

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- The 2015 Business Expo: Innovation in the Basin is March 27 from 4:30-8:30pm at Harrah's Lake Tahoe. For more info, go online.

- The Incline Bike Project is seeking signatures on a petition showing support to Incline Village General Improvement District for a pump track/bike park in Incline Village.
 - The 21st annual St. Theresa Catholic Church Crab Dinner is Feb. 13. Doors open at 6pm for this adults-only event. Dinner starts at 7pm. Tickets are \$40 per person in advance (St. Theresa Church Rectory Office at 1041 Lyons Ave. or Religious Education Office at 1170 Rufus Allen Blvd.) or \$45 at the door. For more info, call Danette Winslow at 530.544.4788.
 - Jeep donated a Wrangler to the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office for patrolling the Rubicon Trail.
 - RE/MAX Realty Affiliates donated \$5,750 to the Douglas County Community and Senior Center for one-year naming rights of the Dining Room and eight electronic score boards in the gymnasium.
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Calif. declares electronic cigarettes a health threat

By Fenit Nirappil, AP

SACRAMENTO – California health officials Wednesday declared electronic cigarettes a health threat that should be strictly regulated like tobacco products, joining other states and health advocates across the U.S. in seeking tighter controls as “vaping” grows in popularity.

The California Department of Public Health released a report saying e-cigarettes emit cancer-causing chemicals and get users hooked on nicotine but acknowledging that more research needs to be done to determine the immediate and long-term health effects.

“E-cigarettes are not as harmful as conventional cigarettes, but e-cigarettes are not harmless” said California Health Officer Ron Chapman. “They are not safe.”

New generations of young people will become nicotine addicts if the products remain largely unregulated, Chapman said. Last year, 17 percent of high school seniors reported using e-cigarettes, known as vaping, according to the report.

“Without action, it is likely that California’s more than two decades of progress to prevent and reduce traditional tobacco use will erode as e-cigarettes re-normalize smoking behavior,” the report says.

E-cigarettes heat liquid nicotine into inhalable vapor without the tar and other chemicals found in traditional cigarettes. A cartridge of nicotine can cost anywhere from \$5 to \$20 and can be reused.

California banned the sale of e-cigarettes to minors in 2010, but the report raises concerns about children consuming liquid nicotine with flavors such as cotton candy and gummy bear. Reports of children under 5 with e-cigarette poisoning jumped from seven in 2012 to 154 last year.

The California report says e-cigarettes emit as many as 10 toxic chemicals, but advocates say there is no evidence those

substances are released at dangerous levels.

“Despite the health officer’s false claims, there is ample evidence that vaping helps smokers quit and is far less hazardous than smoking,” Gregory Conley, president of the e-cigarette advocacy group American Vaping Association, said in an email. “Smokers deserve truthful and accurate information about the relative risks of different nicotine products, not hype and conjecture based on cherry-picked reports.”

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is also proposing regulations that include warning labels and ingredient lists on e-cigarettes, although enactment could take years. California health officials are calling for restrictions on the marketing and sale of e-cigarettes and protections against accidental ingestion of liquid nicotine.

A state senator introduced legislation this week that would regulate e-cigarettes as tobacco products and ban their use in public places such as hospitals, bars and schools. A similar bill was defeated last year over opposition from tobacco companies.

Chapman, the health official, would not take a position on specific legislation, but said his department would be rolling out an e-cigarette awareness campaign with possible television and radio advertisements.

E-cigarettes have become more visible as they grow in popularity and commercials for the products air in places where traditional cigarette ads have been banned. Businesses related to e-cigarettes, including vaping lounges, are rapidly popping up in cities across California.

Geoff Braithwaite, co-owner of an Oakland store that sells liquid nicotine for e-cigarettes, said he understands the need to restrict vaping in public and prevent sales to minors. He says his customers are longtime smokers who should be able to get a nicotine buzz without the harshness of a regular

cigarette.

“Nicotine has all this stigma attached solely to the medium we used to use,” Braithwaite said. “When you try to outright ban e-cigarettes, you’re lumping in the solution with the problem.”

