Purse increases for annual Great Lake Tahoe Bike Race

The 8th Annual Great Lake Tahoe Bike Race, a classic 72-mile course and a 35-mile race or ride, kicks off fall in Lake Tahoe on Sept. 25.

The race features new electronic chip timing and larger 72-mile purse prizes, with the overall winning man and woman taking home $500 each, second place with $400, third with $300, fourth with $200 and fifth place with $100.

The 72-Mile Bike Race starts 7am in Zephyr Cove and has racers moving clockwise around the lake. There is a six-hour time limit for this race. The start is organized by riders' anticipated speed with the fastest riders at the front.

Police will escort the pack through the first nine miles and 24 stoplights of the race. The last eight miles of the race is downhill or flat and has four lanes. There are three water stations located at Emerald Bay, Tahoe City and Incline Village.

The elevation gain for the ride is 3,900 feet. There will be a special award for any 72-mile cyclist who finishes in less than 3 hours and 30 minutes.

Neither course is closed to traffic.

The 35-Mile Bike Race starts in Tahoe City at approximately 8:45am. after the 72-Mile Bike Race participants pass. Racers must finish by 1pm (a 4-hour and 15-minute time limit). Participants drop their bikes at Commons Beach and drive to the finish at Zephyr Cove in the morning, where a bus brings them back to the start line on the North Shore.

The Great Lake Tahoe Bike Race is part of the 15th Annual Lake

Tahoe Marathon Race Week, Sept. 22-26, when runners, walkers and all recreational athletes have a host of events to choose from, including the marathon, coined “a Sunday morning run you’ll never forget,” that winds down the West Shore from Tahoe City to South Lake Tahoe for a post-run bash; Tahoe Triple (three marathons in three consecutive days); Marathon Relays; Half Marathon; Three-Day Triathlon; 10K; 20-Mile Run, Jog and Walk; 5K; Kayaking events; free Kids Fun Run and Speed Golf.

For more information or to register (fees vary for events), call (530) 544.7095 or visit the Lake Tahoe Marathon website at www.laketahoemarathon.com. The website is also home to a course map and profile and event descriptions.

Restless Kerr waits for Tahoe snow to fall to start training

By Roman Stubbs, Reno Gazette-Journal

The homemade plywood start gate sits in his front yard in Truckee, not far from the garage, where several sets of skis are carefully stacked against the back wall.

They were essential pieces of Errol Kerr’s ninth-place finish in skicross at the 2010 Winter Olympics where he competed for Jamaica, but they sit unnoticed in the mid-summer heat.

The real tools of Kerr’s trade are the welder and plasma cutter hanging from cords in the cluttered garage. They help the 24-year-old do what he has been doing all his life – they

help him take risks.

His latest project involves attaching steel brackets to a Canon HD camera. The camera soon will be mounted to a remote control helicopter and flown over the New York Jets training camp by Kerr, as part of an aerial photography deal with HBO's NFL series "Hard Knocks."

Read the whole story

State Fair proves gardens don't need a ton of water

By Debbie Arrington, Sacramento Bee

This summer, a golden garden greets visitors to the State Fair Farm. Hundreds of bees buzz from bed to bed, collecting pollen from sunburst-bright gloriosa daisies and honey-hued coreopsis. Hummingbirds dart among the fuzzy kangaroo paws and pretty penstemons, giving fairgoers an extra thrill.

But unlike previous floral displays at the fair, this new permanent garden demonstrates an important point: Saving water can be beautiful.

"We went for a lot of color," explained landscape expert Julie Saare- Edmonds of the state Department of Water Resources. "We wanted to show how beautiful a water-efficient garden can be. It's not sticks and rocks."

Read the whole story

Classic wooden boats bring history to Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Shimmering mahogany and sparkling chrome bob on the tranquil waters at Tahoe Keys Marina. At the far end of the pier, 69 wooden classics are docked, many with the owner inside.

This is Day 2 of the South Tahoe Wooden Boat Classic, which features woodies form 1929-73.

“Most have been restored back to their original condition,” said Sandy Chase, who was working the event Friday.



"Saga" is one of 69 woodies at Tahoe Keys Marina with a story to tell. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Her husband, Lee, spent 11 years restoring their boat, including the Lycoming V-12 engine. There are only two of these engines on the West Coast, and only four in the United States.

Chase said she lost her garage so her husband could have a boathouse.

It’s a mix of locals, second homeowners and those who love Tahoe who have brought their vessels to South Lake Tahoe for the public to view.

