

Winter Trails hike on the South Shore

Tahoe Rim Trail Association Executive Director Mary Bennington will be on hand Jan. 10 for the Winter Trails Day Hike on the South Shore.

The free guided hike starts at 10am.

Meet at Explore Tahoe, 4114 Lake Tahoe Blvd., at Heavenly Village in South Lake Tahoe.

Space is limited and reservations are recommended. Call Explore Tahoe at 530.542.4637 for questions and to make reservations.

Barton reducing price on wellness panels

Barton Health is offering wellness lab panels and screenings at a reduced cost.

Draws are Jan. 10, Jan. 21, Feb. 7, and Feb. 18.

Lung cancer CT screenings and electrocardiograms (EKG) tests are the first and third Saturday of each month.

Depending on the test, lab draws range from \$40 to \$50, EKGs are \$50, and CT screenings are \$199.

All lab draws and screenings require a doctor's referral and scheduled appointment – go online or call 530.543.5615.

SnowGlobe worker accused of grand theft

A Reno man working at SnowGlobe is accused of stealing items worth more than \$17,000 from the lost and found bin of the three-day outdoor concert in South Lake Tahoe.

Jermaine Williams, 38, was arrested Jan. 1 on grand theft charges.



Jermaine
Williams

Police officers said Williams stole smart phones that had been turned into security. The phones had been locked in a storage case in the Lake Tahoe Community College gymnasium.

Police were notified after someone allegedly saw Williams putting the phones into a suitcase. That suitcase with the 44 phones has since been located with all the phones inside.

“During the investigation one of the theft victims arrived at the event location, looking for Williams. This victim explained that she had called her own phone in an attempt to find it. Jermaine Williams answered this call. According to the victim, Williams had instructed her to meet him near the SnowGlobe stage. Williams told the victim that he would return

her victim phone for \$20,” police said in a press release.

Officers are investigating whether additional contract workers stole other lost and found items.

All lost and found goods from the Dec. 29-31 event are now in the possession of the police department; with officers in the process of trying to find the rightful owners. To retrieve an item, call 530.542.6145.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Queen not allowed to sail after NYE incident

By Kathryn Reed

While the Tahoe Queen did not sustain any damage during a mishap New Year’s Eve, it is still grounded by the U.S. Coast Guard.

During an inspection on Jan. 1, Coast Guard investigators from San Francisco found an unrelated mechanical problem that is keeping the paddle-wheeler docked. USCG Ensign Jake Urrutia called it an “unrelated deficiency”, but had no more details.

“I don’t know how long that will take before that is lifted,” Urrutia told *Lake Tahoe News* of the “no sail” edict.

There are conflicting reports as to whether the boat with more than 200 passengers hit a sandbar or winds disabled it during the annual New Year’s Eve cruise. Urrutia said that is what

investigators are trying to determine. He told *Lake Tahoe News* on Friday morning that investigators don't know why the Queen required the assistance of a tugboat.

At 1:29am Jan. 1 Christi Murphy tweeted this from the boat, "Stuck in the middle of Lake Tahoe on the queen tahoe... Jerks keep lying to us. Boat is stuck in 5 ft deep water with 200 people+kids. Suck."

Coasties were not notified of the incident until about 2:30am Jan. 1, and by that time the vessel was no longer disabled.

Multiple calls to Victor Gomez, tour manager of Aramark's operations on the South Shore, went unreturned. Aramark runs the Queen as well as the M.S. Dixie II, Zephyr Cove Lodge and other operations. Dave Freireich, with corporate offices, also was not available.

With the Queen out of service indefinitely, it means there is no paddle-wheeler operating on the South Shore. This is because the Dixie is undergoing \$1 million worth of renovations and is not expected to be plying the waters of Lake Tahoe until the spring.

The Queen hit a sandbar near Regan Beach on Aug. 4, which necessitated the 257 passengers be ferried to shore by much small vessels. No one was injured in either incident. The August incident is still under investigation by the Coast Guard.

Driver in fatal accident on

Mt. Rose Hwy. found

Update 8:10pm:

Nevada Highway Patrol troopers say alcohol may have played a role in a fatal accident on the Mount Rose Highway on Jan. 1.

Two vehicles collided near Incline Village about 6:18 Thursday night.

