Peak of political incorrectness in Alpine County?



A Google Earth satellite image of Jeff Davis Peak in Alpine County.

By Mike Moffitt, San Francisco Chronicle

Jefferson Davis never set foot in California or Nevada, but two peaks – one in each state – bear the name of the president of the Confederacy.

One, the third-highest mountain in Nevada at 12,771 feet high, towers over Great Basin National Park. The other, 444 miles to the west, is a little known and rarely climbed volcanic plug near Lake Tahoe in Alpine County.

The latter's rugged, near-vertical slopes seem out of place with the surrounding terrain. They look like they belong in Arizona's Monument Valley.

Read the whole story

Boaters can help fight spread of invasive mussels

By California Department of Fish and Wildlife

California agencies combating the spread of invasive quagga and zebra mussels remind boaters to remain cautious over Labor Day weekend.

Quagga and zebra mussels are invasive freshwater mussels native to Eurasia. They multiply quickly, encrust watercraft and infrastructure, alter water quality and the aquatic food web and ultimately impact native and sport fish communities. These mussels spread from one body of water to another by attaching to watercraft, equipment and nearly anything that has been in an infested waterbody.

Microscopic juveniles, invisible to the naked eye, are spread from infested waterbodies in water entrapped in boat engines, bilges, live-wells and buckets. Quagga mussels have infested 33 waterways in Southern California and zebra mussels have infested two waterways in San Benito County.

To prevent the spread of these mussels and other aquatic invasive species, people launching vessels at any body of water are subject to watercraft inspections and are strongly encouraged to clean, drain and dry their motorized and non-motorized boats, including personal watercraft, and any equipment that contacts the water before and after recreating.

It has been a great year to enjoy our lakes and rivers, and boaters are instrumental in protecting California’s waters. As the season winds down, boaters should continue to clean, drain, and dry their watercraft after every outing to protect

these cherished destinations for the future.

Take the following steps both before traveling to and before leaving a waterbody to prevent spreading invasive mussels, improve your inspection experience and safeguard California waterways:

Clean – inspect exposed surfaces and remove all plants and organisms,
Drain – all water, including water contained in lower outboard units, live-wells and bait buckets, and
Dry – allow the watercraft to thoroughly dry between launches. Watercraft should be kept dry for at least five days in warm weather and up to 30 days in cool weather.

Travelers are also advised to be prepared for inspections at California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Border Protection Stations. Over the past nine years, more than 1 million watercraft entering California have been inspected at the Border Protection Stations. Inspections, which can also be conducted by CDFW and California State Parks, include a check of boats and personal watercraft, as well as trailers and all onboard items. Contaminated vessels and equipment are subject to decontamination, rejection, quarantine or impoundment.

Quagga and zebra mussels can attach to and damage virtually any submerged surface. They can:

- Ruin a boat engine by blocking the cooling system and causing it to overheat
- Jam a boat’s steering equipment, putting occupants and others at risk
- Require frequent scraping and repainting of boat hulls
- Colonize all underwater substrates such as boat ramps, docks, lines and other underwater surfaces, causing them to require constant cleaning
- Impose large expenses to owners.

Smoke filling basin from fire outside the area

Smoke is clouding the skies of Lake Tahoe, and there is a distinct wildland fire smell as well.

There is no fire in the basin.

The smoke is from fires south of Tahoe

For people with low tolerance for smoke, authorities suggest taking the following precautions:

• Stay indoors as much as possible, especially seniors and children. Avoid physical exertion.
• Close windows, doors, and outside vents. Use a fan or air conditioner to re-circulate the air. Ventilate your home and work place during periods when it is least smoky.
• Drink lots of water, eat a balanced diet, and get adequate rest. Good health strengthens your immune system.
• Wearing paper masks will generally not protect your lungs from wildland fire smoke.
• Be diligent about taking medicines prescribed by your doctor if you have pre-existing respiratory problems.

Lake Tahoe’s fast-pitch

history revisited



Perata Excavation team sponsor Pete Perata stands with a first-place trophy. Photo/Provided

By Moonshine Ink

They came from the San Fernando Valley, the Bay Area, the beaches of Santa Barbara and the Sacramento Valley.

Many were ex-collegiate level athletes that mostly came to Lake Tahoe to swing hammers in the summer months to help with the area's building boom of the 1970s. Some came to work and play in the snow.

But most of all, they were Tahoe's "Boys of Summer," a once-in-a-lifetime grouping of fastpitch softball champions, who kicked off a community sports renaissance in the basin.

“A lot of us came up here to work, but for me, I just enjoyed the laid-back lifestyle,” said Chendo Hernandez, who owns Mountain Lake Painting in Truckee. “We got up here, loved it, and never left.”

Read the whole story

Tickets on sale for TRTA annual year-end event

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association’s 36th annual Celebration & Fundraiser is Oct. 3.

This is an opportunity to celebrate another successful year. The state of the trail address will be given.

The party will be at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach. It will include food and a silent auction. Proceeds from benefit TRTA programs on and off the trail, from trail building and maintenance to youth excursions.

The event is from 5-8pm. Tickets are $55. Purchase them **online**.

Squaw-Alpine strengthen

Chinese partnerships

Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows has been on a quest to increase the number of Chinese nationals who visit the ski resorts.

A partnership with Toread, the leading Chinese outdoor retailer, travel service, and operator of the Snowone ski competition tour, one of the most well-known winter sports events in China, is designed to help with that quest.

The Tahoe area resorts already has a strategic alliance in place with China's Genting Resort Secret Garden. To date, the partnership has included delegation visits at both Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows and Genting Resort Secret Garden for trail naming ceremonies, joint training sessions and staff cross-training opportunities.

