

Placer County spending money at Lake Tahoe

Placer County supervisors this month went on a bit of a spending spree that will affect Lake Tahoe.

Working with the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association in how to spend money collected from the hotel tax in the region, the supervisors allocated \$1.48 million.

The transient occupancy tax money will be doled out starting July 1 for the following projects and others:

- Truckee River Trail Restoration between 64 Acres Park in Tahoe City and the entrance to Squaw Valley.
- Design and construction of Martis Valley Trail segment 3A.
- Improving the Squaw Valley Bike Trail surfaces.
- Wayfinding sign at North Tahoe Regional Park trail.
- Art in the Kings Beach roundabouts.

SLT taking stab at enforcing sign ordinance

South Lake Tahoe is on a beautification quest of sorts. This means it is going to start enforcing rules on the books so the city looks better. Officials are going to start with the sign ordinance.

This means actually not allowing the illegal signs.

Businesses with a permitted sign do not need to do anything. Businesses with unpermitted signs should contact the city's planning division to determine if their signs require a permit or not.

Unpermitted signs typically include signs added to the sides of buildings, sandwich boards displayed during times when they are not allowed, temporary signs, and various miscellaneous signs on buildings may not be permitted.

"Too many signs on buildings adds to the clutter of Highway 50 and detracts from the natural environment. With the new Fix-Up 50 Initiative, the City's Code Enforcement Officers will initiate a community outreach and education effort requesting voluntary compliance to remove unpermitted signs. By the end of April 2015, unpermitted signs not removed will be cited," Police Chief Brian Uhler said in a statement.

This code enforcement falls under the purview of the police department. Non-sworn personnel are used for this work.

This is what code enforcement officers plan to do:

- March: Community outreach – Explorer Scouts handing out informational brochures to all businesses on Highway 50.
- April 1-12: Code enforcement officers and planning officials to confirm/document all unpermitted signs.
- April 13-24: Code enforcement officers will visit all businesses with non-compliant signs. Notice will be given to remove signs within two weeks.
- April 27-May 11: Code enforcement staff will issue citations to violators who have not acted upon the warning. City staff will remove all signs that were not removed voluntarily to retain as evidence of the violation.

Businesses may call 530.542.6010 for more info.

Tahoe writing festival offers playwright contest

The mission for WordWave is to create an annual cultural event for locals and visitors to share their stories, create and be inspired by the beauty of Lake Tahoe.

WordWave, A Festival of Story at Lake Tahoe will debut Oct. 9-11 at the Tallac Historic Site on the South Shore.

WordWave is the brainchild of Kim Wyatt, publisher of Bona Fide Books based Meyers, and Jennifer Basye Sander, a *New York Times* bestselling author.

The three-day writing event will include workshops, featured readings, panel discussions, open mics, oral storytelling, and guided hikes on some of Tahoe's best trails. Most of the events are free and all events are open to the general public.

The winners of the play competition will each receive \$500, and see their work directed and produced as a staged reading at the historic Boathouse Theater. Winners of the playwright contest will also receive three nights of lodging and the opportunity for a pre- or post-show discussion with the audience. Two winners will be selected.

The deadline for entry is June 30. Plays may be submitted online. Manuscripts can have a running time of no more than 60 minutes, and writers may enter multiple works. There is a \$10 submission fee for each.

For full submission requirements, go online.

Brown unveils emergency drought legislation

By Chris Megerian and Melanie Mason, Los Angeles Times

Gov. Jerry Brown and top lawmakers from both parties announced Thursday a \$1-billion plan to deal with California's persistent drought, describing the legislation as a mix of short-term relief and support for long-term water projects.

"This is a struggle," Brown said at a Capitol news conference. "Something we're going to have to live with. For how long, we're not sure."

Millions of dollars would be spent faster than previously scheduled to provide food assistance and emergency drinking water in hard-hit communities. Additional money would go to wildlife preservation.

