

Free sports physicals for Tahoe youth

Barton Health is offering pre-participation physicals for student athletes who were not able to attend the Tahoe Center for Orthopedics sports physicals event last month. All high school, middle school, and Pop Warner athletes from the Tahoe area may participate.

The free physicals are available at Barton Urgent Care and Family Practice on:

- June 29 from 9am to noon
- July 20 from 9am to noon
- Aug. 10 from 9am to noon.

All students should bring a completed medical history forms to the physical. Forms may be picked up in each school's front office, through the student's Pop Warner football coach, or at Barton Urgent Care and Family Practice. A parent or guardian must be present at the physical.

No appointment is required. For more information, call 775.589.8900.

Daily fantasy sports

operation returning to Nev.

By Sally Ho, AP

Nevada gambling regulators have approved a new platform that will allow bets in a fantasy sports model.

The Nevada Gaming Commission voted Thursday to give a gambling license to Henderson-based US Fantasy.

The newly developed sports system essentially blends sports betting with elements of traditional fantasy sports contests.

US Fantasy and traditional fantasy systems, such as the popular DraftKings and FanDuel models, differ primarily in the way they pay out winners.

US Fantasy's payout depends on what and how other gamblers are betting, while traditional fantasy sports sets an established prize money amount.

The new Nevada platform also declares fantasy sports betting as gambling, despite the industry arguing in the face of legal challenges across the country that its games are not gambling.

The move comes as the daily fantasy sports industry argues in the face of legal challenges across the country that its games are not gambling.

US Fantasy Owner Vic Salerno said his model could easily be reframed to fit states that have approved guidelines allowing fantasy sports to operate. But an industry leader predicts it won't have a major effect on fantasy sports overall because it may only work in Nevada, where sports betting is already legal.

In the US Fantasy system, users bet against each other on individual player stats, with a pot of prize money that can change depending on how many people are betting and how much

they bet. Using football as an example, a user can wager that Tom Brady will throw the most yards that week.

In traditional fantasy sports, users generally pick a group of players to create a team, and if they win, they know they are getting an established payout. In the football example, Tom Brady's performance would help rack up points along with the rest of the players of the imaginary team.

The popular DraftKings and FanDuel platforms ceased operations in states such as Illinois, New York and Nevada, where they were accused of operating as illegal, unregulated betting systems.

The industry has lobbied states to approve laws that would allow them to operate without legal ambiguity. So far, Virginia, Indiana, Tennessee, Missouri, Mississippi and Colorado legislators have done so, while New York's governor has yet to sign off on the state's version.

In Nevada, regulators have urged fantasy sports sites to apply for gambling licenses, a move the industry opposes as too costly and time consuming.

CalFire prohibiting residential burning

CalFire as of June 27 is suspending all burn permits for outdoor residential burning within the state responsibility area of Sacramento, Amador, El Dorado and Alpine counties.

This means all residential outdoor burning of landscape debris like branches and leaves will be prohibited.

“Conditions throughout our region have become such that it is no longer safe for the public to perform residential debris burning. We need the public to be extra diligent and perform defensible space clearances early in the morning and with the right tools,” said Mike Kaslin, CalFire Amador-El Dorado unit chief, said in a statement.

Since Jan. 1, firefighters across the state have already responded to more than 1,500 wildfires. In the CalFire Amador-El Dorado Unit, firefighters have responded to 59 wildfires.

South Tahoe climber rescued in Oregon

By KTVZ-TV

TERREBONNE, Ore. – Two California men climbing the popular Monkey Face formation at Smith Rock State Park became stranded when they chose a wrong descent route and one ran out of rope halfway down Wednesday afternoon, prompting a rescue operation that took until after midnight to conclude, Deschutes County sheriff’s deputies said.

Shortly before 5pm, Cordero Chavez, 29, of Lone Pine contacted 911 dispatchers to say he and his climbing partner, Tyler Coleman, 26, of South Lake Tahoe had reached the summit of Monkey Face but now were in need of assistance, said sheriff’s Lt. Bryan Husband.

The pair had chosen the wrong route to descent, leaving not enough rope to reach the bottom, Husband said. Chavez was still near the summit, but Coleman was nearly halfway down the

approximately 450-foot rock face, unable to ascend or descend farther.

Read the whole story

Free meals at SLT Boys & Girls Club

The Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe is providing breakfast and lunch for free to all youth 18 and younger now through Aug. 26.

The program is funded through the Summer Food Service Program, a USDA/CDE program.

The purpose of the program is to ensure children receive a healthy meal during the summer when school is out.

