

Letter: SLT assists warming room

To the community,

Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless would like to thank the city of South Lake Tahoe for their preparedness in the face of severe weather last week. As one volunteer commented, "Everyone at the city of South Lake Tahoe was very nice, helpful, and willing."

The South Lake Tahoe Warm Room is an emergency overnight winter shelter providing a reprieve from the elements to individuals experiencing homelessness in the South Shore. During our recent rain event followed by a blizzard, we were challenged to find volunteers, to provide access to our guests, and to remain open despite the severity of the weather. The city of South Lake Tahoe and their disaster planning made a big difference for us and set our minds at ease. If power outage or flooding threatened our operations, city staffers helped us create emergency contingencies that reinforced our confidence in our ability to manage the inclement conditions.

We especially would like to thank Tracy Franklin and Nancy Kerry for their prompt communication and assistance in planning for transportation needs. Police Chief Brian Uhler was available and responsive to our concerns about an emergency. Fire Capt. Jon Anderson and his crew from Station 3 inspected our building for storm preparedness and also made themselves available in case of flooding or other crisis.

TCH will be hosting an open house at the Warm Room on Feb. 22 to honor Councilwoman Wendy David and her contributions to our project and the community. The event is from 4:30-6:30pm at 2179 Lake Tahoe Blvd. and our theme is Share the Love and

Bring a Blanket.

Sincerely,

Marissa Muscat, executive director

Douglas County cancels meetings at Tahoe

Weather has canceled the Jan. 19 Douglas County Board of Commissioners meeting at Stateline.

Agenda items for the Carson Valley will be moved to the Feb. 2 agenda. Agenda items for the lake will be moved to the Feb. 16 meeting.

The commissioners' work session scheduled to take place at Kahle Community Center at 11:30am on Jan. 19 has also been canceled.

Chautauqua a fundraiser for Dangberg Ranch

A Chautauqua portrayal of President Theodore Roosevelt performed by Doug Mishler will be a fundraiser for the nonprofit Friends of Dangberg Home Ranch.

The dinner and performance will be at CVIC Hall, 1602 Esmeralda Ave., Minden, on Feb. 4 from 5-8pm.

Ticket sales end Jan. 31. They are \$45 for adults, \$25 for 17 and younger. Tickets are available **online**.

Contract approved for body cameras for NHP

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada Highway Patrol troopers soon will wear body cameras to record their interactions with the public with the approval of a \$1.25 million five-year contract to purchase and operate the devices for its uniformed officers.

The Board of Examiners, including Gov. Brian Sandoval, approved the contract between the state Department of Public Safety and TASER International. The cameras cost \$1,414 each.

The board was told the cameras should be fully operational on all troopers by the summer. About 600 cameras will be provided as part of the contract, along with data storage.

Read the whole story

3rd consecutive hottest year on record

By Seth Borenstein, AP

WASHINGTON – Earth sizzled to a third-straight record hot year

in 2016, government scientists said Wednesday. They mostly blame man-made global warming with help from a natural El Nino, which has since disappeared.

Measuring global temperatures in slightly different ways, NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced that last year passed 2015 as the hottest year on record.

NOAA calculated that the average 2016 global temperature was 58.69 degrees – beating the previous year by 0.07 degrees.

NASA's figures, which include more of the Arctic, are higher at 0.22 degrees warmer than 2015. The Arctic "was enormously warm, like totally off the charts compared to everything else," said Gavin Schmidt, director of NASA's Goddard Institute of Space Studies in New York, where the space agency monitors global temperatures.

Records go back to 1880. This is the fifth time in a dozen years that the globe has set a new annual heat record. Records have been set in 2016, 2015, 2014, 2010 and 2005.

The World Meteorological Organization and other international weather monitoring groups agreed that 2016 was a record, with the international weather agency chief Petteri Taalas saying "temperatures only tell part of the story" of extreme warming.

"This is clearly a record," NASA's Schmidt said in an interview. "We are now no longer only looking at something that only scientists can see, but is apparent to people in our daily lives."

Schmidt said his calculations show most of the record heat was from heat-trapping gases from the burning of oil, coal and gas. Only about 12 percent was due to El Nino, which is a periodic warming of parts of the Pacific that change weather globally, he said.

