

Health professionals to test skills in wilderness

Healthcare professionals, wilderness enthusiasts, first responders, outdoor educators, and medical students will be putting their emergency medical knowledge to the test at Tahoe's MedWAR Challenge on Sept. 17.

MedWAR, which stands for Medical Wilderness Adventure Race, combines physical challenges and wilderness medicine in a daylong race. The adventure takes place in Eldorado National Forest and includes mountain biking, trekking, kayaking, and orienteering. Along the adventure, teams are expected to work together to address and treat patients in mock wilderness medicine scenarios.

Registration is now open. Teams and volunteers may register **online**. The challenge costs \$350 for a team of four people and includes a pre-event lecture, kayak rental, gift bag, team shirt, and a post-race dinner. Space is limited to 20 teams.

Sierra snowmelt runoff coming up short

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

The El Niño-fueled storms that coated the Sierra with nearly normal snow this winter brought blasts of hope to drought-weary California.

But after the flurries stopped and the seasons changed, the melt-off from the high country has been swift and

disappointingly scant, according to new water supply estimates from the state.

The Department of Water Resources now projects that the mountains will produce about three quarters of normal runoff during the months of heaviest snowmelt, shorting the rivers and reservoirs that typically provide a third of California's water – and cementing a fifth year of historic drought for the Golden State.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe Boats & Brews at Tahoe Keys

The inaugural Lake Tahoe Boats & Brews boat Show is June 24-26 in the Tahoe Keys Village.

The three-day event is free. People will be able to check out a wide array of new boats, water toys, and an assortment of local and regional vendors.

The South Lake Tahoe Yacht Club will be sponsoring a brew fest on Saturday from 11am-7pm. For \$20 participants will be able to sample unlimited local and regional craft beers. A portion of the funds raised will benefit Bread & Broth 4 Kids' program.

The event will be at the corner of Tahoe Keys Boulevard and Venice Drive in South Lake Tahoe. The Boat Show hours are Friday, 1-7pm; Saturday, 11am-7pm; and Sunday, 11am-5pm.

K's Kitchen: Elevating the status of chives

By Kathryn Reed

Chives are rarely the star of any dish. However, I have so many of them growing in my herb garden I needed to start finding something to do with them other than chopping them into salads and seemingly every other dish.

The concoction below would be great on veggies other than mushrooms.

I created this as a side dish. However, I could imagine the mixture working extremely well on portabella mushrooms as an entrée. I used crimini mushrooms.

It would be easy to make this on the stove or in the oven as well. As with barbecuing anything, it just gives it a different flavor.



Mushrooms with Chives

1 C chopped chives

$\frac{1}{2}$ C olive oil

1 T lemon juice

Parmesan cheese, grated

8 ounces mushrooms, sliced

Combine chives and olive oil in blender.

Place mushrooms in a bowl. Drizzle with lemon juice; coat with chive mixture.

Cook on grill over medium-high heat until mushrooms are a little shriveled.

Drizzle mushrooms with lemon juice, then sprinkle with cheese.

SLT creating welcome center at airport

By Kathryn Reed

What does the lobby of Lake Tahoe Airport, aka South Lake Tahoe City Hall, say?

The answer, according to Councilmembers Wendy David, Austin Sass and Hal Cole, is that it's shabby and there is so much potential. They voted Tuesday to spend hundreds of thousands dollars to renovate the space and transform it into a welcoming venue for locals and tourists. After all, the main offices for the city of South Lake Tahoe are expected to be located there for the unforeseeable future.

Councilmembers Tom Davis and JoAnn Conner are all for spending the money to upgrade the infrastructure and make it comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. However, neither

wants to do more than the minimum.

The council on a 3-2 vote agreed to pay more than \$600,000 to renovate the facility, with the goal of having it completed by the end of September. About half of the money is for needed upgrades like plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning. The other half is “extras” to create a visitors center of sorts, as well as upgrade council chambers and the lower lobby area.

It is not possible to divide the work into “necessary” and “extra” because that would most likely require going out to bid again. Plus, some of the improvements are intertwined.

Much of the money to do so comes from Barton Health having bought coverage from the city. The banked asset comes from the airport so the money has to be spent at that facility.



Lake Tahoe Airport's lobby doubles as the entrance to South Lake Tahoe's city offices. Photo/LTN file

Signs will be placed on Highway 50 directing people to the visitors center.

The city has already talked to Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority about helping with what should be included in the display. It won't be a staffed facility. It will, though, be interactive. For those wanting to talk to someone, there is the receptionist for the city and phone lines will go directly to the LTVA.

With the restaurant at the airport being overhauled, it may also become more of a destination for locals. The new owners have already said the stack of brochures for tourist-type business will no longer be in there.

One of the major sticking points for Davis and Conner is the gas fireplace that will be installed. Plus, they don't think this is the best use of city dollars. Conner also advocated for moving City Hall someplace closer to the heart of town so it would be easier to get to. However, she didn't have any ideas for where the millions of dollars to do this would come from.

Davis has never supported the renovation idea.

Cole believes the upgrades will be beneficial no matter what the use of the facility is in the future, and that they are long overdue. Plus, he believes the design will be a showcase of alpine architecture with wood and rock that the electeds say they want others to incorporate when doing any future construction.