The program takes place at 1100 Lyons Ave. in South Lake Tahoe. Breakfast is from 8-9am; lunch is from noon-1pm. Call 530.542.0838 to RSVP to ensure enough food is prepared.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Snowboarder Jamie Anderson of Meyers has been nominated in the Best Female Action Sports Athlete category for the 2016 ESPY Awards.
- Wanderlust returns to Squaw Valley from July 14-17.

Event details are **online**.

- Starting June 27, Homewood Mountain Resort will host a cornhole league. On Monday nights from 5 -9pm until Aug. 22 (with a bye on July 4), teams will play three games per night. Teams will consist of two players and two alternates, with a one-time entry fee of \$40 per team. To register, go **online**.

- Former South Lake Tahoe City Manager Dave Jinkens is going to Avalon on Catalina Island to city manager. He had that same position in the mid-1980s.

- Sierra State Parks Foundation is putting on a free guided wildflower hike at Washoe Meadows on June 26. Space is limited. Email Vtracey@sierrastateparks.org to reserve a spot. The hike is from 10am-noon.

Dead Sierra trees a combustible quagmire

By Scott Smith, AP

California's drought and a bark beetle epidemic have caused the largest die-off of Sierra Nevada forests in modern history, raising fears that trees could come crashing down on people or fuel deadly wildfires that could wipe out mountain communities.

Officials who are cutting down and stacking the most dangerous trees in piles across six counties, however, say they are stumped by how to get rid of them all.

One solution is to fire up a fleet of 10 large, mechanized

incinerators the state recently purchased. Promoters say they burn so hot that they spew little if any smoke, making them environmentally friendly.

Environmentalists contend the burners undercut an emergency order by Gov. Jerry Brown – considered a global leader in the fight against climate change – who called for sending the trees to biomass plants and converting them into energy.

Chief Ken Pimlott, who manages the state's response to the die-off as director of CalFire, defended the air burners as one of many tools.

He acknowledged the burners will contribute to air pollution, as with any work in the forest, but much less than a large wildfire, which the air burners may prevent by removing dead trees.

"We could have a catastrophic wildfire in any of these communities," he said, adding that sending trees to electricity-generating plants remains a priority. "We have to be aggressive in terms of protecting life and property."

Called air-curtain burners, the 20-foot long, steel containers blast a sheet of air over the open top, disposing of up to eight trees an hour. The state bought them for roughly \$1 million, part of a \$5 million investment in equipment to meet the epidemic.

A lack of visible smoke, however, doesn't mean the air burners are clean, said Chad Hanson, a forest ecologist at Earth Island Institute's John Muir Project. He called them a waste of taxpayer money and a misguided approach to managing California's forests.

"You're still pumping a lot of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere," Hanson said.

Living trees absorb and store carbon dioxide, a major source

of greenhouse gases, which is released again when the wood is burned. Hanson said he favors leaving the trees that need to be cut down on the forest floor to naturally decompose as wildlife habitat.

He urged Brown to withdraw the emergency declaration, fearing that it would increase logging of dead trees that forests need to replenish. Hanson added that dead trees don't fuel more fierce wildfires as commonly believed.

Last year alone 29 million trees died at the height of California's drought now in its fifth year, the U.S. Forest Service reports. Drought makes trees vulnerable to the insects' attack, officials say.

A beetle epidemic in forests of the Rocky Mountain states was blamed in 2013 for contributing to Colorado's second largest wildfire, forcing entire communities to be evacuated, said Jeff Mai, aerial survey manager for the U.S. Forest Service based in Colorado.

Officials removed some trees throughout the region that threatened people, selling them as lumber products like fence posts. Most were left to decompose naturally. Mai said that in California, bark beetles have killed five times more area of forests than in Colorado.

It's unclear how many trees in the Sierra will be cut down. Officials say the first job is removing those that threaten motorists and mountain communities.

Declaring the emergency on Oct. 30, Brown formed a task force, including representatives of the energy industry and environmentalists, that is charged with carrying out the order, which emphasizes sending the trees to biomass plants that turn agriculture and tree waste into electricity.

That has moved slowly because California's few remaining biomass plants are closing as utility companies turn to

cheaper sources of solar and wind.

Another solution to turn the dead trees to lumber has hit obstacles because they quickly deteriorate, and beetles carry a fungus that stains the wood blue, diminishing its value.

Urgency for residents at the heart of the tree epidemic remains high as California enters another potentially explosive wildfire season.

“One big fire in the wrong place will become very big, very fast,” said Randy Hanvelt, a Tuolumne County supervisor. “I’m afraid people are going to die.”

