

Plea deal for one person in ski voucher thefts

One of three people accused of stealing thousands of dollars worth of ski passes has pleaded guilty.



Tim
Jacobsen

Tim Jacobsen, 22, of Minden in a deal agreed to plead guilty to embezzlement, a class C felony. He is scheduled to be sentenced Aug. 7. He could face up to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Jacobsen admitted he stole the ski pass vouchers worth \$37,920 that were valid at Heavenly, Northstar or Kirkwood and then sold them online.

Angelo Bozin, 26, of South Lake Tahoe and Mark Graham, 21, of Gardnerville were also arrested in July 2016 on charges of felony embezzlement, theft, possession of stolen property and conspiracy. They both continue to maintain a not guilty stance.

Heavenly Mountain Resort on March 10, 2016, reported 1,100 ski pass vouchers were missing from lodges on the Nevada side. The ski passes are valued at \$120 each, with a total possible value of \$116,520.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Near drowning on Upper Truckee River

A woman was pulled from the Upper Truckee River this afternoon after nearly drowning.

She was on a paddleboard with at least one friend.

It's not known if she was wearing a life jacket while on the water; one was not on her when paramedics arrived.

A South Lake Tahoe police officer got her out of the water near the bridge at Highway 50. CPR was being administered as she was rushed to Barton Memorial Hospital about 1:30pm June 7.

Her name, age and hometown have not been released.

The river is flowing at a rapid rate as the snow continues to melt at higher elevations

"It's very dangerous and very cold," South Lake Tahoe fire Battalion Chief Tim Spencer told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Once you are in the water it drains the energy out of you and causes muscles to fail pretty quickly."

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Still not a golfer, Barkley relishes time at Tahoe



Charles Barkley is a fan favorite at the annual celebrity golf tournament in Tahoe. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Jim Krajewski, Reno Gazette-Journal

Charles Barkley is not much of a golfer, and he readily admits that.

He relishes it actually and is not afraid to poke fun of himself.

Barkley remains one of the more popular celebrities each

summer at the American Century Championship celebrity golf tournament at Edgewood Tahoe.

Barkley has become the event's unofficial spokesman.

Read the whole story

Garden art creates a dynamic landscape

By Melinda Myers

Adding excitement to your garden is easy. You can create instant, year-round color, structure, motion and fun to your landscape with a bit of garden art.

Just like shopping for plants, look for pieces that complement your gardening style. And consider all the benefits each piece of art provides. Many pieces are functional as well as beautiful, helping you get the most from your garden budget.

In centuries past, garden art included statues of gods and beautiful people as well as pieces that mimicked nature's ornamental qualities. You can still find those traditional garden statues. But these days you will also find colorful pieces made from a variety of weatherproof materials in a variety of styles.

Look for garden art that's functional as well as beautiful. You no longer need to settle for drab plant supports. Look for items like the Kaleidoscope Tomato Cage made of durable, heavy gauge steel and adorned with colorful weatherproof glass inserts. Train peas and pole beans up colorful and sturdy structures like Kaleidoscope Spiral Supports. These make

creating an edible, ornamental landscape a breeze.



The Kaleidoscope Tomato Cage provides a sturdy support for tomato plants while adding color to the landscape. Photo/ Gardener's Supply Company

Bring your garden to life with garden art that moves in the wind. Metal wind spinners, mobiles and wind chimes add motion and in some cases sound to the garden.

Try creating a bottle bush using individually mouth-blown art glass globes instead of wine bottles. Select those suited to the outdoors. Strategically place them in the garden, so you can enjoy the way the sunlight plays off the unique, colorful glass.

Add a bit of color and ornamental appeal when purchasing your next birdbath or bench. And don't forget about other winged visitors. Some garden art, like poppy sways, also capture water for hummingbirds, butterflies and other beneficial

insects.

Artfully direct water from the roof using decorative rain chains into a rain barrel or mulched area. Use this century-old technique to slow the flow of water, preventing mulch and mud from splashing onto the house. Those in cold climates will appreciate the beauty of the ice-covered chains in winter.

Extend your enjoyment by lighting up the landscape with solar powered artwork. Set solar stakes donned with birds, roosters or calla lilies throughout the garden. You'll enjoy their charming style by day and colorful glow at night. Lead your guests to the front door or backyard garden with the help of solar powered Mosaic glass globes.

Include a bit of fun and whimsy in your landscape. Let your garden design and garden art reflect your personality. A flock of funky metal chickens meandering through the garden or school of steel Fish Out of Water Garden Stakes swimming through your perennials may just be the extra character your garden needs.

Take some time this season to finish off an established garden, create a focal point for a new garden or just add new life to an existing landscape. Whatever the reason, you're sure to enjoy the added beauty only garden art can provide.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including "Small Space Gardening." Myers also hosts the nationally syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" TV and radio segments.

Opinion: EDC CAO didn't tell the whole truth

By Larry Weitzman

El Dorado County's relatively new CAO, Don Ashton, tries to make a case for new and higher taxes. In his bottom line last paragraph of his June 6 column in *Lake Tahoe News* he says: "Here's the bottom line: we have no control over state mandates that are underfunded; we have no control over CalPERS; we have some control over property and sales taxes, but will have to make adjustments in them to maintain service levels. Budgeting. Simple, but not easy."



Larry Weitzman

The county has control over the biggest part (70 percent) of the General Fund budget. It's called salary and benefits, which have grown from a constant from the years 2010 to 2013 when salary and benefits averaged about \$118 million to a proposed 2017-18 budget of more than \$170 million; a 44 percent increase in four years and yet services have not changed.