Other states, including Oklahoma, Tennessee and Arkansas, already have issued advisories cautioning the use of e-cigarettes. Legislatures have been exploring restrictions on e-cigarette marketing, adding childproof packaging requirements and imposing taxes to discourage use.

“Health officials want to be proactive on this important public health issue,” said Lisa Waddell, who leads community health and prevention at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. “The issue of real concern here is we really don’t know everything that’s in these products, and you are seeing the rise of the use of these products in our children as well as our adults.”

South Lake Tahoe – a 50-year work in progress



South Lake Tahoe voters in November 1965 agreed to form an incorporated city.



Publisher's note: This is one in a series of stories Lake Tahoe News will be running leading up to the 50th anniversary of South Lake Tahoe on Nov. 30.

By Kathryn Reed

"The people of Lake Tahoe's South Shore formally have taken steps to control and preserve the natural beauty of this area. The overwhelming vote for incorporation proves the people do care what happens to the lake. We now have local government control and do not have to rely on those from other areas to take care of our needs."

— Wink Ames

Ames was one of the founding fathers of South Lake Tahoe and went on to serve on the City Council. The quote above was his official statement to the media after the votes were counted.

From dirt roads to a major federal highway. From just a few year-round residents, to thousands. From ranching to gaming's housing hub to a recreation mecca. South Lake Tahoe has gone through a multitude of changes through the years.

Before the vote to incorporate took place in November 1965, the area was divided more into neighborhoods that still exist – Al Tahoe, Bijou, Bijou Park, Stateline, Tahoe Valley and Tallac Village.

There were 12,000 people who called South Lake Tahoe home in 1965. The vote to incorporate was 2,011-614. Voter turnout was 65 percent. With approval, South Lake Tahoe became the 398th city in California.



Norm Woods is the longest serving member on the City Council. Photo/South Lake Tahoe

The first council consisted of Brad Murphy who was the top vote getter at 1,377; Jerry Martin (1,194); Eugene Marshall (1,082); Norm Woods (996); and Donald Clarke (971).

What has changed through the years is not the number of votes, but the voter turnout. With the city having a population of about 21,500 people, a total of 9,414 votes were cast for City Council in November 2014 when voters could vote for three candidates. Wendy David received the most at 1,727.

Woods is the longest serving member at 21 years – 1965-70 and

1976-92. By the time current members Hal Cole and Tom Davis finish their terms, each will have served 20 years. Cole from 1994-2006 and 2008-16; and Davis from 1992-2004 and 2010-2018.

From 1965-68, all mayors served a six-month term. Today they serve a one-year stint.



Echo Motel on Highway 50 and Ski Run Boulevard comes down June 26, 1989, for the first phase of redevelopment. Photo/South Lake Tahoe

Pictures of everyone ever elected to the council are on a wall in the room where the five electeds meet, with the dates served posted as well.

Originally the council met in the basement of what was the Tahoe Savings & Loan Building. It is now El Dorado County offices on Takela Drive.

City offices have moved throughout the years, including being in what is now the senior center. Today they are at Lake Tahoe

Airport and on Tata Lane.

Fire, police and snow removal were the three tenants upon which incorporation were sold to the public.

In 1966, the city took over Lake Valley Fire Protection District stations that were in the city limits.

The first police chief, Ray Lauritzen, was hired in April 1967. He then started hiring officers.

Plow drivers were adept enough by the end of 1966 to clear all city streets within 12 hours.

Not everyone was happy with the city being its own entity and no longer under complete control of El Dorado County. A move for disincorporation was put on the ballot in 1968 and was defeated.

John Williams served as the first city manager until 1969.

In 1966, Pioneer Trail was open year-round from Meyers to near the state line.



The base of the gondola was put in by American Ski Company.
Photo/Heavenly Mountain Resort

Planners in the early 1970s expected the city to one day have a population of more than 50,000 people. This was at a time when there was talk of Pioneer Trail being more like a freeway. Even Caltrans was going to build a bigger highway and had the right-of-way to do so.

