

Officials: Water is going to cost more in Calif.

By Sharon Bernstein, Reuters

Californians face higher water prices and permanent conservation measures amid drought, global warming and population growth in a state that has long struggled to satisfy urban and agricultural needs, the administration of Governor Jerry Brown said Thursday.

It will take up to \$500 billion to improve the state's water infrastructure to improve supplies, reduce flood risk and shore up the fragile ecosystems that provide water for people, farms and wildlife, the state's top natural resources officials said in a long-awaited update to California's water plan.

"Water is going to cost more for Californians in the future," said Mark Cowin, director of the state department of water resources, in a conference call with reporters on Thursday. "That's a reality we're all going to have to get used to."

But the state has long struggled to meet the water needs of thirsty cities and its mammoth agricultural sector, prompting a century of political fights between the wetter north and the drier south.

Read the whole story

Sierra putting on Dodgeball Tourney

Sierra-at-Tahoe is taking it to the court on Nov. 13 for the third annual Sierra Snowball Fight: A Dodgeball Tournament at Steamers Bar and Grill in South Lake Tahoe.

The party starts at 7pm; all ages are welcome. Grand prize for the winning dodgeball team is worth more than \$1,000. Individual awards for MVP, Best Smash and Best Threads will be handed out.

The Cash Only Band will be playing inside, while DJ MoFunk will be on the back deck.

To compete in the tournament, round up five friends and start training on the five D's of dodgeball: dodge, duck, dip, dive and dodge. Space is limited, register by calling 530.543.3139.

Opportunity to bottle wine

Charles B. Mitchell Vineyards is hosting a bottle-your-own wine experience Nov. 8-11.

The free event will take place from 11am-5pm.

Participants will have a chance to learn the process of winemaking in a hands-on experience from winemaker

Charles B. Mitchell, including filling, sealing and labeling the finished product.

Varietals to be bottled are the 2013 Delfino Vineyards Malbec, 2011 Fair Play Merlot and 2013 El Dorado

Primitivo.

Guests may bring a clean and empty wine bottle to use or purchase new bottles from the winery for 75 cents each. Complimentary corks and labels will be provided. Single bottles of bottle-your-own wine may be purchased for \$9.99 per bottle or \$6.99 if bought in case quantities.

For more information, call 530.620.3467.

Charles B. Mitchell Vineyards is located at 8221 Stoney Creek Road, Fair Play.

Rape charges reduced in plea agreement

By Kathryn Reed

A former South Lake Tahoe City Council candidate who was accused of rape was sentenced to lesser crimes last week after reaching a plea agreement.

Doug Cichowicz, who came in last in the 2010 council race, agreed to a deal that will have him spending just more than 70 days in the local jail and then be on probation for five years. He pleaded guilty to felony burglary because he entered the home of his victim uninvited, felony stalking, and misdemeanor assault and battery.

Had he been convicted of rape, Cichowicz would have had to file as a registered sex offender. He doesn't have to based on what he pleaded to.

"I don't feel like he is a sex offender. I feel like he has a

violent trigger,” the victim told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I want people to be warned about him.”

The two worked together years ago and then he returned to her life in the past few years.

The crimes took place in summer 2013.

“I know this is a win, but I was so geared up for a trial,” the South Lake Tahoe woman said. “It was supposed to be (this) week. Then they asked for pleas at the last minute.”

Attorney Rob Woelfel, who represented Cichowicz, declined to comment.

Then and now: Orange Julius once a mainstay



Orange Julius disappeared
with redevelopment.
Photo/Private Collection

Since the 1960s, Orange Julius was on the lake side of Highway 50, separated from Ski Run Boulevard by a corner Chevron gas

station which today is relocated on the opposite corner.

Some of OJ's menu items then included: fries = 30 cents, hot dogs = 35 cents, onion rings = 35 cents. Notice the Santa on the window.



A time share sits where
Orange Julius once stood.
Photo/Bill Kingman

Redevelopment in South Lake Tahoe started in the early 1980s. Orange Julius was approximately where the blue Lake Tahoe Vacation Resort letters and stone half-wall stand today, seen near-center in this photo.

