge for those boats not clean, drained, and dry when they arrive at the Lake.

The inspections were implemented a few years ago to prevent anymore aquatic invasive species from entering Tahoe.

Officials want the program to get closer to being self-sustaining. Federal funds help subsidize inspections and that money will be running out in the next couple year.

Fees in 2011 covered 29 percent of the cost of this program. The new fee schedule is estimated to cover 47 percent of the program for the 2012 season, with the remainder coming from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

More information on the Lake Tahoe Watercraft Inspection Program and fees are online.

Kashima on podium in Canada in freestyle World Cup

By USSA

CALGARY, Alberta -- Olympic champion Hannah Kearney of Norwich, Vt., extended her FIS freestyle World Cup record streak to 12 Saturday with a win at the Canada Olympic Park, while Mikael Kingsbury of Canada was the men's winner. Kearney was joined on the podium by K.C. Oakley of Piedmont in third for her first World Cup top 3.

Jeremy Cota of Carrabassett Valley, Maine, was second on the

men's side with Sho Kashima of Stateline in third. The FIS freestyle World Cup moves back to the United States at Deer Valley Resort for the Visa Freestyle International Feb. 2-4.

This was the third podium of the season for Kashima.

U.S. men blow away snowboardcross competitors at X Games

By USSA

ASPEN -- Nate Holland of Squaw Valley, Nick Baumgartner of Iron River, Mich., and Jayson Hale of Sierraville led U.S. Snowboarding to a clean sweep of the snowboardcross podium at Winter X Games.

Alex Deibold of Manchester Center, Vt., was next in fourth, demonstrating the depth of the U.S. team. Holland's time of 1:27.57 was a commanding half second ahead of Baumgartner's 1:28.01.

Lindsey Jacobellis of Stratton Mountain, Vt., injured her knee two days before the event and was not able to defend her title, breaking her streak at four consecutive wins. Canadian Dominique Maltais won the women's event.

This is Holland's fifth X Games snowboardcross gold.

Nick Baumgartner, who won gold in 2011, earned silver

Hale took bronze for the second time in his X Games career.

“It always feels great to be on top. I knew I just had to ride my heart out and back my words up and I was able to do that. I am fired up to be back on top,” Holland said.

Reno's Wise brings home X Games gold in ski superpipe

By USSA

ASPEN -- U.S. Freeskiing's David Wise of Reno averaged airs of 17 feet en route to the Winter X Games ski superpipe title. His 93 on his second run of three nailed down the win for the 21-year-old, the oldest competitor on the podium in only his second X Games. Teammate Torin Yater-Wallace of Basalt, Colo., 16, was third for the second Winter X medal of his career.

This is Wise's won first Winter X Games medal.

Wise's winning run was a switch left double 1080 Japan grab, right 900 true tail grab, left 900 true nose grab, ally-oop flat 540 true tail grab (20 feet out of halfpipe), left double 1260 mute grab.

“I just didn't think about it as pressure. I focused on the perfect halfpipe and perfect conditions,” Wise said. “I wanted to show the world who I am and what I can do. Thanks to everyone for giving me the opportunity to show you what I can do in the pipe.”

Bowman snags silver in ski superpipe at X Games

By Colin Bain, XGames.com

ASPEN, Colo. – Canadian skier Roz Groenewoud – better known in the action sports world as “Roz G” – won her first Winter X Games gold in the Women’s Ski SuperPipe in an emotional final that became a celebration of the memory of Groenewoud’s longtime friend and teammate Sarah Burke.

Like most of the skiers in Saturday’s competition and many of the other athletes at Winter X Games 2012 this week, Groenewoud wore a red “Sarah” sticker on her helmet in tribute to Burke, the 2011 SuperPipe champion and four-time Winter X Games gold medalist whose death Jan. 19 after a SuperPipe training accident in Park City, Utah, has hung heavy over Winter X Games 2012.

“It means so much,” said Groenewoud, tearing up at the base of the SuperPipe at Buttermilk after taking a Run 3 victory lap. “After the tribute for Sarah on Thursday I was just so proud to be a skier. The outpouring of love from the community was just absolutely amazing, and Friday morning in training and all of today I just tried to let all of that love lift me up. It feels so great. I definitely felt like I had Sarah with me. She was my teammate for so long.”

Groenewoud beat out Maddie Bowman of South Lake Tahoe and Brita Sigourney for the win after posting a score of 93.66 and taking the lead from Bowman in Run 2 with a massive 14-foot safety grab and a run featuring a 900, back-to-back 540s, a left-side 720 and a switch 540 traveling down the pipe. Bowman’s Run 2 score of 92.00 held for the silver medal, and

Sigourney blasted to third place in Run 3 with 90.66 after landing the only 1080 of the competition.

Read the whole story

Not all wetlands are created equal

By Rachel Nuwer, New York Times

To many, it's a familiar scenario: a strip mall suddenly pops up in what was once a desolate quagmire or boggy boondock.

But people are coming to realize that these seemingly wasted plots where land meets water provide a valuable ecological service. In addition to nurturing biodiversity, wetlands purify water, produce fish, store carbon dioxide that would otherwise contribute to global warming, and protect shorelines from floods, storm surges and erosion.

Since the early 20th century, development has claimed over half the wetlands in North America, Europe, Australia and China. To repair the damage from those construction binges and regain the benefits of wetlands, restoration has become a booming business.

Yet new research calls into question whether manmade versions can ever compensate for wetlands buried beneath parking lots and subdivisions. In an article published on Tuesday in PLoS Biology, scientists write that restoration efforts often fall short of returning wetlands to their former biological complexity and functioning.

"In traditional restoration, people repair hydrology, put in

some plants, and after a few years say the wetlands are good,” said David Moreno-Mateos, a wetland ecologist at the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve at Stanford University and the lead author of the paper. “But if you look at what’s really going on down there, you see the processes are not recovering.”

“One of the results from this study is that we need to undertake more specific restoration measures focused on recovering processes, not just nice, beautiful wetlands with ducks,” said Dr. Moreno-Mateos, who conducted the research at the University of California, Berkeley.

Read the whole story

International ice sculptors to compete at Northstar

Prestigious snow carvers from around the world will call North Lake Tahoe home Feb. 8-12 for the region’s first- Carve Tahoe competition, with the judging take place Feb. 13.

The weeklong international snow sculpture contest is specifically geared for spectators who will view firsthand 20-ton blocks of pure snow shaped and carved into breathtaking masterpieces. The competing teams are the best of the best – selected from the event’s top applicants and representing more than 20 countries.

Lawrence Nobel, the lead judge of Carve Tahoe, is an award-winning sculptor and illustrator who previously designed a gold medal for the 1984 Olympics and created George Lucas’ Yoda Sculpture in the Presidio in San Francisco.

Northstar's village will host Carve Tahoe.

While the highlight of Carve Tahoe is the talent and skill of the carvers from Finland, Germany, Japan, Russia, Canada and the United States, charitable donations also play a key role. According to event organizers, every dollar donated per spectator per vote will go directly to a local nonprofit.