

# Douglas County SAR preps for winter

Douglas County Search and Rescue participated in training which included a segment with CareFlight.

The training included topics of emergency locator transmitter search, dealing with multi-casualty patients from a mock vehicle roll over, patient packaging, and loading of a patient onto CareFlight.

CareFlight personnel also gave instruction on the safety aspects of working with helicopters in search and rescue operation.

As winter approaches, search and rescue calls involve lost or injured skiers, snowboarders, cross country snowshoers, ice climbers and those riding a snowmobile. Most of the calls occur during the dark hours and bad weather.

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## Nevada DMV might automatically register voters

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – An initiative petition that would make it easier to register to vote could reach the Nevada Legislature next year after more than 125,000 signatures were turned in to county clerks for verification.

The Automatic Voter Registration Initiative would amend state law to require the Department of Motor Vehicles to transmit

information to the Secretary of State's Office to register people to vote or update their information. People could opt out of the program. Right now, people can register to vote at the DMV, but they have to "opt in."

County clerks have until Dec. 1 to verify the signatures.

**Read the whole story**

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## Enthusiastic snow lovers flock to Heavenly



Snowboarders and skiers enjoy good coverage on limited terrain at Heavenly on Nov. 23. Photo/Kathryn Reed

**By Kathryn Reed**

It didn't matter that only one run was open. Hundreds of people were taking lap after lap after lap at Heavenly Mountain Resort today.

It was opening day after all and people had pent up energy having not skied since April.

Not everyone, though, was on the mountain to ride.



Playing in the snow instead of skiing is more fun for some people. Photo/Kathryn Reed

"We were both off all week and we said let's go somewhere we've never been. And here we are," Heather Toxey of Birmingham, Ala., told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We paid 100 bucks to ride the Gondola up to see what it was all about." And she had no regrets.

Toxey was all smiles talking about the snow, what she has seen

in Tahoe – and now she plans to come back in the summer.

Neither she nor her husband, Derek, ski. They were perfectly content to hang out in the Tamarack Lodge.

The lodge was full. And like most holiday periods not everyone had ski or snowboard boots on. It was just about getting that vibe of being in a ski lodge. For some youngsters they were more interested in building snowmen and throwing snowballs outside of the lodge.



Hundreds of people turn out for the first day of the 2016-17 season. Photo/Kathryn Reed

For the more serious they were getting off the gondola while others were still buying their ticket. Martin Hollay, who is in his mid-90s, was departing the gondola about 10:30am Wednesday. (The legendary skier from Hungary was instrumental in designing the cross country course on the West Shore for

the 1960 Squaw Valley Olympics.) He is at Heavenly nearly every day.

On the other end of the age spectrum was a 2-year-old in the season pass line with mom who was holding the little one's skis.

For Allan Zhang, 15, he got in a little late Tuesday night with his family so he was trying to catch some zzzzzzs at lunch in order to be ready to go back out for some afternoon runs.

He and his dad, Eric, drove up from San Jose for a couple days.



Allan Zhang of San Jose rests before heading out later Wednesday afternoon. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“For the first day it is very good. We want to start early and enjoy the entire season,” Eric Zhang said.

The only lift operating on Nov. 23 was Tamarack.

The roar of the snowmaking machines was loud. Visibility was limited in the morning. The weather was definitely better at lake level than on the mountain – but that wasn’t a bad thing because at times it was snowing. It is plenty cold to keep making snow.

Between the fake stuff and Mother Nature more lifts and runs will keep opening.

Just being able to snowboard on opening day was satisfying for Chris Conover. He moved to South Lake Tahoe four months ago from Fresno.

“I feel blessed we’ve gotten the weather we have. In Fresno we are out of water,” Conover said. “We should all be thankful; every day there is snow on the ground it’s a good day.”

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## **Holiday shopping tips from law enforcement**

Shopping isn’t always a harmless endeavor, especially when stores are crowded.

Washoe County sheriff’s deputies are offering some cautionary words for those going out this holiday weekend as well as those making purchases online.

Some tips:

- Stay alert. Report suspicious activity to law enforcement or store security.
  - Avoid shopping alone; there is added safety when shopping with a companion.
  - Always lock vehicles and keep valuables out of sight, preferably in the trunk or locked compartment.
  - Park and walk in well-lighted areas.
  - Don't overload yourself with packages. Maintain visibility and mobility to avoid potential threats.
  - Be wary of strangers approaching you for any reason. The holiday season is notorious for con-artists who may attempt to distract you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.
  - Avoid carrying large amount of cash and valuables, and avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
  - Read credit card statements and bank statements as soon as you get them to make sure there are no unauthorized charges. If there is a discrepancy, report it immediately.
  - Always type a website address yourself or access it through trusted search engines.
  - Never click on an email link taking you to a purchase site. The link may take you to a fraudulent site.
  - Don't allow online sites to maintain your credit card information. Although it's convenient, this is risky.
  - When having items shipped to your residence, make sure they are taken inside timely, preventing thieves from taking them or realizing nobody is home and potentially leaving yourself exposed to a burglary.
  - Whenever possible, use a credit card instead of debit card or check. Credit cards have an additional level of consumer protection in the event of a fraudulent purchase or disputed transactions.
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# Power out for small segment of North Shore

**Update:** Power has been restored.

More than 100 Liberty Utilities customers on the North Shore are without power.

A downed power line caused the outage. It is across Highway 89 near Cabin Creek Road.

Crews do not have an estimated time when the lights will come back on.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## CalFire offers safety tips for Thanksgiving cooks

With kitchen fires being one of the main reasons for a fire in a house, firefighters want people to extra careful this Thanksgiving.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve. In 2014, nearly four times as many home cooking fires occur on Thanksgiving as on a typical day.

“Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires,” Lynne Tolmachoff, CalFire’s chief of public education, said in a press release. “That is why it is important to

always watch what you are cooking and never leave it unattended. One critical safety measure is to ensure you have working smoke alarms installed throughout your home. It's an added measure to protect you and your family from fires in your home. "

To help reduce the chance of fire and injuries associated with holiday cooking fires, CalFire offers these tips:

- Remain in the kitchen while you're cooking, and keep a close eye on what you are cooking. Always stay in the kitchen while frying, grilling or broiling food. If you have to leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove. Regularly check on food that is simmering, baking or roasting, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. Someone walking by is less likely to bump them or pull them over.
- Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- When using a turkey fryer, be sure to follow instructions closely. Don't exceed the recommended oil level and only use the device outdoors.
- Make sure a fire extinguisher is handy at all times. Never use water to put out a grease fire.
- Ensure you have working smoke alarms installed in your home.

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# U.S. home sales strongest in nearly a decade

By Josh Boak, AP

WASHINGTON — Americans bought homes in October at the fastest pace in nearly decade, helped out by low mortgage rates that have since started to climb following the presidential election of Donald Trump.

The National Association of Realtors said Tuesday that sales of existing homes rose 2 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.6 million. Sales reached their strongest pace since February 2007, a sign that the market is still healing from the collapsing prices and foreclosures that ignited the 2008 financial crisis.

A stable job market and historically cheap borrowing costs have spurred demand from homebuyers this year. But sales growth has been tempered somewhat by accelerating prices and a shortage of properties on the market. Sales gains could possibly slow in the coming months as rising mortgage rates are making home loans more expensive.

“Clearly, the market continues to underestimate just how much demand for homes is out there, even in the face of tight inventory and rising existing home prices that are now the highest on record,” said Svenja Gudell, chief economist at the real estate firm Zillow.

Falling mortgage rates helped boost sales for much of the year, but rates surged following this month’s presidential election. The increase means that yearly debt payments for a median-priced home would increase by more than \$500 on average

for people attempting to buy homes in November and December.

Investors expect the federal budget deficit to rise in a Trump administration, causing the yield on 10-year U.S. Treasury notes to reach roughly 2.3 percent.

The rising interest rates trickled into the housing market. The average 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage climbed to nearly 4 percent from less than 3.5 percent at the end of October. Few housing experts say that higher rates at this stage will fully disrupt sales, although it might cause some existing homeowners to stay in place rather than upgrade to new homes and costlier mortgages. The impact of higher rates could be offset if wages accelerate strongly during a Trump administration, giving Americans higher incomes.

Still, the supply crunch of the past year shows little sign of reversing itself.

Sales listings have fallen 4.3 percent over the past year to 2.02 million homes. The shortage has pushed up the median sales price of existing homes 6 percent from a year ago to \$232,200.

The low mortgage rates aided buyers with solid credit, although tighter lending standards appears to have hurt potential sales.

An analysis released this week by the Urban Institute, a Washington-based think tank, found that there could have been an additional 1.1 million mortgages issued in 2015 if traditional lending practices had been in place that put less emphasis on stronger credit scores above 700.

The tighter credit standards have helped foster a housing market that prefers cash buyers and investors who may be more likely to rent homes to tenants than live in them.

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# Rain, snow, sun for Thanksgiving weekend in Tahoe

Thanksgiving Day is likely to be the best day to travel this weekend in the Sierra.

While a storm early today didn't drop much white stuff at lake level, it did bring several inches to the higher reaches of area ski resorts.

Another storm is slated to move into the area late Friday. An even colder system will blow in Sunday.

Wind and cold are almost guaranteed by the National Weather Service in Reno, with snow and rain mixed in throughout the weekend.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

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## Family of deputy who drowned sues Tahoe SUP shop

By Nate Gartrell, Bay Area News Group

The family of an off-duty Contra Costa sheriff's deputy who drowned last year has sued a South Lake Tahoe paddleboard company as part of a push for increased regulations in the

boating industry.

The family of Deputy Carlos Diamond Francies last week sued South Tahoe Standup Paddle, alleging the company's employees failed to warn Francies and his friends of hazardous weather before renting them kayaks. The suit also alleges that Standup Paddle's employees waited a half hour before attempting to rescue Francies' sister, who was struggling to stay afloat in the lake.

In addition to the suit, Francies' mother, Beverly Fisher, says she plans to push for new safety laws in the boat rental industry. The suit alleges that there were severe weather warnings – including a red flag warning issued by the National Weather Service – that should have alerted Standup Paddle to the potential dangers that day.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Suspect in SLT food tampering case arrested**

A 43-year-old South Lake Tahoe man has been arrested in connection with tampering with food at two local establishments.



Harry Dally

Harry Dally was arrested Nov. 22 after officers searched his residence.

“The search warrant service revealed items of interest related to this investigation. The SLTPD now has an indication of what the contaminating substance may be,” officers said in a press release.

The chemical is not being released pending laboratory analysis and questioning of Dally.

While police are confident Dally is responsible for approximately four incidents at the Hot Wok Chinese Food restaurant in the Raley’s near Stateline, they are still waiting for surveillance footage from Baja Fresh. That restaurant is in the same shopping center. The crimes occurred from Nov. 8-19.

The contamination at Baja Fresh from the salsa bar sent a 12-year-old to the hospital.

Evidence and similarities at the two eateries make detectives believe the same person is responsible for the food contamination. However, Dally has only been charged in the Raley’s case. He faces one felony.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*