Letter: In defense of Tahoe's trees

To the community,

The chain saw is coming yet again to my neighborhood. The first time it was cleanup following the Angora Fire. Then it was fuel reduction by the fire department of assorted parcels and residences. Then it was fuel reduction by the USFS of national forest land. Some trees that had survived the fire did not survive the USFS. More recently the California Tahoe Conservancy cut trees on scattered lots they own. Now Liberty Utilities is unmercifully removing out what they call hazardous trees out of front yards that are cherished aspens and conifers.



Fallen Leaf Lake after work by the U.S. Forest Service. Photo/Liana Zambresky

It seems standards have changed. Trees that were tolerated in the past are not tolerated anymore. If a tree leans a little, it is cut. If it is damaged a little, that's the end of it. If it is beautiful and healthy, but a little too close to the power line, it's history. I know plenty of people who are damaged and lean a little, but they are tolerated. Do we have to be so unforgiving with trees?

I moved to Tahoe years ago because I was attracted to the ruggedness of the area, the deep forests, the diverse wildlife, the howling winters, the roaring mountain streams, the sparkling lakes and the magnificent, snowy mountains. I liked the bumpy, narrow roads and the closeness of the community.

It’s not the same anymore. Big money has moved in. The Tahoe area is feeling the heavy hand of man like never before. A walk in unspoiled woods can hardly be found. I used to walk several times each week in the meadows and woods at Fallen Leaf Lake. I would delight in seeing a pileated woodpecker, a western tanager or a bear with cubs. However, it breaks my heart to go there now and see the forest decimated by USFS thinning. I don’t want our forests ruined beyond recognition just because they might someday burn. Nor do I want the beauty of our neighborhoods diminished by excessive standards set by Liberty Utilities.

In the years that I have been here, there have been very few power outages. One was caused by a car driving into a power pole and breaking it. Another by a problem at a power station in Carson City. I can’t even recall one that was caused by a falling tree.

We have become a society that looks over its shoulder for every little thing that could go wrong. We have homeowners insurance because something might happen to our house. We have auto insurance because we might get into an accident. We have life insurance because we might die suddenly. We have health insurance because we might get sick. We have an umbrella policy because these other insurances might not be enough. We might get an earthquake. We might get a flood. A meteor might fall out of the sky…. We have become such a fearful society.

This fear, frenzied in my opinion, has led to uncompromising removal of trees at Tahoe. We need to get a grip on our attitudes, stand back and take a look at the big picture. Life

is hazardous. There’s no question about it. We can’t cover every contingency. I recently flew to Minnesota. What really struck me on the flight is that once away from the Sierra, there were no more trees for thousands of miles. This helped me to see that Lake Tahoe trees are special. They are to be cherished and protected. There should be a place for good judgement. Rules should allow for flexibility and tolerance of special situations without the threat of a lawsuit. Our forests and urban trees need to be managed wisely with care. Once cut, a tree is gone. It takes 100 years to replace a 100 year old tree. What will the world be like by then?

Liana Zambresky, South Lake Tahoe

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



· Sierra-at-Tahoe’s mobile app gauges speed, distance, vertical number of runs and daily calories burned over the course of the season.

· The Oct. 19 opening of Sunday River ski resort in Maine makes it the first resort in North America to open for this season.

· Washoe County Sheriff’s Office has received a $123,100 grant from the Nevada Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety to support the sheriff’s office participation in Joining Forces traffic safety campaigns during the coming year.

· Warren Miller’s “Chasing Shadows” will be shown at

Harrah’s Lake Tahoe on Dec. 4-5 at 7:30pm. Doors open at 6:30pm. Tickets are available **online**.

· North Tahoe Business Association is hosting an open house Oct. 20, 5:30-7:30pm at North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach.

FBI investigating fantasy sports companies

By Joe Drape and Jacqueline Williams, New York Times

The FBI has begun an inquiry into the practices of booming daily fantasy sports websites after players of the games and lawmakers made allegations of predatory tactics and questioned the use of inside information, according to fantasy players who said they had been contacted by investigators.

The FBI began contacting several prominent competitors in the contests, the players said, shortly after an employee of DraftKings, one of the two most prominent daily fantasy companies, admitted to inadvertently releasing data before lineups for the start of the third week of NFL games were locked in. The employee, a midlevel content manager, then won $350,000 at a rival site, though DraftKings said he did not have an advantage.

The players said that they were interviewed by agents from the bureau’s Boston office, who seemed to focus primarily on DraftKings, a Boston-based company. They also said that agents were examining whether the site encouraged and accepted deposits and bets from states where the contests are prohibited. The information under review includes a post by

Jon Aguiar, an executive in charge of developing high-volume fantasy players, on a public thread informing players how to deposit funds and play in contests in states and countries where the games are prohibited.

