

SLT gas station's liquor license suspended

American Gas in South Lake Tahoe has had its liquor license suspended for 20 days.

South Lake Tahoe Police Department and California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control officials said the suspension is a result of an undercover operation conducted Nov. 12 in which owner Stefka Dimitrova was arrested after allegedly selling a glass pipe used for smoking methamphetamine.

The suspension started Feb. 25.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Disabled veterans snowmobile through Tahoe

By Paul Nelson, KTVN-TV

Snowmobiling is just one of many outdoor winter sports in the Sierra, but for some veterans, this is more than just a 15-mile tour.

The veterans have physical disabilities. Some are confined to wheelchairs while others need canes to get around. But none of that matters when they're out here.

About 85 veterans are a part of the group. They get to ride the snowmobiles through the Tahoe wilderness and enjoy some of the best views in the area.

Quick action makes huge difference with strokes

By Diane Rolfs

Often, individuals misdiagnose themselves while having a stroke and do not get the proper treatment due to the fact they do not visit a hospital. This can lead to severe permanent damage to a person's brain. Care Flight would like to remind people of some important facts about stroke.

It is never too late or too early to adopt a healthy lifestyle. You can reduce stroke risk factors by not smoking, staying physically active and drinking alcohol only in moderation. Additionally, seeing your physician on a regular basis can change stroke risk factors by controlling high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

Recognize the early warning signs and symptoms that are very common with a stroke:

- Sudden blurred or decreased vision in one or both eyes
- Numbness, weakness or paralysis of the face or in an upper or lower limb, occurring on one or both sides of the body
- Difficulty speaking or understanding
- Dizziness, loss of balance, or an unexplained fall
- Headache (usually severe and abrupt onset) or unexplained change in the pattern of headaches.

There are four easy steps to identify a stroke using the mnemonic F.A.S.T.

By familiarizing yourself with this one-minute, four-step test, you can recognize the early warning signs and symptoms that are common with a stroke and Act F.A.S.T. Acting fast helps improve the treatment and the outcome for stroke victims. This test is so simple that even a child can use it. Teach it to your child, as many children do save others by learning life-saving techniques such as CPR. If you do believe someone exhibits the symptoms of a stroke, act fast and dial 911.

- Face: Ask the person to smile. Does one end of the face droop?
- Arm: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- Speech: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Does the speech sound slurred or strange?
- Time: If you observe any of these signs, it's time to call 911.

Rapid diagnosis, rapid response and rapid treatment of strokes is especially important because the clot-busting drugs that can reverse or limit brain damage can be used only in the first three hours after strokes occur.

Strokes are caused by the sudden loss of blood flow to the brain or bleeding inside the head. When this blood flow stops, brain cells stop functioning or die. As a result, the activities of the body controlled by dying brain cells can lose their ability to function.

When stroke occurs, the potential for brain damage increases with each moment that passes.

Diane Rolfs is a registered nurse and director of Education, Training & CQI for REMSA.

Soup nights returning to Truckee

Slow Food Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Food Hub's fifth series of Community Soup Nights in Truckee are March 9 at Full Belly Deli, March 23 at Red Truck, and April 6 at Fifty Fifty Brewing Company.

Originally known as Project MANA's Stone Soup, these soup nights bring family and friends together to enjoy a warm, affordable and delicious meal made from fresh, local and sustainably sourced ingredients.

Each community soup night is 6-7:30pm. All are welcome to attend, and the cost is \$5 at the door for a cup of soup and bread.

Each evening there will be live music and a raffle. Proceeds will go toward Slow Food Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Food Hub's initiatives to educate and reconnect the local community to our sustainable and regional food system.

For additional information, or if you are interested in volunteering, contact Trish Geary at pfgeary@gmail.com.

Tahoe casinos post gains in

January

Stateline casino revenue was up in January, while statewide it was down.

The Gaming Control Board on Feb. 26 said statewide revenue fell 2.87 percent in January compared to 2015 to \$925.3 million.

Gaming revenue rose 9.22 percent at the South Shore casinos.

