

Alice in Wonderland Tea Party at library

To celebrate the 185th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's birthday, the Douglas County Public Library will be having an Alice in Wonderland Tea Party.

Tea and cookies will be served with Alice and the Mad Hatter at the Minden Library on Jan. 21 from 3-4:30pm.

Children ages 4-10 are invited.

The Minden Library is located at 1625 Library Lane. For more info, call 775.782.9841.

Backcountry demo event at Alpine Meadows

The Lake Tahoe Backcountry Demo Event, North America's largest venue for all things alpine touring, telemark and splitboard, returns Jan. 21.

Alpenglow Sports of Tahoe City has partnered with Alpine Meadows for the 11h annual Backcountry Demo Event. It will be from 9am-3pm that Saturday.

Participating vendors will include DPS, Black Crows, Dynafit, Tecnica, Blizzard, G3, Scarpa, NTN, Salomon, Scott, Marker, Volkl, Twenty-Two Designs, La Sportiva, Voile, Moment, Julbo, Fly Low, Jones Snowboards and more. The revolutionary Meidjo telemark binding will also be on hand.

The event is free, but participants must possess a valid lift ticket or season pass purchased from Alpine Meadows or Squaw Valley, along with a driver's license and credit card for deposit. Registration for the event will occur onsite at the Alpenglw Sports tent.

Call 530.583.6917 with questions.

Tahoe Queen turned into scrap pile



The Tahoe Queen on Jan. 9 is being torn apart. Photo Copyright

2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Kathryn Reed

The Tahoe Queen is no more.

The paddle-wheeler that sustained extensive fire damage in August was dismantled on Jan. 9.

The engines were salvaged because they were new – part of the remodel that was occurring when the fire engulfed the vessel. Welders and painters had been working in the same area which sparked the blaze.

While the Queen's home port was Ski Run Marina, it had been docked at Zephyr Cove for a while because of the low lake level. That is where the fire occurred. The boat had remained in the water there until a few days ago when it was brought ashore.

Aramark which operated the Queen and still runs the M.S. Dixie II would only confirm that the damage was too great to salvage the boat.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency issues permits for these vessels and the U.S. Coast Guard regulates them. It is unknown if Aramark will try to launch another boat or if the permit might be transferred to another company.

It's also unknown what will become of the hull. Those can be repurposed as a barge or have a new boat built on it.

Video by Carolyn E. Wright:

<https://www.laketahoenews.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/MAH00894.mp4>

Crystal Bay avalanche watch; Sierra roads treacherous



Snow is the word of the day in Lake Tahoe and will be through Thursday. Photo/Susan Wood

Updated 11:33pm:

Lake Tahoe Community College will be closed Wednesday.

Liberty Utilities was able to do some switching and get part of South Lake Tahoe out of the dark. About 1,726 customers on the lake side of Highway 50 in the Al Tahoe neighborhood are still without power.

Updated 10:34pm:

The North Tahoe Event Center shelter in Kings Beach is closed

because of a power outage. Officials are encouraging people seek shelter a hotel or casino.

Incline Village schools will be closed Wednesday.

Another avalanche in the 1800 block of Alpine Meadows Road has closed that area.

Updated 10:10pm:

Weather is getting more severe and lines are going out at a rapid rate, according to Liberty Utilities.

"We have lost a major line which feeds most communities along Highway 89 up through Loyalton and Portola. With I-80 closed, we have sent a crew on snowcat to the probably problem; they are expected to arrive on scene by 1am," spokeswoman Kathy Carter said in a statement.

Tahoe City is also experiencing outages with no restoration time estimated yet.

Some regions may experience flash outages that can be repaired quickly throughout the evening if accessible.

A tree branch that fell on a primary wire on Sundown Trail in the unincorporated area of El Dorado County has 2,316 customers in the dark. Crews are on site, but there is no estimated time when power will be restored.

Updated 8:50pm:

Garbage service in the basin may be slower or delayed throughout the basin because of unplowed roads.

Meyers is in the dark, as is a large swath of South Lake Tahoe. Liberty Utilities crews are on in the area trying to determine the cause.

