South Tahoe walk all about suicide prevention awareness

Three years ago, South Lake Tahoe lost a young and vibrant woman to suicide, Emily Ann Alessi.

Suicide Prevention Network aims to prevent suicide by offering education and awareness in all surrounding counties. On average, about 44,000 people in the United States take their own lives.

Sept. 10 will be the inaugural awareness walk in South Lake Tahoe. This day is also World Suicide Prevention Day.

Register **online**. Cost is $20, which includes a T-shirt and barbecue ticket.

For more info, email alisa@spnawareness.org.

Legal scholars dispute permanence of monuments

By Elizabeth Shogren, High Country News

No president has ever abolished a national monument, and it has been more than 50 years since a president shrank one. Nor has Congress revoked any significant monuments. The high regard given these special places is part of what makes President Donald Trump’s order to review all large monuments designated since 1996 so extraordinary.

Courts have never decided whether a president has the legal

authority to change or undo a designated monument, and now this uncertainty has sparked a clash of legal titans.

A multitude of legal experts – including 121 law professors – argue that presidents lack the power to alter or revoke monuments. Meanwhile, a much smaller but no less adamant group asserts the opposite. These opponents are waging a tug of war in opinion pieces, blog posts, law journals, comment letters and at scholarly conferences. Both sides cite the 1906 Antiquities Act and decades of legal opinions and obscure congressional documents.

Read the whole story

Collecting trash on the country's longest trails

By Elgin Stallard, Outside

Two young men set off last year on an unthinkable task: pick up, haul out, and dispose of every single piece of trash they saw on the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail.

It's a Herculean job when you consider that people leave everything from used toilet paper and diapers to spent batteries and box springs on trails across the country, and that much of the PCT wends through wilderness and large stretches are inaccessible to roads and motorized vehicles.

The final weight of junk the two men pulled off the trail: 720 pounds. Among the highlights: a mattress, a 35-pound metal-and-broken-glass television stand, children's toys, and 26 Mylar balloons.

Read the whole story

Work to preserve Independence Lake continues



The Nature Conservancy is a key player in the preservation of Independence Lake. Photo/Nature Conservancy

By Paul Nelson, KTVN-TV

About a half-hour north of Truckee, down a rough, dirt road, you will find Independence Lake. It has been described as a small version of what Lake Tahoe looked like 100 years ago, with very little development. The Nature Conservancy is trying to keep it that way. It paid $15 million for 2,300 acres around most of the lake, in 2010.

“By buying the land, we could protect the habitat, the watershed of the lake,” Chris Fichtel, Independence Lake Project Manager with the Nature Conservancy said.

Its goal is to conduct forest restoration, prevent aquatic invasive species, and maintain native fish populations.

“It has the full compliment of native fish that it always had, and in particular, it had one, the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout,” Fichtel said. “This is only one of two lake populations of that trout remaining. The other is Summit Lake, Nevada.”

Read the whole story

Reno-Northstar to share renowned cycling trade show



Northstar will be an integral part of the the Interbike trade-show starting in 2018. Photo/LTN file

By Bicycle Retailer and Industry News

Interbike announced today that its 2018 show will be in Reno.

The three-day trade show in Reno will be preceded by a two-day consumer festival at Northstar, followed by a day-and-a-half-long trade demo event at Northstar before moving inside for the trade-only show at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center. Interbike has contracted the convention center through 2022. The full event is being called Interbike Marketweek.

“We’re extremely excited about this move for a multitude of reasons,” said Pat Hus, the vice president of Interbike. “For the first time in a very long time, we’ve been able to hit the reset button on Interbike and OutDoor Demo and give the industry something new and fresh that we couldn’t do in our previous locations. With the support and investment from the city of Reno we are going to be able to truly create a one-of-a-kind, weeklong celebration and experience around cycling. We also recognize that this is a critical time in our industry and that we need to provide a more cost-effective approach to exhibiting at the show, and we are now able to provide that.”

Read the whole story

Defensible space critical for wildfire prevention

Local fire districts are reminding people now is the time to remove trees to create defensible space.

The term “defensible space” refers to the area between a house and an oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been managed to reduce the wildfire threat.

Contact your fire protection agency for permitting and a complete defensible space evaluation. The Living with Fire

Guide for the Lake Tahoe Basin is the authoritative guide for vegetation management and wildfire preparedness on properties in the Tahoe basin.

Structures located within the city of South Lake Tahoe follow the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's tree removal permit process. A homeowner may apply for a tree removal permit **online**. The application can also be obtained at the TRPA front counter, or by calling 775.588.4547. A $53 non-refundable filing fee is due with the application. A TRPA forester will visit the property to assess the trees and issue a permit for any marked trees.

No permit is needed for trees with a diameter of 14 inches or less.

Big, toothy fish found in Nev. chomped prey like sharks



The Birgeria americana predates Nevada's most famous fossil, the Ichthyosaur, by more than 30

million years.
Photo/University of Zurich

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

If fishing reports existed 250 million years ago they probably would have warned anglers to bring extra sturdy line to Northern Nevada.