North Shore casinos also posted a gain – 22.35 percent higher than 2015.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

S. Lake Tahoe man dies at Heavenly

A skier from South Lake Tahoe died at Heavenly Mountain Resort on Feb. 19.

Brian Scott Bitzer, 45, was found off of an intermediate trail on the California side of the resort, according to resort officials. He was pronounced dead at Barton Memorial Hospital. No other details were provided.

Bitzer owned and operated Altitude Painting.

He grew up in the East Bay and then went to college at CSU Chico.

Bitzer was an avid Raiders, Giants and Warriors fan; loved boating and skiing.

He is survived by his wife, Di; daughters Phoebe, Ronnie, and Natalie; parents Mark and Ronnie; sister Heather Davis (Wayne); brother Barry (Susan); sister-in-law Alisa (Peter) Fay; brother-in-law Rafael (Allyson) Alvarez; mother-in-law and father-in-law Dinorah and Bill Namache; nieces Allison Davis, Bailey Bitzer, Michelle Davis and Maddy Fay; and nephews Michael and Steven Bitzer, and Evan and Bryce Alvarez.

There will be a memorial service at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course in Stateline on Feb. 28 at 11am.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial college fund has been set up at Wells Fargo Bank for the Bitzer children who are ages 12 and 10.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Work force issues worry South Shore chamber



B Gorman, CEO of the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, outlines the goals on Feb. 25. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Refining their mission to better be able to adapt to the changing work force, while fostering economic vitality are goals of the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce.

At the annual membership breakfast on Feb. 25, CEO B Gorman outlined for the nearly 50 people gathered at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel what has happened in the last year at the South Shore chamber as well what is planned going forward.

Gorman touched on how baby boomers were joiners – from high school, to college and as professionals. Millennials aren't the same. To get them involved in the business community is going to require a new way of looking at things.

Communication and technology need to be constantly re-evaluated, especially when it comes to businesses reaching customers. More targeted messages instead of a single delivery is what's needed, Gorman said.

Demographic changes will necessitate the need for “strategies of inclusion.”

A major difference with younger generations, Gorman said, is they are choosing the place to live and the job is second.

But she also noted a number of local employers have jobs that go unfilled for months. It’s about not having a work force with the necessary skills, according to Gorman.

What wasn’t addressed was whether the vacancies pay a high enough wage to live in the basin.

In mid-March the chamber is doing a two-day business walk where merchants will be asked a series of open-ended questions to gauge what they would like from employees. The goal is to project out 10 years what businesses will need.

That data will be given to the Tahoe Prosperity Center to incorporate into a study it is doing. Lake Tahoe Community College is part of the project. At the end of the day the college wants to be providing the education component so the future work force has the skills employers are seeking.

The hope is the data will be coalesced by early fall.

All of this ties into the chamber having re-established its goals into four main areas:

- Advance leadership: Attract and retain effective business and community leaders. Leadership Lake Tahoe will be a key component of this.
- Governance: Drive policy and governance to create an environment where Tahoe businesses thrive.
- Economic vitality: Provide opportunities for sustainable and enhanced experiences for residents and visitors.

- Community: Foster a prosperous community as a highly desirable place to live, work and play.

—

Other items to note:

- Sample the Sierra is moving to Sept. 17. A second restaurant week will be tied into the farm to fork event.
- The annual tourism conference is April 26.
- When asked what the chamber's view is on taking the loop road to a vote, Gorman said, "I highly doubt we'll see it on the ballot. I don't think it will be necessary for the chamber to take a position."
- The chamber has more than 650 members; 81 are new in the last year; there is a retention rate of 88.6 percent.
- A nationwide search is under way to replace Gorman. She will be leaving mid-year to start her own business.

Opinion: Lead not an issue at STPUD

By Richard Solbrig

Due to the recent crisis of lead contamination in the drinking water in Flint, Mich., South Tahoe Public Utility District would like to provide information regarding water sampling procedures and the possibility of lead contamination in our local distribution system. The district's priority is to provide reliable and safe water distribution to our customers

efficiently and cost effectively. The district has been focused on safeguarding our resources for more than 65 years.

Following is an informational summary on how lead contamination occurs and what district procedures are in place to detect contamination.