Updated 7:45pm:

For people in custody who were supposed to go to court in South Lake Tahoe on Tuesday or Wednesday today or their cases will be heard on Thursday. All other cases will be rescheduled. Individuals who are represented by lawyers should contact that individual's office. Court users can may call 530.621.7414 ater 8am Wednesday.

With 126 inches of snow in the first 10 days of 2017, Squaw-Alpine is already at 181 percent of their January average. On Tuesday the resorts received 29 inches in about 12 hours. If conditions allow, both resorts will be open with a limited number of lifts.

Blizzard and flooding conditions are expected to continue through the night in the basin.

Northbound Highway 267 is closed at Kings Beach.

Highway 50 is closed from Meyers to Sly Park because of avalanche threat. The estimated time to open is 3am Wednesday.

Updated 4:20pm:

Residents in the Crystal Bay area are advised to stay indoors until further notice. Avalanches large enough to break trees and move cars have occurred in Crystal Bay under similar storm circumstances. This advisory may last for the next 24 hours, or longer, depending on how long the storm lasts. Road crews will not be plowing streets in the avalanche-danger area until further notice. Cornices along the ridge above Crystal Bay will be getting large enough to fall off their own weight and trigger long-running avalanches that could reach the homes below. Wind speeds and snowfall rates are increasing dramatically.

El Dorado County has declared a state of emergency due to damage to local infrastructure.

There is some structural damage to about a dozen houses that

were hit by an avalanche Tuesday morning on Alpine Meadows Road, but no foundational issues have been found.

The road has been cleared and residents are allowed into the valley with ID, but are not allowed into the avalanche area, which is from 270 Alpine Meadows Road to the resort parking lot.

Residents of the southwest Donner Lake area along Washoe Circle, Conifer Drive, and parts of South Shore Drive are advised that a high avalanche danger exists and they may want to evacuate. These conditions are expected to remain for the next few days.

“Even though there are many areas of heavy forest above these homes, avalanches can run into areas of mature forest,” Truckee fire personnel said in a statement.

A backcountry avalanche warning is in effect in the Truckee - Tahoe area. Travel in avalanche terrain, on or below slopes 30 degrees and steeper is not recommended.

Cannons have been going off most of the day; set off by highway departments and ski resorts to reduce the threat of avalanche. This has meant Highway 50 between Meyers and Placerville had been open intermittently. It is currently closed because of several snow slides.

Motorists are being advised to avoid the area of Alder Creek Road between Schussing and Wolfgang in Truckee because of minor flooding.

All roads in Douglas County are open except of Kingsbury Grade between Foothill Road and Tramway.

El Dorado County has closed the Cosumnes Mine Road bridge where it crosses the North Fork of the Cosumnes River. Water has washed away the soil from under the north bridge approach.

Lake Tahoe Unified will be closed on Wednesday, as will the

courts in South Lake Tahoe. The court expects to be open Thursday. Check the **website** for updates.

Truckee's town council meeting has been moved to Jan. 12 at 6pm.

Liberty Utilities is still working on trying to restore power to people throughout the region.



Berms several feet high are being left on streets in Meyers. Photo/Kim Wyatt

Updated 2:10pm

More than a dozen houses were hit by an avalanche at 11:40 this morning on Alpine Meadows Road. No injuries have been reported.

"It's still an unstable situation. There is still avalanche danger throughout the district and the basin," Beth Kenna with

North Tahoe Fire told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The extent of damage is being assessed.

Alpine and Squaw were closed today.

Sugar Bowl is closed because of the Interstate 80 being closed. The resort as of 1:45pm was reporting a 44-inch storm total so far, with 20 inches falling in the last 24 hours. There is not estimated time for I-80 to reopen.

Highway 50 has been closed on and off because of avalanche control.

Highway 267 is closed because of blizzard conditions.

For current road conditions, click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

In South Lake Tahoe, Heavenly was encouraging people to ski while at the same time the city of South Lake Tahoe – as well as every transportation authority, including the two states – were telling people not to travel. The city told non-essential workers they did not have to work on Tuesday. This essentially means the city is closed for business.

In the city and El Dorado County the plows are working the main streets and not the residential areas. This is more for public safety concerns. Residents should not expect to see a plow on Jan. 10 unless they are on a main route.

