

LOCAL NEWS

Yosemite Outdoor Adventures offers a number of field courses

Yosemite Outdoor Adventures offer interactive and enjoyable learning experiences that appeal to all interests in the scenic wonderland of Yosemite National Park. Guided naturalist hikes to lesser-known destinations, Half Dome treks, family camping programs, plein air art and backpack courses are just a sampling of the wide range of affordable learning adventures offered by the acclaimed non-profit organization, Yosemite Association (YA) during 2010.

A total of 62 field courses designed to appeal to a range of ages, interests and abilities are outlined on YA's Web site at

www.yosemite.org. Held in the spectacular setting of Yosemite National Park, the one to seven-day programs address a diverse range of subjects including photography, geology, animal tracks, cultural history, outdoor skills, astronomy and botany. The 2010 Outdoor Adventures catalog is free and available online at www.yosemite.org or by calling 379-2321, extension 17.

YA expects continued growth in private guided trips offered to groups and organization, tailored toward their specific interests. "If the dates for certain courses don't fit with busy schedules or if a spe-

cific topic is appealing, we can customize a course exactly to your needs," said Pete Devine, the association's resident naturalist. "This naturalist guide service is ideal for all types of groups, from friends and family vacations, to wedding parties or company meetings."

For this year, several significant field seminars are scheduled based on past popular appeal. Notable offerings include:

Alpine Botany Backpack Trip: Co-sponsored by UC Berkeley's Jepson Herbarium, this four-day course is taught by Steve Botti, the author of the landmark "Yosemite Flora." Participants will backpack into the highest elevations of the Park's wilderness to survey the burst of plant life in late summer.

Family Camping Jamborees: Two four-day sessions take place in the cool high country of Tuolumne Meadows. Naturalists will lead easy hikes for families and provide evening entertainment, while all the cooking is done for participants. People only need to bring a tent, sleeping bags and the kids.

A Park for All People: A series of three courses explores the little known history of African-American, Chinese and Latino people in Yosemite.

Photography courses that include backpacking and the "moonbow" backpack trips, including *Backpacker* magazine's North Rim trek.

Two Indian basketry courses taught by the famed Parker women, a course in writing nature/outdoor books for children and several art courses in Wawona, Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows will also be offered.

Yosemite Outdoor Adventure participant do not have to be a member of Yosemite Association/Yosemite Fund to attend field courses. However, those who wish to become a steward of Yosemite can join the Yosemite Association with memberships starting at \$25 per year.

For further information contact Pete Devine or Yosemite Association public information at 379-2321, extension 17.

Energy efficiency program comes to the Sierra Nevada

Local governments and businesses in 14 Sierra Nevada counties will have new access to cutting edge energy efficient technology through a new collaboration between Sierra Business Council and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). From 2010 to 2012, Sierra Business Council, a non-profit organization based in Truckee, will be offering free energy audits and low-cost retrofits to commercial PG&E customers in the Sierra Nevada through a new program called the Sierra Nevada Energy Watch.

"During this tough economic downturn, we are excited to be able to support our local businesses and governments by offering cost-cutting energy efficiency services," said Steve Frisch, President of the Sierra Business Council. "This project embodies our long-standing mission of demonstrating that environmental quality and economic prosperity are compatible goals."

In addition to offering energy efficiency services and products, the program will help local governments conduct greenhouse gas inventories and develop climate

action plans to help the state meet its AB32 emission reduction goals. The program takes a comprehensive approach to the region's energy needs. "We aren't just dropping in light bulbs," explained Program Manager, Betony Jones, "We are looking for deep, long-term savings, and we are developing the local workforce capacity to provide clean energy services far into the future."

The Sierra Nevada Energy Watch program is funded by California utility ratepayers under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission. It offers services for municipal, special district, and non-profit facilities as well as small and medium businesses throughout the PG&E service area from Lassen to Mariposa Counties. Those interested in participating in the program or learning more should contact Sierra Business Council at (530) 582-4800.