When the Greenway Bike Path, which may start construction this summer, is completed, much of it will be along that former Caltrans right-of-way that goes from Meyers to almost the Nevada border.

Entertainment and recreation have long been integral to South Lake Tahoe's economy and tourist draw. The Stateline casinos in some form have existed since the 1940s. With the opening of Lake Tahoe Hard Rock this week, there is another reason for people to visit.

While technically there isn't a ski resort in the city limits,

the 1960 Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley put all of Lake Tahoe on the map as a winter wonderland.

Heavenly Mountain Resort's gondola opened for the 2000-01 season. It made it so skiers near the bulk of the hotel rooms could be whisked to the mountaintop without having to drive to one of the base lodges. Two years later Vail Resorts would own the gondola and ski resort. The village, anchored by two Marriott properties, continues to be the hub of tourist activity in South Lake Tahoe.

While the city has made considerable improvements through years, some things never change. The first talk of doing something with signs was in 1967. Regulations about billboards, neon, motif, color, type and style have been made ever since then. Even last year the council was still talking about what to do about sandwich boards. And signs are likely to continue as a topic when it comes to design standards in the Tahoe Valley Area Plan.

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Notes:

- The city is planning open houses at various city building throughout June and July.
- A time capsule unveiling and citywide treasure hunt will take place in September.
- Homecoming and community parade is set for October.
- The 50th anniversary dinner and gala at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel is Nov. 7.

Editorial: Ban personal-belief exemption for vaccinations

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Jan. 27, 2015, Los Angeles Times.*

Unvaccinated teenagers have been sent home from school for as long as three weeks. Dozens of babies who may have been exposed to measles have been placed in quarantine. One in four of the more than 73 Californians infected has required hospitalization. It's getting hard to keep up with how many cases of measles have emerged thanks to the single infected woman who visited Disneyland just before Christmas, or where it might show up next.

Enough. It's time to ensure that more Californians are vaccinated.

The outbreak this winter has illustrated quickly and forcefully how a highly contagious disease can spread when the vaccination rate falls below the level needed for "herd immunity." Herd immunity means that so many people are immune that the chance of outbreak is low, which protects the few who are not immunized because they are too young to have been fully vaccinated or because they are among the few in whom the vaccine doesn't "take" or because they haven't been vaccinated for valid medical reasons.

Read the whole story

Placer County moving forward with buying SLT hotel

By Mark Anderson, Sacramento Business Journal

Placer County officials have backed away from a land-use battle with South Lake Tahoe, but they're moving ahead with the larger effort aimed at allowing development of a hotel on the north side of the lake for the first time since 1959.

The county had planned to pay private owners about \$3.7 million for two hotels in South Lake Tahoe. It planned to demolish them, getting credits for doing so from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. Those credits would help the county entice developers to create a larger project in the north shore's populated areas.

Placer County dropped its interest in the Howard Johnson, but is moving ahead with the other property, the 34-unit Lake Tahoe Inn at 3520 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

Read the whole story

Cheap parking makes life more expensive

By Emily Badger, Washington Post

Geof Glass, a doctorate student at Simon Fraser University,

makes an interesting point in a blog post that's been circulating for the last two days among people online fascinated by the economics of parking: The purchases you make at a store surrounded by free customer parking are effectively taxed to make that parking possible.

Glass puts this "invisible sales tax" at about 1 percent, given estimates that parking makes up about 10 percent of the cost of developing a store, while rents make up around 10 percent of a retailer's costs of operating it.

That 1 percent, Glass argues, is then passed on to consumers in the cost of goods you buy at said store (which was built with, well, parking). These numbers would obviously shift depending on whether we're talking about a surface parking lot or a more expensive parking garage, whether we're talking about free parking, subsidized parking or pay parking. They would also change depending on the local cost of land beneath that parking. Here's Glass:

This subsidy is like a tax, as governments require developers to build parking. For consumers the effect is the same as if the government collected the tax and built the parking itself. This is effectively a privately administered sales tax.

