New wolf pup spotted in Lassen pack

By Ryan Sabalow, Sacramento Bee

Earlier this summer, state biologists announced that a pair of wolves in Lassen County had three pups.

Turns out, they missed one.

Last week, Stafford Lehr of the Department of Fish and Wildlife told a state board that a fourth pup has since showed up on motion activated trail cameras that monitor the pack.

Read the whole story

Squaw's parent company buys Deer Valley

By Jason Blevins, Denver Post

A looming season-pass showdown among Colorado's ski-industry heavyweights moved closer to reality Monday as the new Aspen Skiing-KSL Capital Partners venture bought Utah's posh Deer Valley resort.

The purchase adds a key Utah destination to the partnership's growing portfolio that already included resorts in Colorado, California and elsewhere, and makes a direct challenge to Vail Resorts, the world's largest resort operator.

The newly formed – and yet unnamed – Denver-based partnership already ranks as North America's second-largest player in the

ski resort world after its formation in April. With the Deer Valley deal, it picked off one of the highest-end ski areas in the world, which sits adjacent to Vail's sprawling Park City resort complex.

Read the whole story

Gold miner finds diamond in Sierra foothills

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

A California woman says she found a 1½ carat diamond while mining gold near the Sierra Nevada foothills town of Foresthill.

"I was like 'oh my god I found a diamond,' " said Jillian Kelly.

Kelly, 49, left her Silicon Valley career to take up mining 10 years ago and wrote 'The Miracle Miner: My Life as a Female Gold Miner." The uncut semi-clear pebble-sized stone is about width of a dainty pinky finger.

Read the whole story

Eclipses create science and

so can you

By Seth Borenstein, AP

The sun is about to spill some of its secrets, maybe even reveal a few hidden truths of the cosmos. And you can get in on the act next week if you are in the right place for the best solar eclipse in the U.S. in nearly a century.

Astronomers are going full blast to pry even more science from the mysterious ball of gas that’s vital to Earth. They’ll look from the ground, using telescopes, cameras, binoculars and whatever else works. They’ll look from the International Space Station and a fleet of 11 satellites in space. And in between, they’ll fly three planes and launch more than 70 high-altitude balloons.

But it’s not just the professionals or students. NASA has a list of various experiments everyday people can do.

Read the whole story

Rangers lead educational hikes at Heavenly



USFS ranger Gustavo Nava leads the Smith family to what looks like the edge of the resort. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

A tree is not just a tree. And those sounds; they mean something.

Gustavo Nava walks a little way before he starts an impromptu quiz about how to identify the various trees that line the trail. The three key differences – bark, needles and cones. Key phrases like “gentle Jeffrey” for the Jeffrey pine and “prickly ponderosa” for that varietal are offered as reminders.

Elevation plays a huge factor in what will grow where. White bark pines are prevalent here, not so much at lake level. They like it the 8,000- to 9,000-foot level. These trees are unusual in that they grow together so their trunks are a cluster.

Flora and fauna, and a little history about the Indians dominate the walk.

Nava is one of the U.S. Forest Service rangers who leads these free hikes at Heavenly Mountain Resort. This is the second year the Forest Service has offered these excursions from the top of the gondola.

“The goal is to connect the public more with the land,” Jaclyn Tain with the Forest Service told *Lake Tahoe News*. “It offers them something where they get more in depth knowledge about the land they are enjoying.”

On this particular Friday a mom and her three daughters are learning from Nava. They spend their summers in Carnelian Bay, with the rest of the year in Turlock. This was an opportunity to see a part of the lake they are less familiar with.

“They like guided hikes because they don’t trust their mother,” Kim Smith told *Lake Tahoe News*. Her daughters – ages 13, 10 and 6 – didn’t disagree. Besides not having to rely on her map reading skills, Smith said it’s a chance for them to “learn more and explore more about our back yard.”



Ski runs without snow seem to flow into the Carson Valley. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Snow was a factor this year for the ranger program. The normal route is to take the Tamarack lift and hike from there to Sky Express. The alternate is to hike to the top of Olympic chair – elevation 9,470 feet.

Nava stops again. Everyone listens. It's a Clark's nutcracker. Some see it through the branches. Others trust that it must be there because they hear its song.

Each excursion is different. What wildlife will be out can change day to day, what flowers are sprouting leads to other information being dispersed, then there are always questions by the participants.

Even on days when there is no hike the Forest Service has a presence on the mountain. Six days a week employees hand out maps and answer questions. After all, this is Forest Service land that the resort is operating on.

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Notes:

· Hikes are Fridays and Saturdays at 11am and 1pm.

· They start at the top of the gondola. Meet near the Tamarack Lodge. (Must pay to ride the gondola.)

· They last about one hour and are about 2 miles.

· They will go through Sept. 2.

· Bring water.

· Wear closed toe shoes.

El Dorado County to remove dead trees

El Dorado County is looking for a contractor to remove dead trees on the West Slope.

The county has $300,000 from the California Disaster Assistance Fund and cash from last year's budget to fell the 155 trees.

Bark beetle infestation is being blamed on the deaths of these trees in Happy Valley, Grizzly Flat and Camino. Most are pine trees, with some fir and cedar as well.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Trail will retrace Donner Party path

Placer County this week took action that will help the Memorial Overland Emigrant Trail through Donner Memorial State Park become a reality.

Placer County will be the lead when it comes to planning and designing the trail. Money will in part come from hotel taxes.

California Department of Parks and Recreation will oversee permitting and construction of the trail, and will be responsible for maintenance within its boundaries.