For more information about the Sierra Nevada Energy Watch Program, and to see tips on saving energy at home and the workplace, visit www.sb-council.org/energywatch.

Radanovich steps down from CTCP subcommittee

Congressman George Radanovich (R-Mariposa) last week released the following statement regarding his decision to step down as the ranking member of the Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection (CTCP) subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee:

"I am leaving my leadership position as ranking member of the CTCP subcommittee today to turn my attentions during my remaining time in Congress toward California's Central Valley issues. I will still retain my membership on the Energy and Commerce Committee and the CTCP subcommittee and will work with my colleagues on the legislative agenda in that jurisdiction.

"For the remainder of my last year representing California's 19th Congressional District, I have decided to focus my energy and resources on issues that will most directly af-

fect the San Joaquin Valley. I continue to work hard toward the goals that I have championed for the last 16 years in Congress, including providing for the needs of California's farmers through agriculture policy as well as fighting to bring immediate relief from California's man-made drought that is choking Valley agriculture. I will also continue to fight hard for the needs of the Yosemite National Park, the "crown jewel" of the park system, and one of my favorite places in the world.

"It has been my privilege to serve as ranking member of CTCP subcommittee, and I am leaving it in good hands with my colleague Rep. Ed Whitfield (R-KY). I look forward to working with the local farmers, business community, educators, and other concerned citizens through the end of this year to accomplish the legislative goals I have always supported."

Recycling event set

The Mariposa Fairgrounds is hosting a free electronic and scrap metal recycling event on March 5 and 6.

It will be accepting televisions, monitors, laptops, LCDs, printers, fax machines, cell phones, keyboards, mice, stereo equipment, and copy machines. No appliances will be accepted.

Scrap metal items including anything made from steel, as long as no plastic or wood is attached. No refrigerators, freezers, or propane tanks will be accepted.

The event will be held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the fairgrounds livestock area, and crews will be on hand to unload the recyclables.

Children's Hospital joins butterfly festival

Children's Hospital Central California, in collaboration with the Mariposa Butterfly Festival, will be raising butterflies. The Butterfly Festival is an annual event held in Mariposa.

This year, the festival includes the staff and patients of Children's Hospital Central California in this learning experience. The butterflies will be delivered in pupa stage to the hospital in mid-March. Over the course of four weeks, the caterpillars will develop into full grown but-

terflies. The butterflies will be released into the environment outside at the hospital. The Children's Hospital butterfly release is scheduled for Thursday, April 22, which is Earth Day.

The Mariposa Butterfly Festival is a weekend full of family fun consisting of live music, children's entertainment, local vendors, and of course butterfly releases. Many of the butterflies to be released during the festival will be raised by the students of Mariposa County.

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Hebern will lead at summer Girl Scout camp

Mariposa Girl Scout Leaders and Marlena Hebern (mother of Sarah Hebern), who has been in Girl Scouting since she was small, have announced she will be working at a San Francisco Girl Scout Camp this summer. For more information how an older Girl Scout can be a part of this, call the Rancho Cordova Girl Scout office at (800) 322-4475.

Brownie Troop 3093 has picked Australia for Thinking Day, worked on a Healthy Eating Badge and was busy selling Girl Scout Cookies around Mariposa. Junior troop 3131 has been studying the Bahamas for Thinking Day, working on its Pet Badge and hope it sold enough cookies to go to Six Flags with the profit. Daisy Troop 914 has been studying Ecuador for Thinking day and helped the Boy Scouts with their 100th celebration.

Troop 3092 learned how to use a sewing machine. The troop sewed and decorated 17 camp duffle bags at one meeting. Daisy Troop 3083 has been learning about Greece for Thinking Day. Cadette Troop 3081 helped to serve at the Boy Scouts of America's 100th Boy Scout Celebration at the Mariposa Fairgrounds. Anyone who is interested in Girl Scouting can contact Marie Pretzer at 966-6455.