

Missing man's body found by hikers



Bruce Hutter

The body of a Carson City man who had been missing since Feb. 25 was found this weekend by hikers.

Hikers on March 8 came across a vehicle with a deceased man inside. He has been identified as Bruce Hutter, 62.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies said there is no immediate cause of death. An autopsy is pending.

The vehicle was near Spooner Summit on Kings Canyon Road.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Volunteer service trips subject of talk

This month's South Lake Tahoe AAUW speaker will be talking about volunteer service trips to Central America.

South Tahoe locals Liz and Bill Gieg will discuss their 25 years of experience leading medical mission trips to Central America, and AAUW member Lisa Dernbach will share highlights from her volunteer experience installing water wells in Guatemala.

The free event – which is open to everyone – is March 14 at 10am in the board room at Lake Tahoe Community College.

RSVP to 530.542.8748.

The red-wine blend trend

By Lettie Teague, Wall Street Journal

They're friendly, they're cheap and they're easy to drink – three very good reasons domestic red blends are some of the most sought-after wines in the market today. Although blended reds aren't new (they've been produced for centuries all over the world) thanks to a number of talented winemakers and even more-clever wine marketers, these wines – particularly those made in California and Washington state – are a seemingly unstoppable trend.

Nielsen's January 2015 report says the domestic red-blend category accounts for \$900 million in retail sales annually and is one of the fastest-growing wine sales categories in the country. Much growth is fueled by drinkers "who are switching to red blends from other types of wines," said Brian Lechner, Nielsen vice president, group client director for alcoholic beverages.

Retailers are ready to assist with the transition. I've found

red-blend aisles in just about every wine shop and grocery store I've visited in the past several months, including Gary's Wine & Marketplace in Wayne, N.J., where sales associate Jeffrey Davis said, "The public is clamoring for red blends." With a sweep of his arm Davis took in some 75 bottles of wine.

Read the whole story

Truckee men complete historic PCT winter trek

By Associated Press

CAMPO – Moments after finishing a historic wintertime trek of the Pacific Crest Trail, Justin Lichter reassured bystanders the pale, desquamated look of his rain-soaked hands was "totally normal."

The difference between what looks like a serious problem to the average backpacker and what Lichter and hiking partner Shawn Forry were able to laugh off as an afterthought demonstrates the significance of their most recent accomplishment – a 2,650-mile trek from Canada to the Mexican border.

By completing what's thought to be the first wintertime through-hike of the iconic trail Lichter and Forry broke a huge American hiking barrier and raised the bar for what's possible when it comes to adventure.

Lichter is a professional ski patroller at Sugar Bowl Resort and Forry is an Outward Bound instructor based in Truckee.

"It is like anything else, if you watch a champion ice skater they make it look easy," said Pea "Girl Scout" Hicks, who was among the hiking fanatics who waited in the rain to meet Lichter and Forry at the southern terminus of the trail. "These guys make it look easy. It is not."

Among the many reasons the accomplishment is impressive is the fact Lichter, who has the trail name "Trauma" and Forry, whose trail name is "Pepper," broke a barrier so many have thought about and discussed but very few have even attempted. While the Pacific Crest Trail runs within a relatively easy drive of several major cities, has been the subject of an Oscar-nominated film as recently as last year, and sees several hundred through-hikers annually, completing the trail in winter has long been considered a near impossibility.

"Before they did this doing the PCT in winter was kind of the great unknown," said Elizabeth "Snorkel" Thomas, who in 2011 set a women's, unsupported speed record for through-hiking the Appalachian Trail. "It was one of the last things on the hiking frontier."

The barrier remained in place for so long in part because of the notoriety of winter conditions in the regions through which the trail passes. From north-to-south, the direction Lichter and Forry hiked, the trail passes through the Cascade and Sierra Nevada ranges before descending into the Mojave desert then heading back up into the San Gabriel, San Bernardino and San Jacinto ranges. The most treacherous stretches for winter travel are the Cascade and Sierra sections because those ranges are known for having remote terrain that's subjected to harsh winter conditions with massive snowstorms.

Not only would whoever broke the winter barrier need to be a proficient hiker, they would need to be able to travel on snowshoes and skis if they were going to get through the imposing ranges.

Forry's dad, Randy Forry, summed up the thoughts of many who have pondered and dismissed the notion of completing the trail during winter.