Read the whole story

Learn to be a lifeguard at S. Tahoe pool

There will be two American Red Cross lifeguard trainings at the South Lake Tahoe pool soon.

The purpose is to provide participants with the knowledge and skills to prevent, recognize, and respond to aquatic emergencies. Participants will be trained and certified to provide care for breathing and cardiac emergencies, injuries, and sudden illness until emergency services take over.

Participants must be at least 15, be able to swim 300 yards continuously while demonstrating breathing control and rhythmic breathing, tread water for two minutes using the legs only, and complete a timed event. The class includes 7 hours and 25 minutes of online learning and 20 hours of hands-on instruction.

The pool is at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd.

Call 530.542.6056 for a pre-course swim test. Cost is \$225. Register online.

Session one is Feb. 16-20, 4-8pm. Registration deadline is Feb. 9. Second session is April 6-10 from 4-8pm. Deadline to register is March 30.

Cops to put kibosh on DUIs Super Bowl Sunday

Expect to see more local and state law enforcement out and about on Sunday as they look for people who are celebrating the Super Bowl intoxicated behind the wheel.

There will be 10 roving DUI saturations in El Dorado County.

According to federal data, in 2013 there were 867 people killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes in California –29 percent of all crash fatalities in the state.

Tips: For those who plan to drink, leave your keys at home. Designate a sober driver, whether it's a friend, relative, taxi, or public transportation. For those who plan to drive, refrain from any alcohol.

Avoid the 6 DUI Task Force funding is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

BLM considers recognizing mountain bike trails

There is a proposal under consideration by BLM to improve and adopt the existing 9.4 miles of user created trail and add 13.6 miles of new trail to create the Canoe Hill Trail System.

The trails east of Sparks, including the popular Zipper Trail, have never been recognized by the BLM as official trails.

There will be a public workshop and presentation on the project on Feb. 17 from 6:30-8:30pm at the Spanish Springs Elementary School, 100 Marilyn Mae Drive in Sparks.

Comments are being accepted from Feb. 11 to March 12.

Lack of snow signals year 4

of Calif. drought



Lack of snow doesn't mean lack of beauty at Fallen Leaf Lake.
Photo/Toogee Sielsch

By Kathryn Reed

The state didn't need to take a snow survey to prove that it's dry and moisture has been scarce.

"Unfortunately, today's manual snow survey makes it likely that California's drought will run through a fourth consecutive year. DWR managers said heavy precipitation and cooler temperatures in the next three months would be required for the snowpack to build and give Californians hope for beginning to recover from drought this year," Department of Water Resources officials said in a press release.

What the numbers from today's reading do is quantify how horrible things are. In the field adjacent to the road leading

to Sierra-at-Tahoe, 7.1 inches of snow was found. It has a water content of 2.3 inches. This is 12 percent of average. Just a month ago it was at 33 percent of normal. Statewide the average is 25 percent of average, when it was 50 percent in December.

These measurements at Phillips Station near Echo Summit are taken at an elevation of 6,873 feet.

Six hundred feet lower, at lake level, people are raking, picking up pine cones and wondering if winter is only for those who live on the East Coast. Those in the Bay Area and elsewhere in the state are wondering the same thing as they watch blossoms appear sooner than usual and begin to water lawns that are used to being fed by Mother Nature.

January is normally California's wettest month. 2015 is likely to go into the record books as the driest in history.

Locally, the Lake Tahoe Basin's economy is what suffers the most when it doesn't snow. Even though many ski resorts can make snow, it's not enough to cover the entire mountain. Fewer skiers mean less hotel rooms booked, restaurants aren't as full and locals don't have jobs.

Elsewhere in California it means reservoirs aren't as full. Snowpack supplies about one-third of the state's water for municipalities and farmers.

State Climatologist Michael Anderson said to have a chance at ending the drought, California would have to record precipitation that is at least 150 percent of normal by the end of the water year on Sept. 30, or 75 inches. As of Jan. 29, 23.1 inches have been recorded at the stations.