

Letter: Rotarians give back to Bread & Broth

To the community,

Bread & Broth is very fortunate to have the support of the Tahoe Douglas Rotary Club and have them working side-by-side with our B&B volunteers to help feed many of our neighbors who struggle with hunger. The Rotary Club has partnered with B&B to host five Adopt A Day of Nourishments with their third sponsorship occurring Dec. 4.

“Tahoe Douglas Rotary Club is happy to support Bread & Broth’s wonderful Adopt A Day program,” commented Rotarian Ellen Dauscher. “We truly enjoying working alongside B&B’s fantastic volunteers and are joyful to be able to feed so many members of our community.”

Joining Dauscher on the AAD sponsor crew were fellow Rotarians Allegra Boyd, Ryan Moore, Bob Senna and Watt Wiggins and community member Amanda Jones. Pitching right in, the sponsor crew manned the serving line and the food giveaway, dessert and drinks tables, smiling and warmly welcoming the dinner’s guests.

The club’s sponsorship of B&B’s Monday Meal falls right into line with the club’s mission of providing service to others. The Tahoe Douglas Rotary Club is a group of volunteer leaders drawn together by fellowship and a desire to help others and do humanitarian service. B&B would like to acknowledge and thank the Tahoe Douglas Rotary for their AAD sponsorships and for the positive impact they have in helping so many causes and organizations in the Lake Tahoe South Shore community.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Nevada taking hard stance on DUIs

More than 26 Nevada law enforcement agencies are joining forces between now and Jan. 2, targeting impaired drivers who not only pose threats to themselves, but passengers and other road users.

During the past five years, an average of 300 people died in drunken driving crashes during the Christmas through New Year's holiday period. In December 2016 alone, 781 people lost their lives in drunken driving crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association.

Law enforcement reminds people that buzzed driving is drunken driving.

LTN subscriber wins copy of book club book

Ellie Waller, who has been a loyal reader and subscriber of *LTN* for years, is about to receive a copy of *Lake Tahoe News'* first **book club** book in the mail.

The book is "The Airbnb Story: How three ordinary guys disrupted an industry, made billions ... and created plenty of controversy" (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017). We hope you have started reading and will participate in the discussion via the comments.

As a subscriber, Waller was eligible to receive the book.

“*LakeTahoeNews.Net* is my go-to for online local and regional news. A great variety along with some personal commentary allow all readers to find something they may be interested in,” Waller said. “I have been involved with and participate in local jurisdiction, local and state agency meetings and local issues for 15 years and I’m glad to send information as well as read all posts daily. The new book is related to issues I follow in the Tahoe basin and around the USA.”

Subscribers are allowed to comment on all stories however often they like, receive breaking news alerts, are eligible for give-aways like the book, Soroptimist wine tasting and Giants tickets, and of course are ensuring the stories keep flowing on Tahoe’s only daily news source. It costs \$100 a year or \$10/month. Subscribe **online** or send a check to LTN, PO Box 13406, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151.

– LTN staff

High-end lounge opens at Reno airport

By Johnathan L. Wright, Reno Gazette-Journal

Have lounge, will travel.

Escape Lounge – a stylish new spot for food, drink, connectivity or simply watching planes take off and land – opened Dec. 15 just beyond security on the connector joining concourses B and C at Reno-Tahoe International Airport (and just in time for the holiday travel season).

Unlike many airport lounges, Escape Lounge is open to

passengers in all classes of service; the fee is \$40 in advance, \$45 walk in. American Express Platinum Card holders receive free access.

Read the whole story

Dry Christmas trees can spell disaster

By Kathryn Reed

CARSON CITY – Less than a minute. That's how fast a dry Christmas tree can be reduced to charred pine needles.

Most people will start to dismantle their tree in a week or so. Now is when trees start drying out, potentially creating a disastrous scene that could ruin the holiday in so many ways.

