

THE Kaweah Commonwealth

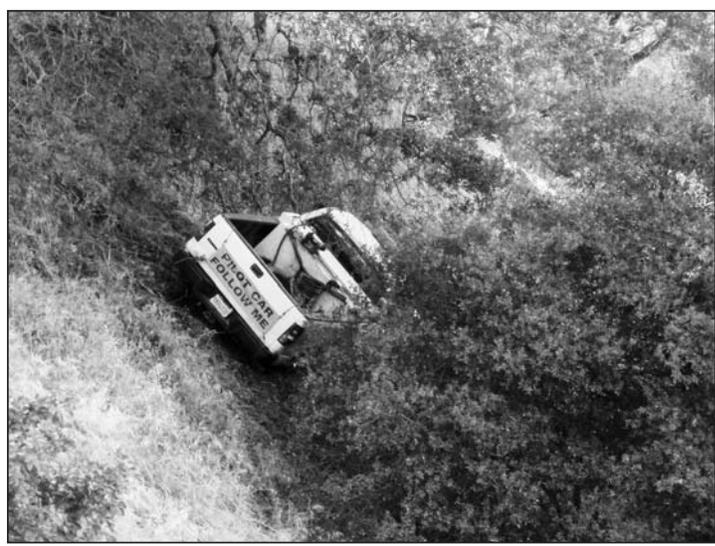
A JOURNAL FOR THOSE WHO LABOR AND WHO THINK

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WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THREE RIVERS AND SEQUOIA~KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS

FOLLOW THE LEADER... OR NOT



En route to the construction zone on Tuesday, June 18, an Allen Construction pilot vehicle careened off the Generals Highway just below the Tunnel Rock area. The driver was not seriously injured and told park rangers that the steering locked up.

Level of Lake Kaweah is rapidly dropping

by JOHN ELLIOTT

Phil said the only year that's even remotely similar to this one is 1990 but the current one could be an all-time record. The 30 percent of normal precipitation was not unprecedented but the fact that what little snow did accumulate was so high up, less of the melt reached the Middle Fork of the Kaweah River, and that means less water in the lake.

The 97,000 acre feet extant on Memorial Day will be approximately 50,000 acre feet on the Fourth of July. At that level, Phil said, the entire road in the lake bottom will be drivable.

If there is a silver lining in the lack of water this season it is that the network of trails in the lake bottom, popular with hikers, bikers, dog walkers, and runners, should be high and dry by

With so little flow coming in from the Kaweah River, Lake Kaweah will quickly be drained of most of its precious acre feet much sooner than in recent years. In fact, the 115 cubic feet per second (cfs) mean inflow that was recorded on Thursday, June 20, could be an all-time low flow for the date.

The current storage as of June 20 is 76,499 acre feet.

"The initial projections had us still above 200 cfs for this week but the flows are even lower than expected," said Phil Deffenbaugh, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers general manager at Lake Kaweah. "Unless Mother Nature sends some weather our way this summer, the minimum pool will be occurring this year sooner rather than later."

—see LAKE, page 10

The hills are alive with Center Stage Strings

by JOHN ELLIOTT

When Danielle Belen, founder and artistic director of Center Stage Strings, made her opening remarks at the Tuesday, June 18, concert kickoff for the 2013 music camp, she couldn't have been more gracious. What an unbelievable journey it has been, she told the appreciative audience in the sanctuary of Community Presbyterian Church in Three Rivers.

"...This local music camp, incredibly, is in its fourth season," she reported.

From humble beginnings in 2010, the camp for violin, viola

and cello students ages 8 to 19 has evolved into a two-week summer session packed with engaging activities and generous good times for its 25 campers.

"For the first three years, students were housed in local host homes," Danielle said. "But this year, we have moved into the new facilities of the Santa Teresita Youth Conference Center at St. Anthony Retreat."

Having all the campers housed together has been a blessing to help keep everyone focused on why they have come to Three Rivers.

