

SLT council gives Kerry two-step salary increase

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry on May 19 received a glowing review from the City Council.

“She is really one of the best city manager’s in the state,” Mayor Hal Cole told *Lake Tahoe News*. “If anyone deserves a raise in this community, she does.”



Nancy Kerry

Kerry, who has officially had the job since fall 2012, will receive a 4½ percent raise immediately and 2½ percent in one year. Altogether this will put her at about \$185,000 a year, which is what former City Manager Tony O’Rourke was making when he left. He also had other perks like a car allowance that she has always refused.

She has a five-year rolling contract.

Cole praised Kerry’s ability to save the city about \$52 million through changes to employee benefits and dealings with the now defunct Redevelopment Agency.

“The city would be in much worse condition if she were not here,” Cole said.

Cole said he is an advocate of merit raises – which this is –

and not cost of living adjustments.

In the past Kerry has turned down raises the council offered.

"I wanted to take the time to prove myself and for the council to feel comfortable that I earned it," Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Kerry is making a name for herself in the state with the changes she has brought about in South Lake Tahoe. The governor asked the League of California Cities to create a task force to deal with employee benefits. The league appointed her to the task force.

Kerry has also been asked to speak at the league's annual conference in the fall about the employee and retiree benefits. She put together a panel who will speak to that topic.

Drought tests California tourism

By Elizabeth Zach, New York Times

Disneyland is anything but underwhelming. Its deluxe fountains constantly spout, water rides regularly douse patrons, and plush gardens all lead children, and sometimes adults, to both squeal with delight and break down in tears.

So you may suspect that a Southern California theme park that relies on evoking a fantastical world of grandeur would view the water restrictions in the wake of the state's drought as onerous. That would be wrong.

The drought has already changed the habits of a tourism industry that includes the state's signature theme parks, world-renowned golf courses, extensively manicured hotel and spa grounds and the abundance of natural wonders that make up a \$57 billion tourism industry and employ nearly 5 percent of the state's workers.

But new limitations calling for people, governments and businesses to reduce water use by as much as 36 percent compared with 2013 mean different things to different attractions. The large-scale destinations say that they'll continue to cut use, so the restrictions will in some ways mean business as usual.

At Pebble Beach golf resort in Northern California, the 454 guest rooms are also equipped with low-flow shower heads and guests can choose to have linens changed less often. The links are watered with reclaimed waste water, a \$67 million project that the Pebble Beach Company says has also reduced discharge into Carmel Bay.

At another popular tourist destination, away from the coast and into the Sierra Nevada, ski operators around Lake Tahoe are seeking to boost their warm weather attractions on the heels of a weak winter season. Seven resorts in the Lake Tahoe area closed early this season because of limited snow.

Andy Wirth, president and chief executive of Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, said that although the number of winter visitors the last four years has been between 20 and 25 percent fewer than before the drought, he is cautiously hopeful that other area attractions will draw them.

Read the whole story

Golf course scheme lands S. Tahoe man in prison

A South Lake Tahoe man is going to prison for 19½ years for bilking 11 investors out of \$3.6 million in a fraudulent scheme to buy a Douglas County golf course.



Scott
Summerhays

In February 2014, Scott Summerhays, 56, pleaded guilty to 24 federal charges, including wire fraud and money laundering. On May 18, he was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Larry Hicks in Reno to prison as well as to pay \$1.4 million in restitution.

According to court records, between 2008 and 2010, Summerhays represented to potential investors that he was purchasing the Genoa Lakes Golf Club for \$17 million and needed a short term loan to complete the deal because his money was tied up in a trust. Summerhays also represented to the potential investors that he solicited funds for oil and gas investments in Texas and owned more than \$30 million in Berkshire, Las Vegas Sands and MGM stocks. Summerhays showed some of the investors a fraudulent investment account statement. Summerhays also claimed that he was in partnership with Las Vegas Sands owner Sheldon Adelson, and showed potential investors a partnership agreement containing the forged signature of Adelson.

In reality, Summerhays had no investment portfolio, and Adelson never heard of Summerhays or had any partnerships with

him. None of the investors was repaid and they lost all of the money they loaned Summerhays.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Players signing on for Tahoe celebrity golf tourney

Returning champions, fan favorites and newbies are gearing up for the 26th annual American Century Championship at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course.

