Snow returns to Tahoe; schools open

Schools are open and most roads in the Lake Tahoe Basin have chain requirements.

Click on the state icons at the top of *Lake Tahoe News'* home page to get information about the roads you will be traveling on.



Shovels had to be dusted off Monday morning in Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

About 4 inches of fluffy, white stuff fell in South Lake Tahoe overnight. The National Weather Service in Reno says the winter weather advisory remain in effect until 4 this afternoon.

The Reno-Carson City-Carson Valley area faces a hazardous weather outlook for Monday. Expect delays on Highway 395 because of snow.

"A series of low pressure systems will move south along the Sierra throughout the upcoming week. A system on Wednesday will bring the next chance of precipitation to the region, with another system moving in for the weekend," the National Weather Service reports.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• U.S. District Court Judge Lawrence Karlton rejected the plaintiffs' – Sierra Club and Friends of the West Shore – request that he preside over the Homewood lawsuit rather than the randomly assigned judge, William Shubb. TRPA calls this a victory. Karlton is the judge who heard the shorezone case that TRPA lost.

• South Tahoe High Performing Arts Department presents "The Royal Family" by George S. Kaufman & Edna Ferber on March 23, 24, 30, 31 at 7pm and March 25 and April 1 at 2pm. Ticket information will be posted online one week prior to opening night.

• Marni Elise Pershnicke of South Lake Tahoe has made the dean's list at George Fox University. She is a senior studying social work at the Oregon college.

• Here are the El Dorado-Tahoe and Sierra Caltrans roadwork schedules for this week.

• Chuck Bluth's restaurant (Lanza's) in Stateline has a new name – Sul Lago – as well as new menu (starting today), to go along with the new service, chef and atmosphere.

K's Kitchen: Mushrooms capture the heart and stomach

By Kathryn Reed

I have a feeling I won't find much love Valentine's night. I have my choice of two school board meetings to attend. Not that these boards aren't made up of lovely people, but, well, it's just another second Tuesday of the month for me.



That's why I spent Saturday night making a special meal. I was trying out two new recipes – the entrée and dessert. Entrée is a keeper – and I'm so glad there are leftovers. Dessert – a bomb. Considering the latter came via a relative who when she died the song "The Wicked Witch is Dead" echoed through my head, maybe it was karma.

Ah, but the main dish – it is so scrumptious. I have this thing for mushrooms. The dish is definitely rich. My guess is it is not something kids would like – but that just means more for the adults at the table.

I just wish I had dried some of the wild edibles I found in Lake Tahoe last year. My goodness, they are pricy at the grocery store. Oh, but the dish is so good, so splurge a bit. I didn't find the exact combo of shrooms the recipe called for, but had the right quantity – even a little more because I really, really like mushrooms.

The meal was complemented by a spinach salad that had sliced mushrooms, dried cranberries and almond slivers. This was all lightly coated with a vinaigrette dressing.

The wine for the evening – a 2006 Caymus Cabernet.

The recipe is from the January-February 2012 *Cooking Light* magazine.

Mushroom Lasagna

1 C boiling water

1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms

1 T butter

2 T olive oil, divided

1¼ C chopped shallots (about 4)

1 8-ounce package presliced cremini mushrooms

1 4-ounce package presliced exotic mushroom blend

1 tsp salt, divided

½ tsp freshly ground black pepper, divided

1½ T chopped fresh thyme

6 garlic cloves, minced and divided

½ C white wine

1/3 C (3 ounces) 1/3-less-fat cream cheese

2 T chopped fresh chives, divided

1.1 ounces all-purpose flour (about ¼ C)

Cooking spray

9 no-boil lasagna noodles

½ C (2 ounces) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine 1 cup boiling water and porcini. Cover and let stand 30 minutes; strain mixture through a cheesecloth-lined sieve over a bowl, reserving liquid and mushrooms.

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon oil to pan; swirl to coat. Add shallot to pan; sauté 3 minutes. Add cremini and exotic mushrooms, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper; sauté 6 minutes or until mushrooms are browned. Add thyme and 3 garlic gloves; sauté 1 minute, stir in wine; bring to a boil. Cook 1 minute or until liquid almost evaporates, scraping pan to loosen brown bits. Remove from heat; stir in cream cheese and 1 tablespoon chives. Add reserved porcini mushrooms.

Heat a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil to pan; swirl to coat. Add reaming 3 garlic cloves to pan; sauté 30 seconds. Add the reserved porcini liquid, 2¾ cups milk, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper; bring to boil. Combine remaining ¼ cup milk and flour in a small bowl; stir with a whisk.

