

Joan Grech – 1940-2017



Joan Elaine Grech

Joan Elaine Grech passed away at home Dec. 18, 2017, after battling cancer for the past two years. She was 77.

Born in New Jersey, on April 21, 1940, Joan moved to California as a young girl.

After graduating high school, she met and married her husband of 58 years, Charlie. Joan and Charlie spent many summers and holidays in South Lake Tahoe with their family.

In 1975, they made Lake Tahoe their forever home. Joan worked at Barton Memorial Hospital in the admitting department for 25 years, where she made many friends. She enjoyed going to car shows in their 1941 Chevy.

Joan is survived by her husband, Charlie; son, Michael; daughter, Debbie (Cass); grandsons, Eric and Troy; and her fur babies Coco and SkiDoo.

No services are planned at this time.

Donations may be made to the South Lake Tahoe Cancer League or Barton Hospice.

Retro ski films to be shown at Diamond Peak

Diamond Peak Ski Resort will once again host a free Retro Ski Film + Speaker Series at The Chateau at Incline Village this winter.

It will include brief presentations by local historians, filmmakers and/or former Diamond Peak employees, followed by screenings of classic ski and snowboard films including five Warren Miller films from the 1970s through the 1990s.

Events will begin at 5pm, with the films starting about 5:30pm and run for approximately 90 minutes. They are free.

The Chateau will offer a no-host bar and popcorn at each event.

Schedule of films:

- Feb. 15: Warren Miller's "Winter People" (1972); speaker Mark McLaughlin – "History of the 1960 Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley"
- Feb. 22: Warren Miller's "In Search of Skiing" (1977), speaker TBD
- March 1: Warren Miller's "Snowonder" (1982), speaker Mark McLaughlin – "Reign of the Sierra Storm King"
- March 8: Warren Miller's "White Winter Heat" (1987), speaker Mark McLaughlin – "History of Lake Tahoe and the

Comstock”

- March 15: Warren Miller’s “Steeper & Deeper” (1992), speaker TBD.
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Disasters pound North America in 2017

By Seth Borenstein, AP

North America couldn’t catch a break in 2017. Parts of the United States were on fire, underwater or lashed by hurricane winds. Mexico shook with back-to-back earthquakes. The Caribbean got hit with a string of hurricanes.

The rest of the world, however, was spared more than usual from the drumbeat of natural catastrophes. Preliminary research shows there were fewer disasters and deaths this year than on average, but economic damages were much higher.

While overall disasters were down, they smacked big cities, which were more vulnerable because of increased development, said economist and geophysicist Chuck Watson of the consulting firm Enki Research.

Read the whole story

Eldorado Forest closing access to dirt roads

The annual seasonal closure of dirt roads will go into effect on the Eldorado National Forest on Jan. 1. These roads will remain closed until at least April 1.

The seasonal closure is designed to protect roadbeds and watersheds from damage and to protect water quality. A minimum three-month closure period from Jan. 1 through March 30 was designated for the core part of the winter in the Eldorado National Forest Travel Management Plan. To maintain flexibility, the timing of the dirt road closure is determined based on current conditions each year which may cause the closure to go into effect early or be extended.

Roads subject to seasonal closure are identified on a map that is available **online**.

U.S. home prices outpacing wage growth

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON – U.S. home prices climbed a robust 6.2 percent from a year ago, amid strong demand from would-be buyers and a shrinking supply of properties for sale.

Standard & Poor's said last week that its S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller national home price index stood in October a solid 6 percent above its previous 2006 peak. Prices are rising at more than double the pace of wage growth, creating some

affordability pressures that have been offset by relatively low mortgage rates. Metro areas with booming job markets and the steepest home price gains could see more residents staying as renters.

Read the whole story

Tahoe author to talk about latest book

South Shore author Jennifer Quashnick on Jan. 30 will introduce people to the third novel from her Mountaingirl Mysteries series, "Sierra Nevada Dangerous Developments."

In this adventure, Rachel Winters never skied so fast in her life. But her life never depended on it before. Now, Rachel's friends and family are in danger, and the only clue left behind is a message written in blood. Still recovering from a serious accident, Rachel must race against the clock to save her loved ones. Who's after them, and why?

The Friends of the Library event is at 6pm at the library on Rufus Allen Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe.

Diamond Peak – a gem of a ski

resort



A snowboarder seems to ride right into Lake Tahoe from the slopes of Diamond Peak. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Kathryn Reed

INCLINE VILLAGE – Gorgeous. It was the word I kept saying. It was almost as though I had never seen Lake Tahoe.