First-timers for the July 14-19 event include: former fashion model and actress Kim Alexis; former tennis star and author James Blake; former MLB All-Star pitcher David Cone; country musician, rapper and southern rock anthem songwriter Colt Ford; Notre Dame head football coach Brian Kelly; actor comedian Rob Riggle of the “Daily Show,” “Saturday Night Live” and “22 Jump Street”; Carolina Panthers head coach Ron Rivera; and Brandon Weeden of the Dallas Cowboys.

Defending 2014 champion Mark Rypien, the Washington Redskins’ former Super Bowl XXVI MVP (1992), who won the very first American Century Championship in 1990, returns this year as well as past winners, three-time champion Billy Joe Tolliver, and eight-time champion Rick Rhoden.

Retired U.S. Army Corporal Chad Pfeifer, an Iraqi War Veteran and amputee whose golf-centered rehabilitation turned him into a top-tier tournament player, joined the field in 2014. Pfeifer returns this year along with retired Army Sgt. Maj. Rodney Gorman who won the Bush Center’s fourth annual Warrior Open at Las Colinas Country Club in October.

For the second year, the American Century Championship is offering complimentary tickets for all U.S. military. All active duty, reservists, National Guard and veterans may receive two complimentary tickets, including one for a guest each day of the tournament. All service men and women can apply by going online. At the events, participants must show photo ID along with the ticket voucher at tournament gates to receive the complimentary ticket(s).

For more info about the tournament, go online.

Local police to get less military-style assault gear

By David Nakamura, Washington Post

The Obama administration announced Monday it will ban federal transfers of certain types of military-style gear to local police departments, as the president seeks to respond to a spate of incidents that has frayed trust in communities across the country.

The banned items are tracked armored vehicles, bayonets, grenade launchers, ammunition of .50-caliber or higher and some types of camouflage uniforms, according to a report released by a White House working group that made the recommendations. Other equipment, including tactical vehicles, explosives and riot equipment, will be transferred only if local police provide additional certification and assurances that the gear will be used responsibly, according to the report.

Community members “have voiced concerns about what has been described as the ‘militarization’ of law enforcement due to the types of equipment” that is deployed, the report stated.

The ban on items will take effect immediately, officials said, while the restrictions on other gear will be phased in so that local law enforcement agencies can be briefed about the new requirements.

Read the whole story

Calif. wells keep drying up

By Matt Stevens, Los Angeles Times

Just a few months ago, the state’s top water officials said they had reason for optimism. Rain was cascading down on California in December and water conservation passed 20%.

“I, for one, had high hopes,” Mark Cowin, director of the state Department of Water Resources, told a California Senate joint oversight hearing on the drought last week.

Cowin and his colleagues sat before lawmakers and took turns delivering a series of sobering facts and figures about the state’s persistent drought: The mountain snowpack was dismal; conservation is falling far short of Gov. Jerry Brown’s 25 percent mandate; officials are curtailing water rights.

One fact in particular caught senators’ attention, though. About 1,900 wells have gone dry, Cowin said.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- There will be a disc golf tournament May 23 to raise money for the Tahoe Vista Animal Shelter. It is at the North Tahoe Regional Park in Tahoe Vista from 10am-4pm. Registration is at 9am, cost \$25. Bring a dog on leash to get \$5 discount.
- The Good News Club will have an end of the school year bowling party at Tahoe Bowl in South Lake Tahoe on May 21 from 3-5:30pm. All area students between the ages of 5 and 13 are invited. Bowling is free. The Good News Club is part of the worldwide Child Evangelism Fellowship.
- Comments on the draft California State Wildlife Action Plan 2015 update are being taken until July 2. The document is online.
- Tahoe Prosperity Center has revamped its website.
- Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control is putting on a free seminar for business owners with an ABC license and their employees on May 28 from 10am-2pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

TOCCATA's 10th summer season schedule set

TOCCATA – Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – kicks off its 10th Summer MusicFest with “Going For Baroque – Summer

Solstice Series" June 17-23.

The program opens with Vivaldi's "Concerto for Violin and Cello, RV 547", with Natalie Haines Backman and Nick Haines as soloists, and continues with flutist Josue Casillas performing Vivaldi's "Concerto for Flute No. 428, Goldfinch." Other soloists include Yuri Liberzon, guitarist, performing Vivaldi's "Concerto RV 82", and harpist Marina Roznitovsky performing Vivaldi's "Concerto No. 540". The concert concludes with J.S. Bach's "Cantata BWV 9, Es ist das Heil" featuring Anna Helwing, soprano, and Stuart Duke, baritone, with Natalie Haines as concertmaster. Maestro James Rawie will conduct all performances.