"Our new campus is helping our students to reach even higher



FACE THE MUSIC: Danielle Belen, violin, and Jacob Braun, cello, perform during the opening concert of Center Stage Strings 2013. —GEOFF GLASS PHOTO

levels," Danielle said. "They have more time to rehearse, relax, recreate, and there is a new sense of camaraderie as they experience all that comes with dorm life. I am thrilled at how

things are going so far."

To accomplish the musical goals of Center Stage Strings, Danielle has assembled a world-class faculty who are all virtuoso musicians and expert instructors in their own careers.

The showcase concerts, like Tuesday's opening night, feature various combinations of the faculty performers playing some of the best classical music to be heard in any venue, right here, right now in Three Rivers. And though she shuns the spotlight and prefers to focus more on the accomplishments of her students,

—see CSS, page 5

• KAWEAH COUNTRY OUTLOOK: three rivers • lemon cove • woodlake •							WEATHER WATCH
Saturday, June 22	Sunday, June 23	Monday, June 24	Tuesday, June 25	Wednesday, June 26	Thursday, June 27	Friday, June 28	The last few days of spring have really felt like, well, spring. It's been cool and breezy with good air quality. But spring will soon be just a memory as today is the summer solstice, signaling the beginning of a new season. And right on cue, the area is in for a run of triple-digit temperatures, which are forecast for the end of the week and into the weekend. Coming up (literally) on Sunday, June 23, is the largest full moon of the year. This supermoon coincides with the moon's closest approach to Earth until August 10, 2014.
Sunny Hi 94 • Lo 60	Clouds and sun Hi 85 • Lo 61	Clouds and sun Hi 89 • Lo 63	Sunny Hi 94 • Lo 64	Sunny Hi 97 • Lo 66	Sunny Hi 101 • Lo 67	Sunny Hi 102 • Lo 68	

BIRD WATCH



The snowy egret is a year-round resident at Lake Kaweah, where they stalk their meals of fish, insects, and reptiles along the marshy shores. The egret's feathers were once in demand as adornments for women's hats, which endangered the egret population. They are now protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and their numbers have since rebounded.

Kings Canyon campgrounds scheduled for opening

Two Kings Canyon National Park campgrounds — Crystal Springs in Grant Grove and Sentinel in Cedar Grove — are scheduled to open on Monday, July 1. Both of these campgrounds have sites available on a first come, first served basis.



PLAYING NICELY TOGETHER: A quartet of Center Stage Strings students performs at a previous year's concert. Three Rivers will once again be graced by the talents of the CSS campers as they begin their series of student concerts today.

—GEOFF GLASS PHOTO

CSS: More concerts this week

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Dorst Creek Campground, one of just two campgrounds of the 14 throughout Sequoia and Kings Canyon that takes reservations, is expected to close this season due to lack of water as a result of limited snowfall over the past winter. No new reservations are being taken for Dorst, and if the campground must close, existing reservations will be honored at a different campground in either park at no additional cost.

Park information: 565-3341.

Danielle is the star of this show. The 30-year-old violinist appears poised at the threshold of true greatness, and it is within the Three Rivers setting where her virtuosity has clearly blossomed. During Tuesday's show, Danielle's performance of John Williams' arrangement of Carlos Gardel's Por Una Cabeza was only an inkling of her pent-up passion for playing her 300-year-old violin.

But Danielle readily admits her special love is teaching. That innate passion so aptly demonstrated in her playing is also evidenced in her teaching. And now the music camp she has created in four short seasons has become a festival extravaganza that has

the classical music world texting, tweeting, posting, and all abuzz. And where do the uninitiated think Three Rivers is? "Three Rivers, in Northern California," wrote Kaitlin Wright in a June 9 article in the *Orange County Register*, is where seven local students are spending part of this summer intensely sharpening their concert hall skills."

Well, maybe not quite Northern California, and not quite Southern California either, but would you believe Central California?

For an ever-growing legion of accomplished and aspiring classical musicians, their families, friends and fans they now know precisely where Three Rivers is located.

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