

Mudslide on Hwy. 50 in Nev. hampers traffic



A boulder the size of a car slid onto Highway 50 Feb. 6 in Nevada. Photo/LTN

Updated at 2:09pm:

From NDOT: All lanes of Highway 50 are anticipated to reopen this afternoon, but minor lane closures and travel delays are to be expected as final roadway repairs are made over the coming days.

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Mud and rock slides have closed one east bound lane of Highway 50 in the Logan Creek area.

Nevada Department of Transportation officials are on scene trying to clear the slide that was reported about 8am Feb. 6.

Local road contractors have been contacted in order to use their heavy equipment to remove the boulder

“We had rock and snowfall come down on the slow lane of eastbound of U.S. 50 near Glenbrook,” Meg Ragonese with NDOT told *Lake Tahoe News*. “That covered pretty much the entire slow lane of U.S. 50. Subsequently a large vehicle-size boulder also fell onto that same travel lane.”

No vehicles were damage and there were no injuries.

Neither NDOT nor the Nevada Highway Patrol have an estimate when traffic will be flowing freely.

Crews will remove the debris. Then they will assess if the mountainside needs to be shored up in some manner.

The majority of the roadside slopes in the Glenbrook area have already been stabilized with rockfall netting or terraced slopes or have barrier rail/wall built at the bottom to contain and collect rockfall.

“With traffic safety as top priority, NDOT has dedicated approximately \$15 million to enhancing traffic safety by stabilizing roadside slopes in U.S. 50 at Tahoe,” Ragonese said.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Money Matters: Avoiding financial pitfalls

By Nic Abelow

Money. It's hard to get and easy to lose. It doesn't take long for the wealth you've accumulated to disappear if you don't manage your money well or have a plan to protect your assets from sudden calamity.



Nic Abelow

Snares like the ones mentioned below could easily threaten your financial security. Planning ahead can protect you and your loved ones from getting caught.

Undisciplined spending

The more you have, the more you spend – or so the saying goes. But not paying close attention to your cash flow may prevent you from saving enough money for your future. Manage your income by creating a spending plan that includes saving and investing a portion of your pay. Your financial professional can help identify planning strategies that will maximize your savings and minimize your taxes.

High debt

With the easy availability of credit, it isn't hard to understand how many people rack up high credit card balances and other debt. Short-term debt will become long-term debt if you're paying only the minimum amount toward your balances. If you can't pay off your credit card debt all at once, consider transferring the balances to a card with a lower interest rate.

Unprotected assets

Your life, your property, and your ability to work should all be protected. Life insurance can provide income for your family if you die. Homeowners and automobile insurance can help protect you if your home or car is damaged or destroyed and provide liability coverage if someone is injured. Disability insurance can protect your income if you're unable to work.

Unmanaged inheritance

A financial windfall is great, but it also can be dangerous. Without solid advice on managing and investing the money, you could find that your inheritance is gone in a much shorter time than you would have thought possible. Your financial professional can help you come up with a plan for managing your wealth. Setting aside a portion of the money to spend on a trip or other luxury while investing the rest may be one way to reward yourself and still preserve the bulk of your assets.

Neglected investments

Reviewing your investments to make sure they're performing as you expected – and making changes in your portfolio if they're not – is essential. But it's also essential to periodically review your investment strategy. You may find that your tolerance for risk has changed over time. You'll also want to assess the tax implications of any changes you plan to make to help minimize their impact.

Retirement shortfall

If you're not contributing the maximum amount to your employer's retirement savings plan, you're giving up the benefits of pretax contributions and potential tax-deferred growth. Maximizing your plan contributions can start you on your way to a comfortable retirement – hopefully with no traps along the route.

Nic Abelow is a LPL Financial Advisor with Abelow, Pratt &

Anderson cruises to win slopestyle at Mammoth

By USSA

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN – The American snowboarders turned in a stellar performance at the Toyota U.S. Grand Prix slopestyle event on Sunday, sweeping both men's and women's podiums.

Up-and-comer Red Gerard (Silverthorne, Colo.) topped the field to take the win for the men, while Jamie Anderson (Meyers) continued her global domination with a win for the women.

Her second run scored 80.25: frontside 180 switch 50-50 to 180 off, boardslide 270 out, handplant, transfer over rail, backside air, frontside 540, Cab underflip, backside rodeo 540.

Kyle Mack (West Bloomfield, Mich.) and Hailey Langland (San Clemente) each took second, while Dylan Thomas (Kingsley, Pa.) and Julia Marino (Westport, Conn.) were third.

It was Gerard's first major victory, but he has been warming up to the top spot all season with a third-place finish at the Kreischberg World Cup and fourth-place finish at the LAAX Open in January. The 16-year-old Coloradan battled the competition as well as the weather to take the top spot.

"It turned out to be fine," he said after his first run. "Just trust your landing and trust your skills and you're good to go."

