

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Hard Rock Lake Tahoe has pushed back its opening date to Jan. 29. “Our goal was to open as early as possible. Given input from our construction team late last week, we decided it would be best to open in time for the Super Bowl, giving our guests the full Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Lake Tahoe experience with a finished product and all of its much-anticipated amenities,” Don Marrantino, spokesman, said.

- “Tahoe In Depth”, the environmental newspaper from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, won a Silver Spike award at the Sierra Nevada Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America annual awards for content marketing. Weidinger Public Relations won four awards, including the Judge’s Choice Award, denoting Northern Nevada’s best overall campaign.

- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency offices will be closed Nov. 27-28.

- Mt. Rose’s Santa Ski Crawl is Dec 13. Skiers in full Santa wear will receive discounted tickets.

- Douglas County Community and Senior Center is hosting a grand opening and open house Dec. 6 at 1pm at 1329 Waterloo Lane, Gardnerville.

Names of victims in fatal S.

Tahoe crash released



Flowers mark the location of the Nov. 24 fatal accident.

Photo/LTN

Olga Penaarce, 20, of South Lake Tahoe will likely face felony driving under the influence homicide charges in the death of Aimee Campos, 21, of South Lake Tahoe. Penaarce was driving at a high-rate of speed Nov. 24 at about 4:30am when the vehicle veered off Pioneer Trail and hit a retaining wall at the corner of Edna Street. "No charges have been filed at this time because the investigation is on-going. Alcohol is suspected to be a contributing factor, however results of a blood alcohol test for the driver are pending," Lt. Brian Williams told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We can say preliminarily that the vehicle appears to have been traveling at an extremely high rate of speed – perhaps 90-100 mph – before the driver evidently lost control. This is a preliminary estimate only." Campos died at the scene. An autopsy is being conducted today, however lab results will not be available for several weeks. Penaarce and 25-year-old Wayne Walker of Sacramento were flown to Renown Medical Center in Reno with serious injuries. Both remained in the hospital Wednesday afternoon. "We will be conducting a detailed review of crash evidence on the body of the vehicle, the objects and evidence of what was found inside and/or ejected from the interior of the vehicle upon impact, examinations of objects struck by the vehicle, re-creating the

scene with computer enhanced digital mapping, making comparisons of this information to collision scene photographs, working the results of mathematical figures to determine an accurate speed of the vehicle based upon number, type and location of skid marks," Williams said.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Changing food labels may reduce waste

By Roff Smith, National Geographic

LONDON—Everyone's done it: You reach into your fridge and pluck out something tasty that you've meaning to eat but had half-forgotten about, only to discover that its "best before" date passed a few days earlier.

What to do? If you're like many people, you let out a resentful sigh and toss it – better safe than sorry – and resolve to be more watchful, less wasteful, in the future.

But did you really need to throw away that perfectly good-looking (and good-smelling) wedge of manchego or container of ice cream?

Depending on what it was, and how well it was kept, probably not, says Emma Marsh, who leads Love Food Hate Waste, a U.K.-based group that's dedicated to tackling food waste. "More than half of the food we throw out is food we could have eaten," she says, referring to British consumers.

Food waste is a growing global concern, with 1.3 billion tons of food – as much as a third of the food that is produced on

the globe each year, worth over \$750 billion – going to waste each year, according to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization. Aside from the morality of such loss in a world where an estimated 800 million people go to bed hungry each night, the economic and environmental implications are staggering. More than a quarter of the world's agricultural land is being worked to grow food that nobody eats.

Rebates available to replace wood stoves

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and partner jurisdictions are offering rebates to people who replace older, heavily polluting wood burning stoves and fireplaces.

According to the TRPA, inefficient wood stoves and open fireplaces are a substantial source of air pollution in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Their incomplete combustion of fuels results in elevated emissions of particulate matter, greenhouse gases, carbon monoxide, nitrogen, and other pollutants.

Cleaner burning models of gas, pellet, and wood stoves and fireplace inserts certified by the Environmental Protection Agency can burn one-third less fuel and cut emissions of pollutants by up to 50 percent.

The rebate program is anticipated to replace about 200 home heating appliances and reduce particulate matter emissions by an estimated 5 tons. Rebates range from \$400 to \$1,400. They are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Homeowners interested in the rebate programs are encouraged to

contact their local office of air quality to find out if they are eligible prior to the purchase or installation of any new wood stove. El Dorado County and South Lake Tahoe residents may contact Adam Baughman at 530.621.7571, adam.baughman@edcgov.us. Placer County residents may go online and click on the link for the “New Wood Stove Replacement Program – Lake Tahoe”. Nevada residents in the Lake Tahoe Basin should contact John Handzo at 775.834.3674, jhandzo@unr.edu.

Stateline casino revenue spikes in October

Stateline casinos were the bright spot for gaming revenue in October.

While state saw revenue decline of 4.3 percent to \$913.6 million compared to a year ago, the South Shore was up nearly 53 percent at \$19 million. This is the third consecutive month the statewide numbers have declined.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board released the figures Wednesday.