How lead contamination occurs

Most lead contamination in drinking water occurs when lead leaches from pipes, fittings and solder joints as corrosive water (or water with a low pH level) moves through them. Homes built prior to 1987 may have used a 50-50 lead/zinc solder for indoor plumbing.

South Lake Tahoe Public Utility District's water distribution system

The district's main distribution system contains no lead pipes.

The district's service lines are primarily made of copper, poly ethylene, or iron pipe.

All plumbing fixtures manufactured after 2008 are required to be lead free (faucets, valves, fittings).

South Lake Tahoe Public Utility District's sampling procedures

The district samples all potable water source wells annually for several types of contaminants. All wells have tested at the non-detect level for lead.

The district samples 90-95 private homes built before 1987 for lead-copper every three years. These tests have resulted in non-detect samples, less than 2.5 parts per billion (ppb). All sampling is done in accordance with the EPA Lead and Copper Rule.

The district is currently in a reduced monitoring schedule for

lead due to the fact we are well below the EPA's action limits (15 ppb).

For more information regarding sampling, refer to the district's annual Consumer Confidence Report **online** or through the Customer Service Department. This report lists all contaminants tested for in all source waters for the district.

Richard Solbrig is general manager of South Tahoe Public Utility District.

Desire to work past 65 often clashes with reality

By Associated Press

YPSILANTI, Mich. — Earl Johnston was 12 when he got his first job, a paper route that he quickly expanded by “buying out” additional routes from other, less industrious boys.

After high school, he enrolled in a program to become an industrial electrician.

“With that journeyman’s card in my back pocket, I had never had trouble finding work — ever,” he said.

Like many people in the prime of their working life Johnston, now 56, always thought he would have plenty set aside for retirement, and if he didn’t, he could always work a little longer. “At least up to 65,” he thought.

What Johnston didn’t plan for was the degenerative spinal condition that made being on his feet for a 12-hour shift all but impossible.

“I could be making lots and lots of money right now, but nobody in manufacturing is going to hire a 50-something guy who can’t stay on his feet,” he said.

On its face, Johnston’s story might be chalked up to simple bad luck. But it serves as an example of the rapidly changing expectations that seniors have for being able to work well past traditional retirement age, and in some cases, dismissing the idea of retirement altogether.

According to the 2015 Employment Benefit Research Institute Confidence Survey, the percentage of workers aged 25 and over who planned on working past 65 has increased steadily from 11 percent in 1991 to 36 percent in 2015.

But those expectations aren’t always achievable.

The University of Michigan Health and Retirement Study found that 37 percent of respondents didn’t reach the retirement age they had set when they were 58.

“The first, and maybe the most obvious explanation people give for early retirement is health,” said Boston College research economist Geoff Sanzenbacher, co-author of a working paper investigating causes for this mismatch between retirement expectations and reality.

“People don’t fully grasp how big an impact health has on your ability to work. You may be 58 and have some arthritis, but you don’t fully appreciate how much that could affect you going forward.”

The second most common reason was layoffs or business closings, followed by familial factors, such as a spouse retiring, he said.

The average retirement age has been inching up for years now. People are living longer, tend to be more educated and have better access to white-collar jobs that don’t require a lot of

manual labor. Women are also reaching older age with more skills and longer work histories than their mothers and grandmothers.

Even as roughly two-thirds of workers do make it to the age they planned to retire, a report by the Hamilton Project at Brookings Institution suggests that a growing percentage of them are entering retirement on shaky financial footing.

Calif. cities miss January conservation targets

By Phillip Reese and Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

California residents broadly missed water conservation targets in January, and the state now has fallen behind the June through February conservation level mandated by Gov. Jerry Brown, the State Water Resources Control Board said Thursday.

The state's urban water districts cut use by 17 percent in January as compared to the same month in 2013, marking the worst performance since mandated cuts began last June. In December, residents managed an 18 percent savings.

Following years of drought, Brown last year ordered communities statewide to cut water use between June 2015 and February 2016 by an average of 25 percent compared to 2013. Through January, the state has cut use by 24.8 percent.

Read the whole story