

Chamber mixer benefits charities

The season of giving continues this month as Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce hosts its annual charity mixer at Riva Grill on Jan. 15 at 5:30pm. Proceeds go to Christmas Cheer and Bread & Broth.

As many food banks are depleted after the holidays, this event helps replenish supplies for the South Shore community. Guests are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to receive additional raffle tickets. Guests receive five additional raffle tickets for every bag of non-perishable food items they bring to the event.

The cost is \$20 for members and \$30 for non-members. Guests receive one drink ticket and five raffle tickets with admission. Tickets are available online or by calling 775.588.1728.

USFS yanks \$10 mil. contract to boost its image

By Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Ore. — The U.S. Forest Service has abruptly decided not to spend \$10 million on a five-year nationwide public relations campaign to brand itself as a public agency that cares about people and nature.

The agency was planning on the campaign at a time when it's struggling to pay for fighting wildfires, maintaining trails

and offering timber for sale. It has also faced a major public backlash in the West over plans to close trails and roads to motorized vehicles due to a lack of money for maintenance, as well as to prevent erosion and protect fish and wildlife.

The Forest Service issued a statement Tuesday saying that it had not accepted any contract bids and would look for other ways to enhance the public's access to national forests and understanding about what the agency does.

The agency wouldn't say why it withdrew the contract.

Andy Stahl, director of the watchdog group Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, said he thought the agency's leaders "finally listened to Forest Service employees, and no one thought this was a good idea."

Stahl said that after he learned of the contract, he sent an email to 25,000 Forest Service employees, and about half of them opened it. He got about 50 replies, all critical, suggesting the money could be put to better use on recreation programs, revising forest management plans, restoring ecosystems, hiring more employees, and lifting a three-year wage freeze.

Forest Service retirees also objected. Al Matecko, retired chief of public and legislative affairs for the northwest region and head of the Old Smokies, which represents about 950 retirees, said he received 50 emails from members who were strongly opposed. He passed on those objections to Forest Service leaders, Matecko said.

"Retirees were just amazed that at this time of shrinking budgets, the Forest Service could find \$10 million," he said.

Jim Golden, a retired deputy regional forester for the northwest region and chairman of the board of the National Association of Forest Service Retirees, said he warned Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell in an email on Saturday of the

“growing firestorm” among retirees unless the agency got out some information explaining the campaign. But Tidwell never came through with a promised briefing paper. Golden said.

“Our primary reaction was one of suspicion,” he said. “Not many retirees believe the Forest Service needs a new brand. Most of us believe the simple (motto), ‘Caring for the land and serving the people,’ is pretty effective.”

Last fall, the agency awarded a \$526,799 no-bid contract to Metropolitan Group of Portland for a branding campaign titled “Valuing People and Place” in Forest Service regions covering Oregon, Washington, southern Idaho, Utah, Wyoming and Nevada, according to the federal website FedBizOpps.gov. It was the only no-bid contract issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture out of more than 3,000.

Another federal website, USAspending.gov, shows the Forest Service has paid Metropolitan Group \$3.6 million since 2011, much of it for the Valuing People and Place campaign.

The area covers national forests where the Forest Service has faced intense public backlash to plans to close roads and trails on national forest to motorized traffic.

Metropolitan Group’s Portland office did not immediately return a phone message asking for comment. Its website describes the company as a “full-service social change agency that crafts and integrates strategic and creative services. We help our clients with strategic communication, multicultural engagement, organizational development and resource development to build a just and sustainable world.”

The website describes the company’s work for the Forest Service as helping it reflect on its roots, discover its future, and “rediscover the meaning behind (Forest Service founder) Gifford Pinchot’s early direction to ‘find the greatest good.’ ”

The website adds that Metropolitan Group was helping train Forest Service employees to deal with the public on the agency's so-called Travel Management plans, which refers to the road and trail closures.

The Forest Service filed notice Nov. 28, the day after Thanksgiving, that it was soliciting bids to expand the campaign nationwide at a cost of \$10 million over five years. Bids were to close Dec. 26.

"It's called the 'Take out the trash season'," Stahl said. "It's when government does things it doesn't want people to know about."

Stahl sent out his email Dec. 26, and the Forest Service filed notice it was extending the bid period to Dec. 29. A week later, it announced it was not accepting any bids.

Established in 1905, the Forest Service manages 154 national forests, grasslands and other units covering 193 million acres in 40 states.