Reno casinos also fared well, with the \$47 million take being up 7.9 percent compared to 2013.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

The case for ditching bike helmets

By Erin Beresini, Outside

Helmet advocates have been dealing with a PR crisis ever since a new study questioning the lids' efficacy in preventing brain injuries received widespread attention this month. But it was Olympic gold medalist Chris Boardman's BBC morning show appearance that truly set people off. Why? He refused to wear a helmet while giving cycling safety tips.

Boardman defended himself, arguing on the BBC's Facebook page and later in an article on British Cycling.org that helmets "discourage people from riding a bike" and shift the attention away from what's most likely to kill a rider – a car.

So is Boardman right? Yes, cars pose the greatest threat to riders (more on that later). But the science surrounding helmets is a bit murkier.

First up: the recent helmet study. Led by a trauma surgeon from the University of Arizona, Dr. Bellal Joseph, and published in the European Journal of Trauma and Emergency Surgery, the study reviewed 709 cyclists who came through Joseph's trauma center.

"Bicycle helmets protect against bruising and scratching," Joseph concluded from examining the cyclists, but not against intra-cranial bleeding – the bleeding inside the skull that ultimately causes brain injury and death. The non-helmeted cyclists in the study were more likely to have a skull fracture, but not any more likely to have intra-cranial hemorrhage than cyclists who crashed while wearing a helmet.

Read the whole story

Novasel not waiting to be sworn in as supervisor to be a leader in El Dorado County



Sue Novasel is working to help District 5 even before being sworn in as the next El Dorado County supervisor.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS – A half eaten muffin and near empty coffee cup sit in front her. She pauses to excuse herself to take a phone call. She steps into the cold where others can't hear her.

This is Sue Novasel's life. She is transitioning from candidate to supervisor of El Dorado County. On this

particular day Freel Perk in Meyers is her de facto office.

Before *Lake Tahoe News* arrives she was consulting with a board member of the Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District.

Helping to resolve their problems is a top priority of Novasel's after she is sworn in the first week of January. But already she is listening, gathering information and getting further acquainted with this and a variety of other issues.

"I study every night. I've called every supervisor. I'm meeting with as many electeds and department heads to get up to speed," Novasel tells *Lake Tahoe News*.

Tahoe Paradise Park is near and dear to her. Her daughters played there. Her husband is a former board member. Novasel knows it could be a real community asset if some structure, direction and vision could be brought to the board and park.

With having lived in the area for 38 years, she brings a history of Meyers and the entire South Shore to the Board of Supervisors.

Setting priorities

Another major task for her is to get the Board of Supervisors to be a more cohesive unit.

"There's some dysfunction and a lot of distractions with a supervisor being ousted and the fact the board has two new members," Novasel said. (Michael Ranalli was elected to District 4. Shiva Frentzen is also new, having replaced Ray Nutting in September.) "I will try to get our board to act like a board. The board needs to develop strategies, policies and plans for the future."

What she doesn't know is if the current board or the one taking office in 41 days will be hiring the next chief administrative officer.

"They have every right to hire (someone) before the new board is sworn in," Novasel said.

It would be a bit of an expedited process, especially with the holidays, if that were to occur. Terri Daly resigned this fall as CAO and Assistant CAO Kim Kerr is leaving at the end of December.

Novasel has experience in hiring a top official, having been on the LTUSD board when Jim Tarwater was selected.

Novasel's other initial focus will be on economic growth – which was her mantra during the campaign.

"They should set a policy regarding business development," Novasel said of the supervisors. "The permit process in Tahoe can always be improved."

She said it's all about growing the tax base.

Public safety and public health are other concerns of hers. She believes her 12 years on the school board will help her bring child centered issues to the table.

Being accessible

During the interview a couple Meyers residents approach Novasel.

Constantly being interrupted is likely something she will have to get used to. If she thought getting stopped in the grocery store to be asked about Lake Tahoe Unified School District issues was distracting, she will now have a much broader constituency to be held accountable to. Besides a larger geographic area that stretches to Pollock Pines, the District 5 supervisor is usually on the board of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Tahoe Transportation District, California Tahoe Conservancy, Waste Management JPA, Recreation JPA and others.

While Novasel is bound to be busy once she takes office, she is going to be taking a few things off of her plate. She is resigning from several boards including Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce and Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

She hopes to have regular office hours in Placerville and Lake Tahoe.

But being a supervisor isn't just representing a specific district. The West Slope has its own issues, which Novasel has been brushing up on. This includes having read the General Plan more than once.

She realizes there is a disconnect between Tahoe and Placerville. But she also said Tahoma, Pollock Pines and El Dorado Hills don't always feel well represented.

Novasel would like to have more combined meetings with entities like her new board and the South Lake Tahoe City Council. She also wants various city-county employees to be meeting more so people are working together better.

"We all need to understand the issues," Novasel said. "The Board of Supervisors needs to make sure the lines of communication are open. We need to know the needs of different communities."