CalFire plans to start running the air burners around the clock this fall.

An environmental benefit of the air burners is that they eliminate the soot, a major contributor to climate change, said Norbert Fuhrmann, vice president of Air Burners, Inc., the device’s Florida-based manufacturer.

Jim McDougald, a CalFire division chief in Fresno County overseeing the burners, said he prefers turning the trees into energy, lumber or opening undiscovered markets to give them value.

But the air burners are one means for the state to get rid of trees in the massive die-off that’s changing the Sierra’s landscape for years to come, he said.

“This is bad,” said McDougald, standing at a lookout point south of Yosemite, where a few patches of dead trees two years now dominate the vista. “It’ll never come back – not in our lifetime.”

Casual doubles event at ZCTC

Hump Day tennis is all about having fun with friends and visitors on the courts of Zephyr Cove.

Organizers on July 6 will pair adults together to play against unsuspecting opponents in what is lighted hearted, albeit competitive doubles. Play starts at 5:30pm at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club.

Cost is \$10 for ZCTC members, \$15 for non-members, and \$5 for spectators (meal only). Membership is \$80 for the year. Membership information is available **online**. No advance sign-up is required.

Burgers and chips will be provided. Participants should bring a side dish or dessert, as well as drinks.

Nev. schools no longer worst in country

By Trevon Milliard, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada's public school system no longer ranks last in the nation, a position it held for the past four years.

The Silver State is now second to last, edging out New Mexico for 49th place, according to the 2016 Kids Count report published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The foundation is one of America's predominant organizations in child welfare issues. Its annual Kids Count report evaluates states in four areas: economic well-being,

education, health and family/community. All this information is combined to determine state rankings for children's overall well-being, with Nevada landing 47th out of 50 states.

Read the whole story

Heavenly makes epic changes for summer

By Kathryn Reed

Heavenly Mountain Resort is becoming a year-round economic driver.

With the opening of Epic Discovery this month, the South Shore resort is redefining itself – at least when it comes to summer activities.

For years the Broomfield-Colo.-based firm wanted to diversify, but U.S. Forest Service regulations prevented that from happening. The feds own much of the land where the ski resorts operate. Congress, though, in 2011 changed the rules, thus allowing resort operators to alter their business model.

Vail Resorts launched the multi-million dollar on-mountain expansion at Heavenly and Vail this year, with Breckenridge to be added in 2017. Resort officials did not release the exact cost of the improvements.

(At this time there are no plans to transform Northstar or Kirkwood. Northstar is still working on its master plan.)

“These kinds of options are highly likely to result in visitors planning extra days in our community because there's

more for them to do now. This of course translates to an improved economy, which means more job stability for people who work in tourism whether they work in lodging, restaurants, retail or other businesses who are impacted by the success of tourism," B Gorman, CEO of Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

It takes manpower to operate the various recreation activities. Heavenly will be putting 200 people to work this summer. Those are full-time jobs. Many of those employees work for the resort in the winter, so now they have year-round employment.

Epic Discovery features 12 activities including an alpine coaster, ziplines, ropes courses, canopy tours, rock climbing, tubing, 4 x 4 expedition tours, wildlife trail exploration and interactive learning stations.

"It's got so many levels of impact on the destination, benefitting everyone from resident to visitor to our overall competitive differentiation," Carol Chaplin, executive director of Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The benefits Chaplin sees include:

- New year-round jobs.
- Mountain access for the summer visitor.
- Access for the visitor who may not otherwise have an opportunity or inclination to venture out.
- Experiential activities that provide education and foster stewardship.
- Recreational opportunities that appeal to a broad age range.
- The contribution by the Nature Conservancy.

· The potential to increase the average length of stay of visitors, providing additional economic impact.

Snow forced construction to be slow and delayed this spring. Plus, with it all being new, it took longer to get things in place for this inaugural season. Footings for some of the apparatus needed to be installed. That's a one-time issue. For the pieces that will be taken down in winter it should be easier to erect them next summer now that people have installed them at least once.

"I think it is important to recognize that these new activities on the mountain provide approachable access to the outdoors for visitors who might otherwise be intimidated to venture out into the wilderness," Gorman said.

While Heavenly has been adding more to its summer offerings for the last few years, this is a more complete experience. The main thing missing from what's on the drawing board is the bike park. That is still a couple years off.

"We want to optimize what we have now," Pete Sonntag, COO of Heavenly, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "There is so much new that we don't want to take on too much."

More hiking trails will also be added in the future.