Woman killed leaving El Dorado County bar

By Gamaliel Ortiz, KCRA-TV

EL DORADO HILLS – A woman was fatally shot by a 41-year-old suspect as she and another woman were leaving a bar in El Dorado Hills about midnight, authorities said.

The two women were approached by the suspect – identified by the California Highway Patrol as Anderson Swift of Oakland – in the parking lot of 36 Handles off White Rock Road.

When Swift encountered the women, he demanded money, officers said.

“They left right about closing time when they were approached by a man with a gun who demanded keys and money,” said Lt. Tom Murdoch with the El Dorado County Sheriff’s Department. “The two ladies turned back around and ran back to the bar when the man with the gun shot and killed one of the ladies.”

The other woman was not injured, authorities said.

Read the whole story

Expect delays on I-80

Caltrans is resuming the Raise80 project which is increasing the vertical clearance of nine freeway overcrossings on Interstate 80 in south Placer County.

The Brace Road Overcrossing lift date and I-80 closures are scheduled for Jan. 27 and Jan. 28 from 11pm to 5am. During the lift process, all I-80 traffic in both directions will be detoured around the project. Motorists can expect an eight-mile detour.

The Brace Road Overcrossing in Placer County is the third structure to be lifted. The Brace Road overcrossing will also be closed from Jan. 25-Feb. 9.

The nine overpass structures being raised on I-80 are between Magra Road and Loomis in Placer County.

Gilbert Irving Smith — 1923-2014



Gilbert Smith

Gilbert Irving Smith passed away peacefully at home in the loving embrace of his wife, Linda, and collected family members. He was 91.

During the past several months myriad friends dropped by to visit with Gil and to share stories. We heard so many stories about how dad had helped people in their careers and personal lives. He was loved and respected by so many folks.

He was born in Pasadena on Sept. 4, 1923.

He was a gifted student and enrolled at Cornell University at the age of 16. Gil graduated from Cornell three years later and he promptly started medical school. He graduated from Cornell's medical school in 1946. He did his residency in urology at New York Hospital and UC San Francisco.

He served as a captain in the Air Force as a doctor. Gil's medical practice flourished in San Jose. He had operating privileges at many hospitals, including O'Conner Hospital and Good Samaritan. He was chief of staff at Good Samaritan for many years.

After he retired from the practice, he volunteered at UCSF to

train residents. His passion for medicine never ceased.

Our dad loved the outdoors. He had a group of buddies called the Menopausal Marching Society who went into the Sierra every year for 10 days. They would emerge from the woods dirty and hairy and intoxicated with the beauty of California. Gil was the last surviving member of the clan.

If you ventured into the woods with him, you had to be prepared for his regular quizzes. Since he knew the name of every California wildflower, whether in the mountains or the desert or on the beach, he expected the same of you. He often remarked, "Seeing the flowers each year is like greeting an old friend."

He loved tending his garden, especially his roses. Gil stood for strength, optimism, and honesty. For his family, if we ever experienced a hard time, he stood tall, and said, "You will be OK, everything will work out." At the end of his life, when he could barely walk, he continued to be a bright shining part of our lives. If we asked him, "How are you today?" he answered, "It is a wonderful day and I feel great."

Gil loved to sail. His first boat was a Thistle and then he moved on to the 505 and finally a Soling. He won many of the important regattas and races on the West Coast. When he was in college, he rowed on the crew team. The walls of his office are chock full of photos of him with his long oar and later as skipper of one of his boats.

He was an avid flyer and every family member had his or her story of near death experiences with dad in the pilot's seat.

He loved to fish and hunt, and he would fly to remote landing strips in small towns in Mexico and British Columbia in search of fish or birds or adventure.

Toward the end of his life, Gil fell in love with painting. His plein air canvases of Marin adorn the walls of their home

and those of friends and family everywhere.

The love of his life was his wife, Linda. They married in 1994 and lived happily in Marin. They loved to travel and told stories of their many trips throughout the world.

Gil is survived by Linda, his four children Terry, Scott, Kim and Tory, his three stepchildren Mike, Liz and Matt, and nine wonderful grandchildren Jesse, Hoby, Lily, Carson, Maxwell, Kelly, Vera, Andrew and Audrey.

In lieu of flowers, consider a donation to Gilbert's grandson's foundation for the blind, Accessible Science.

Road beat: Hyundai Santa Fe – a roomy ride



Hyundai Santa Fe is a head-turner. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Naming a vehicle after the highest state capital of any of the 50 states and also the oldest state capital in the country gives the Hyundai Santa Fe lofty goals. On top of that, the city of Santa Fe is one of our country's art centers. Hyundai's Santa Fe meets that challenge by fulfilling and achieving goals befitting its name.