The Reno and Carson City fire departments last week demonstrated what happens when a dry tree catches fire and what happens to a healthy tree where there are sprinklers. The difference was dramatic.

The dry tree that had not been watered in days was a ball of fire in seconds. Think if there were presents under it, and anything flammable nearby. It wouldn't just be Christmas that went up in smoke.



*Charred remains of what was a decorated Christmas tree.
Photo/Kathryn Reed*

Stats from the National Fire Protection Association:

- Between 2011-15, there were an average of 200 home fires that started with Christmas trees in the United States. On average, annually these fires caused six deaths, 16 injuries, and \$14.8 million in direct property damage.
- On average, one of every 32 reported home fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in a death, compared to an average of one death per 143 total reported home fires.
- Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in two of every five home Christmas tree fires.

Bart Chambers, fire marshal for the state of Nevada, stressed how important it is to check the water level for trees on a daily basis.

“You need to make sure your tree is maintained,” Chambers said. If needles are falling, that’s a bad sign.

It’s also important to cut off a couple inches from the base

once the tree is at home so it will be able to absorb that water. That's because once a tree is cut pitch covers the base, forming a scab of sorts that prevents it from taking in water.

Chambers told *Lake Tahoe News* the number of Christmas tree fires across the country is holding steady, but fire officials would like to reduce that number because most are preventable.

Another issue with a fire with a dry tree is that it is going to produce thick, dark smoke. That could create evacuation difficulties for people. A healthy tree is going to give off a gray smoke that is less dense.

In the demonstration the dry tree was fully engulfed within 30 seconds. The smoke alarm sounded at 4 seconds. The walls of the structure it was in were blackened. This could have been someone's family room – a total loss.

For the healthy tree, it had some damage to the back after 90 seconds. The smoke alarm sounded after 15 seconds. The sprinklers kept it in fairly good condition.

Opinion: STPUD overcoming multiple challenges

By Richard Solbrig

With the new year just around the corner, now is a great time to reflect on all that has happened at South Tahoe Public Utility District in 2017.

This year the district became the first water and wastewater provider in the Tahoe basin to produce its own

hydroelectricity. Hydroelectricity uses the flow of water to generate power. The district is required by law to export all of our treated wastewater out of the basin. We are now capturing energy as water flows from the top of Luther Pass down 2,200 feet into Alpine County.

We currently have the capacity to produce 381,000 kilowatts of renewable energy each year, which will power about 55 homes. This also saves 100 tons of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide from entering our atmosphere. The hydroelectric portion of the project was partially grant funded and will pay for itself within eight years. This is a win-win for our community and the environment.

The big winter of 2017 presented many challenges for our community. At the wastewater treatment plant we saw a 33 percent increase in water flow into the plant from storm water flowing into our aging manholes and sewer pipes. The plant almost reached maximum operating capacity during the intense rain on snow events.

Due to the exceptional work of our crews during flooding and power outages we were able to provide uninterrupted, safe and reliable drinking water and wastewater treatment for our customers.

We had a busy summer repairing and improving our sewer system, but with an aging system like ours, we will be renewing our infrastructure for decades to come. We continue to assess our manholes, pipes and pumps to prioritize upgrades moving forward.

You may have seen us in your neighborhood as we installed fire hydrants and water meters. Living in the forest, fire protection is a top priority for our community. As such, we installed 46 new fire hydrants. We also installed 1,200 water meters to meet the state mandated deadline of a fully metered system by 2025. It will take three more years to install the

remaining 4,000 meters.

Complying with state mandates and updating an aging infrastructure can come with a big price tag. Over the last three years, the district has successfully secured \$6.7 million in grant funding and over \$35 million in low interest loans to help offset costs to our customers while providing reliable service.

From all of us at the district, have a wonderful holiday and thanks for a great year.

Richard Solbrig is the general manager of South Lake Tahoe Public Utility District.

Former Stateline school back on the market

The Douglas County School District board at a special meeting on Dec. 18 voted to put the former Kingsbury Middle School site back on the market for \$3.4 million.