The Rubicon Trail is also closed due to hazardous conditions. Conditions will be reassessed on Friday.

Due to treacherous weather conditions, Liberty Utilities has closed its walk-in and call center offices in Tahoe Vista and South Lake Tahoe. With approximately 2,000 customers still without power, crews are trying to make repairs although they are hampered by unsafe conditions, including avalanche danger.

“With heavy snow comes roof snow shedding, which could trap anyone underneath it. Make sure you or any family members stay away from any potential roof shedding areas,” warns Truckee fire officials.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “A blizzard warning has been issued for the Sierra through Wednesday morning. Dangerous and potentially life threatening blizzard conditions are possible in the Sierra Mountains. Multiple feet of snowfall are expected. Strong winds will produce zero visibility in whiteout conditions along with high drifting snow. Do not attempt to travel as first responders may not be able to rescue you. Travel may already be impossible with several road closures due to heavy snow already being reported. Even a short walk could be deadly if you become disoriented. Avalanche danger will remain high through this storm.”

The U.S. Forest Service office in South Lake Tahoe is closed Tuesday and Wednesday.

TART has canceled Truckee local service and night service for Tuesday.



This is Echo Summit on Jan. 10. Photo/Caltrans

Updated 7:55am:

The South Lake Tahoe branch of the El Dorado County Superior Court will be closed is closed for Tuesday. Cases scheduled for today will be trailed until Wednesday, and there may have a delayed start time. Court users need to check the court **website** for further information and instructions.

Blizzard and avalanche warnings for the Sierra are in effect through Wednesday per the National Weather Service in Reno.

About 18 inches of snow have fallen on the South Shore in the last 24 hours, which is impacting travel. Several feet are in the forecast through Thursday.

School closures for Tuesday include: Lake Tahoe Unified, Lake Tahoe Community College, Douglas County schools at the lake, Jacks Valley is closed because of the Highway 395 flooding and buses being unable to transport students, Tahoe Truckee Unified, Incline Village schools,

Non-essential El Dorado County employees in the basin do not have to go to work.

Liberty Utilities rebuilt a major transmission line Monday that serves the West Shore. This brought power back to all but about 50 customers along Highway 89 between Squaw Valley and Truckee.

Mount Rose Highway is closed.

Avalanche control is going on Highway 50 in the Echo Summit area so traffic is being held.

High winds are likely to impact ski resorts. Tahoe Donner is closed today.

Sno-parks provide gateway to winter fun

By Kathryn Reed

Parking can be a difficult thing to find in the winter for those who want to play outdoors. That is why there are sno-parks throughout California.

The 19 sites, six of which are in the greater Lake Tahoe area, are regularly cleared of snow. The catch is that a permit is required to park there. It costs \$5/day or \$25/season, with a season being Nov. 1-May 30. Access is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The fine is \$94.50 for parking at a sno-park without a permit.

California State Parks manages the program with cooperation from the U.S. Forest Service, California Highway Patrol and the vendors selling the passes. No one from State Parks was available to explain when the program started or if the money is used for things other than snow removal.

Lake of the Sky Outfitters sold a record number of passes last winter – almost 300. Most years they sell between 160 and 250 permits. Weather is the main factor when it comes to sales.



The South Lake Tahoe store, which will be closing Jan. 31, gets to retain a little bit of the cash, but most of the money is sent to the state.

"Mostly for us it was a convenience for our customers," store owner Peter Hussmann told *Lake Tahoe News*. People interested in snow play areas were the main purchasers of passes.

The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit's main office in South Lake Tahoe is another popular place to get passes. Staff field a ton of calls about what the parks really are. Those on the other end of the line are hoping it's a real park. The reality is these locations are nothing more than a parking lot at a trailhead. Some have porta-potties, but that's it. There are no concessionaires renting toys or selling food, often no trash bins.

Overnight camping in vehicles used to be permitted, but is no longer allowed at any of the sno-parks. Tent camping is also prohibited as are fires in the parking lots.

Backcountry skiers, snowshoers and snowmobilers are the primary permit seekers at Sorensen's Resort.