– *Bill Kingman*

Wild Sonoma Coast soothes the soul



It's all about the ocean when staying at the Timber Cove Inn. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Susan Wood

JENNER – You know you've encountered something unique and untamed upon walking through the lobby with its high-vaulted ceilings and turning right to gaze beyond the expansive setting to the back patio overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Or, maybe it hits you before you even arrive at the Timber Cove Inn. Driving the wild and scenic Sonoma Coast is transformative in itself. Cows wander freely on Highway 1 north of Jenner, mingling with deer in a perfect harmony between ocean and land.

Harmony is just what a soul gets at this iconic, 49-room rustic resort. The half century-old inn melds being active and doing nothing.

After settling in on one recent fall Wednesday evening to a cocktail, French fries and the National League pennant champs San Francisco Giants on the television in the airy, redwood Sequoia Lounge in front of the large, stone fireplace, Kae and I chose the latter for our first-day itinerary. Doing very little hit the spot.



The lounge area at the inn is relaxing.

In a daze while waiting for the coffee to brew in the room, I stood almost motionless on the patio of the ocean view room as AJ jumped down a few feet to conduct her morning ritual. So many hotels come equipped with borders and railings. The openness was a nice change. No obstacles to inhibit the 180-degree view of the ocean. It was like no other I've had before.

And it's one thing to see this massive body of water. Waking up to the sounds of the pounding surf are quite another thing. The rhythm of the waves sets the stage for the entire stay.

We walked with AJ over the 26 acres of the grounds on the bluffs overlooking the Pacific. There was no bad view on the clearly marked trails divided between the North Coast and the South Coast trails – with Lover's Point and Timber Cove Point jutting out at the midpoint. Waves crashed in over the rocky coastline.

Visible from most of the property is the Bufano Obelisk. The 93-foot sculpture made of tile, concrete and redwood was created by Italian artist Benjamin Bufano as a symbol of world peace.

Peacefulness is the general theme here. Upon each bend in the trail, we often stopped at the benches staged just for spending time to take it all in. Only the sunbathing seals

appeared to be lazier than us. The resort gets major points for having several areas to sit and just be. What's striking at the resort is the notion that it's incredibly quiet.

To partake in one of our favorite places to sit, I grabbed a bottle of wine because this is after all Sonoma County – the ultimate Wine Country. We soon learned the Timber Cove Inn's outside fire pit set up just outside the restaurant patio is a big hit. Wednesday night we had checked it out with the provided lantern in the room. Nice touch. On Thursday, wine and reading – and Bananagrams – topped the agenda.

For those who didn't bring their own games, the inn built a bocce ball court off to the side.

Eat, drink and be merry



Alexander's restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Suggested is dinner at the inn's Alexander's restaurant. For starters, the roasted red and yellow beets in the salad melted in my mouth, and the Ricotta cheese provided a perfect accent. And, we loved the sourdough bread.

The Alexander Valley merlot paired well with Kae's polenta lasagna, which looked as good as it tasted. The circle of marinara sauce on the plate was ample enough for every bite of

the concoction. The sauce had a definite homemade flavor.

My seafood pasta was more about the catfish, prawns, salmon and halibut than the noodles – which can be a rarity. The dish was tasty and filling. The view at sunset next to the floor-to-ceiling window was stunning.

After dinner, we hit the bar again for the Giants game and formed a kinship with a small community that turned up there in the evening – with couples from Reno to Rohnert Park enjoying the cushy sofas and fireplace. Bands play there on the weekends.

A sense of adventure beckons



An otter along the Russian River.

With the Timber Cove Inn situated 13 miles north of Jenner, the Russian River represents a good outlet for recreation. We rented a canoe for \$60 that we could have had for four hours from Watertreks' kiosk in downtown Jenner on Friday. I appreciate the worker's tips such as the nature of the currents. With AJ in the middle compartment, we paddled the calm and serene estuary that marks the mouth of the river. It's currently closed off at the ocean by sand. On the ocean side that we walked to is where seals bob their heads in the surf when they're not lounging on the beach. We also spotted a river otter near the island dividing the north and south riverfronts.