Rich Christopher of Morgan Hill brought “Clinker Toy” to Tahoe on July 29 for the show. She is a 1959 22-foot Chris Craft Sea Skiff with a 353 Chevy engine.

“I have had her for seven years. Last year was the first year she was in the water,” Christopher said while sitting in his boat.

He can’t even count the hours it took to fully restore the boat, including engine.

This is the first show he has come to that includes judging. Twenty-three awards will be given out, with the ceremony on Sunday at Sugar Pine Point on the West Shore. That event is from 11am-2pm.

Members of the local Boys & Girls Club cruised around as judges, too. Horns were going off, interior inspected and finish analyzed to determine the number of points each particular boat should be awarded.

A lot of money is tied up in these boats. Chase said a couple Rivas are scheduled to be auctioned at Pebble Beach in August with asking prices of $260,000 and $320,000.

“These boats become a member of the family,” Chase said. “The value depends on the rarity of the boat and if the restoration brings it back to the original or not.”

Mahogany is the dominant wood. It used to come from Africa, but that is hard to get now. Much of today’s wood hails form Honduras.

As part of the Antique & Classic Boat Society, the local chapter is supposed to have an educational component – the boat show fits that criteria.

Tickets are $20, though Raley's has them for $15. Proceeds benefit Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society, Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe, the three Kiwanis Clubs on the South Shore, and the South Lake Tahoe Fire Department. The event is from 9am-5pm today at Tahoe Keys Marina on Venice Drive off Tahoe Keys Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe.

Now in its third year, the boat show is growing – 10 more boats this year, and a couple thousand people expected to weave among the docks these two days.

The Tahoe Maritime Museum has a booth. Membership is available, with certain categories coming with a ride on a woodie.

New this year is three racing boats. All on trailers – not in the water – because it is too rough for them.

ngg_shortcode_0_placeholder (Click on photos to enlarge.)

Reno-Sparks looking to create region bike-pedestrian plan

By Susan Voyles, Reno Gazette-Journal

With the first comprehensive area regional bicycle and pedestrian plan kicking into gear, residents are wanted to help identify the top bike lane projects in the Reno-Sparks area to be built over the next 20 years.

At Thursday’s Sparks Hometowne Farmer’s Market, residents can draw lines on maps to show the projects they favor for the plan.

Residents also will be asked to fill out written comment cards, so support of the various projects can be tallied.

The projects are expected to range from finding critical missing links of bike lanes for bike commuters, as well as re-striping projects that can be done when streets are repaved or rebuilt.

For example, new bike lanes have been built on Victorian Avenue, from Pyramid Way to McCarran Boulevard in Sparks, said Katy Cole, an engineer with Fehr & Peers, which was awarded a $250,000 contract to prepare the master bike/pedestrian plan.

But she said there remains a big hurdle in finding a safe way to get bicyclists across McCarran and over to the Sparks Marina.

Read the whole story

Cycling, running assessments help keep athletes healthy

By Kathryn Reed

Flexibility – good. Hamstring strength – not so good. Seat – broken and didn’t know it. Pedal efficiency – could be greatly enhanced by losing the toe cages and getting clip-in pedals.

Riding a bike has gone high-tech. Beyond what the two-wheelers are made of, the specialties for road-mountain-tri, and all

that lycra, some riders have cycling power meters on the handlebars. The handlebar area in bike lingo is known as the cockpit.



Beyond degress in kinesiology and physical therapy, Jason Collin has training in bike fitting just for people in health care. Photos/Kathryn Reed

And now cyclists in the greater Lake Tahoe area can be professionally fitted to whatever kind of bike they pedal. Jason Collin has been fitting people to their bikes for several years, but it was just last month that the physical therapist working out of Tahoe Fracture & Orthopedic Medical Clinic in South Lake Tahoe started offering the service in Tahoe.

Biomechanical expertise and knowledge about anatomy are the things Collin brings to an adjustment session that a bike shop usually doesn’t have. He also takes about two hours to do the whole assessment – time the bike shop doesn’t give. Barton Health charges $199 – a much higher fee than a bike shop.

My mountain bike was bought sometime in the early ’90s when I lived in Las Vegas. I road it around the parking lot, liked it and bought it. The shop may have adjusted the seat. That was it.

My road bike is a few years old. My girlfriend who likes to ride bought it for me so I wouldn’t be so whiney on my mountain bike while she cruised ahead of me. I never liked the person who assembled it in South Lake Tahoe. Maybe his less than friendly demeanor is why he is out of business.