“Of course this is climate change, it’s overwhelmingly climate change,” said Corinne Le Quere, director of England’s Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, who wasn’t part of the NOAA or NASA teams. “Warming (is) nearly everywhere. The Arctic sea ice is collapsing. Spikes in fires from the heat. Heavy rainfall from more water vapor in the air.”

According to NOAA, 2016 was 1.69 degrees warmer than the 20th Century average. The first eight months of 2016 all broke heat records. NASA has last year at 1.78 degrees warmer than their mid-20th Century average and about 2 degrees warmer than the start of the industrial age in the late 19th Century.

The effects are more than just records, but actually hurt people and the environment, said Oklahoma University meteorology professor Jason Furtado. They’re “harmful on several levels, including human welfare, ecology, economics, and even geopolitics,” he said.

Caesars wraps up \$18B bankruptcy case

By Tracy Rucinski, Reuters

Caesars Entertainment Corp has wrapped up the \$18 billion bankruptcy of its main operating unit, allowing the casino company to focus on restoring the tarnished Harrah’s, Caesars and Horseshoe brands after two years of Chapter 11 proceedings.

Caesars’ subsidiary, Caesars Entertainment Operating Co Inc., won court approval on Tuesday for a plan to shed \$10 billion of debt and separate its U.S.-based property assets from its

gaming operations.

The company expects to emerge from bankruptcy later this year.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Harveys at Stateline.

Read the whole story

Third Eye Blind to play outdoors at Tahoe

The first show of the 2017 Harveys Summer Outdoor Concert Series has been announced.

Third Eye Blind will take to the stage on July 16 at 7:30pm. This coincides with the final day of the annual celebrity golf tournament.

Tickets go on sale next month.

The last time the band was in Lake Tahoe was in 2015 at MontBleu.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Late-season bear arrival at

LTWC

A bear cub weighing about half its normal weight has been brought to Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care to be rehabbed.

The 1-year-old animal is believed to have injured its head because it was found dazed, walking in circles round its mom near Quincy.

Veterinarian Kevin Willetts could not find anything wrong the cub other than weighing only 35 pounds.

While the little one is not very active, he is eating some and is no longer going in circles.

This bear will stay at the South Shore rehab center through the winter, while the other bears will be released into the wild this week.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Professor to give lecture on political divide

Political Polarization and Policymaking after the 2016 Election will be the subject of a Feb. 2 talk at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village.

Just how divided are we? And what are the nature of those divides? Political science research indicates that a diverse set of conflicts-differences in issue attitudes, policy priorities, race and ethnicity, core values and beliefs, and culture/lifestyle-continue to overlap on one another. This has

produced polarized voting patterns, partisan behaviors, and increasing distrust and dislike of those in rival ideological and partisan camps.

Christopher Hare, UC Davis political science professor, will review those findings and discuss the implications for policymaking in the 115th Congress.

The program will begin at 6pm, with refreshments and no-host bar from 5:30-6pm at 291 Country Club Drive in Incline Village.

Seating is open at 5:30pm to guests who have **preregistered**, open seating starts at 5:50pm. A \$5 suggested donation will be collected at the door.

SLT recaps storm, applauds its response

By Kathryn Reed

Snowmageddon tested South Lake Tahoe personnel and infrastructure in ways that are still being assessed.

The full impact of last week's rain and snow storms might not be known until things fully dry out. This is especially true of roads and drainage systems.

The City Council on Jan. 17 received an update by department heads about how the multi-day event played out; what worked, what didn't and what needs to be improved upon. Overall, though, staff was pleased how everyone and everything worked. Training was lauded as being a key for everyone knowing their

job.



South Tahoe firefighters respond to water in a garage. They use a sump pump to clear the area. Photo/Provided

The electeds voted to declare a state of emergency, which will allow the city to apply for money from the state and feds. Businesses and residents would be able to seek financial relief, too, not just the city.

“During the height of the storm we doubled our capabilities,” Fire Chief Jeff Meston said.

The police department brought in more people, too. When snow removal personnel came to work, so did the mechanics; such are the requirements with old equipment.

Meston headed up the emergency operations center at the airport. It was a fluid situation. When urgent care flooded it was necessary to have a backup plan. When the recreation center, which is the usual shelter, flooded, Plan B was implemented. When the school district didn’t want pets at

South Tahoe High School, education by the Humane Society was necessary to explain how animals wouldn't damage the school-shelter.

