Bodines’ casino owner looking for another Derby win

By Dan Hinxman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Real Quiet is right where he belongs – at a farm in Pennsylvania in the company of mares.

The bay thoroughbred is 15 now, 12 years removed from what some have called “the toughest beat in all of sports,” the whisker loss to Victory Gallop in the Belmont Stakes that denied Real Quiet the elusive Triple Crown – a sweep of horse racing’s biggest events, the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes and Belmont.

“Real Quiet took me on the ride of my life in 1998,” owner Mike Pegram said last week while sitting in Bodines, the Carson City casino he co-owns.

Read the whole story

Coasties offer free boat safety inspection



By Maggie O’Neill, Reno Gazette-Journal

Hurry and take your boat in for a free safety inspection offered by the U.S. Coast Guard this Sunday in the Reno-Sparks area.

Otherwise, you might end up driving your vessel to a boat ramp at Lake Lahontan, Pyramid Lake or Lake Tahoe in search of a free inspection. Nobody wants to do that when they can have their vehicle inspected for free by the North Lake Tahoe Coast Guard Auxiliary and stay in town.

This Sunday's check could be the last Coast-Guard sponsored event offered in Reno-Sparks this spring.

Read the whole story

Sand Harbor to open boat launch

The boat launch at Sand Harbor will reopen May 1. Boating launching hours will be 6am-8pm throughout the summer.

Boat inspectors from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency watercraft inspection program will be present during these hours. Tahoe boaters are encouraged to get watercraft inspected early due to summer crowds.

Lake levels are still low and launch conditions are less than ideal, especially for boats over 16 feet in length. Boaters will need to use caution when launching their boats.

Students to participate in Nevada Moves Day

Schoolchildren across Nevada will be traveling to school by foot and bicycle on April 28 as part of the first Nevada Moves Day.

The statewide event was proclaimed by Gov. Jim Gibbons, with walking and bicycling to school events planned across Nevada.

More than 32 schools will participate in Nevada Moves Day in seven counties across Nevada. Nevada Moves Day events will take place in Douglas County, Washoe County, Clark County, Carson City, Lincoln County and Nye County.

“Physical activity at an early age, such as walking or bicycling to school, helps reduce heart disease, diabetes and other obesity-related diseases,” NDOT State Safe Routes to School Coordinator Rebecca Kapuler said in press release. “Plus, walking or biking to school can help reduce the up to 25 percent of morning rush hour traffic that involves children being dropped off at school.”

Other benefits of Nevada Moves Day include teaching safe walking and bicycling skills to children, discussing concerns for the environment, reducing traffic-related congestion and air pollution near schools, and connecting families, schools and community leaders.

Reservoir experiment may

change how milfoil is controlled



By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Experts plan this summer to try a new way to eradicate an invading underwater weed spreading throughout Lake Tahoe and the Truckee River.

The experiment at Martis Creek Reservoir, located south of Truckee, will target Eurasian watermilfoil. If it is successful, it could be employed elsewhere – including in the Truckee River, where the plant poses a potential threat to water intakes serving the region's primary water supply system.

"Definitely we don't want it to get worse. We'd like to control it," said Mark Foree, general manager of the Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe ski report, April 25



Get to the slopes – resorts are closing today. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

California closer to mandating youths wear ski helmets



By Derek Wilson, Times-Herald

When her boys wanted to start skiing, the first thing Vallejo's Jake Souza did was to put helmets on their heads. Now, two Northern California lawmakers would like to do the same for all minors.

A fatal skiing accident at a Northern California ski resort received international attention in February, sparking legislators to consider stricter safety rules for California ski resorts.

"My kids never fought me on the helmet thing," Jake Souza said. "I've seen so many bad head injuries and I've seen a lot of kids' lives saved by helmets."

Danny Souza, a junior at St. Patrick-St. Vincent High School, knows the risks of not wearing a helmet – and the benefits they offer.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe ski report, April 24



Bring the sunscreen if you are headed for the slopes. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Fine sediment clouds future of Washoe Meadow State Park

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS – “Parklands are for the entire state, not just one community.”