I had heard a bit about Barton’s Pro Bike Fit and Runner’s Program, but wanted to know more. I was skeptical about how paying nearly $200 for the bike fit or the $150 for the running program could be worth it. Then I let my cynical reporter’s brain be taken over by my health conscious massage therapist brain and thought, hmmm, just give it a try.

I know proper equipment is key to preventing injury and enhanced performance. (Stronger hamstrings and not so tight hips would help, too, Collin pointed out.) I don’t have a laser to look at my biomechanics. I can’t take measurements while I’m on a bike. I don’t have mini-jacks to balance my pedal on while the measurements are taken. I don’t know a shaky seat can mean it’s broken and therefore a real hazard. And even if I could get a friend to do all of what I went through on Thursday, neither of us would know what it meant.

Collin knows. And the next closest person to tell you about your bicycle mechanics is at UC Davis.

Barton decided to tap into Collin’s expertise as a way to expand its sports medicine offerings as well as expand its destination health care. The same goes for Alan and Caroline Barichievich, two physical therapists, who offer the runners’ assessment at Stateline Medical Center.

The next closest runners’ program is in Carmel.

“It’s for anyone who runs, hikes, or walks. We do a full muscle-skeletal evaluation, including video analysis,” Alan Barichievich said. “A lot of changes can be made by getting in the right shoe.”

Both programs are available to anyone – wherever they live. Insurance is accepted. Sometimes a cycling injury covers the bike assessment. Barichievich said most people he’s seen have a prescription. Knee issues can warrant the type of evaluation the Barichievichs provide.

These programs are geared toward everyone – the novice athlete, the weekend warrior, the competitor. Collin and the Barichievichs know their sports firsthand – not just the medical aspects to the assessments. They know what it’s like to do a tri, ride a century or run an ultra-marathon.

No bike shop is going to have a customer lay on a table to test strength and flexibility. Nor are they going to explain how my ACL is threatened via cycling and skiing when my hamstrings and hips are, um, lacking in muscle.

And they certainly aren’t going to send an email at 11pm with your assessment, pictures of exercises/stretches and a mild lecture that says, “Please get that seat swapped out soon so I don’t have to see you for rehab after a crash! Bike shoes and clipless pedals will make a world of difference for you, too. Don’t worry, the learning curve is quick!”

For more information on the bike program, call (530) 543.5896 or click here. For runner info, call (775) 589.8953.

ngg_shortcode_1_placeholder (Click on photos to enlarge.)

Water ski weekend at Homewood may become annual event

The sport of water skiing is 88 years old. Tahoma's Les Bartlett is 75 years old. The two got together along with some 20 somethings and other assorted ages to put on quite a show for the Tahoe Maritime Museum's first on-the-water exhibition of water skiing.

Bartlett demonstrated how "not to learn to water ski" by skiing hunched over as well as dropping his derriere repeatedly into the water as the crowd in boats and on shore looked on. A crowd of 100 plus watched the July 23 morning events from the Obexer's Marina pier while another 70 or so were crowded into 17 boats to survey the demonstrations of slalom skiing, wakeboarding, wakeskating, kneeboarding, trick skiing, double skiing, wakesurfing and aquaplaning.



Les Bartlett without a wetsuit on Tahoe's icy water. Photo/Tom Bredt

Ten-year-old Amanda Shepherd of Homewood concluded the day's exhibition on an aquaplane by being the youngest "skier" on the oldest piece of equipment. The aquaplane's heyday at Lake

Tahoe came in the 1940s before water skiing had really dipped its toe in the water at the lake.

Event coordinator Warren Fallat called the Water Ski Weekend “a great success” and said he hopes the event can be held in some fashion on an annual basis.

The lineup of demonstration skiing/boarding went as follows: Wakeboarding and Wakeskating, Jeff Stoike; Slalom Water Skiing, Lee Schmidt; Kneeboarding, Robert Dawson; Trick Skiing, Warren Fallat; Double Ski’s – how not to water ski – Les Bartlett; Wakesurfing, Greg Felsch; Aquaplaning – Amanda Shepherd; and a special “Air Chair” exhibition by Ron Rupp.

Contact the Tahoe Maritime Museum at (530) 525.9253 for more information, photos or video of the Water Ski Weekend.

Tahoe City’s Bahrke retires from skiing

By Elizabeth Karam, U.S. Ski Team

Known for her dyed pink hair, glittery eyelids and bright smile, Shannon Bahrke of Tahoe City announced her retirement from the U.S. Ski Team. Bahrke was a member of the freestyle moguls team for 12 years earning Olympic and World Championships medals, World Cup titles and wins and U.S. Championship titles during her tenure with the team.

