

Dogs face danger in the backcountry

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

For people who love dogs and the Sierra Nevada backcountry it's tough to imagine a better day than what Don and Polly Triplat planned for one Sunday.

The Truckee couple, two friends and their dog, Scarlet, would spend the day skiing, relaxing and enjoying solitude and views of Lake Tahoe in the Third Creek area near Incline Village.

For the Triplats, both 45-years-old and avid backcountry skiers trained in avalanche safety and wilderness first aid, ski outings with Scarlet and their other dog, Brodie, were rewarding for the whole family.

"It is absolutely a blast to watch your dog slide down a hill in front of you," said Don Triplat, who is also the executive director of the Sierra Avalanche Center, a non-profit partner with the U.S. Forest Service that provides education on avalanche safety and information on snow conditions in the backcountry.

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