

U.S. needs apartments, but nobody is building them

By Patrick Clark, Bloomberg

Urbanists often lament that developers no longer erect the small apartment buildings that were once a staple of city neighborhoods. Instead, they construct single family homes or large apartment buildings.

There are good reasons to revive this “missing middle,” however: Small buildings are a good way to add density without compromising the character of quiet, single-family districts. They also provide a convenient way for older homeowners to downsize without leaving their neighborhoods.

But the best reason is that smaller apartment buildings are often cheaper for renters.

[Read the whole story](#)

Hot ashes spark garage fire



South Tahoe firefighters on April 19 extinguish a garage fire. Photo/SLTFD

Hot ashes dumped into a trash can inside of a garage erupted into flames Wednesday afternoon.

South Lake Tahoe firefighters were able to keep the fire to the garage of the Tahoe Vista Drive house.

The occupants of the house were able to get out without injury.

Firefighters urge people to dispose of ashes in metal cans.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Huge winter, hostile politics concern scientists

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

The mountain snowpack is fat but funding to unravel what it means for western communities and the environment is thin.

That's the dynamic facing scientists who study climate, snow and water in California and Nevada.

They gathered this month for the fifth Great Basin Climate Forum at the Desert Research Institute in Reno to watch presentations about the drought-busting winter season.

They also talked about how hostility from President Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress could undermine scientific research into climate, water and fire behavior that shape the environment of the Western United States.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Robert Hall will be headlining Magic Fusion at The Loft in South Lake Tahoe nightly from April 26-June 7.
- El Dorado County Supervisor John Hidahl will host a town hall meeting May 1 from 7-9pm to provide an update on the Capital Southeast Connector (Elk Grove to El Dorado Hills Expressway). It will be at the El Dorado Hills Community Service District, Norm Rowett Pavilion, 1021 Harvard Way.
- Reno chef Colin Smith will be on the April 20, 10pm segment of "Beat Bobby Flay" on the Food Network.
- Lake Tahoe Community Choir's "Broadway Old and New" will be May 5-7, 7:30pm in the Duke Theatre. Cost is \$12 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors.
- The 6th annual XTERRA Tahoe City Off-Road Triathlon, Duathlon & Sprint on June 24 starts and finishes from Commons Beach in Tahoe City and features a Lake Tahoe swim, as well as

mountain biking in Burton Creek. For more info, go **online**.

Sewer line, sink hole repair won't be immediate



Repair to the damaged sewer line will take at least a week to fix. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

South Tahoe Public Utility District's board on April 20 is expected to allocate up to \$100,000 for emergency repairs on a ruptured sewer line crossing Tahoe Keys Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe.

Crews from Thomas Haen Company were to arrive Wednesday to begin fixing the problem. It could be more than a week before the work is completed.

When the failure was first detected April 14 the sewer district was able to reroute the discharge so it did not get into the groundwater or soil.

The failure caused a huge sink hole in the road that spans part of both lanes of travel and the median. A detour allows fluid travel in this South Lake Tahoe neighborhood.

This is a 57-year-old 24-inch asbestos cement pipe that is 16-feet deep. This section is 80-feet long. It was installed before all the houses in the Tahoe Keys were built. The length and severity of the break won't be known until the construction team starts digging.

According to the district, the pipe is believed to be corroded and collapsed because of high hydrogen sulfide.

Portable pumps are pumping sewage out of the manhole and into the wet well, and also directly into the Tahoe Keys force main. From there it goes to STPUD's plant.

Adding to the problem is the ground water is only 3 feet below the surface and the backfill material is "highly deficient."

While the district's board is the only entity needing to sign off on the work, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and South Lake Tahoe officials have input into the process.

Suit against Placer County regarding Squaw moves forward

By Lake Tahoe News

Both sides in the legal battle involving the proposed development at Squaw Valley are saying a court ruling this week benefits them.

Sierra Watch filed a lawsuit last fall against Placer County contending CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act, and the state's open meeting law – the Brown Act – were violated.

“[The] decision is good news for everyone who wants to ensure the integrity of the public process and ultimately to provide reasonable limits on development in Tahoe and to Keep Squaw True,” Isaac Silverman, Sierra Watch attorney, said in a statement. “The Brown Act might not force Placer County to make responsible choices for Tahoe, but it does require that if they are going to make bad choices that harm the lake, they have to do it in the open, in the plain light of a public hearing.”

Clayton Cook, deputy county counsel for Placer County, told *Lake Tahoe News*, “The court's ruling was in response to a motion filed by Placer County, in which the county requested that the court dismiss the claims by Sierra Watch. The court granted part of our request – but denied another part, stating that the issue at hand is a factual dispute that needs to be resolved after discovery has been conducted. This court ruling simply means that some of the allegations will require additional proceedings before the court determines the matter. It does not affect the project in question. Placer County stands by its position that it did not violate the provisions of the Brown Act and we will continue to vigorously defend our actions in court.”