This is the midpoint between two appraisals the district has for the Stateline parcel. The most recent appraisal was done this fall and came in at \$3.75 million, while an earlier one listed it as \$3.15 million.

If someone comes forward soon, the bid could be discussed at the board's Jan. 9 meeting.

More than a year ago the board entered an agreement with Patrick Taylor to purchase the site. He was never able to come up with the money so it fell out of escrow. His intent was to build affordable housing.

The 22-plus acre site with 36,000-square-feet of space had an original price tag of \$4 million and has been as low as \$3.15 million.

KMS has been dormant since the end of the 2007-08 school year. It was closed because of declining enrollment.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Firefighter's Dec. death underscores CalFire's 'new normal'

By Adam Ashton, Sacramento Bee

Last week's death of a state firefighter battling a December blaze in Ventura County underscored a stark message from this year's devastating fires: There is no end to fire season in California anymore.

Since 2004, no CalFire firefighter had died on duty after October in a calendar year. That changed when the so-called Thomas Fire on Thursday overtook San Diego-based engineer Cory Iverson, a 32-year-old firefighter who left behind a pregnant wife and a 2-year-old daughter.

His death stunned the department not only because it lost a veteran firefighter, but also because it occurred so late in the year.

[Read the whole story](#)

How the USFS grows millions of seedlings each year

By Greg M. Peters, *Forests Magazine*

Tucked into the Douglas fir and ponderosa pine forests of Northern Idaho sits the quaint lakeside town of Coeur d'Alene. The former lumber town is now a popular tourist destination drawing families from across the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Gone are the pounding mills, replaced with fancy lakefront hotels and bustling shopping centers.

But it's not hard to find relics of the region's once-thriving industry: Huge logs chained together to form breakwaters protect marinas and lakeside restaurants scattered around Lake Coeur d'Alene—the region's main tourist draw. In the sprawling Idaho Panhandle National Forest that nearly surrounds the town, century-old stumps the size of boulders rot beneath a canopy of trees that themselves seem a hundred or more years old. Both the stumps and the Forest's now abundant trees provide clear evidence of a century of forest management that has played out in this quiet corner of America.

A short 10-minute walk from the box stores and fast food restaurants that skirt Coeur d'Alene's edges is another example of how connected this small city is to the forests that surround it. Here, just off of an unassuming and ordinary street is the U.S. Forest Service's Coeur d'Alene Nursery. Established in 1960, the Coeur d'Alene Nursery straddles the past, the present and the future on a 220-acre plot of land. A squat single-story building greets visitors who enter into a small lobby decorated with a few posters, some t-shirts and hats. Greenhouses, warehouses and fields, some fallow and some

flush with small green trees, spread out behind the office, a tapestry of incongruous shapes and colors. An assortment of sheds, tractors, four wheelers and other custom-built contraptions rounds out the scene.

Read the whole story

Stranger saves dog that fell through ice in SLT



Ice at lake level is seldom strong enough to hold a person. Photo/SLTFD

A good Samaritan had to be taken to Barton Memorial Hospital on Monday for mild hypothermia after rescuing a dog in the Tahoe Keys.

“A pregnant lady was walking her dog. The dog got loose or ended up on the ice and fell through the ice,” South Lake Tahoe Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News*. “A passer-by came by and jumped in to rescue dog, which she did.”

Ice has formed along part of the Upper Truckee River, in the canal by Cove East and on the edge of Lake Tahoe in various places.

“When it’s cold and the Keys freeze you should never go out on it. It’s not thick enough to walk or skate on,” Meston warned.

Clearly, not everyone is heeding that warning. On the same day, Dec. 18, a man was seen ice skating on the canal by 15th Street. And a family regularly places hockey on a canal behind Tahoe Valley Elementary School.

Meston said a recent training video put out by Reno Fire Department said 3- to 4-inch thick ice is only solid enough to hold 200 pounds.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*