The bulk of the legislation would fund infrastructure initiatives that might not be completed for years. The proposal includes \$272.7 million from the \$7.5 billion water bond approved by voters last year for projects such as water recycling and desalination.

Read the whole story

USFS considering Kingsbury trail improvements

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is asking for public input on a proposal to reconstruct the Kingsbury Stinger Trail near Kingsbury Grade.

The Stinger Trail runs approximately 2.75 miles from Genoa Peak Road to Terrace View Drive on lower Kingsbury Grade and is open to all-terrain vehicles, motorcycles and mountain bikes. The trail is steep in places, is prone to erosion, crosses private land for approximately 280 feet on the lower segment and no longer meets current Forest Service standards for safety and sustainability.

The proposed project would reroute excessively steep trail segments, install speed control features, improve sightlines along the full length of the trail, install measures to prevent erosion and improve water quality and reroute the section of the trail that crosses private land.

The intersection with the Tahoe Rim Trail would be relocated to prevent motor vehicles from trespassing onto the TRT.

Project work could begin this summer. Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association and other interested volunteers will help with construction.

Comments should be received by April 3. For more info, go online or contact Jacob Quinn at 530.543.2609 or jmquinn@fs.fed.us.

Protect savings from vagaries of the market

By Michael Abbott and Christopher Bennett

As people creep into the retirement “red zone” – those years just before or right after they retire – it becomes more important than ever that they find ways to keep their savings safe.

Because at that point, their retirement picture will change significantly only if they lose a lot of money.

They are not going to change who they are. But if they lose a bucket of money, they are not going to go out to eat, they won't travel, they won't be able to leave money to their children and grandchildren. They will end up having to make sacrifices.

In other words, they won't be living the retirement they envisioned all those years they were saving a nest egg.

Having a “safe money” strategy is key to a secure retirement. It's important to be able to create an income stream that the retiree won't outlive.

There are several areas you and your financial professional can focus on as part of an overall “safe money” strategy.

Here are two examples:

- Rate of return vs. sequence of return. The average rate of return on an investment can be misleading. That's because in reality how well you hang onto your money depends more on “sequence of return.” That is, exactly when do those profits and losses come about?

To see how that might work, imagine a 50 percent loss followed

by a 50 percent gain. That would appear to average out to a zero rate of return. But that's not how it would look in your portfolio. If you have \$100,000, a 50 percent loss drops it to \$50,000. The market rebounds with a 50 percent gain. But a 50 percent gain on \$50,000 just increases that investment to \$75,000, so you've still taken a loss.

Now consider that kind of activity over the course of your retirement as you are also withdrawing money from your savings to live on. Depending on when market fluctuations happened, you could take major hits. That's especially true if the dips come early in retirement when your savings are at their peak, and the rallies arrive late when there is less left in the account.

One big downturn and that money could run dry.

There are tools that a good financial professional uses that can help people reduce the risk created by sequence of return.

- Maneuvering toward tax-free income. Whatever the tax rates may be in the future, taxes can be a drag on your savings and may adversely impact your retirement security. So it's important to consider the tax implications of how you hold your assets.

Even those Social Security benefits that retirees draw can be taxed, but they don't necessarily have to be. Once again, a financial professional can review strategies that could help reduce or even eliminate the tax on that monthly Social Security benefit.

It's possible to have tax-free income in retirement. Talk about being in control. Then you can just enjoy your retirement with your children and your grandchildren.

Michael Abbott has two decades of experience assisting retirees with their 401(k)s and pension plans. He is co-founder of the Abbott Bennett Group, LLC, an independent

financial services firm, where he serves as CFO. Christopher Bennett is a 16-year financial professional who has served as CEO of the Abbott Bennett Group since 2003.

Derby rejoins Barton for 1-year CFO stint

Dick Derby didn't stay retired long.



Dick Derby

He has been rehired by Barton Memorial Hospital to be the interim chief financial officer. A one-year contract has been signed. His first day will be March 23.