"When he told me it has never been done before I kind of said 'you know there is probably a reason'," he said.

The risk associated with the winter trek was such that before Lichter and Forry decided to attempt it, many within the hiking community would have considered it foolhardy. The credentials Lichter and Forry brought to the trek, however, made people take notice of their attempt. Lichter has hiked more than 35,000 miles, done an unsupported swim around Lake Tahoe and developed a hiking route between Durango, Colorado and Las Vegas. Forry has hiked more than 20,000 miles in seven countries, including New Zealand where he and Lichter completed a precursor route to the Te Araroa trail.

"In most cases if someone said they were going to through-hike the PCT during winter you would try to talk them down from the cliff," Hicks said. "But these guys got a lot of encouragement."

During the summer, a hiker in trouble on or near the trail could expect dozens of people to be in the vicinity, improving the likelihood of finding help, but that's not the case in winter. Lichter and Forry traveled 1,700 miles from Snoqualmie Pass in Washington to Walker Pass in California without seeing anyone along the trail. Their only human contact was when they left the trail for resupply or went through towns.

"Once you are in the High Sierra it is not an easy out," Forry said. "There is always that looming cloud of anything could happen at any moment."

They were almost derailed before Christmas when they both suffered frostbite on their feet near Bend, Ore. At another point they forced to swim across swollen Grider Creek in the Klamath National Forest early one morning in December after

discovering a bridge they had planned to use was washed out.

The intellectual challenge began long before the duo set foot on the trail. They had discussed the idea for about five years, Lichter said, but it took more than talk to make it a reality. A tuneup trip on skis through the Sierra Nevada a couple seasons ago helped to jump start the process of deciding what gear they would need and how it might perform on the trek. They also spent a lot of time studying resupply options because many of the standard summertime access points are closed in the winter.

The biggest deviation from plan came shortly before the trip started. That's when they decided to scrap the original idea of going south-to-north and instead go north-to-south.

"This seemed like a smart thing to do so we could get through Washington before they built up a lot of snowpack and higher avalanche risk and then get into the Sierras, an area that we are most familiar with, in the heart of the winter," Lichter said.

Lichter and Forry needed more than their outdoors skills to complete the trek. They also needed to stay sane. It was a challenge because the harsh environment meant any given day could be an emotional roller coaster for either or both of the men, meaning each had to not only manage his own emotions but be attentive to how the other was feeling. Communication got to the point each hiker could anticipate what the other was about to say or do, they said.

"You know when to back off and when to pry," Forry said. "Trauma knows if he sees me snapping trekking poles over my knees not to ask any questions."

The mental aspect, according to Thomas, might have been the most difficult part of the accomplishment.

"There is sort of a mental stamina that I think is what really

makes what they did impressive,” she said. “If you don’t have the mental stamina you are just going to quit.”

Lichter confirmed as much during an interview with the Pacific Crest Trail Association when responding to a question about the skills needed for a winter through-hike. In addition to knowing about winter camping and avalanche safety he added one more item to the list, “Short term memory failure.”

Nev. lawmakers to review pot, background check initiatives

By Associated Press

Nevada lawmakers will discuss voter petitions aimed at expanding background checks on gun purchases and legalizing marijuana for recreational use.

The Assembly Judiciary Committee is scheduled to review two initiative petitions on Monday that were approved by voters in December.

Initiative Petition 1 would legalize possession of up to one ounce of marijuana, and Initiative Petition 2 would require background checks on certain firearm purchases.

Republican committee chairman Ira Hansen said the bills will be moved out of committee without a recommendation and that Republican leadership will make a decision on what to do with the petitions this week.

The Legislature has 40 days from the start of the 120-day session to pass the initiatives before they are automatically placed on the 2016 ballot. The deadline is Friday.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Have you considered becoming a foster or adoptive parent? There will be an information night April 9 at 5:30pm at 2580 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe. Contact Megan at 530.544.2111 for more info.
- Portland guitarist-bandleader Scott Pemberton is releasing his new album "Timber Rock" and will be performing at the FNCTN Winter Music Series on March 20 at 8pm at the Lake Tahoe Golf Course in Meyers. Cost is \$10. Also playing is Black Star Safari.
- A parked South Lake Tahoe police vehicle belonging to a community services officer was hit last week near the 7-Eleven on Highway 50. The vehicle is in the shop getting repaired; the driver of the other vehicle was cited.
- Xterra Lake Tahoe is Aug. 15. For more info about the mountain bike race, go online.
- Check out this video shot at Lake Tahoe on March 8 of a meteor.

