North Tahoe roadwork to cause delays

Motorists traveling in the Truckee-Tahoe should expect traffic delays next week as paving operations on Highway 89 move toward the Interstate 80 junction and the roundabouts.

Full eastbound and westbound I-80 ramp closures at the Highway 89 south interchange will be in effect around the clock from 5am Oct. 2 through 8pm Oct. 4. One-way traffic controls will be in effect from 8pm Oct. 1 through the morning of Oct. 6 on Highway 89 from Donner Pass Road, south through the roundabouts, and extending several miles.

Delays of 20 to 60 minutes are expected.

Striping work requiring intermittent one-way traffic controls will begin Oct. 16.

Plenty of firewood available in Wrights Lake area

Eldorado National Forest is asking the local community to help continue to clean up the Wrights Lake Recreation Area.

It was severely damaged in the winter of 2013 when numerous large green trees were pushed over in extremely high winds. More than 200 trees fell during the wind storms causing a heavy accumulation of fuelwood in the areas adjacent to the campground, picnic areas, trails and recreation residences. During several special clean-up events in 2014 and two free fuelwood cutting events in 2015 and 2016, many loads of wood

were removed.

However, the area still contains a large amount of dead and downed wood, and much of it is already cut and accessible off of adjacent roads.

To continue reducing dead and downed material in the area, free residential woodcutting will be permitted through Oct. 22 from 8am-5pm. The public with a valid permit for the Wrights Lake area will be allowed to cut and remove wood from a designated portion of the recreation area. Free permits for fuelwood cutting and gathering are available at the Pacific Ranger District office, Crystal Visitor Information Station.. The fuelwood is predominantly lodge pole pine.

Nev. pot sales hit $27 million in first month

By Jenny Kane, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada took a gamble on recreational marijuana, and it’s paying off.

Dispensaries sold $27.1 million of pot in Nevada, in July alone. That’s almost double what Colorado and Oregon sold in their first months. It’s almost seven times what Washington sold.

Banking on weed, Nevada made $10.2 million off the fledgling industry during the first month of sales in July, according to the Nevada Department of Taxation. Of that, $6.5 million came from industry fees and $3.68 million came from tax revenue.

Read the whole story

Motorcyclist dies on Spooner Summit



A motorcyclist died Sept. 30 after crashing on Spooner Summit. Photo/NHP

A motorcyclist died Saturday on Spooner Summit.

The right lane of eastbound Highway 50 is closed about one mile east of the summit, with no estimated time of reopening.

The accident occurred about 12:30 pm Sept. 30.

Only the motorcyclist was involved. Authorities said speed may have been a factor.

Information on the rider was not available.

This weekend marks the annual Street Vibrations motorcycle event based in Reno, though rides are throughout the area, including the Tahoe basin.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Recycling rates soar on North Shore

Nearly two years after Placer County's recyclable sorting facility near Truckee started to receive a $1.2 million upgrade, the amount of goods being recovered has soared.

The first full operational fiscal year ended in June.

Compared to the year prior to the improvements, recovery of plastics has increased by 21 percent and recovery of aluminum has increased by 37 percent. About 600,000 more plastic bottles were diverted than before the improvements and about 1 million more aluminum cans.

The upgrades included metering equipment at the beginning of the sorting line that helps control the volume of waste loaded onto the conveyor belt, a new sorting screen that spreads the waste out for better visibility, and four new sorting stations added at the end of the line that increases the opportunity for workers to pull more recyclable materials.

Since opening in 1995 to facilitate the closure of the adjacent Eastern Regional Sanitary Landfill, which had been in operation since 1973, the materials recovery facility, or MRF, has operated as a sorting and transfer station for waste collected in the eastern portion of the county and in Truckee. Recyclables are separated at the sorting facilities.

California requires all cities and counties to divert a minimum of 50 percent of all waste from the landfill.

Bear activity increasing; use common sense

California black bears are typically active and foraging between April and mid-fall, but in autumn, black bears experience changes in metabolism that drives the need to consume as many rich calories as possible. This metabolic spike is an important signal to the bear to bulk up and gain the fat that will sustain the animal through hibernation and periods of lean food sources.

Scientists estimate that black bears may forage as many as 20 hours a day at this time.

During this transition, residents in bear country like Lake Tahoe should be even more diligent to avoid attracting bears. This will avoid creating garbage bears, but it also means the bears getting the appropriate diet that will sustain them through the winter.

Residents leaving cabins for the season should remove all attractants from the cabins, and seal and lock all doors and windows. Crawl spaces under houses or porches should be sealed in order to prevent them from becoming denning sites.