Spoon ½ cup sauce into 11 x 7-inch glass or ceramic baking dish coated with cooking spray, and top with 3 noodles. Spread half of mushroom mixture over noodles. Repeat layers, ending with remaining sauce. Sprinkle cheese over top. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until golden. Top with 1 tablespoon chopped chives.

Cellist to highlight Tahoe symphony’s spring program

Tahoe Symphony Orchestra & Chorus presents “Brrroque Masters” on March 8, 11, 14 and 16.

The program features guest cellist Jeffrey Lastrapes in a program that includes works by Bach, Couperin, Vivaldi, Scarlatti, and Handel.

The series kickoff March 8 at West Shore Café in Homewood. Appetizers and wine start at 4:30pm, the concert at 5pm, and a four-course dinner with three gourmet wines starts at 7pm. Tickets for concert and dinner are $110 and are limited to 60 people. Concert without dinner is $45.

Other performances are March 11 at 3pm in St. Theresa Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe; March 14 at 7pm in Trinity Church, Reno; and March 16 at 7pm in St. Patrick’s Church, Incline Village.

Tickets for these concerts are $25 adults, $20 seniors, and $5 students age 19-25. Tickets can be purchased at the door with cash or check or online with credit card. Preferred seating is available for $35. For more information or preferred seating, call (775) 313.9697 or go online.

Opinion: Jobs deficit more

important than federal deficit

By Robert Reich

The most significant aspect of January's jobs report is political. The fact that America's labor market continues to improve is good news for the White House. But as a practical matter the improvement is less significant for the American work force.

President Obama's only chance for rebutting Republican claims that he's responsible for a bad economy is to point to a positive trend. Voters respond to economic trends as much as they respond to absolute levels of economic activity. Under ordinary circumstances January's unemployment rate of 8.3 percent would be terrible. But compared to September's 9.1 percent, it looks quite good. And the trend line – 9 percent in October, 8.6 percent in November, 8.5 percent in December, and now 8.3 percent – is enough to make Democrats gleeful.



Robert Reich

But the U.S. labor market is far from healthy. America's job deficit is still mammoth. Our working-age population has grown by nearly 10 million since the recession officially began in December 2007 but many of these people never entered the workforce. Millions of others are still too discouraged to look for work.

The most direct way of measuring the jobs deficit is to look at the share of the working-age population in jobs. Before the recession, 63.3 percent of working-age Americans had jobs. That employment-to-population ratio reached a low last summer of 58.2 percent. Now it's 58.5 percent. That's better than it was, but not by much. The trend line here isn't quite as encouraging.

Given how many people have lost their jobs and how much larger the total working-age population is now, we've got a long road ahead. At January's rate of job gains — 243,000 — the nation wouldn't return to full employment for another seven years.

When they're not blaming Obama for a bad economy, Republicans are decrying the federal budget deficit and demanding more cuts. But America's jobs deficit continues to be a much larger problem than the budget deficit.

In fact, we can't possibly achieve the growth needed to reduce the budget deficit as a proportion of the total economy unless far more people are employed. Workers are consumers, and consumer spending is 70 percent of economic activity. And cutting the budget means fewer workers, directly (as government continues to shed workers) and indirectly (as government contractors have to lay off workers) and therefore fewer consumers.

Yet deficit hawks continue to circle. State and local budgets are still being slashed. The federal government is scheduled to begin major spending cuts less than a year from now. Republicans are calling for more cuts in the short term. Austerity economics continues to gain traction.

Meanwhile Congress is debating whether to renew extended unemployment benefits. This should be a no-brainer. The long-term unemployed, who have been jobless for more than six months, comprise a growing share of the unemployed. (In January they rose from 42.5 percent to 42.9 percent).

Republicans say unemployment benefits are prolonging unemployment, that people won't get jobs if they get unemployment checks from the government. That's claptrap, especially when there's only 1 job opening for every 4 people who need a job. Republicans also say we can't afford to extend jobless benefits. Also untrue. Jobless workers spend whatever money they get, and their spending keeps other people in jobs.

Government should extend unemployment benefits, and not cut spending until the nation's rate of unemployment is down to 5 percent. Then, and only then, should we move toward budget austerity.

The job situation is better than it was but it's still awful. The jobs deficit is still our No. 1 economic problem. Forget the budget deficit until we tame it.

Robert Reich is chancellor's professor of Public Policy at UC Berkeley. He has served in three national administrations, most recently as secretary of labor under President Bill Clinton. He has written 13 books.