City staff helped Denny's and Pet Supermarket deal with their flooding. The Knights Inn and residences on streets in that vicinity are still recovering. Flooding was also an issue in the state streets. Sump pumps are still running to clear water from under houses.

The width of the roads was problematic at times for fire personnel. Meston admitted there is damage to some of the apparatuses. He said it's either that or risk not reaching a patient in time.

It wasn't until this Tuesday that streets started to be widened. The snow gang was given the weekend off to recover; especially with more storms arriving today.

In preparation for last week the police department had a small boat, motorcycles and snowmobiles ready in case standard vehicles wouldn't suffice.

Cops had their own flooding to deal with when the roof at the station started to leak. Plastic was already in the building since this wasn't the first incident.



A plow works to clear the parking lot at the library in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Susan Wood

For the first time the city used a drone. This provided near live coverage to the EOC regarding how high the Upper Truckee River was. Had roads been blocked and post-storm assessment been needed, the drone could have provided a visual.

During the chaos regular conference calls were made with about 100 people from throughout the region, including the National Weather Service.

Staff assessed various businesses for safety concerns, issuing one of three flyers: a) all is safe; b) some storm damage; and c) do not enter.

While the bubble on the pool sustained damage, the facility will reopen this morning at 10.

Ray Jarvis, head of public works, said one of the biggest

problems was dealing with parked cars on streets. It delays plows and then sometimes a backhoe had to be employed to dig out the vehicle just so it could be towed.

He is going to be in contact with Caltrans to see if that agency can do anything to provide a longer left turn lane, which would make travel safer. This was a request of Councilman Jason Collin's.

Councilman Tom Davis was critical of Liberty Utilities, saying no one was telling the city when power would be restored. He wanted them to be part of the emergency operations center. The reality is if they have their own command post and cannot allocate personnel to every EOC in their service area.

Police Chief Brian Uhler said if Liberty were to give out more information, he believes dispatch would not have received as many power outage related calls.

Other city staff, in talking with *Lake Tahoe News*, was less critical of Liberty.

"Every time we respond to wires down we ask for an ETA, which is done by our dispatch," Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News* after the meeting. "The utility then puts them into a priority system; generally with widespread emergencies they do not offer an ETA."

City Manager Nancy Kerry told *LTN*, "Throughout the event, I spoke to Randy Kelly (with Liberty), who accepted my phone call every time and directed me to the person who could provide more detail as to when the power would be back on; he also provided us a direct phone number to Liberty's EOC that was activated on the North Shore, because power was out and the conditions on the South Shore – snow-flooding – were more substantial.

"What Tom Davis was referring to is that we have to take the initiative to contact Liberty, we seek out information.

Previously Liberty would often send emails regarding outages. Also Liberty does not have any social media presence, which would greatly assist everyone in knowing when power would be restored – or that they are working on it – and people could share information on Liberty’s social media platform.”

Lake Tahoe News on the other hand received regular emails from Liberty during the storms, which were then included in the multitude of updates on the news site each day.

Things the city will consider in the future include moving the sand away from the Rufus Allen location so it does not interfere with city vehicle traffic, putting in a device to make it easier to load sand into bags, enlisting the California Conservation Corps members to help, having a conversation with Heavenly so the resort isn’t encouraging people to drive when the city is saying shelter in place, and assembling a volunteer snowplow team to assist those who can’t remove their own snow.



Snow finally replaced days of rain. Photo/Denise Haerr

Some stats from last week’s storms:

- Seven graders in the snowplow fleet went down; but all were fixed in house
- 2 million gallons of water tested the storm drain system

- 150 tons of sand were scooped up by residents
- The ladder truck was used $2\frac{1}{2}$ days; it was never used in 2016
- South Tahoe Action Team was called in for the first time; mostly these volunteers helped at the emergency operations center
- On Jan. 8 the fire department responded to 21 calls
- 65 disabled vehicles were tended to
- 16 flooding issues were handled by the police
- 86 snow citations were written
- 11 tows were required because of the snow
- 12 other tows were made
- More than 6 inches of rain fell between Jan. 7-10
- 2-5 feet of snow fell from Jan. 10-15
- More than 100 people called to complain about berms.