Chinese New Year stories for children at Zephyr Cove library

Douglas County Public Library at Zephyr Cove is presenting Saturday Stories on Jan. 28 at 1pm.

Celebrate the Year of the Dragon at the library. Miss Carol will read Chinese New Year stories.

Children ages 3 and up will listen to stories, make crafts, and get a fortune cookie treat.

Sign up by Jan. 27.

Young children should be accompanied by an adult.

The library is located at 233 Warrior Way in Zephyr Cove. For more information, call (775) 588.6411.

South Lake Tahoe woman wins Dew Tour superpipe

By Taylor Morris, ESPN

Sixteen-year-old phenom Torin Yater-Wallace double-corked his way to a first place finish at Saturday's Dew Tour men's ski superpipe finals in Killington, Vt. Yater-Wallace held a

comfortable lead through the first set of runs with his first-run score of 90.25, until Wallace himself bested the score, muscling two doubles (a cork 1260 and a double flair), a 900, and a switch 9 en route to a second-run 93.75.

The grey skies cleared and the snow lessened as the day wore on, allowing for higher speeds and huge amplitude from every competitor. Second place Tai arrymore dropped a pair of 9s and a double cork alley-oop 12 on his second run, for a score of 88.50, while Tucker Perkins backed up two 9s with a double cork 12, stomped clean, for a score of 85.75.

Of his win, Yater-Wallace said he set a goal in his head and it "ended up happening." He went on to commend his competitors, saying, "I don't think there's one person that was in the finals today that couldn't have won." He hopes to carry his momentum into this week's Winter X Games. Yater-Wallace's win makes him the youngest winner in Winter Dew Tour ski pipe history.

Earlier in the day, a video tribute to Sarah Burke christened the start of women's ski superpipe finals. Burke, the groundbreaking athlete responsible for progressing and popularizing women's freeskiing, died Thursday from injuries sustained while practicing superpipe in Utah on Jan. 10. Burke's name was painted and stickered, in memoriam, on the sides of competitors' helmets.

The women's ski pipe winner, Maddie Bowman of South Lake Tahoe, said the day was hard for everyone, but that, "Sarah would have wanted us to ski, and that's what we did – in her honor, of course."

Read the whole story

North Shore chamber looking for nominees for various awards

Businesses and organizations may nominate outstanding employees, volunteers and others to be recognized at the 58th annual North Lake Tahoe Community Awards Dinner.

The event is Feb. 16, 6-9:30pm at the Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe in Truckee.

The annual event produced by the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce recognizes Small Business of the Year, Large Business of the Year, Citizen of the Year, Public Servant of the Year, Regional Marketing Award, Nonprofit Organization of the Year and Hospitality Award for a business or organization. The chamber is also accepting nominations for Volunteer and Employee of the Year for individual businesses and organizations, with a $25 award fee per nominee due with application.

The deadline for nominations is Jan. 27 at 5pm.

Kym Fabel at (530) 581.8764 or kym@puretahoenorth.com has more information and nomination forms.

Tickets to the dinner are $85.

Winter arrives in Lake Tahoe and will be sticking around

The white stuff on the ground and in the trees throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin is snow – just in case people forgot what it looked like.

The sounds and sights of winter finally arrived Jan. 21. Snowmobiles were on city streets, private and public snowplows were doing a brisk business, bus stops had snowboarders waiting for a lift, shovels came out of the garage, and children were being pulled on saucers.



Pedestrians take a chance Jan. 21 crossing Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Snow is in the forecast for the basin through Tuesday. Highs will be in the mid-30s, with lows in the 20s.

For South Lake Tahoe residents wondering when their street might be plowed – keep wondering. The thousands of dollars spent on the GPS system for the machines were touted at the Jan. 17 City Council meeting as being installed. And they are.

It’s just that the technology to allow people to track them online isn’t up and running.

Below are the rain and snow totals from the National Weather Service as of 11:30am Jan. 21:

Snow:

Soda Springs Ski Area – 8-12 inches

Incline Village – 7-12 inches

Sierra-at-Tahoe – 9 inches

Tahoe-Donner – 6-7 inches

Tahoe City – 3 inches

Truckee airport – 3 inches

Rain:

South Lake Tahoe – 4.30 inches

Homewood – 4 inches

Incline Village – 1.50 inches

Alpine Meadows – 1.13 inches.