The need to rehire Derby, or someone else, was needed after the South Lake Tahoe healthcare system fired Steve Neff on March 11. Neff had been employed since August, the same month Derby initially retired. Derby was CFO for 14 years.

“He will be resuming chief financial officer duties in the interim while the executive team conducts a search to fill the position,” Barton Health spokeswoman Mindi Befu told *Lake Tahoe News*.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Cyclists see mostly harm in adult helmet law

By Laura J. Nelson, Los Angeles Times

A proposed law that would make California the first state in the country to require that adult bike riders wear helmets has reignited a decades-long debate between regulators and the bicycling community over safety.

Senate Bill 192, introduced by state Sen. Carol Liu, D-La Cañada Flintridge, would impose a \$25 base fine on adults who bike without headgear. The proposal has spurred a backlash from California's bicycle advocacy groups, which say a mandatory-helmet law would do more harm than good. Helmet laws could make cycling appear more dangerous, they say, at a time when elected officials are working to draw drivers onto alternative forms of transportation.

Liu said she wants to encourage people to try biking and walking and keep them safe while doing so. Requiring helmets for adults isn't the only way to protect cyclists, she said, but "it certainly protects people more than not wearing anything on their heads."

Collisions involving cyclists in California rose 18 percent in a five-year period, from 11,814 in 2008 to 14,013 in 2012, according to the most recent California Highway Patrol data available.

Read the whole story

Thirst for craft beer increasing in U.S.

By Alison Griswold, Slate

America's craft breweries are thirsty for a lot more market share. By 2020, the trade association representing small and independent brewers in the U.S. says its members will satisfy 20 percent of the country's beer consumption.

That's quite a bit when you consider that in 2014 beer giant Anheuser-Busch (which includes Budweiser, Rolling Rock, Corona, Stella Artois, and other brands) made up an estimated 45 percent of the U.S. market and MillerCoors another 25 percent or so. But according to the Brewers Association, craft beer might already be more than halfway there – in 2014, its market share flowed into the double digits (at 22.2 million barrels, or 11 percent of volume) for the first time.

Estimates from Beer Marketer's Insights, an industry research group and publication, are more conservative, putting craft beer's volume share closer to 8.9 percent in 2014.

But numbers-parsing aside, the point everyone agrees on is that craft beer is popular, growing fast, and unlikely to slow down any time soon. The Brewers Association put craft beer's 22.2 million barrels in 2014 at an 18 percent increase in volume and a 22 percent increase in sales over the previous year.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Advisory Planning Commission on April 8 at 9am will discuss the Tahoe Valley Area Plan at the agency's Stateline office. The South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission will discuss the plan April 9 at 3pm at Lake Tahoe Airport. Comments are being taken until 5pm April 14.
- David Pogue, host of NOVA "ScienceNow", founder of Yahoo Tech, and an accomplished musician will present "Should Science Be Allowed to Be Interesting? One Man's Insane Journey through a TV Career on PBS" at UNR's Discover Science Lecture Series at 7pm April 2.
- Twelve students from South Tahoe Middle School were recently honored for their essays for the Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra Writing Festival. Sixth grade: Clyde Rypins, Jack Rich, Luke Mueller and Maddie Kay; seventh grade: Sophia Lamore, Allison Kennedy, Cameron Lehmann and Brandon Rios; eighth grade: Ryan Newberger, Casey Turner, Ashley Trejo and Michael Parsons.
- Tahoe Maritime Museums will be operating out of the Homewood building for one more summer, opening the new exhibition Racing Tahoe: Post WWII Powerboat on June 5. In the fall the museum will move into the two-story log building located on the corner of West Lake Boulevard and Granlibakken Road in Tahoe City.
- Douglas R. Hoffman has been appointed El Dorado County court commissioner. He will be based in South Lake Tahoe, but will serve in all of the branches in El Dorado County.