Much of that increase is due to the infamous CAO Teri Daly 15 percent raise of about two years ago. A less but still significant reason is the increase in the EDC workforce of about 8 percent. Yet services remain constant.

Former Supervisor Norma Santiago applauded Daly even as she

was terminated as being a champion of the employees. She sure was. But Daly (and Santiago, she voted for the raise) was the enemy of the residents of El Dorado County. Over the five years including the new budget, salary and benefits raises have cost EDC residents more than \$100 million. The administration portion of our county needs to go on a diet.

I could cite specific examples of high paid employee incompetence, employees who make over \$200,000 a year, but I won't bore you with additional, lengthy details. Taxes don't have to go up, salaries are too high, especially for what we get. We need to elect people who will excise this cancer that appears to be slowly killing the patient.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- The Thunderbird yacht is back in business. During the drought the historic boat could not leave the boat house.
- Tahoe Maritime Museum and the U.S. Coast Guard are offering a boating safety course on June 17 from 8:30am-3pm in Tahoe City. To register, email danielle@tahoemaritime.org or call 530.583.9283, ext. 103. Cost is \$30 for adults, \$20 for those 12 and younger.
- Tahoe City Golf Course is celebrating its 100th year.
- Raley's, Bel-Air and Nob Hill stores are offering discounted tickets to the 28th annual American Century Championship, the celebrity golf tournament at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course on July 11-16.
- Check out this promo video for mountain biking in Lake

Tahoe:

Lake Tahoe Airport solidifies its future



In the future planes will get fuel at a self-serve station at Lake Tahoe Airport. Photo/Kathryn

By Kathryn Reed

The tower will be demolished, electric vehicle charging stations installed, commercial hangars built, and pavement removed from Lake Tahoe Airport.

These are all included in the master plan for the South Lake Tahoe facility. This is a designed to be a 20-year blueprint.

The final component of the plan was approved by the City

Council on June 6. The electeds unanimously OK'd the mitigated negative declaration. No written comments were submitted regarding the document.

Environmental Science Associates prepared the initial study. It identified biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, and noise as items that would need to be mitigated.

One hazardous item on the 348 acres that will be removed is the tower. Since the facility was abandoned by the FAA in 2004 water has seeped in. The end result is toxic mold.

"It's not suitable for human habitation," Mark Gibbs, airport director, told the council Tuesday.

An 80-foot communications tower will be built before the control tower is deconstructed.

It is up to the FAA to dismantle the old tower because that agency owns it. That could occur this year.

Nothing in the master plan expands the airport, but that doesn't mean there won't be improvements.

A self-serve gas station will be installed. This will eliminate the need for trucks to transport the fuel to each aircraft. The projected date for this is in 2027.

A partial list of future improvements includes reconstructing the aircraft parking apron, drainage ditch improvements, relocating taxiway H, removing excess pavement, getting rid of the bypass taxiway, installing a new automated weather observation station, improving the fixed base operations facility, and building a commercial hangar.

The Federal Aviation Administration pays for the bulk of improvements at this airport.

Another piece of the master plan is the release of 45 acres on

the western edge of the airport for future non-aeronautical use. A couple years ago this undeveloped land had been talked about being converted into an outdoor concert venue. Since then it has been determined to be an inadequate site.

Opinion: What Calif. has is a housing catastrophe

By Erika D. Smith, Sacramento Bee

We do a lot of talking about the housing crisis in this state. But I'm beginning to think the word "crisis" isn't strong enough to convey just how alarmed every Californian should be that the cost of meeting a basic necessity of life – you know, shelter – is devouring entire communities with no signs of slowing down.

Seriously, just check out the data from the latest parade of housing reports.

According to the California Association of Realtors, only 32 percent of households statewide can now afford to buy the median-priced, \$496,620 home. In Sacramento County, one of the fastest growing markets in the Golden State, a mere 46 percent of households can afford a home for the median \$319,720.

Read the whole story

O'Neill, wetsuit pioneer, dies

By Teresa Watanabe, Santa Cruz Sentinel

Jack O'Neill, the Santa Cruz entrepreneur who opened one of the world's first surf shops and pioneered the neoprene wetsuit that helped popularize year-round cold-water surfing, has died. He was 94.

The one-eyed surfing icon, who cut a rakish figure with his black eye patch and bushy beard, died peacefully of natural causes at his Santa Cruz home, waves lapping at his deck, his family said in a statement.

Known for his colorful personality and marketing genius, O'Neill began experimenting in the early 1950s with ways to insulate swimwear so he could stay in the frigid Northern California waters longer. Surfers at the time were using sweaters sprayed with oily water sealant, he recalled in one interview.

He tinkered with foam rubber but switched to neoprene, which was lightweight and flexible. A UC Berkeley physics professor, Hugh Bradner, had created a prototype wetsuit and tested it in icy Lake Tahoe in 1950. O'Neill claims he hit on the idea of using neoprene in wetsuits after seeing the material in the carpeting of an airliner.

Read the whole story

Crews pounce on 3 wildland fires

Three wildland fires outside of the Lake Tahoe Basin have kept crews busy on Tuesday.

The Topaz Fire destroyed one outbuilding. Eight acres were blackened near Topaz Lodge between Topaz Lake and Highway 395. The fire is fully contained. At one time more than 30 structures were threatened and the highway was closed.

The Payne Fire has charred 100 acres and as of 9pm was 40 percent contained. It is burning in Alpine County off Highway 88.

The Ray May Fire was stopped a 3.6 acres. It was located at Ray May Way and Highway 395.

All three started June 6. No cause has been released for any of the fires.

On the Payne Fire a firefighter sustained a thumb injury.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report