The 16-mile trail will re-create the original wagon route west over Donner Summit. It will go from Kingvale through Donner State Memorial Park in Truckee, following the original Overland Emigrant Trail but away from its remnants to protect its historical artifacts.

Environmental studies should be done a year from now, with public workshops planned in the months to come.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

LTCC soccer teams eager to launch ’17 season



Camaraderie is key to success on the soccer field. Photo/Terra Breeden

By Terra Breeden

The only thing artificial about soccer at Lake Tahoe Community College is the field on which the players smack that white and black ball.

The men and women's teams have been practicing for weeks in anticipation of the season opener Aug. 22, with both squads hoping to improve upon last year's results. In 2016 the men went 12-5-6, after winning the Golden Valley Conference championship the year before for the second time. Two years ago the team earned its first state final four appearance. The women went 11-5-4 in 2016.

Men's head coach Nick Arbelaez and women's head coach Jeremy Evans have built what they hope are all-star teams, having recruited players from all over the country to play at LTCC. Both soccer teams are expected to do well this year.



LTCC coach Jeremy Evans, center, works with the women in preparation for the 2017 season. Photo/Diane Lewis

The Coyotes are in their fourth season, with head coaches who are in their second (Arbelaez) and third (Evans) years.

“In soccer, we are one of the top 10 junior colleges in the country,” Arbelaez told *Lake Tahoe News*. “The focus is there and we’re hoping to come away with a championship this year.”

Sixty percent of sophomore soccer players at LTCC receive an athletic scholarship to attend four-year schools and because of LTCC’s standing as a top junior college, many gifted players come to the school for soccer.

“I’m looking forward to a fun year and the expectations are high because for these players. Soccer is a privilege, not a right,” Arbelaez said.

Both teams are practicing nonstop to get ready for their first game on Tuesday. The women take on West Valley College at 5pm

and the men will be playing the 1868 Reno professional soccer team at 7pm. Both games will be at the LTCC soccer field.

Once the season starts, the LTCC teams will be competing every week. Each plays 22 games in 90 days.

“It can be a grueling schedule, but we’re excited for the season,” Evans said.

Although the teams are composed of a lot of talented locals, both have players from all corners of the globe. On the men’s team, three players come from England, one from Spain and another from Jamaica. The women’s soccer team has many local players, as well as members from the Bay Area and England.

“This is about providing a college experience and having players from different cultural backgrounds provides that,” Evans said.

There are several players to keep an eye on this season.

“We have 18 solid players,” Evans said. “It’s the best collection of talent that has ever come through this program.”

Veterans like Caitlyn Bidart, who plays defender center-back, and forward Kenya Maltese should be forces to be reckoned with.

“Caitlyn Bidart had a phenomenal freshman year and having that kind of leadership on the team is critical because I have 16 newcomers who are looking for guidance,” Evans said.

Last year, Maltese was voted to be an all-league player in the Golden Valley Conference as a freshman. This year, she is revving up for another big season as she returns to the field at LTCC.

“I’m looking for her to be leading goal scorer and build on her impressive first year,” Evans told *Lake Tahoe News.*

On the men’s team, sophomore forward Sean Keith is captain of the team. Keith will be graduating from LTCC in June. He already has an opportunity to play at Creighton College, which is a Division 1 school in Nebraska.



LTCC men’s soccer team is aiming for a division title. Photo/Diane Lewis

“He’s quick and an overall leader,” Arbelaez said. “He’s the first one at practice and the last one to leave, just a really special athlete.”

Co-captain of the men’s team Dalton Rice plays center-mid position and brings high energy to the game.

“He’s a dynamic player and a team leader who’s also great in the classroom,” Arbelaez said.

Sophomore Omar Trujillo came to LTCC from the Reno area and is the goalkeeper. Although Trujillo will be graduating from LTCC soon, his soccer skills define him as one of LTCC’s star

players.

“He has quite a few schools gauging his interest – he is that good,” Arbelaez told *Lake Tahoe News.* “He had the starter position as a freshman.”

Although both LTCC soccer teams are looking forward to a stellar season, there is more to the players than school and sports. Players are involved in the South Lake Tahoe community throughout the year. They tutor and read books with local children at South Lake Tahoe elementary and middle schools. Several team members also volunteer at Tahoe Youth & Family Services and provide mentoring to youth. Both LTCC soccer teams are involved in the South Lake Tahoe American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) and have “soccer days” at the schools.

“Soccer is a big part of their lives, but we encourage community outreach. When the players get out in the community, the community gets to know them on a different level, as human beings and not just talented athletes,” Arbelaez said.

Saga of a poacher: crime and punishment

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

A wildlife detective saga in Northern California ended with the conviction last month of an out-of-state deer poacher – with a twist from a law that just took effect: The same poacher, caught now, would have faced fines of $80,000 instead of the $1,500 he was assessed in Superior Court.

The new law, five years in the making, says that poachers who take trophy deer, with antlers 3×3 or better, and other trophy wildlife, can face fines of $40,000 per animal, and those who illegally shoot wild turkeys up to $5,000 per bird, plus jail time.

The trail of evidence led game wardens to Nevada, on to Truckee and then ultimately to remote Mendocino County.

Read the whole story

Nev. team will capture eclipse from 100,000 feet in air



The view from 100,000 feet, part of NASA's eclipse live-streaming project. Photo/NASA

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

A group of Nevada researchers plans to take solar eclipse

viewing to new heights.

They’re launching a balloon outfitted with cameras to the edge of space just as the eclipse shadow rolls over eastern Oregon and Idaho.

The idea is to capture unique images from the first total solar eclipse viewable from the contiguous United States since 1979.

Read the whole story