That’s because newly described fossil evidence shows the warm waters of the time were home to a toothy apex predator that chomped its prey like a modern shark.

“The surprising find from Elko County in northeastern Nevada is one of the most completely preserved vertebrate remains from this time-period ever discovered in the United States,” said Carlo Romano of the University of Zurich, lead author of a Journal of Paleontology article about the find.

Read the whole story

Star Guide: Countdown to the eclipse

By Tony Berendsen

On Aug. 21, along a 70-mile -wide path of totality, stretching from coast to coast of the United States, millions of people will experience a total solar eclipse. The last total eclipse in the U.S. happened in 1979, so this will be the first total eclipse experience for many Americans.

For those planning to be in the path of totality to view the eclipse it will be without a doubt the event of a lifetime,

never to be forgotten as the day the moon blocked out the sun and day became night for a moment.

First-grade student Sienna Larrucea of Loyalton Elementary School expressed her excitement for her upcoming eclipse trip in a poem:

I’m going to see the solar eclipse

With a smile on my lips

It sounds exciting when the moon is in front of the sun

I bet I will have a lot of fun

I will sit there in my special glasses

And watch as the moon slowly passes

As the darkness comes along

The birds will sing their evening song

Then it will get bright once more

And things will look like they did before

You see I am so excited to go

To see the eclipse in Idaho.

Most of us will not travel to the path of totality, experiencing a partial eclipse of the sun instead. In Lake Tahoe and the surrounding region, the partial eclipse will begin on Aug. 21 at 9:04am with maximum eclipse (83 percent) at 10:20am, and the end of partial eclipse at 11:43am.



High-altitude balloons take flight during a test launch in June near Rexburg, Idaho. Photo/Kelly Gorham/Montana State University

Unfortunately, almost all of the geeky astronomer types in our area will not be in town during the eclipse, so there aren’t a lot of options for organized public viewings. But anyone with proper solar viewing glasses, a pin hole camera, or standing under a tree looking down at the pin hole type projections on the ground can watch the progress of the moon crossing the disk of the Sun.

There is an interesting option to take a balloon ride to the stratosphere 100,000 feet up to view the eclipse with the Eclipse Ballooning Project.

Eric Wang, associate professor of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, is associated with the project through Nevada Space Grant which has been active in high altitude ballooning for the past 15 years.

I had a chance to ask him a couple questions about the project:

What is the eclipse ballooning project?: “The basic concept is to launch as many high altitude (stratospheric) balloons as possible to capture and live stream the eclipse. About 60 teams from universities, community colleges, high schools and private ballooning groups will be doing a coordinated launch from dozens of sites across the path of the eclipse. The balloons will provide live coverage of the eclipse as viewed from balloons at about 100,000 feet. As the eclipse progress across the U.S., teams will launch their balloons and live stream the videos for anyone to watch.”

Will the balloon images show the eclipse, or the shadow, or both?: “The live steam will show mainly the eclipse. We are also recording the entire event with 360 degree spherical cameras so anyone can rotate the view in VR (virtual reality) to view either the eclipse or the shadow.”

The public can view the live stream **here**.

Wang added that he was very excited to witness the eclipse, and fell lucky to participate in a project of this size. “We will be launching from eastern Idaho and have a few alternate sites to use if it turns out to be cloudy in eastern Idaho.”

Whether you are traveling to totality, viewing a partial with those special glasses, or hopping on a stratospheric balloon … happy eclipse viewing!

Tony Berendsen runs Tahoe Star Tours. He may be reached at 775.232.0844 or tony@tahoestartours.com.

625 acres on North Shore to be thinned

Starting this week mechanical whole tree removal will take place on approximately 625 acres above Carnelian Bay and Tahoe Vista. Work is expected to conclude in mid-October.

Thinning will begin off the east side of Highway 267 and forest road 16N52 (Gas Line Road). Depending on conditions, work will then proceed to the west side of Highway 267 off the Fiberboard Freeway, forest road 16N74 and Old County Road.

Mechanical whole tree removal involves cutting the entire tree and moving it to the landing area to remove the limbs and cut it into sections.

The U.S. Forest Service advises the public to avoid these areas due to the hazards posed by heavy equipment and falling trees. Hazards may be present even when operations have ceased for the day.

New website to reserve campsites, tours at California State Parks

By Mary Forgione, Los Angeles Times

Starting Tuesday, visitors will have to call up a new website to book a tour at Hearst Castle, a vintage cottage at Crystal Cove in Laguna Beach, or a campsite at Half Moon Bay. And each

day brings an expanded booking window too for those who like to plan ahead.

California State Parks is rolling out a new reservation system called ReserveCalifornia, which promises to be more user-friendly than the current ReserveAmerica system.

The new website only applies to California parks; ReserveAmerica still handles reservations for campgrounds and activities in other states. And Recreation.gov is the primary booking website for many national parks.

Read the whole story