From a design standpoint the new Santa Fe (all new as a 2013 model) also fits its nameplate with perfect proportions, great lines and turning heads wherever it goes. The clean aggressive front end simply flows rearward enhanced with a perfect window line that also keeps the cabin airy and bright. It is a great looking ride that promises an excellent driving experience.

Size-wise, the Santa Fe has grown over the 2012 model with a midsize wheelbase of 110.2 inches just 0.2 inches longer than its midsize Sonata sibling and a length of 193 inches. When

you add in its wide beam of 74.2 inches you actually have a midsize “plus” SUV. Inside it provides a full-size interior with three real rows of adult seating and almost 60 inches of shoulder room. The very similar looking Santa Fe Sport now occupies Hyundai’s position as a compact CUV.



Specifications

Price Santa Fe Limited
\$33,790 plus \$855
destination

Engine

3.3L DOHC, 24 valve V-6 290
hp @ 6,400 rpm
252 ft.-lb. of torque @
5,200 rpm

Transmission

Six speed automatic with
manual mode

Configuration

Transverse mounted front
engine/FWD/AWD

Dimensions

Wheelbase 110.2 inches
Length 193.1 inches
Width 74.2 inches
Height 66.5 inches
Track (f/r) 64.5/64.5 inches
Weight 4,173 pounds

GVWR 5,512 pounds
Fuel capacity 18.8 gallons
Steering lock to lock 2.95
turns
Turning circle 36.9 feet
Wheels (std/opt)
18X7.5/19X7.5 alloys
Tires (std/opt)
235/60X18/235/55X19
Interior volume (2nd row
up/down, 3rd row up)
40.9/80.0,13.5 cubic feet

Performance

0-60 mph 6.47 seconds
50-70 3.68 seconds
50-70 mph uphill 5.29
seconds
Top speed governed at 130
mph
Fuel economy EPA rated
18/28/21 mpg
city/highway/combined.
Expect 22 mpg in rural and
suburban driving and 30 mpg
on a level highway at legal
speeds.

Under the hood is Hyundai's potent state of the art 3.3L DOHC 24 valve V-6 that produces 290 hp peak hp at 6,400 rpm and 252 peak pounds of twist at 5,200 rpm. That equates to 250 hp at the same 5,200 rpm. In my non-AWD tester only the front wheels are driven via a six-speed auto cog swapper that can do some thinking on its own to improve fuel economy by shifting more aggressively (getting into the next higher gear sooner so the engine operates at lower rpms). But not to worry, if you ask for flank speed, it will deliver instantaneously with near escape velocities.

Speaking of making the scene, the Santa Fe can do it in style with a 0-60 mph run of a near world class 6.47 seconds (any motor vehicle having a 0-60 mph time of less than 6 seconds is world class). That is a very quick time especially when you consider 1960 muscle cars with 7.0L V-8s and a rated 400 hp were lucky to break seven seconds and most could not break 8 seconds. A 1969 Pontiac Grand Prix with 400 cubes and 350hp did 0-60 mph in 7.5 seconds. It also was lucky to get 10 mpg.

Passing times were also super quick for the Santa Fe with a 50-70 mph simulated pass stopping the Chronodex is 3.68 seconds and the same run up a 6 percent grade only slowing that time to 5.29 seconds. The throttle was so responsive that a quick stab (not even half throttle) from a stop would produce wheelspin and that's with a vehicle with about 60 percent of its 4,173 pounds on the front wheels.

And the tires are wide 235/55 x 19 inches. The Santa Fe certainly does not lack power in any way, shape, manner or form. Escape velocities is not a misnomer. It can get it done. It is also rated to tow up to 5,000 pounds which it should do with ease. And it will also have the ability to pass gas stations. During a long highway run the Santa Fe averaged 30 mpg at 70 mph. Overall in rural/suburban driving it averaged about 22 mpg. EPA says 18/25/21 mpg city/highway/combined. With its large 18.8 gallon fuel tank the Santa Fe has a highway range of an easy 450 miles with reserves.

