

Shop Local Holiday Contest begins Friday

Special to the Sun

Holiday shoppers at North Lake Tahoe and Truckee are encouraged to support local businesses by participating in the Shop Local Holiday Contest between Black Friday and Christmas Eve with cash and staycation prizes for two participants.

Shopping local is invaluable to improving the economy. Each dollar spent at independent businesses returns three times as much money to the local economy compared to dollars spent at chain businesses, according to the American Independent Business Alliance.

Also, as small business are the largest employers nationwide, shopping local helps create and sustain jobs.

Participants collect one sticker per \$25 spent at participating businesses in Incline Village, Kings Beach, Tahoe City, Truckee, Northstar, Squaw Valley and the West Shore to fill out a contest card due in the mail by Jan. 5, 2017.

Earning four stickers

enters participants into a drawing to win \$500 cash and earning 12 stickers enters participants into the Grand Prize, a North Lake Tahoe Staycation with lodging, dining and activities valued at \$1,500.

Last year, the contest generated more than \$407,476 in revenue for local business, with retailers reporting \$24,000 on average in sales due to the contest.

The contest is designed by the Business Association Chamber Collaborative (BACC) to support local business by keeping money in the local economy, boost the region's shopping and dining economy and reduce the carbon footprint of locals shopping outside of their community.

For a full list of participating businesses, mail-in drop off locations and contest rules, visit shopnorthtahoetruckee.com.

This article was provided by the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association. Visit gotahoenorth.com to learn more.

Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway nears completion

Susan Voyles
Special to the Sun

One more link has been added to the hike trail being built in the rugged Truckee River Canyon connecting Truckee and Reno.

The link — built across a wall of boulders pushed over the edge in building Interstate 80 freeway nearly 60 years ago — opens up a 6.3-mile run from Floriston, past Farad to the rebuilt Fleish footbridge.

That makes a nice little run, hike or bike ride as long as the weather holds. Then it's time to strap on some snowshoes, said Janet Phillips, president of Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway, a nonprofit group based in Reno that's working with the Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District, the official sponsor of this section of trail.

By spring, a section of trail past the Fleish bridge should reopen to take people all the way down the canyon from Floriston to Reno.

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority has closed its maintenance road from the Fleish bridge to Verdi while it rebuilds the spillway at one of its hydro power plants. TMWA opened the road for the bikeway in 2013.

Within two years, the last

four miles of trail should be built from the Hirschdale Bridge, just east of the Glenshire community, to Floriston. That will open up the entire Truckee Canyon, allowing people to hike/ride between Truckee and Reno.

This work is built in two stages:

- A section of trail starting at the Hirschdale bridge is expected to open following the old highway route in 2017.

- Work for the last leg of the trail through the Truckee Canyon — following the steep, winding curve on Interstate 80 just before Floriston — is expected to start in 2018 after environmental studies are concluded.

But for now, you may want to check out the Floriston to Fleish bridge section if you haven't already. People can safely park just off Interstate 80 exits at Floriston or Farad. The trail location is obvious at Farad while at Floriston people should park on the north side of I-80 and the Truckee River and then head east.

The trail has a few small hills but is generally flat. Riders will have to pick up their bikes and carry them over stairs built across pipes for an old hydro power plant. Several new informational signs can be found



COURTESY PHOTO

Susan Voyles on the Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway trail.

about the river and the highway just west of Farad.

The new link east of Farad was supposed to open in the summer of 2015, but builders ran smack into a virtual wall of boulders. The challenge: how to keep the boulders in place above and below the trail route, which runs about 50 feet below the freeway, said Don Hays, who built the trail and has trail construction offices in Sparks and Tahoe City.

Hays has built trails across the country for years and said this section was his second or third most difficult project. "It was like building on a stack of marbles," Hays said. "If you took one marble out, the rest of the mountainside would come down on you."

So for 265 feet, Hays built a wall with two-inch thick boards framed in steel to keep boulders in place above the trail and below the trail in some places. Then he and another worker built a trail bed, using 210 cubic yards of small rocks to create building blocks.

Each block of rocks is wrapped in chain-link fencing and was laid by hand.

one rock at a time. The rock bed is up to 12 feet deep in places.

"It was just physically really hard. Just me and one other person. There was no room for more," Hays said.

The California Department of Transportation issued a permit to build this section of trail along the Interstate 80 corridor and would issue more permits for the upcoming trail work.

"It's a great example of what can be achieved with a public-private partnership," Reed said of the bikeway group. "They have a level of expertise on a volunteer basis. It's an amazing group."

A \$2 million federal grant is pending for the last leg. The bikeway group has raised \$150,000 in the last year in reaching \$300,000 in required matching funds for the project, Phillips said.

In all, the bikeway group and its sponsors have raised about \$1 million to open 10.7 miles of trail through the Truckee Canyon.

Susan Voyles is a member of the Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway group's communications committee. Visit tphikeway.org to learn more.

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