Douglas County officials tout goals to reinvigorate economy

By Anne Knowles

MINDEN – Douglas County's multifaceted strategy to boost its economy is working, according to proponents who presented an update on the economic vitality plan to the county's Board of

Commissioners.

“It’s a feel-good meeting I am happy to report,” said Mike Bradford, CEO of the Lakeside Inn and Casino in Stateline, who led the meeting at the Carson Valley Inn here and leads the Tahoe Revitalization team for the county.

Tahoe Revitalization is one of a dozen components of the roadmap adopted 17 months ago by the county. Each piece is overseen by a team of local businesspeople, and county and city government representatives who are responsible for turning talk into action and delivering measureable results.



Construction of a bike path connecting Round Hill Pines Beach to Stateline is part of Douglas County's economic revitalization plans. Photo/LTN file

“The goal is to transform the South Shore into a true mountain recreation spot,” Mitchell Mize, director of real estate for Edgewood Companies and a member of the Tahoe Revitalization team, said at the Feb. 10 meeting.

“We need to resurrect the entertainment that used to be there,” he said. “And we need to influence the TRPA’s (Tahoe Regional Planning Agency) Regional Plan update to allow the kind development we need there.”

Rize said the “grand plan” – the South Shore Vision Plan – is complete. That plan, developed with $50,000 supplied by the South Tahoe Alliance of Resorts, will complement the combined $25 million Embassy Suites and MontBleu resorts on the South Shore have invested in hotel renovations. Another $35,000 to conduct an economic impact study was provided by STAR, the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Douglas County and South Lake Tahoe. And $2.5 million from the Federal Highway Administration is funding the South Shore bikeway demonstration project featuring 3.2 miles of bike paths connecting Stateline to Round Hill Pines, which will break ground this summer.

Next up, said Rize, is completion by year-end of an environmental impact statement for the Highway 50 revitalization plan, which would turn the highway into a three-lane local roadway in through the Stateline casino corridor while realigning the highway through a neighborhood to the east, as well as securing funding from both private and government sources for construction of the project.

Rize said, in the end, the success of the teams’ efforts will be measured in room nights, transient occupancy tax collected, commercial vacancy rates, gaming revenues and investment in commercial property.

“We’re looking to compete with Vail and Aspen,” concluded Rize.

Melissa Shaw Granat, team leader for the Tremendous Trails element of the plan, said 16 miles of trails above Genoa with connections to the Tahoe Rim Trail would open this spring. The 100-mile loop of trails planned for the county was recently

christened the Carson Valley Discovery Trail after an August survey and workshop helped pick the name and the Flagship Trail map is almost complete, which should help draw visitors to the area. Also to help promote tourism, the team is working with the California Tahoe Conservancy on a smart phone application that would map area trails and on creating signage for the paths.

Granat said they are working with area visitors' authorities to find ways to measure the economic impact of trails.

Gardnerville and Genoa, the focus of two of the plan's components, have already been able to gauge progress in terms of new businesses. Genoa, which is trying to capitalize on its historic downtown, has recently added seven businesses, including three restaurants, a consignment shop and a clothing boutique, said Dan Aynesworth, team leader for Genoa Destination. That's a 46 percent jump in new businesses when the target was 10 percent, said Aynesworth. Room nights have increased 6 percent, he said, with a goal of 7 percent.

Redesign plans for Genoa's downtown are half completed, said Aynesworth. The Genoa Trail, funded with $100,000 from The Nature Conservancy, is 60 percent designed and construction should begin in June, with completion planned by the Candy Dance in September. A covered wagon that will be turned into a road sign for the town located on Highway 395 East has been acquired with $6,800 from the town. Casino owner and local rancher John Ascuaga has donated $1,500 for the cemetery beautification project.

Gardnerville added 16 businesses last year, a 9.5 percent increase, said Paula Lochridge, leader of the Main Street Gardnerville team. She said they have a 10-year goal of getting the commercial vacancy rate down to 5 percent, recruiting 10 new businesses and creating 50 new jobs.

Other presentations were made on Ascent Douglas, the work to

attract sporting goods manufacturers to the county; Sports Aviation Foundation, work to bring more aviation, including gliding, tourism to the area; the county's K-12 education and transportation needs; and the long-awaited Carson Valley Community and Senior Center, which is scheduled to open in 2014.

Three components of the plan – Maximize WNC Facility, Minden Momentum and Energy Science Park – have teams but have yet to find a so-called champion, or leader to move them forward, said Lisa Granahan, economic vitality manager for the county.

