North Shore kicks off summer with 5 days of fun

Summer officially kicks off in North Lake Tahoe on Memorial Day Weekend with the 4th annual Opening Day at the Lake.

This five-day special event begins May 27 and runs through May 31. It is comprised of celebrations and festivities primarily along the West Shore.

“This is our official launch into the boating and summer season,” Andy Chapman, of the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, said in a statement. “The first days of summer bring with them a buzz of excitement and we wanted to capture that. People are eager to get outside and enjoy themselves. Whether it’s on the water, on the beaches or taking part in other seasonal events, it’s a great time of year to explore North Tahoe.”



Seaplanes are part of the annual Opening Days on the North Shore. Photo/Provided

Opening Day at the Lake events include deck opening celebrations at Sunnyside Resort, Bridgetender Grill and Chamber’s Landing Bar & Restaurant, openings and tours of the historical Vikingsholm Castle and Ehrman Mansion, guided tours

of the Tahoe Maritime Museum along with activities for kids, community clean ups, open house at the Rideout Community Center, as well as the Mike Brown Seaplane Splash-In and barbecue.

New this year is the Obexer's General Store Grand Opening, along with stand-up paddleboard relay races and demonstrations at Sunnyside Resort and Obexer's Marina. There will also be a special winemaker dinner at Swiss Lakewood Restaurant with wines from John and Lane Giguiere, and a "Launch into Summer" celebration and fundraiser and "History of Seaplanes" lecture series at the Tahoe Maritime Museum.

For more information about Opening Day at the Lake, activities, lodging and special events in North Lake Tahoe, click here.

Environmental educators get lesson about Angora Fire

By Kathryn Reed

Tromping through the forest with hard hats on, the group listened intently to scientists talk about the affects of fire on the landscape.

The 150 people with Project Learning Tree were divided into groups Wednesday as they scoured the Tahoe Mountain area that was burned in the 2007 Angora Fire.

Today they head home – which is all over the country. The headquarters for the group is in Washington. They have been on the South Shore since Monday for a convention.



Project Learning Tree members get an education in forests and fires. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Wednesday was their field trip. Ecology and fire were the topics, according to Sarah Lobner, with the U.S. Forest Service. They started the afternoon at Taylor Creek Visitor Center.

The group of men and women are the teachers for Project Learning Tree.

“We learn how other coordinators use different activities with different audiences,” said Lori Brant, who traveled to Lake Tahoe from Connecticut for the conference. “We teach the teachers.”

Their curriculum is for K-12.

Part of the experience on the South Shore included speaking with South Tahoe High School students about how they have worked with younger students to educate them about the environment.

“We checked on the health of the trees they planted last year,” Brant said of the student project.

For more information about Project Learning Tree, click here.

Tahoe-Truckee prep golfers snag state recognition

Reno Gazette-Journal

It was a good day for North teams in the 2A and 3A NIAA state golf tournaments on Wednesday.

In the 3A, Truckee's Allan Nousiainen took first place after a one-hole playoff. He shot a 74 (at the Oasis Golf Club's Canyons Course) on Day 1 and a 76 on the second day (Falcon Ridge) for a total of 150.

Read the whole story

Gray's Crossing opens season as public golf course



By Steve Pajak, Sacramento Bee

When the operators of Gray's Crossing in Truckee decided they were going to allow public play, they weren't going to let a little thing like a foot of snow get in the way.

After three years as a private club, Gray's Crossing opened to

the public for its 2010 season Friday, five days after being blanketed in white.

And Sacramento golfers thought weird spring weather was messing with them.

“We’ve been working around the clock getting the course dialed in,” said Shane Jones, the course’s head professional, on Monday.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe Marathon discounts in May



Coined “A Sunday run you’ll never forget,” the Lake Tahoe Marathon will bring about 3,000 racers to Lake Tahoe Sept. 22-26 to run the 26.2 miles down the West Shore, along with a host of other events.

In addition to the event’s popular marathon (Sept. 26 starting in Tahoe City), runners and walkers may choose from the Tahoe Triple, three marathons in three consecutive days (starting Friday); 20-Mile Power Walk and Run, a non-competitive event (Sunday); 72-Miler (Saturday); 3-Day Triathlon (starting Friday); Marathon Relays for two- and five-person teams (Sunday); Half Marathon (Sunday); 10K, starting at Emerald Bay’s Inspiration Point and 99 percent downhill (Sunday); 5K (Sunday); 35- or 72-Mile Bike Races (Saturday); Kayaking and Swimming events (Friday); A La Carte Marathons (Friday and Saturday); free Kids Fun Run (Saturday); Race Directors Fun

Run (Wednesday) and Speed Golf, run one of the Lake Tahoe's most scenic golf courses playing with three clubs (Thursday).

New this year is the Tahoe Double Dare, two laps around the lake in opposite directions (a special one-time only event); half mile, 1-mile and 2.5-mile swims and the Triple or A La Care Marathons, with different finishers medals for each of the three different marathons (Friday, Saturday and Sunday).

Early bird online registration specials saves participants 10 percent off fees, available through May 31.

For more information or to register (fees vary for events), call (530) 544.7095 or visit the Lake Tahoe Marathon website. The website is also home to a course map and profile, event descriptions and 2009 race results.

Trout Creek breach sends water flowing into Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Mother Nature is hard at work this season as she creates another tributary into Lake Tahoe.

Trout Creek in South Lake Tahoe normally flows into the Upper Truckee Marsh and then into the Upper Truckee River that lets out into Lake Tahoe at Cove East.

Not this year.