When pushed hard, its cornering power will surprise you. Suspension is state of the art four-wheel independent with stab bars at both ends and coils in all for corners. Steering is a quick electric rack that is 2.95 turns lock to lock that allows for Driver Selectable Steering Mode (at least it is not passenger selectable or your friends could play tricks on you). There are three modes, comfort, normal and sport. It not only adjusts effort levels, but on center build up on the highway and the curves. Try it and see what you like. As a result changing directions in the Santa Fe is fun with good

cornering power and a benign attitude. It was better than expected with none of the body roll or head tossing found in larger SUVs. Simply point the Santa Fe and go with confidence.

What is amazing is the ride quality. It's so good you hardly think about it as it absorbs just about anything a road can dish out and then some. On the highway it is extremely quiet and smooth, providing over the road comfort of the best luxury car. The engine spins a very low 1,900 rpm at 70 mph. Sure it's not designed to do the Rubicon, but when was the last time you were there and if you have that need, just tow the built up off roader behind you. At least you will be comfortable getting there and have a sublime ride home.

Braking is by large four wheel discs and all the acronyms. Stopping power is very good, bringing the Santa Fe to a stop from 40 mph in just 42 feet under perfect control. Extensive use of ultra high strength tensile steel is designed for collision energy management in the event of an accident and there are seven airbags including side curtain airbags that have a roll over detection system.

Other safety features include a Vehicle Stability Management system to optimize the electronic stability control. It also interacts with the electrically driven power steering system to apply steering assist when because of driving conditions the vehicle wants to pull. I didn't experience this system, but information says that when the vehicle starts to slide it will automatically provide countersteering. I think they mean an assist in a countersteering maneuver. Sounds impressive.

Inside the cavernous interior are beautifully appointed seats and details. Everything is top quality in this Santa Fe Limited model with the Limited Technology Package. Understand that the package doesn't add more luxury, but things like HID headlights, parking assist, memory seat, Nav, ventilated front seats (heated front seats are already standard), sunroof and some other goodies. In other words the Limited comes extremely

well equipped without any packages.



The Santa Fe has plenty of leg and shoulder room.

Seats are very comfortable and the instrumentation is complete with a dual cowl tach and speedo dividing by an information center. Its systems are easy to use. And the interior is voluminous and versatile with 160 cubic feet of volume, 80 cubic feet behind the front seats, 40.9 cubes behind the second row and 13.5 cubes behind the third row. If you need a bus, this surely beats a Greyhound, including the Scenicruiser which was designed by famed industrial designer, Raymond Loewy. The Scenicruiser was considered one of the 100 best industrial designs of the 20th century.

Price for the Santa Fe Limited FWD starts at \$33,790 plus \$855 for the boat from Ulsan, South Korea. The aforementioned Tech Package will add \$4,850. Carpeted floor mats are \$135. Hyundai's have come a long way as the Santa Fe is a world class vehicle. Their dramatic rise in quality and value speaks volumes as their U.S. sales continue to grow that when combined with their sister company, Kia, are knocking on Honda's door. There is something to be said about their five year/60,000 miles bumper to bumper warranty and their 100,000 mile 10 year powertrain warranty.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the

U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

High-caliber performing arts center in the works

By Kathryn Reed

TAHOE CITY – A multi-theater indoor-outdoor performing arts center in the mountains has a growing audience of supporters. Now organizers need the funds to make the facility a reality.

The Tahoe Regional Arts Foundation is planning to build a center at Castle Peak. A 75-year lease has been signed with Vail Resorts-Northstar.

The 208 acres are near the entrance of the ski resort. The area is accessed by going to the right at the initial roundabout where the parking lots are. These lots would be used for the center.

“At this point the idea is conceptual, and Northstar is very supportive of the Tahoe Regional Arts Foundation’s current efforts to research feasibility, funding possibilities, and community interest levels for bringing a performing arts venue to the Truckee-Tahoe region,” Beth Howard, general manager of Northstar, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Keith Vogt, president of the foundation, gave a presentation Jan. 6 to the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association’s Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club at Granlibakken Resort.

“Almost every other mountain community has a theater and we don’t,” Vogt told the group.



The Stages at Northstar is a multimillion performing arts center proposed for Truckee. Photos/Williams+Paddon Architects

In doing research, the theaters in Jackson Hole, Wyo., Telluride, Colo., and Beaver Creek were looked at. All are successful, well designed and bring in diverse entertainment.

The Truckee center will be called The Stages at Northstar.

However, it's likely the theaters and other aspects of the facility will have other names. Vogt told *Lake Tahoe News* there are opportunities for at least 20 areas to be named. This is where some of the larger checks are expected to come from.

It's estimated that \$50 million is needed to build the center and establish an endowment fund.

