# Lake Valley holiday fire truck set to roll

Lake Valley Fire Protection District will again travel the neighborhoods with a decorated holiday truck.

**Here is the schedule:**

Dec. 11 – Echo View Estates, Tahoe Mountain Road, Mule Deer Circle

Dec. 12 – Lake Tahoe Boulevard from Boulder Mountain Drive to Grizzly Mountain Drive

Dec. 13 – West side of North Upper Truckee from Zuni Street, Highway 50, Chiapa Drive

Dec. 14 – East side of North Upper Truckee from Grizzly Mountain to West San Bernardino Avenue

Dec. 15 – Christmas Valley from Highway 50 to Grass Lake Road

Dec. 16 –North side of Highway 50 in Meyers (lower Apache, Magnet School), behind Station 7 (Cornelian Drive, Navahoe Drive, Cheyenne Drive).

Dec. 17 – North of Pioneer Trail from Highway 50 to Elks Club (Southern Pines Drive, Tionontati Street, Meadow Vale Drive), Player Drive

Dec. 18 – Upper Apache Drive and Mandan Street

Dec. 19 – Pioneer Trail from Busch Way to Washoan Boulevard (Glen Eagles Drive, Hekpa Drive)

Dec. 20 – Pioneer Trail from Washoan Boulevard to Jicarilla Drive (Apalachee Drive, Nadowa Street, Susquehana Drive)

Dec. 21 – Kokanee Estates (Marshall Trail, High Meadow Trail)

Dec. 22 – Golden Bear Trail, Meadow View Estates (Plateau Circle, Cattleman's Trail)

Dec. 23 – Cold Creek Trail, Del Norte Street, Black Bart from Pioneer Trail to Meadow Crest Drive.

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# NLT Boys & Girls Club expanding after school programs

This winter, the Boys & Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe will be partnering with the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation to serve youth in Incline Village with out-of-school time programs.

The foundation has granted a substantial amount to help spearhead the effort to open the Boys & Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe Duffield Youth Program.

Starting in January, the BGCNLT Duffield Youth Program, with additional support from the Incline Village General Improvement District and Incline Elementary School, will provide after-school programming for K-5 within Incline Elementary School. Participants will have access to enrichment programs Monday through Friday from the moment school is released until 6:30pm. Membership for these drop-in programs will be available for an annual $50 fee.

IVGID's current after school program will be folded into the Boys & Girls Club curriculum.

# Wildfires can wipe out Calif. greenhouse gas gains

**By David R. Baker, San Francisco Chronicle**

Most years, the amount of greenhouse gases spewed by California's cars, factories and power plants drops slightly – a hard-won result of the state's fight against global warming.

And in any given year, one big wildfire can wipe out that progress.

Over the course of just a few weeks, a major fire can pump more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than California's many climate change programs can save in 12 months. Scientists debate whether California's vast forests are emitting more carbon dioxide through fires than they absorb through plant growth.

As global warming raises temperatures, making fires like the ones that tore through the Wine Country last month more likely, it could turn into a vicious cycle.

**Read the whole story**

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# Preparation key to working

# out in the winter

**By Kristi Jouett**

Does the cold weather stop you in your tracks? Maybe not if you are a winter sports enthusiast, but what if you aren't? Maintaining your fitness goals can be challenging when you're shoveling snow to get out of your driveway – or even to get into your car. But remember: shoveling snow is exercise.



Kristi Jouett

If you're someone who goes into hibernation with the bears during winter, I'm here to offer some tips that will help you stay motivated throughout the colder, darker months.

**No. 1:** Plan ahead. John Wooden, a member of basketball hall of fame, once said, "Failing to prepare is preparing to fail." Winter months require a little more effort, so planning ahead based on weather conditions may help maintain motivation.

**No. 2:** Dress for success. Like summer, winter offers an array of exercise choices, but may require an extra layer of clothing.

**No. 3:** Make it fun. Pull out the Yaktraks, snowshoes, or cross country skis. Consider inviting a friend.  It also helps to make a game plan for each day in an effort to maximize time spent doing an activity or workout. Even in the snow, you'll find exposed rocks that can be used as exercise platforms. Get creative and make nature your snowy playground.