The driver of a 1998 silver Isuzu Rodeo going west crossed the center line, striking a blue 2003 Jeep Liberty that was going east, according to troopers

Two occupants of the Jeep were transported via helicopter to Renown Medical Center in Reno with major injuries and one occupant went by ambulance with serious injuries.

Hugo Barrios, 40, a passenger in the Isuzu died at Renown.

The driver of the Isuzu fled on foot immediately after the crash. Manuel Mejia Verdusco, 49, was found hiding at a residence in Incline Village on Jan. 2. He was taken to a hospital with injuries to his face, a wrist and an ankle, according to troopers. Charges are pending.

Officers have not released the names or hometowns of the others involved in the accident. Anyone who may have witnessed this incident or who may have information is asked to call 775.689.4625.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Spouses tangle over pets in divorce court

By Carri Geer Thevenot, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Family law attorney Mandy McKellar valued her cats so much that she included them in a prenuptial agreement with her husband – “just in case.”

By the time they divorced this summer, the couple also had acquired two dogs. Now all five pets live with McKellar in her Las Vegas home, although she has offered to let her ex-husband take the cat they adopted.

“He can come back and get her at any time,” McKellar said of the cat. “She hates the dogs.”

Although McKellar and her husband went through an uncontested divorce, lawyers and judges who handle Family Court cases know that breakups often turn bitter. Couples fight over their children, their houses, and yes, even their pets.

The American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers announced in February that 27 percent of the respondents in a recent survey had noticed an increase in the number of couples who fought over custody of a pet during the previous five years. Most of the time, those disputes involved a dog.

Read the whole story

Controversy surrounds Nevada coyote hunt

By Yvonne Beasley, Reno Gazette-Journal

Local hunters have organized a coyote hunt, which has raised hackles of animal protection groups.

The Saturday event, called a coyote calling contest, is similar to hunts in other parts of Nevada and Western states. Coyotes are an unprotected species in Nevada; a license or permit is not required to hunt them, according to the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

"This was set up for local people to get together," said Jason Schroeder, one of the organizers. "It's a very small gathering of probably 20 to 40 people."

The hunting will take place on BLM land around the state, Schroeder said.

[Read the whole story](#)

Guest services No. 1 priority for Northstar chief



Beth Howard took over the top leadership position at Northstar just before the ski season started. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – Having all the equipment one needs for whatever work conditions might come up isn't unusual for a boss. What's different about this office is the tools are four pairs of skis.

"I'm ready for any type of condition," Beth Howard says.

But she doesn't always put on her gray uniform when she hits the slopes – that would be a giveaway to employees that upper management is around. As vice president and general manager of Northstar ski resort, she wants to be able to check on things incognito. This allows her to experience things as the guest does.

Howard is on the mountain at least four days a week, every Saturday and all holidays. The 51-year-old assumed the top position at Northstar this fall. She took over for Bill Rock

who is now at Park City.

“Beth was chosen for this position because she has strong leadership skills, deep business knowledge and an ability to get things done. In her career at Vail Resorts she has had great success overseeing our entire food and beverage operation for all of our mountain resorts driving a strong financial performance, delivering a high quality product and service and has been instrumental in developing and putting in place many innovative programs, products and approaches,” Blaise Carrig, president of Vail Resorts Mountain Division, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “She easily works her way through difficult challenges with a very positive and can do approach. And she has consistently demonstrated an ability to lead other strong leaders and foster teamwork.”

Since 2010, she was vice president of mountain dining and clubs for Vail Resorts, the parent company of the ski resort. That job had her overseeing the dining operations at the company’s more than 100 restaurants and eight private mountain and golf clubs.

“This job is much more hands on,” Howard said while sitting in her spacious office in the heart of Northstar Village.

The corporate gig was much more removed from the day-to-day operations, while this job has her interacting more with guests. And it is guest services that Howard plans to focus on.



The 42-year-old ski resort

has more than 2,400 acres of skiable terrain.

“I’d like to see Northstar as the best in guest services in the industry,” Howard told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We can always be better. We are fine-tuning how we can execute our guest services.”

She is taking note of every component of guest services – from the interaction with bus drivers on trips to and from the parking lot, to lifties, to food quality, to what the resort looks like. No detail is too small for her to pay attention to when it comes to guest services.

Howard doesn’t want Northstar to be compared to other resorts. Often it is referred to as the Beaver Creek of California. She wants Northstar to stand on its own.

