

# Tahoe-ites rid lake beaches, riverways of tons of trash

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – “I’m going out of state and getting trashed” is not what my Mom wanted to hear I was doing on my birthday. It was met with silence on the other end of the phone.

The truth is I’ve spent the last two nights in Nevada – out of state – even if the Lakeside Inn is only six miles from my California home. And I got trashed yesterday, on my birthday, in the sense that I participated in the annual coastal cleanup day.



Cigarette  
butts littered  
Rabe Meadow  
and Nevada  
Beach.

Photo/Kathryn  
Reed

Mom still wasn’t amused with my initial description. But she did applaud my community service.

With staying at Stateline, I arranged through Ellen Nunes of Clean Tahoe to have Nevada Beach be a satellite affiliate this year. It was great to be able to walk there from Lakeside.

With 12 of the 15 official sites reporting, Blackwood Meadow reported the most amount of trash – 1,465 pounds – collected during the three-hour campaign to rid California locations near water of trash. Lou Graves parked a truck in front of Clean Tahoe's office in South Lake Tahoe the afternoon of Sept. 25. It was full, and included a couch.

He said this was just one of five couches retrieved from the meadow in the center of South Lake Tahoe. Graves said the truck had 19 bags of trash.

My Jeep was filled with one bag of trash and what looked like the spring of a rear Jeep seat we found near Burke Creek.

In the roughly 2.5 hours Sue and I spent walking through Rabe Meadow and along Nevada Beach we collected 228 cigarette butts, 175 food wrappers, 22 caps/lids, five pieces of glass, 12 straws, rubber from a bike tire, 91 pieces of food and other trash.



Kathryn Reed hauls out what looks like a spring for a car seat that she found in Burke Creek. Photo/Susan Wood

While Sue was using profanity toward smokers, I had choice words for the people who left behind peanut-pistachio-sun

flower shells.

Yes, putting out a cigarette in the sand is great. But what the heck are you thinking when leaving it there?

I love pistachios – but why leave the shells on the beach? How long do you think it's going to take to biodegrade? And no bird wants the empty shell. Stop being lazy. Your litter is worse than the paper left behind because it blends in more with the sand.

According to Clean Tahoe's Nunes, with 80 percent of the sites reporting, 193 people participated through her organization, 2,557 pounds of trash were collected, 266.5 pounds of recyclables were bagged, and 26 miles were covered.

These are just results on the South Shore. Coastal Cleanup is a statewide effort.



Sue Wood finds Nevada Beach isn't as pristine as it looks.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

"The youngest volunteer was 18 months old, although many little ones were in backpacks. The youngest in dad's backpack was 2 months. Our oldest volunteer was 84. Four of our volunteers drove all the way from San Francisco to participate," Nunes told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I'm simply amazed

at how our group pulled it together without the usual grant funding to advertise the event. Getting the word out was a grass-roots effort with each member of our organizing committee reaching out to their co-worker and friend networks. Facebook played a big role in getting the word out as well.”