32-year veteran retiring from Lahontan's No. 2 post



Lauri Kemper, left, listens as her boss Executive Director Patty Kouyoumdjian on Nov. 15 reads a proclamation. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Like so many people, Lauri Kemper thought she was going to spend a couple years at Lake Tahoe and then move on.

That didn't happen. Instead she spent the last 32 years with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, 20 of them as a manager. On Dec. 18 she retires as the deputy executive officer from the state agency that is based in South Lake Tahoe, after having started in February 1985.

The place and purpose are what kept her here all these years.

"It's like living in a national park. And the career was focused on making things better for humans and the environment," Kemper, whose background is as an engineer, told *Lake Tahoe News.* "The other reason I stayed is the diversity of the region."

Lahontan's jurisdiction, while it covers the California side of the Tahoe basin, extends to the Oregon border and down to the desert.

On Nov. 15 she was recognized by her colleagues and the board of directors for her service. Executive Director Patty Kouyoumdjian read a resolution and presented Kemper with a photo of Lake Tahoe that was signed by her co-workers. Kouyoumdjian was effusive with her praise of Kemper. “All are better for working with her,” Kouyoumdjian said.

Kemper will continue to live on the South Shore; she looks forward to having more fun by hitting the slopes, hiking – enjoying the outdoors she has worked so hard to protect.

She said this will feel like the first real ski season she has had since living here. No longer will work get in the way of a powder day.

Taking over for Kemper is Doug Smith, a supervising engineering geologist for Lahontan.

Plenty of snow on mountaintop as Heavenly opens



Winter has definitely arrived at Heavenly as evidenced Nov. 17 by the snow at the top of Tamarack chair looking down. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Opening day at Heavenly Mountain Resort was delayed a few hours, but that didn't seem to bother the hundreds of people who were making tracks Friday for the first time this season.

It did make for a bit of a long day for those who arrived at 6:30am to ensure they'd be first in line.

Roy Lambert of Gardnerville, Michael Brown of Stateline and Kouri Penn of South Lake Tahoe had the lock on the front row. There's about 15 in their posse. They consider themselves the first chair club. They've been at it for more than a dozen years.

It's the rush, being with friends and beating the crowds that has them wanting that first gondola carriage of the season.



Roy Lambert, from left, Michael Brown and Kouri Penn are ready for the first gondola car of the season at Heavenly on Nov. 17. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The day started late because Tamarack chair needed to be deiced. It was the only lift running, which is normal for the start of the season.

The snow, though, was awesome. As one man from Carson City said, it was like January snow.

On the mountain it’s like a frosty winter wonderland where the trees are wrapped in a thick layer of snow.

Snow is being made as well, which will speed up the process for more terrain to be opened. Expect Dipper to be the next lift to spin.

For Art Bonfert of Auburn, he's been to opening day the last four years – a treat since retiring.

"The skiing is never good, but it's just the fact you can be here," Bonfert told *Lake Tahoe News*. This is his 49th year to ski Heavenly. Last year he got in 75 days, this year he's hoping for 100.



It was hard to smell the fresh mountain air in the Tamarack line on Nov. 17. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Jesse Sopoaga of Monterey has been hearing his buddy's stories about snowboarding and knew it was time to share in the fun. He rented equipment at home, pulled the appropriate clothing together, stayed over Thursday and was ready hours before the gondola was open. He paid $109 for the experience.

His friend Jeff Oda of Pinole has an Epic Tahoe pass. Tahoe is his place to unwind from the stresses of the Bay Area. This, though, was his first opening day.

It seemed to be a bit of a party atmosphere in the Tamarack lift line with all the smoking – cigarettes, pot, vaping – and the alcohol being consumed. Even though the resort has signs not to partake in those activities in line, staff wasn't doing anything about it. It was hard to miss the smell and not see the big puffs of smoke.

Perhaps once more terrain opens it won't be such a nuisance to those not consuming.

Northstar was supposed to open Nov. 17 as well, but the storm brought more rain than snow to the Truckee resort. It is now slated to open Nov. 23.

Squaw Valley opened Nov. 17, Mount Rose is open, Mammoth is open, Kirkwood is set to open Nov. 22, and other resorts are waiting on Mother Nature to help cover the slopes with white stuff. Another storm system is expected to reach Tahoe starting Sunday night. It is best to check the website of each ski resort to see if it is open as well as how much terrain is skiable.

Douglas County has grant money for agencies

Douglas County is looking for applicants for the 2017-18 Community Grant Program.

Criteria for funding is **online**.

The Board of Commissioners will make the final decision as to which agencies are funded.

Applications are due at 5pm Dec. 1.