The canoe trip was a blend of both the natural world and an architectural tour marking a small civilization of gutsy river inhabitants who are known to rebuild when the river floods because they love the environment so much.

I can see why.



AJ isn't sure what to make of the ocean waves.

The Sonoma Coast doles out a rugged yet relaxed type of lifestyle.

Eating up the experience

For an overcast day, the excursion required a quick hot meal – so we opted for soup at the Jenner Inn Café. My salmon chowder was as close to local ingredients as one could have it. I heard the very helpful clerk tell another customer the salmon is pulled from the ocean in the front yard and grilled in the restaurant's back yard. Kae's squash soup was true warmth with flavor. Fresh French fries topped off the meal, with an interesting ginger lemonade concoction mixed in the café.

The sign out front said it all: "Eat, rest, love."

Loving Sonoma County is a state of mind I may never lose.

We quickly turned off on the way back to the inn with wine in mind, yet again. The Fort Ross Vineyard named after the Russian military fort called out to us, so we climbed the very

steep grade that led us high on the bluff overlooking the ocean. Think Chardonnay and the ever-so temperamental Pinot Noir that thrives in the fog.



This view never gets old.

With the chill of the weather again, we soon headed to the warmth of our room and cranked up the gas stove awaiting the highlight of the day – massages by Karma Tales’ Hannah. (Note of recommendation: set up the head of the table near the slider with the door cracked open to hear a hint of wave action with the new age music.)

It’s beyond relaxing.

(Another note: the menu for room service will not fully match that of the Website, so keep that in mind when ordering in.)

On the prowl for fungi and fun

The Sonoma Coast can be a lush playground where the mushrooms dance – especially when it rains. So after a few light storms giving the coast a hint of winter, off we went with the Sonoma County Mycological Association on the next morning. The experience was like no other.



More than 70 kinds of mushrooms were discovered on the foray.

We traversed up and down hills through the dense wilderness of the 6,000-acre Salt Point State Park at Woodside Campground searching for mushrooms like pioneers searching for game. SOMA, the association, hosts these forays throughout the fall and winter. Plus, the group throws a potluck lunch with many offerings afterward.

From food to wine

The Fort Ross Harvest Festival capped off the afternoon with tasting from a dozen local wineries, including the samplings from an artisan cheese maker from Freestone. It was a picture perfect day – filled with activities commemorating the park and the vineyards that surround it.

The event celebrates the bounty of the Sonoma coast as well as the culture of the historic park set over the bluffs one mile south of Timber Cove.

With unparalleled views all its own, the Timber Cove Inn hosted its year-long celebration called “50 and fab.” The resort is old and has a slight weathered look to it to match

its age, but it also has undergone a renovation of about a quarter of its rooms – mostly the forest view variety.

We were in an ocean view room, equipped for a disabled person with the open shower and plenty of space. In the corner of the room is a huge boulder that spills out onto the sidewalk.

The hot tubs have been taken out in the interest of California's drought.

According to General Manager Sharon Lynn, Sonoma County wants to see a master plan for the hotel before further upgrades are made.



Timber Cove Inn – the view from the room.

Don't count on high-end upscale. But with free WiFi and other standard amenities like a small gym, the rooms serve their purpose. It's really all about the view that makes this place special.

Oh, and don't expect cell service. It's non-existent on a huge swath of this coastline. Lynn said there's talk of a tower going in nearby.

"I tell people to come here to unplug," she said. "It is what it is, with all its quirkiness."

Notes:

- Timber Cove Inn is located at 21780 North Coast Highway 1, Jenner.
 - Contact: 707.847.3231 or online.
 - Rooms start at \$229 a night. Low season runs from January to March.
 - Watertreks Jenner: 707.865.2249.
 - Fort Ross Vineyard and Tasting Room: 15725 Meyers Grade Road, Jenner.
 - Sonoma County Mycological Association.
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Opinion: Consider the arts when voting

By Robert Schimmel

I'll bet you've heard how you must vote and why, right? Well, I hope you listened, because when you vote it really makes a difference.