The views from Diamond Peak are that good; they rival any view from any Tahoe resort. The superlatives are almost endless. Every 10 feet seemed like a Kodak moment.



A conveyor belt on Lakeview chairlift is a unique experience.
Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

And the resort – wow. This was my first time at this Incline Village ski area, same for Carolyn. We were both incredibly pleasantly surprised, impressed and eager to return when the entire mountain is open.

On the day after Christmas there was no waiting in line. Only once did we have to share a chairlift with others, and that was as the afternoon skiers started arriving.

Crystal Express chairlift delivers skiers to the top of the mountain at 8,540 feet. On the east side Washoe Lake dots the valley in what otherwise looks like the barren landscape of the Carson area. Doing a 180, Lake Tahoe's deep blue waters stretch out, as though skiers could plunge into its icy embrace.



With views this good, it's hard to want to eat inside at the Snowflake Lodge. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

A multitude of runs descend from the intermediate Crystal Ridge run. The only problem is they are roped off. The incredibly dry December means no Tahoe area resort is completely open. And so it is at Diamond Peak.

But once Mother Nature cooperates (which forecasts show could start later this week), these slopes should be covered in white stuff. Because they face north, it means they'll be in better shape than others as the season goes on.

The tree skiing, according to resort officials, is pretty phenomenal – when there is the snow.



Lake Tahoe from Crystal Ridge looking toward the runs off Lakeview lift. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The runs that were open were in great condition. No complaints.

The busiest area was the beginner terrain. The bulk of the mountain, though, is blue and black runs.

A welcome feature was the free open air tram that shuttles people between the parking area and the base. It could have been a bit of a walk, especially in ski boots, without this assistance.

Diamond Peak's mantra is to be customer service driven. It certainly doesn't have a corporate feel to it. Residents in the Incline Village General Improvement District actually own the resort. They also get deals on passes and daily tickets.



Diamond Peak is owned by the homeowners in Incline Village.
Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The Pike family from Granite Bay takes advantage of parents/in-laws owning a condo in the area.

“We love the views, it’s family friendly and everyone who works here is really nice,” Nell Pike tells *Lake Tahoe News*. She and her husband, Richard, are taking a break at the Snowflake Lodge with their four kids – ages 12, 10, 8 and 5.

For 8-year-old Robert, going fast is what he likes. He started skiing at 4 and last year transitioned to snowboarding. He boasted about how Diamond Peak was an easy place to switch sports.



Diamond Peak has all of its beginner terrain open. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

Most of the seating at this upper mountain lodge that is accessed from the Lakeview chairlift is outside. And with good reason. The views are stunning. On this Tuesday, with not a cloud in the sky and the sun beating down, it was definitely warm enough to sit there without a jacket.

Food is basic ski resort fare, with a couple vegetarian options.

It's easy to linger.

Laid back is a good way to describe Diamond Peak. It's unpretentious. It's welcoming.

Opinion: Calif. losing its prized rural forestland

By Jane Braxton Little, Sacramento Bee

California values forests. From coastal stands of iconic redwoods to high-elevation pines, trees cover 33 million acres, nearly one-third of the state. Private owners manage around 40 percent of these forests, an area more than twice the size of Alaska's Denali National Park.

Today California is losing these prized forestlands incrementally – one luxury home, one ski run at a time.

Lawmakers have historically recognized the critical role private forests play in the state's economy and beyond: providing water and wildlife habitat, storing carbon, creating and retaining soil. Among the steps they have taken to protect timberlands is the Forest Taxation Reform Act of 1976, the cornerstone of California forest policy. It establishes Timber Production Zoning (TPZ) designed to promote the long-term growth of timber on private lands by offering tax incentives that encourage protection of young trees and restrict other land uses.

Read the whole story

Airports losing money as ride sharing grows

By Amy Zipkin, New York Times

For many air travelers, getting to and from the airport has long been part of the whole miserable experience. Do they drive and park in some distant lot? Take mass transit or a taxi? Deal with a rental car?

Ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft are quickly changing those calculations. That has meant a bit less angst for travelers.

But that's not the case for airports. Travelers' changing habits, in fact, have begun to shake the airports' financial underpinnings.

Fewer people are parking cars at airports, using taxis or renting cars, according to a recent report from the National Academies Press.

[Read the whole story](#)

Fire in Pine Nuts contained at 122 acres

The Holiday Fire burning in the Pine Nuts has been contained.

The wildland fire that started Dec. 29 holiday fire burned 122 acres.

The incident is in the Preacher Mine area south of

Gardnerville.

Bureau of Land Management officials are investigating the cause.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*