Read the whole story

Health benefits found in white wine



Studies show white wine may be beneficial to one's health. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

By Ariana Eunjung Cha, Washington Post

Throughout the years scientists have documented the benefits of red wine – for heart health, cholesterol control and possibly even cancer prevention – in numerous studies. But what about its cousin, the white kind?

The short answer is that the evidence supporting white wine's health benefits, while still limited, is growing. While previous studies on the elixir have been mostly focused on

testing in animals or on testing the components of the drink itself, scientists have recently reported on two randomized clinical trials that found good news for white wine enthusiasts.

The first study, called In Vino Veritas (In Wine, Truth) involved tracking 146 subjects half of whom drank pinot noir, and half of whom drank a white chardonnay-pinot over a year. The researchers reported at a European Society of Cardiology meeting last year that those who worked out twice per week and drank wine – either kind – saw a significant improvement in cholesterol levels.

Read the whole story

South Lake Tahoe plastic bag ban expands

South Lake Tahoe's ban on plastic single-use carryout bags at retail establishments went into effect today.

The ordinance took effect for grocery stores and food vendors on Jan. 15, 2014. For all other retail establishments the rule is effective Oct. 15.

The city said it is seeking voluntary compliance and has no intention of immediate enforcement.

According to the ordinance, the rules affect a "retail establishment that sells perishable or nonperishable goods, including, but not limited to, clothing, food, and personal items, directly to a customer. … A reusable carryout bag or a recycled paper bag may be provided to the customer."

Legal brothels in Nevada on the wane



Brothels are less popular than they once were. Photo/Russell and Sydney Poore

By John M. Glionna and Javier Panzar, Los Angeles Times

When Lamar Odom was found unconscious Tuesday inside a Nevada brothel, he'd wandered far off the beaten path of adult entertainment culture, back into an analog version of an increasingly high-tech sex-play universe.

Like Wayne Newton and mobsters wielding tommy guns, the antics of the world's oldest profession smack of a bygone era in Nevada. Brothels are under siege, more and more considered outdated and distasteful – even in the only state to sanction prostitution.

Legalized in Nevada in 1971, these so-called pleasure dens, many believe, are on their last legs.

"These brothels are really a relic of the past. Even here in

Nevada, they’re relegated to what we call the cow counties,” said Nevada state Sen. Richard S. “Tick” Segerblom. “The urban areas have an appetite to abolish them. And given the state’s rapid urbanization, there’s really little popular support left for these businesses.”

Read the whole story

Lincoln man ID’d in fatal logging accident

The logger who died Oct. 14 while working in the Eldorado National Forest has been identified as Jeffrey Jones, 55, of Lincoln.

Jones was working at a logging operation off Wentworth Springs Road on the West Slope.

According to the El Dorado County Sheriff’s office, Jones “sustained fatal injuries from a log that fell from his trailer and struck him in the head.”

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

News photographer faces

assault charges after incident at Tesla plant

By Daniel Rothberg, Las Vegas Sun

Tesla says two Reno journalists trespassed at its battery-manufacturing property late last week before striking two security guards with a Jeep belonging to the *Reno Gazette-Journal*.

The sheriff's department arrested *Gazette-Journal* photographer Andy Barron on two counts of felony assault with a deadly weapon. Tesla said Tuesday in a news release that Barron and the other journalist, who hasn't been identified, will be charged with trespassing.

The District Attorney's Office did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the charges.

Read the whole story

Bay Area duo ID'd as SLT plane crash victims

The two people who died in Saturday night's plane crash were from the Bay Area.

Conrad Yu, 73, of Oakley was the owner and pilot of the Beech 35 Bonanza. His passenger was Mary Choy, 66, of San Francisco.

The aircraft was taking off from Lake Tahoe Airport just after 5:30pm Oct. 10 when it banked left and landed next to a house

on Tionontati Street in El Dorado County.

Witnesses said the aircraft was making noises as though something was wrong.

The plane pieces, which were initially stuck in a tree behind the house and scattered about the yard, have been removed. The National Transportation Safety Board took them to a secure location to determine if there were mechanical or structural issues with the plane.

NTSB officials often take a year to release a report stating the cause of any plane crash.

The plane erupted into flames and caught part of the house on fire. The two people and a dog who were renting the house escaped without injury.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

South Lake Tahoe man hit in drive-by shooting

Police are searching for the gunman who shot a 19-year-old South Lake Tahoe man in the leg early this morning.

The victim, whose name has not been released, showed up at Barton Memorial Hospital about midnight Oct. 15. Hospital personnel then called police.

Officers tracked a vehicle in question to the rear of the TJ Maxx center. The suspect fled on foot. K9 units were unable to locate the person.

The shooting occurred near Ski Run Boulevard and Highway 50.

South Lake Tahoe Police Chief Brian Uhler described it as a drive-by shooting. He told *Lake Tahoe News* it was too early to say if it was gang related. The suspect and victim are believed to know each other.

“The victim gave us some information. We do have some significant leads we are working on,” Uhler said.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report