Houses to spill south of Highway 50

By Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

Folsom will begin its long-planned march across Highway 50

this summer, a move that eventually could bring 10,000 new homes to an expanse of rolling hills now dotted mainly with oak trees. The move sends a strong signal that the market for new suburban housing in Sacramento is recovering from the near-knockout blow dealt by the recession.

Drought and climate change concerns loom, however. City officials acknowledge they are still working to secure the water agreements they likely will need for the expansion, and critics question whether the city will have enough water in dry years to provide for both new and existing residents.

Folsom's new frontier contains 3,500 acres of mainly grassland stretching south from Highway 50 to White Rock Road. Annexed a few years ago, it expanded Folsom's boundaries by 25 percent, although nearly a third of the land, an oak forest along Alder Creek, will remain open space.

Read the whole story

Multiple ways to enjoy asparagus

By Russ Parsons, Los Angeles Times

Can it be mere coincidence that March heralds the arrival of both my birthday and the first California asparagus? I think not. As Einstein said, God doesn't play dice with the universe.

And while I no longer am filled with the same childlike excitement about each approaching birthday, I do feel that way – or maybe stronger – about the start of asparagus season.

For the last couple weeks, I've been stopping by the Zuckerman's Farm stand at my Long Beach farmers market asking when the jumbos will be arriving. Maybe this weekend? Certainly next.

With great asparagus like this – big around as your thumb, available only for about a month ever year – the simplest cooking is best. I buy a pound a person, steam them just until they sag when lifted – they'll be on the edge of mousse-y with almost no crispness left, and with a profound clean fresh asparagus flavor – and then dress them with good olive oil, lemon juice and coarse salt. Toss in a loaf of good bread and a bottle of Navarro Gewurztraminer and you've got a feast to remember.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Sybil

Sybil is beautiful 1-year-old domestic shorthair cat who is a lot of fun. She is a bit feisty and would make a great mouser.

Sybil is one of seven cats at the shelter right now.

Sybil is spayed, microchipped, tested for FIV, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz

Evolution of food not necessarily healthy

By Kathryn Reed

While humans have evolved for the better in so many ways, when it comes to what they eat – especially in the United States – it's more like people have devolved.

"There weren't many overweight or obese ancestors," Lynn Norton, a registered dietitian with Barton Health, told a group of nearly 60 people last week at Lake Tahoe Community College.

She reached back to the days of hunters and gathers to talk about how diets have changed through time. They were eating seeds, nuts, animals and had different protein sources. People

ate what the land provided. In addition to this, they were active. Their quest to find food necessitated a certain nomadic lifestyle.

Today people hunt for food in grocery store aisles, gather items that are easy to prepare and have sedentary lives.

This has led to 75 percent of the people in the United States between the ages of 20 and 77 being obese or overweight.

“Today we are screening kids for fatty liver disease,” Norton said.

Farming took hold about 600 generations ago, with nearly all parts of the world having some sort of farming at least 300 generations. This led people to migrate less, but it also meant less diversity in diets.

Eventually, people were becoming deficient in certain vitamins because of the lack of varied foods. Lifestyle changes led to infectious diseases and epidemics becoming more prolific.

The Industrial Revolution of the 1800s began food processing on a massive scale. Additives became the norm – like sugar, fat and salt. Instant food was common. Convenience became more important and little attention was paid to how manufacturers made that happen.

“The meats of our ancestors was wild game and it was much leaner. Today we are fattening up cattle,” Norton said.

It was in 1970 that corn syrup, aka fructose, was introduced. Fructose can come from corn, sugar cane or sugar beets. Norton explained how the latest trend is for food companies to list fructose as beet sugar so it sounds healthier. She called it “a game” and that the consumer is unaware.

She went through a litany of ailments that are prevalent and common today that can be traced back to food choices. These are health issues that people didn’t have to contend with

hundreds of years ago. Heart issues, clogged arteries, hypertension, some orthopedic injuries and others are what she calls “diseases of excess.”

“We need to balance the abundance from all the food choices,” Norton said.

She said the way to better health is to be active, minimize added sugars, avoid high calorie meals, eat slowly, ingest more plant foods, lose weight, reduce stress, get enough sleep and drink water.