At the June 21 meeting the contract was awarded to DML Construction. The firm plans to use six local subcontractors.

In other action:

- The council unanimously agreed to make the next franchise agreement with Southwest Gas be 10 years. And the electeds want all future franchise agreements to be 10 years. Some have been for 30 or 50 years.

- The council at a future meeting will be discussing the rental car surcharge imposed by Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. This was implemented when the airport had commercial air service.

Opinion: Community colleges an overlooked option

By Patrice Apodaca, Los Angeles Times

Congratulations to the high school graduating class of 2016. You deserve praise for your achievement and are no doubt excited about the future that lies before you.

I'd like to offer a special congrats to those among you who have made what could turn out to be a very wise choice. A certain percentage of your graduating class will soon be attending a local community college, and while that might not elicit the hoops and hollers of a brand-name, nationally ranked university, if handled responsibly it might just be one of the best decisions these students ever make.

The case for community colleges these days is pretty darn compelling.

First, there's the price tag.

Read the whole story

Cancer deaths preventable with lifestyle changes

By Melissa Healy, Los Angeles Times

Roughly half of cancer deaths in the United States could be prevented or forestalled if all Americans quit smoking, cut back on drinking, maintained a healthful weight and got at least 150 minutes of exercise each week, according to a new report.

These same measures would also reduce the number of new cancer diagnoses by 40 to 70 percent.

For men, universal embrace of this lifestyle could avert or delay 67 percent of cancer deaths and prevent 63 percent of new malignancies each year, researchers calculated. If all of the nation's women did the same, their yearly cancer mortality rates would fall by 59 percent and new cancers would drop 41 percent.

Read the whole story

Tips to be safe on 'red flag' days

South Lake Tahoe Fire Department is implementing the "red flag" program for a third year to help inform and educate citizens on fire danger.

Red flags will be flown at local fire stations to inform the public when the weather creates a fire warning.

Extra personnel will be added for an aggressive fire attack.

Tips during these times:

- Avoid outdoor burning, such as campfires, or any other open flame. Even grilling is not advised.
 - Dispose of cigarettes and other smoking materials into fire safe containers. Tossing smoldering cigarettes onto the ground should be avoided.
 - Properly store flammable materials such as gasoline, alcohol, paint, lighter, and matches. These materials may reach their critical points during hot weather and can possibly result to fire.
 - Be extremely careful when using and fueling chain saws, lawn mowers, weed eaters and other lawn care equipment. High heat conditions make ignition of the fuel vapors more likely. Find shade if possible and allow the machinery to cool if it has been running. Also avoid welding in dangerously dry conditions, as the sparks can easily ignite the dry vegetation around you.
 - Be careful where you park your vehicles. The hot underside of a car or truck filled with gasoline parked over dead grass or leaves is an explosion waiting to happen.
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Study: Calif. years from drought recovery

By Scott Smith, AP

It could take California four years to recover from the most severe drought on record, even if the next several winters bring above-normal snowfall to the Sierra Nevada, researchers said Tuesday.

One winter of El Nino storms that delivered a near-normal snowfall wasn't enough to make up for the deficit from four

consecutive dry years in the Sierra, a critical water supply statewide, the study says.

The lack of snow forces water suppliers and farmers to draw heavily on reservoirs, groundwater and other sources, said Steve Margulis, a civil and environmental engineering professor at the UCLA who led the study.

“The deficit we have is so large it is very, very unlikely to recover in one year,” he said.

Snow typically falls each winter in the Sierra and melts during the warm months, rushing down streams and rivers into reservoirs. It provides critical water supplies to millions of residents and vast farmland in the nation’s leading agricultural state.

Consecutive dry years are common in California, but this drought – now entering a fifth year – is the most severe in the last 1,200 years, according to studies cited in the research.

California recovered in as little as one year from past droughts, such as one in 1977, but this one is exceptional, said Margulis, publishing the findings in the *Geophysical Research Letters*, a journal of the American Geophysical Union.

In the study, researchers combined three decades of NASA satellite imagery taken of the Sierra snowpack with state snowpack measurements collected since 1951.

Today, California’s snowpack is at 8 percent of normal for this time of year, according to the state Department of Water Resources figures.

The study is designed to help leaders chart water policy. Last year, state regulators imposed historic cutbacks on farms and cities. Restrictions on residents were recently relaxed, allowing local water districts to set their own conservation

efforts.

“It is critical for regions like California, that rely on their regional snowpack for water supply, to understand the dynamics of the system,” Margulis said.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Because of construction at Lake Tahoe Community College this year’s commencement ceremony will take place June 24 at 6pm in the South Tahoe Middle School multipurpose room.
- Sweet Tahoe Time, located at 8636 N. Lake Blvd. in Kings Beach, will be opening 4th of July weekend.
- Craig Hellberg, El Dorado County investigative assistant, was awarded the El Dorado Hills Rotary Club 2016 officer of the year award.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife recently certified five K-9s and their handlers.
- Truckee is looking to improve trash and recycling services over the next year. **This survey** will help direct the changes.