The performances are:

June 17, 7pm at Shepherd of the Sierra Lutheran Church in Carson (3680 Highway 395 South)

June 19, 7pm at St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in Incline Village (341 Village Blvd.)

June 21, 3pm at St. Theresa Church in South Lake Tahoe (1041 Lyons Ave.)

June 23, 7pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Reno, (501 California Ave.)

Tickets for this series are available at the door or online. General admission is \$25 adults, \$20 seniors. Preferred seating is \$35 and \$15 for youth/students. Students with ID under 24 years of age are \$5, in non-reserved seating at most regular season concerts in 2015, in whatever seating is available 10 minutes prior to concert start time.

The cold hard facts of freezing to death

By Peter Stark, Outside

When your Jeep spins lazily off the mountain road and slams backward into a snowbank, you don't worry immediately about the cold. Your first thought is that you've just dented your bumper. Your second is that you've failed to bring a shovel. Your third is that you'll be late for dinner. Friends are expecting you at their cabin around eight for a moonlight ski, a late dinner, a sauna. Nothing can keep you from that.

Driving out of town, defroster roaring, you barely noted the bank thermometer on the town square: minus 27 degrees at 6:36. The radio weather report warned of a deep mass of arctic air settling over the region. The man who took your money at the Conoco station shook his head at the register and said he wouldn't be going anywhere tonight if he were you. You smiled. A little chill never hurt anybody with enough fleece and a good four-wheel-drive.

But now you're stuck. Jamming the gearshift into low, you try to muscle out of the drift. The tires whine on ice-slicked snow as headlights dance on the curtain of frosted firs across the road. Shoving the lever back into park, you shoulder open the door and step from your heated capsule. Cold slaps your naked face, squeezes tears from your eyes.

You check your watch: 7:18. You consult your map: A thin, switchbacking line snakes up the mountain to the penciled square that marks the cabin.

Breath rolls from you in short frosted puffs. The Jeep lies cocked sideways in the snowbank like an empty turtle shell. You think of firelight and saunas and warm food and wine. You look again at the map. It's maybe five or six miles more to

that penciled square. You run that far every day before breakfast. You'll just put on your skis. No problem.

Read the whole story

SLT dentist creates program for kids in need

By Kathryn Reed

Dental care can be a luxury. Often it's not covered on health plans or it's cost prohibitive to add it. And most doctors don't accept Affordable Care Act or Medi-Cal patients.

One South Lake Tahoe dentist is bucking the trend. Mireya Ortega through her Young Tahoe Smiles program is providing extremely low cost care for ages 0-16. Until this year the youngest children she saw were 5 year olds.

She started the program in 2010; and it has grown each year. Partly this has to do with the First 5 dental van no longer making visits here, part has to do with the casinos not offering dental care to most employees and part of it has to do with the economy not turning around for everyone in the area.



Mireya Ortega through Tahoe Young Smiles ensures youth have quality dental care. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Through 2014 she saw 196 patients. This equated to more than 600 visits and more than 2,100 procedures. The care is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

It's not just a cleaning. Ortega takes X-rays, provides fluoride, sealants, basic fillings, baby teeth root canals and extractions.

Having the young patients come back at six-month intervals has made a dramatic difference in reducing the care they need and getting them to do the basics. Hygiene has improved, and she can provide preventative care and less restorative care.

Ortega does all of this because she knows that catching dental issues early can lead to better overall health. Plus, getting kids to understand the importance of oral hygiene is easier than teaching adults.

According to the American Dental Association, the first dental visit should be by age 1 or as soon as the first tooth appears. By kindergarten more than 40 percent of kids in the U.S. have tooth decay, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Ortega's literature about the program says, "Young Tahoe Smiles is a dental program whose mission is to provide basic dental care to children in the age group of 0 to 16 years, who are dentally ill, financially challenged, underserved, and without dental insurance or any other assistance program to help them. The goal is to restore children's oral health to a stable, infection free, pain free and functional state."

Also new this year, Ortega changed the income requirements to allow more patients. She verifies financial eligibility and sets fees accordingly. The minimum charge is \$5.

For Ortega, Young Tahoe Smiles is a better way to care for kids than Medi-Cal. (No dentists in South Lake Tahoe accept Medi-Cal.)

"(Medi-Cal) is a time consuming process. It's not worth it," Ortega told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It's assembly line dentistry. It's not the type of care I like to provide."

It's not just kids she addresses. Educating the parents about dental care is part of the deal, too.

She also has dental plans for adults who don't have medical insurance.

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Notes:

- High Sierra Dental Care is at 1060 Ski Run Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

- For more info, call 530.541.7040.