The goal is for it to be a year-round facility. There will be an outdoor amphitheater that will seat 3,500, with the potential for more on the mountainside. There will be two

indoor theaters, with the main theater being 33,000-square-feet, with a capacity of 500 people.

It will be a visual and performing arts center. Vogt said the community theater groups need it, the youth deserve it and the public wants it.

The foundation, which received its nonprofit status last year, is run by a board of directors. They foresee offering summer drama programs where students will be part of a residence program.

Multiple studies have been done seeking the public's input and such a facility keeps rising to the top.

Vogt assured people that while the goal is to be a state-of-the-art center that one day could garner international acclaim, area schools and nonprofits would be able to afford to use the space. He anticipates significant revenue being generated from renting out space for corporations for retreats. That classroom has multiple windows looking out onto the ski slopes of Northstar.

The annual fiscal impact to the area is estimated to be \$4 million, Vogt said.

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Notes:

- For more info, email tahoestages@tahoearts.net.
 - More info is also available online.
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Opinion: Lead Safe Tahoe a success

By Janie Green

In 2009, South Lake Tahoe was awarded its first lead hazard control grant for \$1.5 million that was funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Lead Safe Tahoe program was established so the city could assist members of our community in reducing their exposure to hazards from lead-based paint. In 2011, the city was awarded a second lead hazard control grant in the amount of \$2 million.

The Lead Safe Tahoe program assisted qualified residents and had 581 homes tested for lead-based paint hazards and provided control work for 214 of these homes that tested positive for high levels of lead. This control work included stabilizing and repainting exterior and interior surfaces of these properties and replacement of trim, baseboard, doors and windows. The city also provided educational information to the residents and offered free testing of the children to check for elevated lead levels in their blood.

At the time the grant was started the community did not have any contractors or workers trained and certified to the standards required by HUD in order to perform the lead mitigation work. Through these grants, 244 members of our community were trained and certified for lead safe work practices including Supervisor Training, RRP (Renovation, Repair and Painting) and Abatement.

Although these lead hazard control grants have had a huge impact on the safety of our community members, lead hazards still exist in many of the buildings and homes. If your home or other residential property was built before 1978, there is a chance it may contain lead based paint hazards. With the

final grant closing, the city wanted to do something to continue to positively impact our community and has produced a 10 minute lead safe work practices video that will be available in English and Spanish on the city website. This video provides some basic information about lead based paint hazards and some instructional information for property owners on lead safe work practices. If you are a home owner doing small repairs or renovations around your home, this video could be beneficial for you to view.

The Lead Safe Tahoe program has also put together bags with some materials to assist you if you are doing small repairs. The Lead Safe Bags contain a copy of the lead safe work practices video on DVD, googles, HEPA-masks, disposable suit, shoe covers, disposable gloves, cleaning wipes, duct tape, a spray bottle, and lead based paint informational pamphlets. These bags are available for free starting Jan. 12, while supplies last, at the Development Services Building permit counter located at 1052 Tata Lane.

Janie Green is the Lead Safe Tahoe project manager.

Finally we would like to remind you that lead paint exposure can occur during any home renovations. We have provided you with some basic guidance and tools, in order to prevent exposing yourself or your family to these lead hazards. We recommend before starting any work, you have your home assessed by a professional Lead Inspector and Risk Assessor. If lead based paint hazards are identified use lead safe work practices or hire a licensed lead-certified contractor to do the work for you.

Novasel to be sworn in at S. Lake Tahoe

There will be a special swearing in ceremony for Sue Novasel on Jan. 8. Novasel is Lake Tahoe's representative to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors.

El Dorado County Superior Judge Suzanne Kingsbury will conduct the ceremony in her chambers at 11am.

The courthouse is at 1354 Johnson Blvd., South Lake Tahoe. Kingsbury's courtroom is upstairs.

Brown seeks green regulations in historic fourth term

By Chris Megerian, Los Angeles Times

In an inaugural address drawing on his family's deep roots in California, Gov. Jerry Brown called for expansive new environmental regulations that would protect the state for future generations.

The governor also pledged not to stray from promises he has made to strengthen California's finances, invest in the \$68-billion high-speed rail system and major water infrastructure projects.

"While we have not reached the Promised Land, we have much to be proud of," Brown told the California Legislature in the Capitol.

Brown's speech hewed mostly to familiar themes of fiscal restraint and increasing local control over schools and criminal justice. But he announced an ambitious new proposal to reduce carbon emissions for years to come.

Read the whole story