**No. 4:** Keep your workouts outside. Tahoe offers many blue sky days even in the winter. More and more evidence suggests exercising outside has more health benefits than indoor activity. In a 2017 study published in the ACSM Health & Fitness Journal, Kelsey Brown and Dixie Stanforth found that "green exercise" or exercising outside leads to "increased exercise enjoyment" and "stronger exercise adherence."

**No. 5:** Make a commitment to yourself and keep it. You only let yourself down when you skip a workout. Maintaining a level of fitness takes a lot of work and does not always come easy. Keep that in mind when you feel like skipping a workout on that cold, blustery winter day. The hardest part of any workout is simply getting there. Show up.

*Kristi Jouett is a certified fitness instructor with Tahoe Fit, a partnership between Barton Health and Lake Tahoe Community College offering a variety of daily fitness classes around South Lake Tahoe.*

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# Truckee trash franchise changes coming in 2018

The Truckee council on Dec. 12 is expected to sign a 10-year agreement with Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal.

The new agreement includes significant changes to residential and commercial services.

The biggest service changes for residents will be the roll-out of containerized recyclable and yard trimming collection. Each household will receive a 64-gallon wheeled blue cart for all recyclables and a 96-gallon wheeled green cart for all yard

waste. Recyclables and yard waste will be picked up curbside on alternating weeks. Residents have the option to opt out of recycling carts and continue to use blue bags.

There is, however, no opt out option for yard waste; all residents must use green carts as green bags will no longer be accepted after June 30.

The new services will also expand existing dumpster and drop-off services for yard waste. Other notable service changes include two new locations for recycling drop-off during the summer months and two free pick ups of large items per year.

These changes will reach residents over the next three years. All Truckee residents will receive yard waste carts in June for use beginning July 1. The Glenshire neighborhood will receive recyclables carts in September and begin with the new recycling service changes on Oct. 1, 2018. Remaining Truckee neighborhoods excluding Tahoe-Donner will start using blue carts in 2019. Tahoe-Donner residents will begin the new program in 2020.

All residents will continue to use their current trash cans for mixed waste materials.

Commercial customers will receive wildlife-resistant food waste carts that will be serviced up to three times a week.

The meeting starts at 6pm at the Truckee Town Hall.

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# Essential oils can bring calm

# to the holidays

**By Melinda Myers**

Ease into the hectic holiday season with the help of aromatherapy. The fragrances of plant-derived essential oils have long been used to improve the health of our mind, body and spirit.

Boost your energy and increase your focus as you work to balance work, family and holiday fun. Peppermint has long been prized for this and so much more. You'll find it also helps relieve headaches and indigestion.



Warming wraps infused with essential oils can provide relief to those suffering from sore shoulder and neck muscles. Photo/Gardener's Supply Company

Freshen your home with the scent of grapefruit. It's the

perfect solution when unexpected guests drop by for a visit. You may also find the grapefruit aroma, along with your company, help to lighten your mood.

Use eucalyptus essential oil in the fight against colds and flu this winter. Just place a few drops into a diffuser on your desk at work, in your bedroom or family room. The diffusers come in a wide array of shapes and sizes. Some use heat, ultrasonic vibrations, fans or wood wicks to disperse the fragrance throughout the room. Others allow the fragrance to seep through the porous portion of the diffuser pot and into the room.

Or use a eucalyptus eye mask to help relieve sinus pressure and sooth tired eyes. Just gently heat or cool the mask, cover your eyes and relax into a bit of relief.

End your day with relaxing lavender. It helps reduce anxiety, relieves headaches and improves sleep. Turn up the heat and fragrance with the Ultimate Lavender Wrap. Simply pop the flax, rice and lavender infused insert into the microwave. Place it back into the cloth cover and drape it over your neck and shoulders. This can provide relief for those suffering from tense or aching muscles and winter chills.

Encourage a good night’s sleep by tucking a lavender-filled sachet under your pillow. Or set a bundle of dried lavender stems in the bathroom, bedroom or anywhere you want to enjoy the fragrance of a summer garden and a bit of relaxation.