Squaw Valley has been granted approval by all regulatory bodies to overhaul the base area in what will be a \$1 billion, 30-year project that includes 1,493 new bedrooms and a 90,000-square-foot indoor water park.

Sierra Watch alleges that county staff gave documents to the Board of Supervisors less than 72 hours before the public meeting that weren't simultaneously made available to the public.

"The fact is, there was no Brown Act violation. The development agreement was on the agenda, and the DA was publicly available to anyone who wanted to review it. What is rather striking is that Sierra Watch would attack a voluntary commitment to pay an air quality fee of \$441,000 to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency," Whit Manley, environmental attorney at Remy Moose Manley, told *Lake Tahoe News*. He is representing Squaw Valley Ski Holdings. "If Sierra Watch's claim is designed to intimidate the county, we doubt it will work. The county has very able planning and legal staff, and we are sure they will provide a thoughtful response to this misinformed claim."

Sierra Watch plans to amend its complaint in the next few weeks.

It could be years before the CEQA aspect of the case is resolved.

Most banks run away from

marijuana cash

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

The recent gathering at the Sheraton Grand hotel in Sacramento would have been improbable just a few years ago.

Marijuana farmers – clad in plaid shirts and jeans, and looking like, well, farmers – openly assembled for a meeting of the California Growers Association. But the trade group's agenda topic – about banks refusing cannabis business – still spoke of doors closed and cash transactions made in the shadows.

Convening in the ballroom, CGA members shared stories about the problems they've had finding banks, credit unions or other institutions willing to take marijuana dollars, make loans to businesses and elevate the legal pot economy from a virtual cash-only industry to one with full access to the financial system.

Now California officials, led by state Treasurer John Chiang, are hosting an on-going series of "Cannabis Banking Working Group" meetings that look to identify policies under which "the cannabis industry may fully avail itself of banking services ... that every other business in California enjoys," Chiang said.

Read the whole story

Athletes - stars commit to

Tahoe's celebrity golf event

There will be a mix of newbies and veterans at the 28th annual American Century Championship celebrity golf tournament at Edgewood Tahoe this summer.

Charles Woodson, Travis Kelce, Doug Pederson, Mike Zimmer and Adam Thielen will make up the NFL contingent of first time competitors. They will join regulars Marshall Faulk, Tim Brown, Marcus Allen, Herm Edwards, Sebastian Janikowski, Golden Tate, Carson Palmer, Patrick Peterson, Robbie Gould, Marvin Lewis, Sterling Sharpe, Brian Urlacher, Jared Allen, Terrell Davis, Trent Dilfer, Mark Rypien and A.J. Hawk

The competition is set for July 14-16 ,with celeb-am events and charity fundraising planned throughout the week.

Other athletes and stars who have committed to play include: Jeremy Roenick, Rob Riggle, Kevin Nealon, Alfonso Ribeiro, Oliver Hudson, Larry the Cable Guy, Jason Kidd, Bode Miller, Greg Maddux, Tom Glavine, Ozzie Smithm Ivan Rodriguez and Brian Kelly.

Long time favorites Charles Barkley, Aaron Rodgers, John Elway and Jack Wagner are expected to announce their participation in the coming weeks.

Spiritual Summit set for

South Lake Tahoe

The third annual Spiritual Summit will be May 27 from 1-4pm in South Lake Tahoe.

The major goal for this event is to share with the community a way in which to get beyond challenges that life presents and gain a balance on the side of good.

Members and friends of South Lake Tahoe Christian Science Church will present ideas based on the teachings of Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science. Speakers will share how to expect good and to gain freedom from whatever is bothering people.

The free event will be at the Tahoe Beach Retreat in South Lake Thaoe. Everyone is welcome. For more info, go **online**.

Tahoe City planning summer activities

Tahoe City Wine Walk and Solstice Festival are gearing up to offer myriad activities for local residents and visitors June 15-18.

The annual wine walk will be June 17 from noon-4pm. This alfresco event features more than 20 tasting locations that showcase regional wineries and bites from North Lake Tahoe restaurants and caterers.

The event also includes craft brews and spirits, as well as non-alcoholic tasting options. The complete list of participants will be updated **online**.

Wine walk tickets are \$45 per person in advance and \$50 day-of. Ticket price includes admittance, wine, beer, spirits and non-alcoholic tastings (for participants 21 years and over), commemorative wine glass, bite-sized morsels, live music and complimentary on-site parking. Designated driver tickets are available for \$20 day-of and include food sampling only. Kids under age 6 are free. For more information or to purchase tickets in advance, go **online**. Day-of tickets will be available at the Boatworks Mall and the North Lake Tahoe Visitor's Center (cash only).

The Tahoe City Wine Walk takes place during the Tahoe City Solstice Festival, a weekend full of activities that kick off the summer season at Lake Tahoe. The four-day Solstice Festival brings together artisan food and wine, musicians and artists, and the popular shops, restaurants and galleries.