

Toddler found unresponsive at Stateline casino

A 4-year-old boy was found unresponsive in a hot tub at MontBleu on Sunday.

Douglas County sheriff's officials said the incident is believed to be an accident. They were called to the Stateline casino about 1:30pm Dec. 17. First responders tried to revive the boy.

The Redwood City toddler was transported to Barton Memorial Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

El Dorado County sheriff's coroner is handling the death investigation.

More information has not been released.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Tree falls through roof in S. Lake Tahoe

A South Lake Tahoe house was severely damaged Saturday when a tree fell on it.

No one in the Saddle Road residence was injured in the Dec. 16 incident. The winds that night were strong and sustained.

The renters living there stayed the night with the hole in the roof. They have since been temporarily relocated.

Authorities didn't know about the tree until Sunday.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Hight ready to prove herself in South Korea

By Garvin Thomas, NBC

Elena Hight moved to Lake Tahoe from Hawaii when she was 6, so snow was new to her.

Acrobatics, weren't however.

Her parents tell her she was jumping off everything by the age of 2. And now, after a big setback, Hight is hoping to jump back into the games.

[Read the whole story](#)

Public transit part of the ski industry traffic solution

By Matt Hansen, Powder

For a pastime that was built around the notion of escape and freedom in the mountains, getting to the ski hill now feels like we're lurching in the opposite direction from those ideals: stop-and-go traffic, idling cars spewing exhaust,

drivers angry at one another as they jockey for position.

Though this is nothing new for Colorado skiers trying to navigate I-70, bad traffic has coughed its exhaust-laden tentacles into even the most isolated Western ski towns. The parking lot at Bridger Bowl, Montana, overflows on powder days; the ski area even shut it down once because there was simply no more room. Ever tried driving into Aspen or Jackson or Breckenridge or Squaw Valley on a powder day? Not exactly the quiet life in the mountains we all envisioned. And then there's Little Cottonwood Canyon. Traffic is so bad there it has a name, the Red Snake, a line of brake lights that extends 11 miles from Alta and Snowbird to the valley floor.

"Unfortunately, it's become part of the deal, just like rising lift tickets," says Tom Hudachko, who, at 41, has skied Alta his entire life. "Just like everybody else, I'm getting up at the ass-crack of dawn to sit in my truck on the side of the road, with a thermos and breakfast burrito two hours before the lifts open."

Like you and me, Hudachko knows he's part of the problem. And just like you and me, Hudachko knows things would probably be better if everyone just took the bus.

Read the whole story

NDOT completes year-two on Incline project

The Nevada Department of Transportation last week completed the second construction season of the Highway 28 bike path near Incline Village. The entire project is anticipated to

complete in late 2018 or early 2019.

Lane closures in place through the summer and fall have now been removed. Crews may conduct minor preparation and staging along the path during winter months if conditions allow; creating periodic daytime lane closures during off season. Major construction is scheduled to resume in the spring, with lane closures between Sand Harbor State Park and Ponderosa Ranch Road.

This season, major rock scaling and retaining wall construction to protect the existing roadway and future path work occurred along the hillside near Lakeshore Boulevard. Pathway bridge foundation installation also began with utility work, sewer line and water quality enhancements.

The approximately \$36 million project by Granite Construction will result in numerous safety improvements, congestion reduction measures and water quality upgrades.

Film about climbing legend Beckey coming to Stateline

“The Legend of Fred Beckey” premiers Jan. 6 at MontBleu.

Beckey is the original American “Dirtbag” climber whose name has evoked mystery, adulation and vitriol since the 1940s. Beckey’s stubborn, singular quest to conquer peaks meant a solitary life on the road, where he left a long trail of scorned climbing partners and lost lovers in his wake.

The groundbreaking life story of this rebel athlete, who inspired generations of climbers to head for the mountains

with his monumental first ascents and eloquent books, is told for the first time in this exclusive documentary film.

Hailed as one of the most prolific, influential climbers of all time, Beckey's adventures began in Washington's North Cascade range with his brother Helmy in the 1930s. In 1942, the Beckey brothers cemented their place in climbing lore when the teenagers survived an incredible second ascent of Mount Waddington—considered the most difficult climb in North America at the time.

Still obsessed with the mountains and planning ambitious expeditions at age 94, the man who once bounded up granite and ice with graceful elegance and ease becomes challenged with the simplicity of everyday life. He slowed physically in his 90s, but his zeal for the outdoors never waned, and he continued steadfastly plotting new routes up undiscovered ranges for the next generation of climbers and explorers.

Director Dave O'Leske spent the past decade filming Beckey, getting to know the mythical man in the mountains of China, across North America and in his Pacific Northwest home. O'Leske partnered with a crew of award-winning filmmakers.

The \$15 tickets are available **online**. The film starts at 7:30pm, doors open at 6:30pm.

Caltrans, contractors clashing over road quality

By Adam Ashton, Sacramento Bee

Every time you pay more at California's gas pumps to fill your

tank, you're feeling the price to fix the state's roads.

But are you feeling the improvement?

California's newly paved roads are built to standards of smoothness that are the strictest in the country. With that standard comes high costs that have surprised contractors, who are fighting for reimbursement and bitterly condemning a level of smooth they say no driver would ever notice.

At least one major contractor also contends the smooth pavement is dangerous, arguing that corrective measures he takes to hit the target actually shave features that are supposed to keep roads safe in wet weather.

Read the whole story

Nev. drops to 37th in health care firm's annual ranking

By Jessie Bekker, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada ranked 37th in the nation this year in health, dropping two rungs from last year in an annual ranking by a health care company.