But she is intimately familiar with the inner workings of Beaver Creek because she was in charge of that Colorado resort’s mountain dining from 1993-2008.



Summer operations, like the bike park, are also Beth Howard’s responsibility.

Howard doesn’t let it faze her that she is in a male-dominated profession; it’s not something she has focused on and clearly not something that has held her back. She’s been in the ski business for 30 years.

It is men who founded most U.S. ski resorts and subsequently hired other men to operate them. Many of them came out of the 10th Mountain Division after World War II. Slowly hiring practices have changed, but a woman in a ski management position is still rare.

“I think that now it is not an industry bias but more reflective on the culture of individual resorts and resort companies – whether they are supportive of women in these roles and also create and foster workplaces that are unbiased and gender neutral,” Carrig said. “This has been an ongoing focus at Vail Resorts, where we have two women running very large resorts (Northstar and Breckenridge), two women are directors of mountain operations (Vail and Canyons), two women ski patrol directors (Vail and Beaver Creek). And, my successor for president of the Mountain Division is Pat Campbell, which will put a woman at the helm of the largest ski operation in the North America, if not the world.”

But a career in the ski business is not what Howard dreamed of as a farm girl in Iowa. In many ways it’s a fluke she ended up in Colorado for the last three decades.

She was attending the University of Northern Iowa when she saw a posting for an internship with Vail Associates – the predecessor to Vail Resorts. This was 1985. The business major wrote to the Colorado-based company requesting a six-week internship. She had never heard of the company until then.

“When I saw Colorado and those mountains I knew that’s where I wanted to be,” Howard said.

Until this fall, she had never left.

For now, her husband and son are still in Colorado. They will be moving to Truckee when the school year is over.

“I’m living my dream,” Howard said of her new job, new town and new mountain.

Opinion: Stop the math, science obsession

By Emily Eckart, Washington Post

When I was a child, I wanted to be a scientist. For a school project, I grew my own bread mold and dressed up as Alexander Fleming. I read about Marie Curie's travails with the enthusiastic fandom that most girls dedicate to movie stars or singers. Microbiology, entomology, neuroscience, medicine—all beckoned with promises of discoveries to be made, fundamental truth hiding behind a microscope or a tricky equation.

Then, it all came to an end.

In seventh grade, I read Lawrence Krauss's book "Atom". The book followed a single atom from the days of the Big Bang to present. Krauss concluded by saying that he was composed entirely of atoms, and that upon his death, these atoms would be recombined into other objects. This passage was apparently intended to uplift, but I found it troubling. What was the purpose of everything if it all came down to mechanical interactions of particles and cells – what was the point of living, of doing anything at all?

Those of us who cherish the humanities know well the disappointment our math and science teachers express when we choose to "squander" our bright young minds. In high school, when I confessed to a former science teacher that I had decided to major in music, her face fell. "Emily," she said, distraught, "what happened to science?"

It is commonly claimed that STEM majors are the "most valuable" – value being defined as immediate job offers and

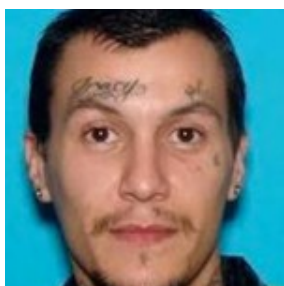
high earnings. Articles promoting STEM have a clear focus: jobs and money. College is increasingly viewed as a form of vocational training, useful only for teaching the quantitative skills that our data-obsessed society demands.

But defenders of the humanities have long recognized that the study of history, literature, art and language develop other skills that are critical for students' success. With their focus on careful reading and analysis of texts, humanities foster clear communication, both in speaking and in writing.

Read the whole story

Idaho murder suspect arrested in Truckee

A suspect in a murder in Idaho was arrested New Year's Day in Truckee.



Kevin Michael
McQuilliams

Kevin Michael McQuilliams, 26, was spotted driving in the area of Dorchester Drive and Rolands Way in the Glenshire subdivision of Truckee on Thursday about 4:50pm.

McQuilliams is believed to have been involved in the shooting

death of his 34-year-old girlfriend and was wanted by the Idaho Falls Police Department. The shooting occurred about 1:15am Jan. 1.

Truckee officers said McQuilliams has no connection to Truckee. However, they are also not releasing any specific information regarding the arrest or investigation.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*