That was the overriding message of Pam Armas, superintendent of the Sierra District of the California State Parks. She was one of many park officials dressed in their trademark green uniforms at Thursday night’s open house at Lake Tahoe Golf Course.

The golf course in Meyers sits on land that is part of the Lake Valley State Recreation Area, adjacent to the Washoe

Meadow State Park. Both are part of the State Park system. Many people, even locals, don't know this is one of the 17 parks in the Sierra District. It made the news in 2007 when nearly 20 acres of the more than 700-acre park burned in the Angora Fire.

America Golf is the concessionaire of the golf course and will continue to have a month-to-month contract until a decision is made about the future of the links, the park and the river that runs through it.



Celio dairy barn in Washoe Meadow State Park. Photos/Kathryn Reed

This undeveloped park is ideal for snowshoeing and cross country skiing in the winter, hiking and mountain biking in drier conditions. The old Celio dairy barn is an iconic relic of days gone by.

Trails traverse alongside and across the meandering Upper Truckee River.

A mix of meadows and forest dot the landscape.

Snowmobiling is the most common issue Brian Barton and other park law officials handle. It's not allowed in the park. In the summer it's dogs – especially ones off leash. They are only allowed on drivable roads.

Maria Mircheva, executive director of the Sugar Pine Foundation, was dispensing information about blister rust and how it affects the sugar, white bark and Western white pines in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

“We donate sugar pines to the State Parks and they plant it in the upland areas where they see fit,” Mircheva said. “We brought them two boxes (tonight).”

El Dorado County had a table set up to talk about issues such as the Sawmill Bike Path that will go through Washoe Meadow State Park property.

Earth Day was an opportunity for the parks department to showcase Washoe Meadow, to answer questions about animal habitat, plants, forest fuels management, blister rust, law enforcement issues, and re-routing the Upper Truckee River.

Like most reaches of the Upper Truckee River, the one in the park is being studied to potentially re-route it so it would follow its natural path. The draft EIR and EIS should be out this summer. It will include five alternatives. A 60-day comment period will follow. Park officials did not give a time line for when the final documents would be released.



Upper Truckee River in the state park.

The reason to mess with the river is to reduce the amount of fine sediment that reaches Lake Tahoe. The theory is stream restoration also allows for better plant management, flooding

into meadows and other environmental benefits.

But what has people like Krissi Russell, who is part of the Washoe Meadows Community, concerned it the potential relocation of some of the holes from the golf course into the undeveloped area of the park.

This grass-roots organization of 200 people formed in 2006. Mostly it’s people who live in the area or use the park. She said her group also is worried about the logging going on in the park.

Piles of felled trees are sitting in the park waiting to be hauled off when the ground is dry.

“I wonder if the logging is to prepare to move the golf course,” Russell said. “It will fragment the park.”

Her group has made several Public Records Act requests to Armas’ office. The superintendent, after the last request, invited representatives of the group to Tahoe City to look at whatever documents they want.



Pam Armas, Sierra District parks superintendent, talks April 22 about Washoe Meadow State Park.

Armas said she is trying to be as transparent as possible and keep communication open with the public.

Rich Adams, a forester with State Parks, said the goal of his department is to return the area to pre-settlement conditions. This has necessitated removing trees that are more than 100 years old.

He said the problem is fire suppression has created an unnatural environment. Removing trees by hand and machine is being done, as is chipping the material, burning slash piles, having contractors haul away the lumber and having prescribed fires. Some material is sold as lumber, some to cogeneration plants, some to composting companies.

“We want a variety of vegetation structures,” Adams said. “We think having a variety of structure is good for wildlife.”

This means larger trees will be 30-feet apart, while some stands will be more dense.

Lisa Fields, environmental scientist with State Parks, said, “Anything living in this park is comfortable with people.”

This is because the park is surrounded by development.

The golf course is an Audubon certified course – which means it provides substantial bird habitat.

Fields said a study from the state Department of Fish & Game and Caltrans came out this month saying most animals travel around the valley the park is situated in by migrating via the nearby ridges.

Click here for more information about the Upper Truckee River restoration project.

Lake Tahoe ski report, April 23



Spring has returned to Lake Tahoe. It’s a bluebird day. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.