The China Ski Association has reported that the number of skiers in China has increased from 200,000 in 2000 to 12.5 million in 2015.

The partnership with Toread has the potential to expose a broad base of Chinese skiers and snowboarders to Tahoe.

Toread and Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows also intend to work together on events, including coordination of a friendly competition between the U.S. and Chinese national freestyle teams.

SUP races coming to Tahoe

Vista

Tahoe Vista is going to host what is being dubbed as the world's longest inland standup paddleboard race.

This will be the second year for the Tahoe Vista Paddlefest.

It will be Sept. 8-10. Women on Water is that Friday, The Butterfly Effect on Saturday and the 22-mile long Fall Classic race on Sunday.

There are events for the serious paddler and the recreationalist.

For more info, go **online**.

LimeBike – great concept, bike not so wonderful

By Kathryn Reed

Gears. Oh, my, I will never take them for granted on my bikes ever again.

Sunday's tiny excursion through South Lake Tahoe on a LimeBike proved a few things: a) I might be in worse shape than I want to admit, b) the town is not as flat as I think it is, and c) a heavy bike cruiser is not meant for a mountain environment.

I love the concept of LimeBike; love the whole shared economy. I don't mind the color. It's fun. I'm totally good with not having docking stations. It adds to the flexibility of the whole rental.

Does the system need some tweaking? Of course. Every business needs to make adjustments, especially when first starting out.

Two us started from different locations with the goal of meeting up and riding to lunch on Aug. 27. Sue had looked the night before to see where a LimeBike was located (it's all done through an app) and there was one on 13th Street. By the next morning it was gone. She walked about 15 minutes to Burger Lounge for the next one. It wasn't locked. She rode for free the whole day.

"I began to have guilty feelings, thinking someone would come out of the restaurant without their transportation. This is my ethical dilemma with the LimeBike program. It's like stealing someone's horse in the Old West," she said.

In reality, there is a big difference. She would have been shot dead for stealing a horse. LimeBike's, well, they are meant to be shared. No stealing possible. No reserving either.



LikeBikes are cheap transport, but it's a bit of a workout. Photo/LTN

People are known to not lock them when they stop. In part this is to thwart someone from taking it. For those on a free ride it means having the bike that much longer without paying.

I thought I was going to have it easy getting my bike. There has been a LikeBike on my street for at least week. When I went to unlock it it said it was out of service for maintenance. A neighbor came out. He said he called LimeBike to come move it. He said they had no record of it being on this street near the Y.

There is a GPS system in the bikes, which is how the owners know where they are and how people can find them via the app.

This meant I had to start walking. The closest was at Grocery Outlet. But that one didn't unlock either. I tried moving it and a recording said something about the police would be called if it's moved without unlocking it. I moved on without the bike.

Next one was on Bertha. It was at a residence. The guy poked his head over the fence. He was fine that I wanted to take the LimeBike away.

He's hoping the next incarnation of the bikes have gears and a better steering mechanism. Sue echoed those sentiments.

"For one thing, I wished I had my Allen wrench to fix the crooked handlebars," she said.

I was whining about the little things. I had actually looked forward to having the front basket for my phone, camera and notebook. Didn't work. All could slide out.

We both thought the seats were uncomfortable after a couple miles. Riding on our crappy roads on a LimeBike was worse than being on my 20-year-old mountain bike. There's no give on these LimeBike's. The cracks on the roads are jarring; not sure if I should send my massage bill to the city or LimeBike.

(Just kidding of course.)

Sue had issues with the handlebars to the extent she felt awkward, saying her elbows were bent the whole time. I didn't have the same issue. I liked that the grips were flat. Way more comfortable than my bikes.

At the end of the ride LimeBike shows you a map of your route, how many miles you went, the carbon you saved, and calories burned. I'm too embarrassed to share the mileage. Suffice it to say we sweated more than we would have on our own bikes.

"Having no gears could be problematic as I felt the hard pedaling associated with having one gear was the equivalent to an hour's workout at the gym," Sue said.

Mostly we were on city streets or bike paths.

"I also appreciated having tires that could ride over dirt since I took the Washington-Dunlap street cutoff," Sue said.

The tires are tubeless, so no need to worry about getting a flat. But it does make the bike heavier.

LimeBikes are here through September on a trial basis. I'm not sure they are ideal for tourists unaccustomed to this elevation. Gears are a beautiful thing and these bikes don't have any. There is no way I would recommend them to guests. I'd send them to a local bike shop with a better bike – the cost would be worth it. Locals who have a bike probably aren't going to get on one unless they are writing about the experience. What I can see is locals who don't have a bike and need to get from point A to point B faster than walking would use them. It would be great for errands, going to class, that sort of thing.

The concept is great, it's the bike itself that leaves a lot to be desired.

Monumental silence from Trump on Zinke’s review

By Henry Brean, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s national monument report went to the White House on Thursday, but the Trump administration has yet to disclose any recommendations from the unprecedented four-month review.

The lack of information drew criticism from monument advocates, including Democratic members of Nevada’s congressional delegation. Conservation groups have formally requested the release of Zinke’s report under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Interior Department responded to the growing calls for transparency on Friday by releasing a list of news stories and statements from right-leaning groups praising Zinke and the monument review.

Read the whole story

2045 eclipse should be big for Nev. tourism

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

To the parents and grandparents who took the time to share the

science of last week’s Great American Eclipse to children and grandchildren, I salute you.

You might have planted a seed of curiosity that one day might play an important role in our tourism economy.

The youngsters of today will be in their 30s and 40s in 2045, the year Great American Eclipse III darkens the skies over Northern Nevada in what could be one of the greatest tourism events in our state’s history.

Read the whole story