I'd like to offer you another criteria to consider: the arts and what they mean to our community as a point of pride, a vehicle for healing, a source of inspiration and creative development, the nurturing agent for educational abilities and success, a real engine for our economy and growth, and an identity that will bring recognition and pride like no other. And what does this have to do with voting? Everything.



Robert
Schimmel

Who are the candidates that support art as part of our curriculum and will fight for it? Oh, by the way, art is a legally mandated part of our schools' studies but has been cleverly left out for budgetary reasons for many years by the powers that be. The sad part is that it is a primary stimulant to all learning processes, and our kids aren't benefiting from its influence on their performance in other subjects.

Who recognizes that the arts as an economic engine have no equal for what they generate in employment, contribute to projects, bring to festivals, galleries, stage shows, etc., attract and turn into heads in beds dollars we desperately need? The point here is that most artists and art related businesses can only thrive and fuel our economy if the governing bodies regulating business have freedom and success of private enterprise at the core of their beliefs. This has been steadily eroding here and even more so nationally.

Do you know candidates who will be proactive and support the arts at the city, school, community and business levels? Or do you fall prey to the lip service with no teeth that is so easy when they are not held accountable or even understand what's at stake?

Don't misunderstand me, I am not scolding you (as promises and truth are hard to discern and make stick), but I am encouraging you to take another criteria with you into the booth that may make voting easier. After all, we live and thrive on art every day and have become oblivious to it and

its benefits. The new creative economy we have entered is fairly obvious but has crept up via the Information Age and been camouflaged in the process to the extent that we haven't adapted or understood what's happened.

Bottom line is that I want (and will assume you do) Tahoe to prosper and grow. This doesn't have to be ugly with thoughtless, carpet-bagging policies, favoritism and environmental devastation. Instead it can be accomplished by opening the gates to creativity by including more arts integration in every city project and arts education funding of organizations that provide it (including our schools), by passing new or supporting existing legislation that empowers and permits artists to do more in public venues, etc., and by actually promoting Tahoe as an arts destination.

Novel idea, right, especially when most of us are here because of just that, whether we knew it at the time or not. Yes, the appeal of all our seasonal recreational activities is largely based on the aesthetic of beauty before, during and after we've caressed each experience, don't you think?

Be sure to vote, and, if uncertain as to why or for whom, then make the arts a priority.

Robert Schimmel is a professional artist in South Lake Tahoe.

Time to change the clocks back

Turn back your clock one hour at 2am Nov. 2 to return to standard time.

Canoeists rescued from Pyramid Lake

Two men had to be rescued from the choppy waters of Pyramid Lake on Nov. 1 after their canoe overturned.

The fishermen were off the western shore, several miles south of Sutcliffeon.

The call came in shortly after 11am.

Raven, Washoe County sheriff's helicopter, arrived with two volunteer swimmers. The first boater was located in rough water about a mile off shore still clinging to the canoe. Both rescue swimmers entered the water and the boater was hoisted into the helicopter.

A short while later the second boater was located. The rescue swimmers dropped into the water so that the victim could be hoisted into the helicopter.

Both men were transported to a local hospital.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Storm brings snow to Lake Tahoe



Snow covers a Meyers
backyard on Nov. 1.
Photo/Provided

While the first winter storm of the season did not bring a ton of snow to the area, it was enough to turn much of the basin white – especially at the ski resorts.

Northstar and Heavenly were reporting 3 inches of snow, Sierra-at-Tahoe 6 1/2 inches, Squaw Valley 10 inches, and Alpine Meadows 6 inches.

Meyers reported a couple inches, while Zephyr Cove received a dusting.

It's going to be a cold one tonight with the expected low 14 degrees in South Lake Tahoe. By Wednesday the highs are expected to return to 65 degrees, the overnight lows will remain below freezing.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report