Holland just misses podium in Utah

By USSA

PARK CITY – In only her second competition back from injury, Faye Gulini of Salt Lake City was U.S. Snowboarding's top finisher Sunday at the Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix at Canyons Resort, taking second to win the women's U.S. Championship.

Teammate Nate Holland of Squaw Valley was the top American male finisher on a day where continuous snowfall made for low visibility and slow course speeds on Canyons Resort's Doc's Run.

Austrain Markus Schairer won the men's title while Canadian Dominique Maltais took the women's.

Holland placed fourth overall for the men, after he took a

fall near the start in the championship heat.

“I’m pumped to have the U.S. Championship title but I really wanted to put the exclamation point on it with a win. Right off the start features, I got run into and taken out,” Holland said. “There’s not much I could have done. I’m stoked for the title, but wish I would have gotten the win. Sitting one off the podium is a bittersweet spot.”

Sandoval does away with 654 Nevada regulations

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

RENO – Gov. Brian Sandoval said his plan to repeal 654 unnecessary regulations will assist in the state’s efforts at economic diversification and job creation by making Nevada more business friendly.

In addition to the repeal of more than 600 rules, another 1,100 will be updated as a result of an executive order he issued in January 2011 imposing a one-year freeze and calling for his cabinet to thoroughly review the entire regulatory framework of the state.

Most regulations that will be repealed come from agencies that impact businesses and individuals directly – 137 regulations in the Department of Business and Industry, 120 in the Department of Motor Vehicles and 95 in the Department of Taxation.

This week Sandoval said a less burdensome regulatory system

will help Nevada attract jobs.

“My goal is to make Nevada the most business-friendly state in the country,” he said. “I think that sent an incredible message that we’re in Nevada are going to have important regulations that are business friendly, and we think that it’s going to have a large impact and compliments what this plan does today.

“Overregulation in other states has suffocated business and we think that that is going to be a very attractive component of our ability to attract those businesses to come to our state,” Sandoval said.

At the Department of Motor Vehicles, the regulation which requires schools for training drivers to establish a place of business located in Nevada is being repealed. Repeal was recommended because requiring Internet-based schools to establish a place of business in the state constitutes an unnecessary burden with little to no increased consumer protection (NAC 483.766(1)(a)).

In the Manufactured Housing Divisio, NAC 461.125 is being repealed. The regulation requires that every manufactured building in the state equipped with a toilet have a label affixed to it indicating the maximum amount of water the toilet uses for each flush. The MHD states that this regulation is duplicative and unnecessary.

During the freeze, all regulations were reviewed to determine if they were still necessary, to identify any adverse impact on business, to clarify language and address duplication or inconsistencies, and to determine if the public value outweighed the cost of the regulation itself.

“With my executive order, I established a set of regulatory priorities for this administration – namely, to protect the health and welfare of the people of Nevada without discouraging economic growth,” Sandoval said.

Additionally, Sandoval has given his cabinet specific directions to refocus their approach to rule-making. Regulations will not be frozen, but every regulatory body will be required to notify the governor's office of proposed actions and include notice of how the proposed regulation is consistent with Sandoval's priority to keep Nevada's economy moving.

"My office will provide a thorough review of the rule-making process to ensure government doesn't get in the way of job growth," Sandoval said.

Burning Man plagued by ticket drama

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

Organizers of the iconic counterculture event Burning Man are scrambling to solve a crisis that some fear threatens the very fabric of the event.

The problem has left perhaps 75 percent of the longtime participants who traditionally provide the creative spark for displays and activities without a ticket. The event is held annually at a remote site in the Black Rock Desert of northern Nevada.

The crisis resulted from attempts to solve issues from last year, when, in addition to the normal problem of computer servers crashing as thousands of people rush to buy tickets online, the event sold out for the first time.

With the event increasingly becoming a bucket-list activity,

organizer Black Rock City LLC set out to create a more egalitarian method for distributing tickets and thwarting scalpers.

Black Rock's solution was to distribute 40,000 of the 58,000 tickets through a lottery. Applicants had two weeks to apply for up to two tickets. Demand far outpaced supply.

The result: "A full-on fiasco," said Steve Jones, author of "The Tribes of Burning Man."

The new system made it easier for folks not willing or able to sit at a computer for hours. But many say that same convenience also made it easy pickings for scalpers.

Read the whole story

Slopestyle competition at Heavenly

The first part of the Stateline Showdown, a three-part slopestyle competition series, will take place at Ante Up Terrain Park at Heavenly Mountain Resort on Feb. 18 from 9:30am-2pm.

The entry fee is $20.

The two other dates are March 10 and 24.

For more information, call (530) 542.5133.