Here are things to know:

- Bears have a sense of smell seven times stronger than a bloodhound and eyesight as good as a human’s
- Any scent, especially one of odorous foods like fish or other meats, may attract a bear to your home and yard
- Remove bird feeders completely until later in the year
- Remove fallen fruit off the ground promptly
- Use bear-resistant garbage cans and wait to set trash

out until the day of pick up
- Store pet food inside
- Do not leave food or other scented items in your car
- Bears fed intentionally or unintentionally by people may become bold and aggressive—they may be killed if they become a threat to public safety or cause property damage
- In the event a bear breaks into your home, move to a safe location and contact local authorities. Wildlife experts caution against directly confronting the bear or blocking the bear's escape route.
- Be alert on trails (avoid wearing headphones)
- Keep a respectful and safe distance from bears at all times
- Do not attempt to take "selfies" with bears or other wildlife
- Never feed a bear – it is unlawful and dangerous to people and may result in the needless death of a bear.

– California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Private business on public lands a growing trend



Recreational vehicles at an RV-only camping area in Yellowstone National Park run by Xanterra. Photo/Jim Peaco/National Park Service

By Joshua Zaffos, High Country News

A family heading to Yellowstone National Park this summer to sleep amid the geysers and grizzlies had lots of choice in accommodations. They could throw up a tent on a simple campsite without flush toilets for less than $20 a night. Campgrounds with full RV hookups, showers and bathrooms would cost $24 to $47. Cabins and rooms around Old Faithful, while much pricier, offer easy access to restaurants, stores, cell service and Wi-Fi.

Beyond the upgraded amenities, a difference the park-visiting family might not have noticed is who was running those campsites and cabins. The National Park Service manages the basic campgrounds, while Xanterra Parks & Resorts, a private concessionaire, operates the more developed campgrounds and lodges, food services, gift shops and guide outfits – all the services, in other words, that are well positioned to turn a profit.

Turning over campgrounds and other services to private companies is a common – and somewhat controversial – practice in popular national parks, and even many well trafficked

national forests. And it may soon become even more ubiquitous, bringing changes that could alter the natural settings of campgrounds and public lands.

Read the whole story

Video contest open to Gaines' constituents

High school and college undergraduates reside in California's 1st Senate District may enter a video contest. The theme is The Bill of Rights and You.

State Sen.Ted Gaines, R-El Dorado, is hosting the contest.

Participants must choose a constitutional amendment within the Bill of Rights and create a two-to five-minute video illustrating how it has benefited them. The videos may feature live people, stills, animation – whatever best conveys the message.

Videos can be submitted now through Nov. 20. Two winners – one high school and one college – living in or attending school within the 1st Senate District will be selected by Gaines and will each receive a $300 cash prize and be invited to the Capitol in Sacramento for a meeting with Gaines and a VIP tour of the building. The winning videos will also be posted to Gaines' website.

All details about the contest, including the rules and entry form are available **online**.

Caesars wins key approvals, moves close to bankruptcy exit

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Gaming regulators in Louisiana and Missouri have granted the licenses and regulatory approvals necessary for the restructuring of Caesars Entertainment and Caesars Entertainment Operating Co., company officials said Wednesday.

The approvals in those two states were the last major hurdles for Caesars to clear to exit Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The company expects to be operating under the restructured corporate governance in early October.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah’s and Harveys in Stateline.

Read the whole story

Mt. Rose making upgrades in time for Oct. opening



Mount Rose has the highest base of any Tahoe-area resort. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Mount Rose is installing North America's first dual enclosed conveyor belt lift to better serve beginners. It will be only the second one in the world.