Anderson is more than familiar with the top of the podium, including winning the inaugural Olympic snowboard slopestyle gold medal at Sochi in 2014. It was her third major win for the season after taking the big air win at the Copper Mountain Toyota U.S. Grand Prix and the Dew Tour championship in December.

Sunday's slopestyle was the first Olympic qualifying event for the PyeongChang Olympics in 2018.

Other Americans who made the final: Judd Henkes (La Jolla) was fourth; Brock Crouch (Mammoth) was sixth; Eric Willett (Breckenridge, Colo.) was 10th.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Dakota

Dakota is a 3-year-old boy who loves to swim, play fetch and go hiking. He is a cattle dog mix, about 55 pounds, and has

lived with older children. Dakota walks nicely on the leash, and seems pretty mild-mannered.

Dakota is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter. (Probably due to the weather, very few animals at the shelter have found new homes in the past week. Please consider adopting your new best friend this week.)

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

South Lake may end retiree health care benefits

By Kathryn Reed

Health care benefits for former and current South Lake Tahoe employees may soon look dramatically different.

South Lake Tahoe is about to start negotiations with its six labor unions. Health care will be one of the main subjects. This affects retirees because they get whatever their respective labor group agrees to. Through the years everyone has endured changes in premiums, deductibles and coverage.

The skyrocketing price of health care is making it almost impossible for public and private sector employers to offer a reasonable plan. South Lake Tahoe is trying to be creative with how it does business, with the desire to be equitable to current workers, retirees and taxpayers.

“It is very chaotic in the health care industry. The only way employers can manage those costs is with the continuation of cuts,” City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Salaries have not kept up with health care for anyone in this country.”

The premium for the city 's medical plan is \$556.07 per month for retiree only coverage, \$1,112.14 for retiree plus one, and \$1,573.68 per month for family coverage. This is for those not on Medicare.

On Tuesday the City Council will be presented with an option to revamp retiree health coverage. The approximately 150 retirees, as well as those whose dependents qualify for coverage, may be given the opportunity for a one-time buyout.

Staff is proposing using the \$6.5 million in the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) trust fund to pay the retirees. The amount each person would receive depends on years of service, whether they are on Medicare and other criteria. The average compensation would be \$68,000 for those who are not on Medicare, and \$32,000 for those in the Medicare group.

The OPEB account was created in fiscal year 2008 by then City Manager David Jinkens and the council at the time as a way to begin dealing with the city's \$42 million unfunded liability for retiree health care. That obligation ballooned to \$55 million at its highest point. The amount the city contributes to OPEB fluctuates each fiscal year, with \$250,000 allocated for 2016-17. During part of the recession zero dollars were earmarked for OPEB.

A step toward curtailing these defined benefits took effect

Jan. 1, 2008, with the mandate that no new hires would be eligible for health care upon retirement.

In 2014, the council approved City Manager Kerry's plan to radically change health care. The main outcome was that all the employee groups agreed to give up their retiree health care effective Oct. 1, 2014. Some opted to retire before that date.

These changes brought the unfunded liability to about \$20 million.

In December 2015 South Lake Tahoe was sued by a group calling themselves the South Lake Tahoe Retirees Association. **Last August** a judge said the group will not receive monetary compensation.

The case is still active. The proposal before council on Feb. 7 is not expected to impact that lawsuit.

Kerry's rationale for the lump sum is that it provides more security for the retirees than what they have today. Today they are at the whim of what their old bargaining unit decides. Retirees have no voice at the negotiating table. If the city and labor groups agreed to do away with health care coverage, the retirees would have nothing. Or a plan could become cost prohibitive for a retiree. The point is they have no guarantee what their health coverage will be from contract to contract.

The lump sum being proposed would go into a health savings account. This way the individuals would not be subjected to paying income tax.

The ultimate long-term savings to the city will be determined after it is known how many retirees decide to take the offer – assuming the council on Tuesday approves the plan. The retirees would have until May 31 to make a decision. They would then be on their own to come up with health care

coverage once all the paperwork is processed.

Editorial: Nev. must make background checks work

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Jan. 15, 2017, Las Vegas Sun.*

Christmas just kept coming last year for the NRA crowd in Nevada.

Three days after the holiday, Nevada Attorney General Adam Laxalt gave them another gift when he announced that the November ballot measure on universal background checks had hit a roadblock.

Cue the Charlie Brown music. Based on the chorus of smug comments about how opponents of the initiative had warned voters all along that it was flawed, the types who can't drink enough NRA Kool-Aid had quite a celebration.

Here's hoping they had plenty of fun, because now it's time to get back to the important job of reducing gun violence in Nevada.

Read the whole story

Boots recalled because tread leaves swastika

By Lindsey Bever, Washington Post

A Southern California shoe company has recalled a model of military-style work boots after a customer complained that the tread leaves swastika stamps on the ground.

