

Runnels removes vehicles on deadline day

The cars are gone from Runnels Automotive per a judge's order that was issued last month.

Just before 10am on Sept. 8 South Lake Tahoe code enforcement and police, along with a couple tow trucks converged in the TJ Maxx parking lot across the street. By noon all of the old vehicles – most of which didn't run – were removed from the property at the Y.



John Runnels

On Aug. 6 after a four-hour hearing, El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Daniel Proud determined the vehicles were abandoned, which violates city ordinances.

Runnels was issued a dealers' license in 1979 by the DMV, the same year the city's Planning Commission approved a special use permit allowing him to store unregistered vehicles at the Emerald Bay Road business. Two of the conditions of the city permit were that Runnels had to maintain valid certification from the state to sell and repair vehicles. They both expired. That gave the city the power to revoke the special use permit.

"Although code enforcement was there to ensure those vehicles were removed, also a towing company offered to assist John and they removed the last of few vehicles John had left to remove," City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The

outcome resulted in the vehicles removed, John being able to retain all those vehicles, although they are stored in other locations, and compliance with the judge's order."

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Drought could dry up Nevada's estate distilleries

By Mike Higdon, Reno Gazette-Journal

If El Niño doesn't deliver much-needed water this winter, the stills could run dry at two of Nevada's craft spirits makers: Frey Ranch Estate Distillery in Fallon and the future Bently Heritage Estate Distillery in Gardnerville.

"We are keeping our fingers crossed for a powerful El Niño," said Ashley Frey, owner of Frey Ranch along with her husband, Colby.

Frey Ranch and Bently, set to open in 2017, are two of just three estate distilleries in the United States. The third is in New York. An estate distillery grows 100 percent of its own ingredients, then distills, bottles and sells all the spirits on the same property.

Distilleries use rye, barley and wheat to make vodka, gin and whiskey. Without adequate water, nothing grows and no one drinks.

[Read the whole story](#)

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- South Shore bike paths and sidewalks built this construction season are nearly ready to ride. Watch for the opening of: South Tahoe Greenway Herbert to Glenwood; Nevada Stateline to Stateline Bikeway, Laura Drive segment; Sawmill Boulevard Bike Trail and Al Tahoe sidewalk.
 - At this month's Tahoe Talk, learn about Safe Routes to Schools, Bike to School Week, the Bijou Bike Park, and other opportunities for kids to gain safe biking skills. This talk will include a preview tour of the new bike park. The talk is Sept. 16 from noon-1:30pm at the Pavilion at Bijou Community Park in South Lake Tahoe.
 - South Lake Tahoe Yacht Club is having a social Sept. 12 from 5-8pm at the clubhouse, 2435 Venice Drive. Bring a Mexican dish to share. Non-members are welcome.
 - North Lake Tahoe Resort Association has hired Sarah Winters as the leisure sales director.
 - Richard Solbrig, general manager of the South Tahoe Public Utilities District, will be the guest speaker at the Rotary Club of South Lake on Sept. 9 at noon at Harveys. The public is invited.
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Changing landscape of Tahoe's environmental movement

By Kara Fox, Moonshine Ink

After decades of development lawsuits throughout the Tahoe basin and Truckee, change has quietly been happening over the last few years as conservation groups and developers come together on projects. While environmental leaders say litigation can be necessary to protect the environment, they believe working with the developers is a better strategy to advance their cause.

Since 2012, when new executive directors took the helm of both the League to Save Lake Tahoe and Mountain Area Preservation – two local environmental groups historically known for litigation – the environmental movement shifted. The new leaders have ushered in a more collaborative form of environmentalism. In this new model, litigation is used as a last resort and meetings with developers are commonplace to come to a consensus on development projects. In addition to advocacy, the groups are also focusing on community education, outreach, and awareness, which they say was needed to change the community's perception of the organizations.

"The environmental movement has changed," said MAP Executive Director Alexis Ollar. "It seemed like we were the 'no, no, no' group. You can't say no to everything. Change is inevitable."

Jesse Patterson, deputy director for the League, agreed.

"It is [about] trying to be pragmatic about environmental problems at Lake Tahoe," Patterson said. "You have to grow with the times; we want to remain effective."

Read the whole story

USFS program encourages kids to get outdoors

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Eldorado National Forest and Tahoe National Forest are participating in the Every Kid in a Park program.

Fourth-graders nationwide can visit the new **Every Kid in a Park website** to obtain a pass that provides free access to students and their families to all federally-managed lands and waters – including national forests, grasslands, wildlife refuges and waters. The pass is valid for the 2015-16 school year and grants free entry for fourth-graders and three accompanying adults (or an entire car for drive-in parks) at more than 2,000 federally-managed sites.