For more info email, kkaiser@douglasnv.us.

No injuries as LTUSD bus slides off road



A school bus on Gardner Mountain on Nov. 17 was close to going down an embankment after sliding on ice. Photo/LTN

A Lake Tahoe Unified School District bus carrying 15 students slid off the road Friday morning. No one was injured.

According to the California Highway Patrol, the bus driver was west on 13th Street near Gardner Street at a slow rate of speed when she was unable to stop because of the slick road.

This caused the front of the bus to start sliding down Gardner

Street. The driver side front wheels went off the edge of the road.

While the bus was sliding it hit a stop sign on Gardner Street.

“There was no indication that this icy intersection had been sanded at the time of the collision,” Officer Mike Garrity said in his report.

The accident occurred at 7:47am Nov. 17.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. may reach 50% renewable power goal 10 years early

By David R. Baker, San Francisco Chronicle

Two years ago, Gov. Jerry Brown signed an ambitious law ordering California utility companies to get 50 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2030.

It looks like they may hit that goal a decade ahead of schedule.

An annual report issued Monday by California regulators found that the state’s three big, investor-owned utilities – Pacific Gas and Electric Co., Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas & Electric Co. – are collectively on track to reach the 50 percent milestone by 2020, although individual companies could exceed the mark or fall just short of it.

Read the whole story

Blood drive in South Lake Tahoe

BloodSource will host a South Lake Tahoe blood drive on Dec. 1.

The drive is sponsored by the Barton Memorial Hospital Auxiliary.

Walk-ins are welcome.

Donors must weigh at least 110 pounds, be at least 16 years old (16 and 17 year olds will need a signed BloodSource Parental consent form) and be generally healthy. There is no upper age limit for blood donations. Donors must bring a photo ID and should drink plenty of fluids before donating.

It will be at the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center on Rufus Allen Boulevard from noon-5pm.

Affordable housing complex possible in Truckee

The Truckee Planning Commission on Nov. 21 will consider granting a development permit for an 48-unit affordable housing complex in the Coldstream Specific Plan Area.

The complex would include a mix of one- and two-bedroom dwelling units and a community clubhouse.

Access would be off Coldstream Road and by the construction of the main entry road into the Coldstream Specific Plan Area. Frontage improvements include a new roadway and new diagonal parking and a transit stop. A retention basin and a snow storage area are proposed off-site on property currently owned by Teichert Land Company-Stonebridge Properties, which is the owner/developer of the Coldstream Specific Plan.

Placer County aims to increase housing supply

Placer County Board of Supervisors this week voted to support an update to the county's ordinance for secondary dwelling units, making them easier to build.

Secondary dwelling units are commonly known as in-law suites or granny flats.

The updated ordinance allows flexibility for either the primary or secondary dwelling on the property to be available for owner occupancy or long-term rental.

The units make it easier for homeowners to accommodate young adults attending college, college graduates returning home and those providing care for aging parents. They also create income opportunities for homeowners who want to build dwelling units on their property.

The units may either be attached or detached from the primary home, and must provide complete, independent living facilities

for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.

These secondary units cannot be larger than 1,200 square feet.

Secondary dwelling units in the Lake Tahoe Basin are subject to all Tahoe Regional Planning Agency regulations.

Sand bags available in Placer County

Placer County has a slew of locations where residents may get sand bags.

Here are locations in the greater Lake Tahoe area:

- North Tahoe Fire: Station 53, 5425 West Lake Blvd., Homewood
- North Tahoe Fire Station 52, 288 North Shore Blvd. (Intersection of highways 267 and 28), Kings Beach
- Northstar Community Services District Corp Yard, 50 Trimont Lane (off Northstar Boulevard)
- Old Squaw Valley Fire Station, 1810 Squaw Valley Road (at west end of valley, near lifts)
- Department of Public Works Corp Yard, 2501 North Lake Blvd. (Burton Creek), Tahoe City’
- Truckee Fire Station 92, 11473 Donner Pass Road
- Truckee Corp Yard, 10969 Stevens Lane.

Memory subject of talk in Incline Village

Charan Ranganath, director of the UC Davis Memory and Plasticity Program and professor of psychology, on Jan. 18 will be talking about the cutting-edge of human memory research.

Recent discoveries in neuroscience have revealed significant insights into how people remember and how to remember better. Evidence shows that the very act of remembering can sometimes help retain information with important discoveries about why this happens. Research also shows the surprising ways that motivation and curiosity can influence memory.

The program will begin at 6pm, with refreshments and no-host bar from 5:30-6pm at TERC on the campus of Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village.

Pre-registration is encouraged. A $5 suggested donation will be collected at the door.