“I’m going to miss everything, freestyle is such a way life. It’s just so much fun and I’m really going to miss that,” said Bahrke. “I’m going to miss the people, the competition and I think I’m certainly going to miss waking up every day and

having a purpose to kick somebody's butt. There are so many things I'm going to miss, the people here, my teammates, but I'm ready for what comes next in life."


Shannon Bahrke

Bahrke first clicked into skis at the age of three, ripping the mountain with her mom. Her career began as an alpine ski racer before making the switch to freestyle, eventually settling on moguls. Her first big splash came in 2002, when she won the Gold Cup at Deer Valley Resort in Park City, solidifying her spot on the 2002 Olympic Team.

"That night I was there with my whole family, right before they [aerials] competed they played the National Anthem and raised the flag. I looked over and my dad was just balling. I've never seen my dad cry like that," remembered Bahrke. "So I said, 'dad what's wrong?' He said, 'my baby's going to the Olympics.' That really kind of solidified everything I've done and everything that they've put on hold for me. That was a really cool moment."

Bahrke, competing on home snow, won the silver medal at the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City, after earning her spot six weeks prior. Following 2002, she went on to become the 2003 World Cup champion and World Championships dual moguls silver medalist. In 2007, Bahrke added another World Championship medal, taking home bronze in dual moguls.

Her remarkable career was filled with wins and medals. Over the course of her 12 year tenure, she competed on five World Championships teams, winning two medals, and three Olympic

Teams, also winning two medals including bronze at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver.

“I believe things are better experienced when they’re shared. You can tell someone how awesome closing and opening ceremonies are. But when you get to walk into the closing ceremony holding your brother’s [Scotty Bahrke of Tahoe City] hand – it is really a special moment,” said Bahrke, looking back on memorable moments from her career. “I’m now passing the torch to him. I’ve done everything I wanted to do and now it comes to him.”

Bahrke has no plans of slowing down, now that she is “retired.” She will marry her fiancé Matt Happe in October at a destination wedding in Hawaii with family and friends. On top of getting married, she plans on devoting more time to their business, Silver Bean Coffee. Bahrke also has hopes of one day being on ABC’s hit show “Dancing with the Stars” or hosting NBC’s “The Today Show”.

“I’m really happy in life. I’m excited about my career and how it ended, whole thing. I’m just going to try and go with it, whatever happens. Maybe that’s hosting the ‘Today Show’, hint hint or be on Dancing with the Stars, hint hint,” said Bahrke. “I really can’t get past the fact that I’m really happy. I think that will get a little bit harder as next season rolls around, but right now it’s just good, I’m enjoying the sunshine.”

Livermore residents

rediscovering their piece of Tahoe

By Mark Tarte, Oakland Tribune

The Livermore Area Recreation and Park District has been around for more than 60 years. Founded in 1947, it has been an integral part of Livermore for generations of kids and families since the beginning.

Besides the parks and facilities it operates around town, the district also has a treat of a campsite at Lake Tahoe that has been available to Livermore residents for years, Camp Shelly.

Camp Shelly came under LARPD control in the early 1960s. The six-acre site is just a stone’s throw from Lake Tahoe, just off Highway 89. Open from June to September, Camp Shelly is a wonderfully rustic site with all the amenities that you need to camp and have some outdoor, family fun.

The campground is equipped with washrooms and hot showers, running water, a basketball court, Ping-Pong tables, a volleyball court and horseshoe pit. Each site is equipped with a parking lot, table, tent area, food storage locker and metal fire pits and grills.

Read the whole story

Tahoe brothers bring their

‘Deadliest Catch’ stardom to Reno

By Johnathan L. Wright, Reno Gazette-Journal

For Keith and Monte Colburn, crab is still king.

The brothers are the captain and relief captain, respectively, of the “Wizard,” one of the boats on “Deadliest Catch,” the popular Discovery Channel series about crab fishing in the Bering Sea.

But despite television stardom, the Colburns say it’s crustaceans, not cameras, that still draw them to some of the brawniest waters on Earth.

“We’re crab fishermen; it’s what we do,” Monte Colburn said. “It’s been paying the bills all these years.”

The brothers, who grew up at Lake Tahoe (Monte Colburn still lives there), are scheduled to appear at a meet-and-greet July 31 at the Silver Legacy Resort Casino.

Read the whole story