A UnitedHealthcare annual report showed that Nevada's greatest challenges include high rates of violent crime rate and the uninsured and a dearth in primary care.

It also ranked last among the 50 states and the District of Columbia in public health funding, at \$41 per person, compared

with \$296 per person in the No. 1 state for such funding, West Virginia.

Read the whole story

Free bus service in Truckee during holidays

For the second year in a row, Truckee in partnership with local businesses has made getting into downtown easy with free shuttle service from area neighborhoods and Northstar.

Residents and visitors alike can help reduce congestion by leaving the car behind from Dec. 26-31.

Free neighborhood shuttles will be providing service to/from downtown Truckee between 6pm and 2am daily. The neighborhood shuttles will service: Donner Lake, Sierra Meadows, Brockway, Gateway, Deerfield, West River Street, Prosser, Tahoe Donner and Glenshire.

Connections between the neighborhood and resort shuttles can be made at the Truckee Train Depot.

Free nightly resort shuttles will be providing service to/from downtown Truckee and Northstar between 6pm and 2am daily. Connections between holiday shuttle routes and TART's free night service can be made nightly at Northstar.

For additional information, go **online**.

Northstar – off the charts good



Near empty slopes at Northstar seem to flow onto the inversion covering Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Susan Wood

TRUCKEE – *Pssst* – here’s the best-kept secret for those who have been living under a rock – midweek skiing is nothing like the weekend.

Midweek riding offers a world all its own for those either lucky enough to be retired or crazy enough to call in sick to work. Then, there are those who work odd hours or swing shifts and others who want to celebrate the slopes to themselves. The experience is surprisingly a mixed bag of motivations.

Wednesday at Northstar was no exception.

“It’s eclectic – all types. You can see everything from retirees to ski teams to locals to visitors wanting a different experience,” Northstar spokeswoman Marcie Bradley

told *Lake Tahoe News*. “(Midweek is) serene and quiet.”



A crew prepares the terrain park that is now open.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

She's right. Only three boards and four sets of skis were resting in the racks by midday at the routinely-busy Zephyr Lodge.

Compulsive skiers and boarders wanting the assurance of technology to tell them what lift lines are uncrowded may check a feature on their Epic Mix pass that allows them to check the length of time to get on the slopes. Vail introduced the feature last year.

Eric Behrens of Healdsburg, who's been skiing at Northstar since he was 10, doesn't need to check. He knew what to expect midweek, that's why he was there.

The 41-year-old skier was celebrating his 10-year anniversary with his wife at Northstar. He came up midweek, and had a room at the Ritz-Carlton Lake Tahoe, which is tucked in about a

third of the way up the slopes.

“Nobody’s here. There’s no line,” Behrens said, while riding up the Comstock Express chairlift. He’s semi-retired, so his schedule is somewhat flexible.

One snowboarder from Redwood City didn’t care he was supposed to be at work. The 59-year-old, who plans to retire at 61, called in sick to his job in San Francisco to go skiing with no lines. He boasted of the bold decision.

Northstar has much to brag about. Besides its reputation for being family friendly, customer-service oriented, amenity-filled and professionally astute about what it’s doing, the Truckee ski resort has the operation down like a fine-tuned instrument.



Slow times at Zephyr Lodge. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Despite the bare ground at lake level, the big guns of snowmaking operate top to bottom skiing, with wide runs that can make you claustrophobic anywhere else.

The ski resort boasts 58 inches of snowfall even before Christmas. Since it's been quite cold, the snowmaking has been working around the clock on some days. And there's something to be said for that. Northstar has some of the **best snowmaking capacity** in the nation. With apologies to natural-snow snobs, it appears the man-made variety holds up better on warm days. Northstar is able to cover half its mountain with its chemical mix.

The runs off East Ridge on one side of the summit and West Ridge on the other are fully covered. Sketchy runs with obstacles like the black diamond trails of Rendezvous and Dutchman are well marked with warnings. The view off the ridges is outstanding, and the terrain is worry-free, and at midweek, it's like the wide-open road.

Skiers and boarders seeking a greater red-carpet experience may add on the Platinum Piste service, a trail combining the resort's signature grooming on a trail designed exclusively for them. Early birds may sign up for First Tracks, which opens its runs to them before the lifts turn for the masses.

The resort on Friday opened its Pinball terrain park under the Vista Express chairlift. This is one of nine lifts the resort is turning to serve 30 trails.

Northstar should start to see an uptick in people hitting the slopes for the holidays. If you're one of those who couldn't get away any sooner or later, there is an advantage to the exhilaration of coming out when the resort is bustling with activity.



No waiting in line during midweek skiing at Northstar.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

Events include:

- Noel Nights, Dec. 22, features a winter wonderland with horse-drawn sleigh rides.
- Breakfast with Santa, is just that on Dec. 24.
- New Year's Eve Fire & Ice, Dec. 31, rings in 2018 with a fireworks show.
- Her Mountain Retreat, Jan. 6-7; Feb. 3-4, provides an all-women getaway on the slopes.
- Mountain Table Dinner, Jan. 12, Feb. 2, Feb. 16 and March 9, allows for a night dining excursion at the Zephyr Lodge.
- Spring It On, April 7-8, celebrates the warm-weather season at the resort with a favorite – the pond-skim event.
- Snowshoe tours for families are scheduled for Dec. 24, Jan. 1, Jan. 14, Feb. 18. Stargazers can take part on Dec. 21, 23, 27; Jan. 13; Feb. 17; March 10; April 14. Twilight enthusiasts may seize the event Dec. 16, 23, 30; Jan. 6, 20, 27; Feb. 3, 17, 24; March 3, 4.