Trout Creek is flowing into Lake Tahoe -- a rare thing. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The creek has its own outlet into the lake. Although it is crossable via foot, it might mean getting soaked up to at least one's knees in some locations.

"It's nature doing what nature does," Bruce Eisner of the California Tahoe Conservancy said. The state agency owns the marsh. "It's fascinating to see nature in action."

The CTC will continue to let Mother Nature do what she wants. It's likely in a month the breach will not be evident as the snowmelt decreases and temperatures rise.

This is not the first time a breach has occurred. But it's also not an annual event.

For now, much of the meadow near the edge of the Al Tahoe neighborhood is more like a marsh. Egrets are swooping low as if fish may be in those waters. Flocks of Canada geese waddle in the muck. Mountain chickadees chatter about cheeseburgers.

Blades of wild grass poke above the water. Reflections of the cloudy unsettled sky are reminders summer has yet to arrive in this part of the state.

But all has not been quiet this spring along the beach. On a couple warm nights South Lake Tahoe police officers have been

called out to break up parties. Bonfires have been a problem in the past. Several cigarette butts line the trails in the area. A wildfire is a real concern.

At the May 18 City Council meeting it was agreed the CTC will pay $12,251 to the city for police officers' overtime to patrol the Upper Truckee Marsh and beach area, as well as Cove East on the other side of the river through June 25. An agreement between the city and CTC was entered into in July 2009 for police to patrol the areas at a cost of not more than $20,000. The extra money is to fill out the current contract.

The CTC is in the process of crafting a draft environmental impact report regarding restoration of the Upper Truckee marsh. It will come out this year. It was delayed for several months because the bond freeze by the state prevented money from flowing to the CTC to fund the creation of the document.

"We have an obligation to protect habitat. That is our overriding concern," said Ray Lacey, CTC deputy director. "The CTC is closely monitoring the use patterns. It's likely in the future there will be different recommendation to tailor some of those patterns."

The agency is worried about dogs off leash, more so in the wetlands than on the beach. Residents have become reluctant to frequent the beach when young people are partying there.

Wildlife habitat as well as recreation concerns are things the CTC staff and ultimately the board will have to balance.

Public input will be sought by the CTC as it moves forward with plans.

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Search and rescue teams complete swiftwater training

Earlier this month Douglas County Search and Rescue hosted a three-day swiftwater rescue technician training event.

The instructor was Rachel Moore from Sierra Rescue. Sierra Rescue is California’s premiere Rescue 3 Swift Water Rescue Instruction Company; specializing in hands-on training. In attendance were eight members from DCSAR, one Carson City SAR member and a deputy and sergeant from Alpine County Sheriff’s Office.



Sienna Smith-Saeger, Nathan Smith, Rob Ranieri, Anne Thomas, Pat Fried and Instructor Rachel Moore. Back row (l-r) Tom Mapes, Greg Altringer, Jason Zona, Cary Olson, Jeff Bennett and Ron

Michitarian.

The skills emphasized in the class included self-rescue, throw bag rescue, entrapments, thinking through a rescue, simple rope tricks, and rescue techniques that have been tested and proven successful in real rescues. The instructor played the victim in several scenarios which tested the participant’s abilities to plan and execute a swiftwater rescue.

The river portion of the class included defensive and aggressive swimming techniques and accessing eddies. Contact rescues emphasized rescuer safety and taught techniques to counter panic subjects. Participants learned about Live-Bait jackets which allow self-release if caught in a serious situation.

Shallow water crossings both singly and in small groups were practiced.

Entrapment rescues were emphasized and all learned that one NEVER tries to stand up when under downstream momentum—the quickest way to encounter possible foot entrapment.

Strainer drills were practiced as well as rescues involving the use of river boards.

Knots were reviewed and the use of ropes with and without mechanical advantage to aid in rescues were taught and practiced.

Freeing wrapped boats, righting overturned rafts, and the use of ziplines were all skills that were also taught and practiced. The course included a written exam and student skills demonstrations. Successful students received certification as a Swiftwater Rescue Technician.

Volunteers needed for annual water quality testing

The 9th annual Water Quality Snapshot Day is May 22 in the Lake Tahoe Basin, Truckee and Reno.

Sponsored by California Trout, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, UC Cooperative Extension, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Incline Village General Improvement District and the Truckee River Watershed Council, the day is about testing the water quality of Lake Tahoe's watersheds as well as Pyramid Lake

To volunteer, register here or call Jenny Hatch at (530) 541.3495.

Introduction to curling at South Tahoe ice rink

The South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena is offering a curling orientation and clinic May 22 from 1-3pm.

Curling is a great sport similar to shuffleboard played on ice. Although it is often played with significant strategy and skill, it can be enjoyed by all ages after a short lesson.

Prepare yourself by logging on to www.curlingbasics.com to learn the fundamentals of the game.

Cost is $12 and enrollment is limited.

Sign up at the arena at 1176 Rufus Allen Blvd, South Lake

Tahoe, or call (530) 542.6262.

Forest thinning project in Zephyr Cove



The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will conduct mechanical forest thinning operations north of Zephyr Cove Resort along the west side of Highway 50 as part of the Round Hill Fuels Reduction Project beginning as early as May 18.

Approximately 10 acres will be treated, which will include tree thinning and surface fuels reduction to improve forest health and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Some excess slash material may be piled for prescribed burning at a later date. Work is expected to continue for up to two weeks depending on weather conditions. Operations will not occur on Memorial Day weekend.

In order to facilitate safe and efficient fuels treatment, the public is asked to voluntarily avoid the area while work is under way.

For questions, contact Duncan Leao at (530) 543.2660.