



The basket competition is a highlight of the annual *Wa She Shu It'Deh* Arts Festival, taking place this weekend in South Lake Tahoe. COURTESY/WASHOE TRIBE

Noble art

Wa She Shu It'Deh Arts Festival

For the past 28 years, South Lake Tahoe residents have seen the cultural side of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, and other native tribes, on display in a popular event that showcases the community's customs and history.

"The arts festival is based in Washoe culture, and this is one of the only times throughout the year where we display it," said tribal cultural/language resources director Herman Fillmore. "Most of the time we hold it near and dear to our hearts, but we are happy to share it with everyone."

The 29th Annual *Wa She Shu It'Deh* Arts Festival returns to the Vahalla/Tallac Historic Site for two days of arts, culture and entertainment. Fillmore said the basket competition is one of the most popular events of the festival. It features weavers from Nevada and California, as well as a few from other parts of the country.

The festival also features dance performances from Agai Diccutta Dancers of Schurz Paiute, Miwok Dancers and Maidu Dancers. There's also traditional flute music from Paul Stone, round dance songs from the Red Hoop Singers, and Washoe songs from tribal members Darlene Smokey and Itmahawa Enos. Fillmore also said the reggae band playing, False Rhythms, features two tribal members.

Traditional games and stories from the Washoe Tribe will be presented. There is also a fashion show that will display clothing made by Washoe tribe members and designers, a pop-up live art exhibit and an area with food and drink vendors.

"We also have arts and crafts vendors with Native American jewelry," Fillmore

said. "A lot of them are from the local tribes, but, for example, we had a Navajo couple that bring up pottery from that area."

Parking is limited. It should be parking available on the side of Highway 89/ Emerald Bay Road near the site, and there is additional parking across from Taylor Creek. The tribe will have shuttles available to and from the front gate of the festival grounds to parking area.

While music, dance and crafts are the biggest parts of the festival, there is another message and goal for the Washoe Tribe's event: reclaiming stewardship of the land.

"We really want to leave a small footprint, so we have really increased our recycling efforts this year," Fillmore said. "We've also asked our vendors to use biodegradable items. This is a key piece for us this year, to take up the mantle of being good stewards of Tahoe, as we were the original stewards of that land."

To that end, there's an festival educational component. A tribe press release states that the Washoe people "feel it is their responsibility to educate the surrounding communities about the importance of taking proactive steps to protect the natural beauty of Tahoe and the surrounding area."

There's also an environmental tie to the arts and crafts themselves. The press release states that "in order for the Washoe traditions to continue there needs to be preservation of all the things that keep the Washoe culture alive, from the willows used to make baskets to the wildlife and habitat that are used in traditional meals and ceremonies. Washoe language and culture is intrinsically tied to their homeland and the people cannot be separated from the land from which they come." □

The 29th Annual *Wa She Shu It'Deh* Arts Festival takes place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. July 27 and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. July 28 at Tallac Historic Site, 1 Vahalla Road, South Lake Tahoe, California. Learn more about the event and the Washoe Tribe at washotribe.us.

THE LINEUP



NAPPY ROOTS
JULY 26



**MATT GILMOUR
BAND WITH
THE CUCKOOS**
AUGUST 3



**GEORGE! STARRING
NICK BOLD AS
GEORGE HARRISON!**
AUGUST 9



**TERRY PARRETT:
HYPNOTIST**
AUGUST 30 & 31

CENTER

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