President Obama launched the Every Kid in a Park initiative earlier this year as a call to action to get all children to experience America's outdoors. Today, more than 80 percent of American families live in urban areas, and many lack easy access to safe outdoor spaces. At the same time, youth spend more hours than ever in front of screens instead of outside.

Fourth-graders may log onto the **website** to complete an educational activity in order to obtain and print their pass. Students can also trade in their paper pass for an official access card at participating federal sites. Passes are available at national forest offices.

Educators and community leaders may access educational activities, field trip options, and print passes for their classrooms. Parents visiting the website can find additional

links for more information on planning trips to nearby public lands.

Cave Rock work to cause traffic delays

Expect delays on Highway 50 through Cave Rock beginning Sept. 9.

Both directions of traffic will be alternated through the eastbound Cave Rock tunnel, with travel delays of up to 30 minutes each weekday between approximately 7am and 4:30pm. The closures are anticipated to last four or five weeks.

The closures are so NDOT officials can make preparations for work that will begin in the spring.

The project will extend the westbound, lakeside Cave Rock tunnel entrance, providing an extended overhang for further driver safety and protection against potential rockfall.

Drought, wildfires among Western issues facing Congress

By Bill Theobald, Statesman Journal

WASHINGTON – From drought to wildfires, Congress faces numerous issues of special importance to Westerners when it returns today.

The cost of fighting the fires has already exceeded what had been budgeted for fire suppression this year, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said. That means the Forest Service and the Interior Department will have to shift funds intended for other uses to pay for fighting fires. This “fire borrowing” siphons money targeted for clearing undergrowth and other steps to prevent fires or reduce their severity.

For several years, legislation has been proposed to change the method for paying to fight wildfires to avoid fire borrowing. There are two competing proposals in the Senate this year.

In its fourth year, drought’s footprint continues to expand in the West, according to the National Drought Mitigation Center. The most serious level – exceptional drought – covers most of central California and western Nevada. That area is ringed by the next most serious level – extreme drought – which extends throughout much of Oregon and Washington and into western Montana and northern Idaho.

Read the whole story

Mapping where Truckee River water goes

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

What percentage of the Truckee River's water goes to agriculture in the Fallon area varies year to year and depends on how much water is available. On an average year, when plenty of water exists in the Carson River and Lahontan Reservoir to irrigate crops, the vast majority of the Truckee River's water – 80 percent – flows to Pyramid Lake.

The Truckee-Carson Irrigation District gets 10 percent, diverted from the river at Derby Dam, for crop irrigation. The Truckee Meadows Water Authority gets 3 percent for municipal use in the Reno-Sparks area.

On an average year, about 734,000 acre-feet of water is diverted from the Truckee River.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Michelob Ultra is donating two grants to the highest ranked trails and the Tahoe Rim Trail is one of the nominees. Voting takes place **online** through Oct. 31.

• The annual Rock & Gem Show is Oct. 17-18 from 10am-5pm at the El Dorado County Fairgrounds in Placerville. There will

be 50 dealers featuring minerals, gems, jewelry, beads, fossils, petrified wood, gold, meteorites, geodes, lapidary material and tools; displays and jewelry-making demonstrations; free activities and rocks for kids. Details are **online**.

- North Tahoe Business Association, Spectrum Business and Sierra Business Council are putting on a seminar called Understanding Business Finance Through QuickBooks. It will be Oct. 7 from 8-9:30am at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach. To register, go **online**.

- The Tahoe Area Sierra Club's annual fall fundraiser at Aspen Hollow Nursery is Sept. 20 from 4-7pm. The event will include food, wine, friends and fall planting. Tickets will be sold at the door and are \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. Aspen Hollow Nursery is located at 541 Emerald Bay Road in South Lake Tahoe.

Tahoe students to learn about ag

El Dorado County Ag in the Classroom will embark on the third annual South Lake Tahoe Farm Day at Camp Richardson on Sept. 22.

Nearly 600 local third- and fourth-grade students, their teachers, and chaperones will get a hands-on experience where lessons of agriculture and its role in everyday lives, the county, and its economy are taught in the context of local farms, ranches, and timber industry.

Interactive exhibits and demonstrations presented by

organizations, businesses, and persons who are experts in their field include: nutrition, food preservation, worm composting, soil, working animals, food animals, invasive and beneficial insects, resources from healthy forests, organic pest management, watersheds, irrigation, land stewardship and more.