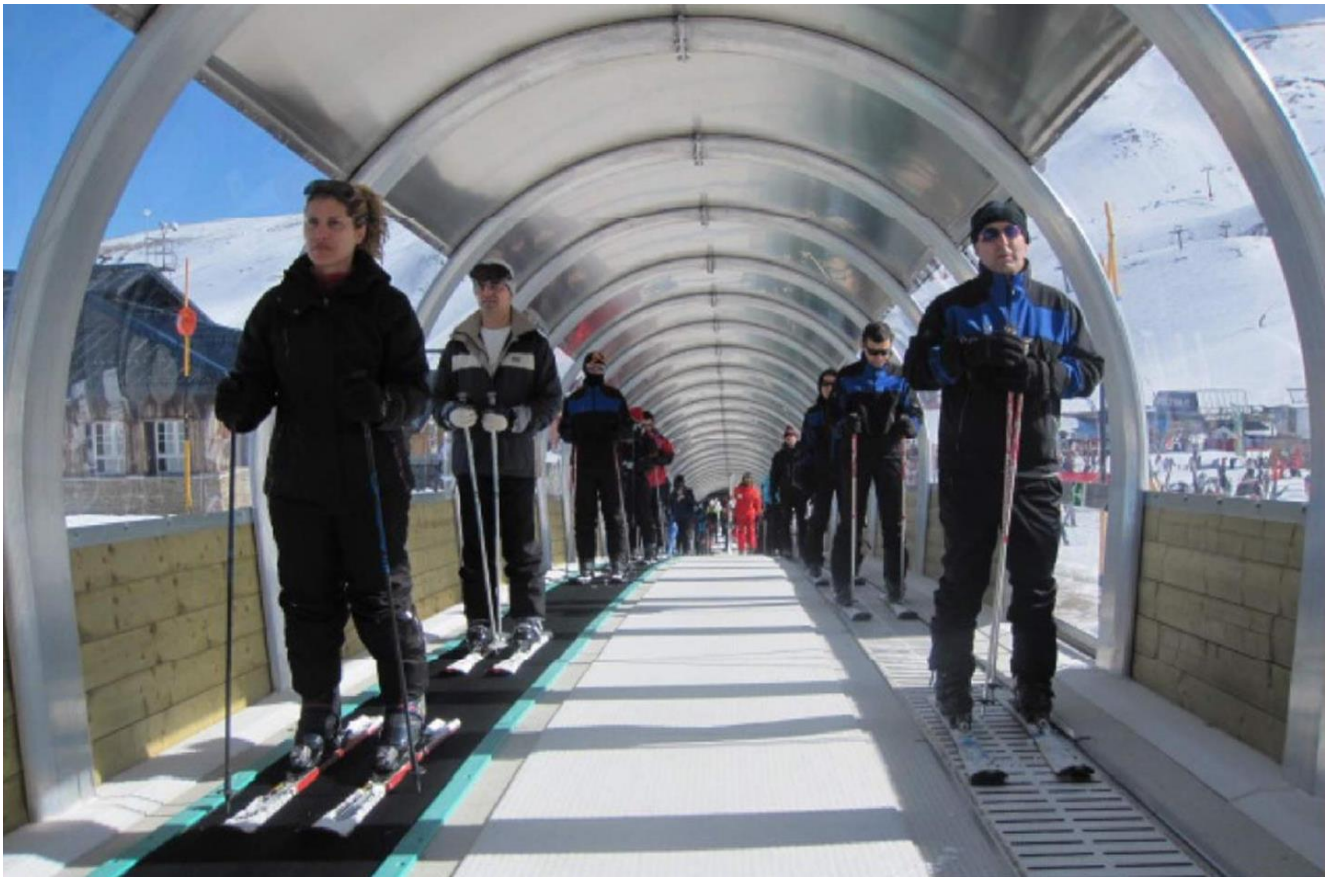
"Our learning terrain is very popular. The goal is to increase uphill capacity," Mike Pierce, the resort's spokesman, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

The hope is that this lift will give newbies more time on the hill. The thinking it that will speed up their learning curve so they will be able to graduate to terrain serviced by actual chairlifts.

It will be located in the Show-Off beginner area near the main lodge. The single, exposed conveyor known as Flying Jenny has been removed.

The first time packages and beginner lessons keep growing, Pierce said.

In all, Mount Rose is infusing more than $2 million into the resort for the 2017-18 season.



The dual conveyor coming to Mount Rose will be the second in the world. Photo/Provided

The Reno-area ski resort had been on market, but is staying family owned. Fritz Buser, 96, was ready to sell in January 2016. He has been a majority owner since 1968. Two of his sons and a grandson have taken over the resort. One son, Curt Buser, lives in the area, is president of the company and has been involved with the resort for more than a dozen years.

“The organic, local feel won’t change,” Price said.

Owners have been investing millions of dollars in the resort in the last several years – from lifts to lodges. Plans are still on the books to expand the resort across the highway.

Lately Mt. Rose has been battling with Boreal to be the first Tahoe-area resort to open each season. This year Rose is hoping to have terrain open by Halloween. With a base of 8,260 feet, mixed with cold nights (which are in the forecast) to make snow, this makes it possible to create just enough skiable terrain in the early season. Oct. 27 is the tentative opening day.

“The goal is to open early and have a six-month season. We’ve proven that is possible the last couple of seasons,” Pierce said.

Mother Nature will need to come through to open the remaining nearly 1,200 acres of skiable terrain. Much of this is on private property, though the resort also is on U.S. Forest Service land. Rose has increased its snowmaking capacity for this winter, realizing that record snowfall can’t be counted on every winter. A mix of stationary and mobile devices have been added.

With the record 762 inches that fell at Rose last season, it made building the new lift challenging because construction crews had to wait until the snow melted. It’s possible not all of last year’s snow will melt before winter truly arrives this season. A stash is tucked in the Slide bowl area, plus the September storm added to what was left over.