When you incorporate some aromatherapy into your routine you’ll find yourself smiling and more relaxed. The boost in energy and reduced stress will help you navigate the many gatherings, rich food and busy schedules ahead. And consider giving the gift of aromatherapy to someone you love, so they too can enjoy improved harmony and health into the New Year.

*Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including “Small Space Gardening.” She hosts the Great Courses*

*“How to Grow Anything: Food Gardening For Everyone” DVD set and the nationally syndicated “Melinda’s Garden Moment” TV and radio segments.*

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# Transformer replacement to lessen Liberty outages



Tyson Hurd and Josh Kleinschmidt hook up a transformer in the Tahoe Keys on Nov. 21. Photo/Kathryn Reed

**By Kathryn Reed**

Power outages are never fun. And when the problem isn’t obvious, it’s worse for everyone – including the crews tasked with solving the issue.

Last weekend a swath of the Tahoe Keys was without power. A transformer had gone out in this South Lake Tahoe neighborhood. It needed it replacing.

The problem is when the Keys was built in the late 1960s all of the transformers were submersible. In other words, they are underground and likely sitting in water because of the high water table. Even when some were replaced in the 1980s, back underground they went.

Aesthetically, putting electrical transformers underground made sense. Practically, though, the logic was missing.

"The submersibles are mapped, but they're hard to find," Nick Rains, a patrolman with Liberty Utilities, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "A backhoe is brought in and it's a bit of a guessing game."

In winter it is even more problematic with snow and the ground being frozen.



Crews maneuver the green transformer box into place. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Rains was out with a crew this week on Venice Drive replacing the transformer that died three days earlier. To do so required getting permission from the homeowner to place a green box in their front yard. Most people don't want it there, so it can take some negotiating.

Liberty has a program to replace all the submersible transformers. But when one goes out, like last Saturday, then it rises to the top of the list. The new ones have a life expectancy of about 30 years.

When Liberty bought the territory from NV Energy in 2011 there were more than 130 of these submersible transformers, with most being in the Keys. Since then about 80 percent have been replaced.

"Liberty has made the change-out program a priority; investing about $100,000 per year with a goal to change out an average of 10 per year," Jeff Matthews, manager of engineering and planning for Liberty Utilities, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Liberty wasn't able to change out as many submersible transformers this year because of the high water table due to the extreme snow earlier this year."

Doing any repair work can be a nightmare on the submersibles. The above ground ones make it so outages don't last as long because the work can be done faster. The technology also allows for outages to not be as widespread by rerouting customers.

Another concern of the submersibles is what they are doing to the environment.

"A potential toxin of concern for electric transformers contaminating groundwater is polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which were formerly used in transformer oil. (South Tahoe Public Utility District) tests all of our wells regularly for PCBs and has never found PCBs in our drinking water," Shelly Thomsen with STPUD told *LTN.* "By moving electrical equipment

above ground, Liberty Utilities is moving in the right direction to greatly minimize any issues relating to groundwater in the future."

Utility companies are mandated to test the water in these vaults when pumping is required to access the components.

"Not all older transformers had PCBs in the internal fluids. I am not concerned about the individual older transformers units that may have had PCBs because the hydrostatic pressure from being submersed in water helps keep the contents inside and individual units usually have very little internal fluids. Also, PCBs have a high affinity for adhering to soil particles, which makes the PCBs less likely to leach into groundwater," Doug Smith, assistant executive officer with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

According to Matthews, Liberty has not had any issues with its transformers in regards to contaminants.

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# Opinion: Partnerships can help bridge divides

**By Joanne Marchetta**

Nearly 200 conservation professionals from around the country gathered back east this November to have a strategic dialogue about the state of landscape-scale conservation. Lake Tahoe was featured at the forum for the region's cooperative restoration initiatives, and it was an honor to share the stage with such high-caliber conservation thought leaders.

The national forum showcased how people of all backgrounds are collaborating and working to conserve some of America’s most iconic natural areas.



Joanne Marchetta

Through the High Divide Collaborative, partners are working to conserve forests, wilderness areas, and open spaces that extend from Northern Montana and Idaho to Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. The focus is on protecting working family ranches, headwaters for world-class fisheries and water supply, and nationally-important recreation areas, while also ensuring continent-scale wildlife corridors for species such as elk, wolves, grizzly bear, and sage grouse.