One thing that should make Novasel's job easier is that Judi McCallum has decided to stay on as the District 5 assistant.

Opinion:

California's

comeback is spotty

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

As he sought re-election to his fourth and last term as governor this year, Jerry Brown crowed about a “California comeback” after weathering the worst recession since the Great Depression.



Dan Walters

He was particularly adept at selling it to out-of-state media types who liked the story line and didn't delve into details.

In fact, California's recovery has been very slow and very spotty, largely confined to the San Francisco Bay Area and a few other coastal enclaves.

We have regained, on paper, the million-plus jobs lost during the recession, but that superficially positive factoid ignores growth in the labor force and an unpleasant truth that many of those new jobs are low-paying and/or part-time.

California's unemployment rate in October, 7.3 percent, was fifth highest among the states.

Read the whole story

Judge blocks Uber from Nevada

By Scott Sonner, AP

A Washoe County District Court judge granted the state's request late Tuesday for a court order blocking the ridesharing company Uber Technologies from operating unregulated in Nevada, saying Uber's refusal to comply with the necessary state licensing requirements could put the public's safety at risk.

Nevada's attorney general filed a lawsuit last month arguing that the Internet application matching riders with drivers using personal cars for a fee infringes on the franchise rights of taxi companies and cabdrivers serving fare-paying passengers under state oversight.

Washoe District Judge Scott Freeman granted the state's request for a preliminary injunction pending a future trial based on concerns that Nevadans could be at risk as a result of the company's refusal to follow state laws regulating commercial motor carriers and passenger transportation services.

Freeman's ruling came after Nevada Department of Business and Industry Director Bruce Breslow and Freeman himself praised the Uber application. Breslow said he has used it multiple times in other cities where it's regulated.

"There's no question it's a wonderful product," Freeman said. "But I'm charged with following the law – the law currently in existence. ... I'm not going to risk the safety of the public."

The Delaware-based Uber maintains it is a technology company, not a transportation-services company subject to Nevada regulations that apply to taxis or commercial motor carriers. The state is trying "to compel a legal round peg into a square hole," said Don Campbell, a Las Vegas lawyer representing

Uber.

Breslow testified that representatives of Uber met with him last month to discuss ways they might comply with those regulations. But he said that two days later he was blindsided by Uber's formal launch of its business in Nevada on Oct. 24 with nothing more than an email notice that morning.

Deputy Attorney General Gina Session said Uber's defiance of state authority was unprecedented in her 20 years of dealing with regulatory law in Nevada. "I've never seen a multibillion-dollar company come into Nevada and so aggressively and deliberately disregard the law," she said.

Freeman questioned witnesses and lawyers directly at times during a more than six-hour hearing in his Reno courtroom on Tuesday.

"Why did Uber choose to operate first without regulation?" the judge asked Uber's lawyers at one point. "Why didn't you try to change the law first, then operate?"

Campbell pleaded with Freeman to deny the request for a preliminary injunction because there has been no irreparable harm or threat to public safety. He recommended instead that the judge set an expedited hearing schedule for a pending trial, which has yet to be scheduled.

Freeman said he would provide more detail in a formal order he hoped to issue on Wednesday. He ruled earlier Tuesday that taxi companies can't join the state's lawsuit because it currently is a regulatory matter, not a question of economic damages. He said that Bell Limo and Whittlesea Checker Taxi can claim monetary harm later and file civil lawsuits separately, the judge said.

Campbell argued that the company is not a motor carrier as defined by state law, in part because it does not "hold itself out to be public." Unlike taxicabs, the Uber drivers have no

distinguishing paint or other indications that identify them, and patrons are unable to hail them from a curbside, only order a ride through the online app.

“Uber does not dispatch anybody,” he said.

Campbell said that while Uber doesn’t meet the specific state regulations, it does conduct background checks on drivers, requires vehicle inspections and provides assessments of drivers and riders alike in “real time” based on a reviews they can make via the online app immediately after completing their travel. He argued those reviews do a better job of detecting impaired drivers than the state’s current policy that includes random drug testing.

But Freeman said that only helps after the fact and doesn’t guard against dangers upon entering the vehicle. “By the time a customer figures out somebody in the car is stoned, it’s too late,” he said.

Multi-agency prescribed burns in basin

California State Parks, North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District and the U.S. Forest Service will continue prescribed fire operations near Incline Village, Tahoma, Meeks Bay, Sugar Pine Point State Park, Tahoe Mountain and Heavenly urban lot areas. Operations will last through the next several weeks as conditions allow.

Fall and winter bring cooler temperatures and precipitation, which favor prescribed burning. Each operation follows a prescribed fire burn plan, which considers temperature,

humidity, wind, moisture of the vegetation, and conditions for the dispersal of smoke.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size. The agencies coordinate with state and local county air pollution control districts and monitors weather conditions closely prior to prescribed fire ignition.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, the agencies post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2600, No. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.