The faux pas was brought to the attention of Conal International Trading Inc., the city of Industry company that manufactures the lace-up boots, after a Redditor posted a picture on Imgur showing the footwear alongside its swastika imprints.

Conal International Trading said it has recalled the Polar Fox boots and stopped selling them.

In a revised statement Friday, the company said that it had imported the offensive footwear.

Read the whole story

Truckee junior helps U.S. to third in Nordic worlds

By USSA

SOLDIER HOLLOW, Utah – The 2017 USANA FIS Nordic Junior World Championships came to a close on the Olympic venue of Soldier Hollow with hotly contest relays under bright skies and warm temperatures. Sunday morning the Russian team took gold over

France, with the U.S. women taking their first medal ever with bronze.

In the afternoon, Norway and Russia battled right down to the wire before Norway picked up gold. France took bronze.

In the men's relay under soft track conditions, Germany and France took the early lead on the first classic leg building a 10-second margin back to Russia and Norway. On the second classic leg, Norway and Russia setup their battle that would remain through the finish. A big gap built between Russia-Norway and the chasing French team, which skied alone the remainder of the two freestyle legs.

Coming into the stadium, it was a tight battle between Norway's Thomas Helland Larsen and Russia's Vladislav Vechkanov. Larsen found himself on the outside of the 180-degree turn into the final 100 meters. But he had strong momentum and made the pass to setup a finish spring. Larsen kept pace and made his move at the finish line to take the gold by four-tenths of a second.

In the women's relay, Germany took a first leg lead with classic skiing of Antonia Froebel to hold a 17 second lead over Russia. That evaporated in the second classic leg as a race developed between Italy and Russia for the lead with Germany dropping well off the pace.

Moving into the skating legs, the lead group remained Italy-Russia with France, Sweden and the U.S. battling for third. On the final climb coming out of Cabin Hollow, America's Hannah Halvorsen (Truckee) of the Sugar Bowl Ski Team put on a quick charge to move the U.S. into third. She gave back the spot coming into the stadium fourth, handing off to teammate Katharine Ogden (Landgrave, Vt.) of Stratton Mountain School, bronze medalist two days earlier in the skiathlon.

While Russia and Italy battled for gold, Ogden made a move on France to take the lead, adding to her time to build a large

gap coming into the stadium. Russia did the same over Italy, taking gold by 20 seconds over Italy with USA winning bronze just 26 seconds behind Russia.

Teter third in halfpipe at Mammoth

By USSA

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN – American snowboarders were dominant at the Toyota U.S. Grand Prix halfpipe event on Sunday, sweeping the men's podium and taking two of the top three spots for the women.

Shaun White (Carlsbad) won for the men, while Kelly Clark (West Dover, Vt.) took the win for the women. Ryan Wachendorfer (Edwards, Colo.) was second and Louie Vito (Bellefontaine, Ohio) was third for the men, while Hannah Teter (Meyers) rounded out the women's podium in third.

Teter in her first run scored 36.25 with a backside air, frontside 540, backside 540, frontside 720, Cab 360, frontside air, backside 900 crash. She fell hard on the backside 900, not taking a second pass.

Weather made an impact on the 2017 event, with snow throughout the week and high winds canceling the men's halfpipe qualifiers on Saturday. The full field of 29 men took two runs in the final on Sunday. The women were able to get their qualifiers off on Wednesday, but three of the six women were unable to stay for the final, including Americans Chloe Kim (Torrance) and Arielle Gold (Steamboat Springs, Colo.), which was rescheduled from Saturday to Sunday. Another Sierra storm

descended upon the riders as they competed in the final on Sunday, with conditions deteriorating throughout the comp.

It was a big win for both Clark and White, who are the two most dominant halfpipe riders in snowboarding history, but had not seen the podium yet this season.

“I didn’t have the nicest contest at X (Games),” White said after his first run scored a 94.7, “so I was excited to come here and be the normal me—put some runs down.”

It was also a huge result for Wachendorfer, who scored his first major podium after finding success on the Toyota U.S. Revolution Tour. He’s also the reigning USASA national halfpipe champion. “I’m actually staying for Rev Tour,” he said when asked where he was headed next, “so I’ll be here for another week.”

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Liberty Utilities awarded Tahoe Truckee Unified School District a \$19,638.42 rebate for improvements made in 2016 to increase energy efficiency at two schools. This is the largest incentive payment provided to any commercial customer by Liberty. The district should realize more than \$15,700 in annual energy bill savings.

- Douglas County sheriff’s search and rescue team received six high-quality binoculars worth \$1,000 from Scheels.

- Here are the El Dorado-Tahoe and Sierra roadwork schedules for the week from Caltrans.

- North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District will be

hosting a blood drive Feb. 16 from 9am-5pm at the main fire station at 875 Tanager St.

· +Impact School and Tahoe Expedition Academy's annual Celebration of Learning event is Feb. 8 from 4:30-7:30pm in Tahoe Vista. For more info, go **online**.