"We have been going through them like water right now," Kel Gennert of Sorensen's told *Lake Tahoe News*. Thousands of dollars' worth, she added. It's been a mix of day and season passes. "We do it as a courtesy for Alpine County Chamber of Commerce. They make a little bit of money on it."

Because Sorensen's doesn't make a penny, the Hope Valley resort only accepts cash or checks for the permits.

“When people say what kind of park is it, we tell them it’s access to backcountry, that it is a safe place to park,” Gennert said.

Sorensen’s also has a brochure to hand people that has a map of where the sno-parks are and the rules. It’s been so busy they are temporarily out of them.

Oregon and Idaho have similar programs, with the three states having a reciprocal agreement.

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Notes:

• For more information about California sno-parks, including locations, go **online**.

Opinion: Calif. overdue for a budget-busting recession

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

It’s the economy, stupid.



Dan Walters

The line, uttered by James Carville as he managed Bill

Clinton's successful 1992 campaign for the White House, still holds true, as this year's presidential election proved anew.

Whatever we may hope for California in 2017, it all begins – or ends – with the state's uniquely complex, notoriously volatile economy.

The technology-heavy San Francisco Bay Area has almost single-handedly lifted California's economy and while other regions are better off than they were during the depths of the recession, their recoveries have been more sluggish.

Read the whole story

Ways to ensure hiking boots last for years

By Joe Jackson, Outside

Dave Page knows a thing or two about boot care. He's owned a boot repair shop in Seattle for the past 40 years (aptly named Dave Page, Cobbler).

Dave and his employees have worked on thousands of hikers. They are also authorized repair agents for 18 outdoor brands. I recently called him to talk boots and find out his top five maintenance tips.

Page doesn't immediately put wax or other products on his leather boots.

"Perspire in them. Let them shape, blend, to your foot first,"

he says.

He suggests taking new leather boots on a series of shorts hikes.

Read the whole story

Why we buy milk, bread and toilet paper when it snows

By Lisa Respers France, CNN

Is there something about snowstorms that makes us want to eat French toast and sit on the toilet?

With every predicted blizzard, there's a mad dash to load up on milk, bread, eggs and toilet paper. But why those particular items?

Sure, there are some variations, including booze, snack foods and even ice cream. Yet these items are the first to disappear from store shelves when the dreaded s-word is mentioned.

Read the whole story

Gold Country vintners pick up

where prospectors left off

By Mike Dunne, Sacramento Bee

Not all the prospectors lured to the hills and hollows around John Sutter's sawmill at Coloma in El Dorado County had as much luck finding gold as James W. Marshall.

For that matter, not even Marshall made much of a fortune in digging for color. His celebrity rests largely on his happenstance discovery of small flakes of gold in the tailrace of Sutter's mill, which he was helping build in 1848, touching off the Gold Rush.

With only sporadic success beyond that, Marshall and many other argonauts began to exploit Coloma's rich soils, agreeable climate and abundant water to cultivate other sources of revenue, namely flowers, vegetables, fruit and wine. They were so successful that Coloma Valley, aka Coloma Basin, came to be recognized more for its agricultural bounty than its gold. "Coloma is literally a pomological garden," waxed Placerville's Mountain Democrat in 1858, according to Eric Costa's 2010 history of winemaking in El Dorado County, "Gold and Wine."

Read the whole story

Olympian to give skate ski

Lessons in Tahoe City

Olympian Marcus Nash is putting on a skate ski clinic at Tahoe Cross Country on Jan. 15.

Nash is a nine-time national champion in cross country skiing, went to the Olympics in 1994 at Lillehammer, Norway, and 1998 in Nagano, Japan. He was a member of the U.S. Ski Team for seven years and is now a pilot for Cathay Pacific Airlines.

Originally from Maine, Nash traveled all over the world in his days as a professional cross country skier, and when he retired, he chose Truckee to live and ski.

His emphasis as a coach are technical development, increasing endurance capacity, and strength training. Marcus has competitive and coaching experience in cross country skiing and cycling.

The clinics are 9-10:30am and 11am-12:30pm.

Cost is \$40, which does not include trail pass.

Register by calling 530.583.5475.