Along the East Coast, dozens of partners are working to conserve and restore natural areas and protect cultural experiences along the storied Appalachian Trail that runs from Georgia to Maine. And through the Two Countries, One Forest initiative, the U.S., Canada, and 50 partner organizations are working to protect 80 million acres of forest habitat in the Northern Appalachia and Acadia ecoregion.

Speakers at the conference clearly showed that the conservation movement is coming of age in North America. From the Gulf Coast to New England and the American West, collaborative, landscape-scale conservation is being understood not just to feed the human spirit, but for our very survival, to connect people responsibly to the ecosystems that sustain us.

The understanding of this deep need to protect natural areas was echoed in elections this month. According to the Trust for Public Land, voters across the country passed 36 out of 41 local and state conservation measures on the ballot, approving more than $1.5 billion for parks and conservation in coming years.

Lake Tahoe's conservation story is helping inspire and guide many of these initiatives. Lake Tahoe was one of America's visionary and first landscape-scale conservation initiatives. Rightfully fearing that Tahoe could be lost to runaway development half a century ago, California, Nevada, and the federal government partnered to stop overdevelopment in the Tahoe basin under the organizing cry that polluted water doesn't respect state lines.

Over the last half century, the Tahoe region has taken major steps to conserve and restore the lake and its environment and we are continuously working to increase the pace and scale of our conservation and restoration accomplishments and to make our communities more sustainable.

In the last two decades, the Lake Tahoe environmental improvement program has grown into one of the nation's most ambitious and successful conservation and restoration initiatives. More than 50 public and private sector partners at Tahoe have implemented more than 500 projects to restore streams and wetlands, reduce storm water pollution, and restore forest health. TRPA and dozens of partners are working to sustainably redevelop our communities to lessen their environmental impact, improve the health, vitality, and safety of our neighborhoods, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

With climate change now threatening the environment we all depend upon, landscape-scale conservation takes on a new importance. It not only protects wildlife and the natural areas we all enjoy for recreation and inspiration, the

integrity of landscapes can alleviate the aftermath of extreme storm events as well as protect air and water quality, human health, and confront major threats like increased wildfire.

Our partnerships and successes at Tahoe have created a national model for landscape-scale conservation in America, and it is heartening and inspiring to see other models taking shape nationally and globally. The leaders who gathered at the national landscape conservation forum acknowledged today's polarized politics and national divisions. But they all agreed on one thing: That there is the opportunity to use landscape conservation to show how models like Tahoe's collaborative partnership can bridge divides, promote understanding, and heal division. Now more than ever, we need that.

*Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.*

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# Single travelers changing the tour market

**By Arthur Frommer, Frommer's**

In a surprising announcement, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has found that fully 50 percent of America's adult population now consists of unmarried single people. And because another smaller percentage of the population is married people who nonetheless prefer to travel alone, the result is that more than half of our adult population are persons who travel without a spouse.

That interesting figure has been noted and absorbed by a growing number of tour operators who are now modifying their

trips to appeal to solo travelers. The largest of those tour operators, Intrepid Travel, has just announced a sizable tour program for the coming year that will be limited to single or solo people.

**Read the whole story**

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# Free avalanche beacon seminar on North Shore

Apenglow Sports in Tahoe City is putting on a community avalanche beacon seminar and practice session at the Tahoe City Winter Sports Park Sports on Dec. 13 at 6pm.

This event will help attendees better understand avalanche beacon function and the recent technological advancements of these vital backcountry tools.

The evening is free to attend and will last approximately two hours. The event will begin with an outdoor component that will cover both basic and multiple burial scenarios, as well as over-arching safety themes. During this hands-on practice, Alpenglow Sports will have a small fleet of beacons on hand for practice, and knowledgeable experts will be available to teach proper avalanche beacon usage. If you own your own beacon, we encourage you to bring it for practice.

Bring a headlamp, warm clothing and dress for winter conditions.

The group will then move indoors where Café Zenon will be offering an egg roll and craft beer special for $8. Our guiding experts will be available for follow up questions, and

to share their knowledge.