– Kathryn Reed

Climate change skepticism

seeps into classrooms

By Neela Banerjee, Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON – A flash point has emerged in American science education that echoes the battle over evolution, as scientists and educators report mounting resistance to the study of man-made climate change in middle and high schools.

Although scientific evidence increasingly shows that fossil fuel consumption has caused the climate to change rapidly, the issue has grown so politicized that skepticism of the broad scientific consensus has seeped into classrooms.

Texas and Louisiana have introduced education standards that require educators to teach climate change denial as a valid scientific position. South Dakota and Utah passed resolutions denying climate change. Tennessee and Oklahoma also have introduced legislation to give climate change skeptics a place in the classroom.

In May, a school board in Los Alamitos passed a measure, later rescinded, identifying climate science as a controversial topic that required special instructional oversight.

“Any time we have a meeting of 100 teachers, if you ask whether they’re running into pushback on teaching climate change, 50 will raise their hands,” said Frank Niepold, climate education coordinator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, who meets with hundreds of teachers annually. “We ask questions about how sizable it is, and they tell us it is [sizable] and pretty persistent, from many places: your administration, parents, students, even your own family.”

Against this backdrop, the National Center for Science Education, an Oakland-based watchdog group that supports the teaching of evolution through advocacy and educational

materials, plans to announce on Monday that it will begin an initiative to monitor the teaching of climate science and evaluate the sources of resistance to it.

NCSE, a small, nonpartisan group of scientists, teachers, clergy and concerned individuals, rose to prominence in the last decade defending evolution in the curriculum.

The controversy around “climate change education is where evolution was 20 years ago,” said Eugenie Scott, executive director of NCSE.

Read the whole story

Profits dip for El Dorado Savings

By Mark Glover, Sacramento Bee

Placerville-based El Dorado Savings Bank, one of the area’s most consistently profitable financial institutions, saw a slight decrease in net income in 2011.

The bank, which operates 32 branches in Northern California, on Friday reported a full-year profit of $10.2 million, down from $10.9 million in 2010.

Fourth-quarter net income was $3.3 million, down from $3.5 million in the final quarter of 2010.

Assets as of Dec. 31 totaled $1.7 billion, up $50 million from 2010.

Chairman and CEO Thomas Meuser said he was pleased with bank

operations and a flow of new customers amid “challenging conditions” in 2011.

Washoe Drive Fire contained, people allowed to return home

By Reno Gazette-Journal

The Washoe Drive Fire was considered 100 percent contained as of 6am, Sierra Fire Protection District spokesman Mark Regan said.

All evacuation requirements were lifted by 8am, Regan said.

“The weather helped, but also the crews working helped speed things along,” Regan said.

That included NV Energy, which made sure there were no dangers to the public from power lines, and the Nevada Department of Transportation, which fixed the guardrails and cleaned the roads of debris.

“We couldn’t lift the evacuation order until the area was secured,” Regan said.

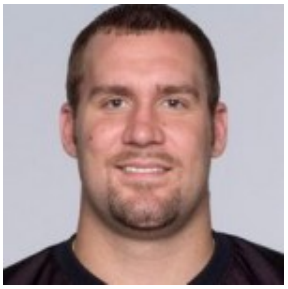
About 2,000 people in the area of Pleasant Valley and Old Highway 395 was reopened about 11 on Friday night, Regan said.

Lawsuit alleging rape by Steelers QB in Tahoe settled

By Martha Bellisle, Reno Gazette-Journal

The civil lawsuit filed by a former Harrah's Lake Tahoe casino host claiming Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger raped her while he was visiting Lake Tahoe for a celebrity golf tournament in 2008 has been resolved.

But neither side will say whether the Super Bowl star paid Andrea McNulty any money as a settlement.



Ben Roethlisberger

McNulty filed the suit in Washoe District Court in 2009, claiming Roethlisberger lured her into his penthouse suite and forced her to have sex. The suit also named a list of Harrah's employees, claiming they covered up the alleged sexual assault.

In August 2011, the Nevada Supreme Court ruled against Roethlisberger and the other defendants, who had filed motions to move the case out of Reno. The Supreme Court affirmed a judge's ruling that the case should stay in Washoe District Court.

In December, all of the parties in the suit signed stipulations to dismiss the case.

McNulty’s lawyer, Cal Dunlap, refused to discuss the terms of the stipulation.

Roethlisberger’s lawyer, David Cornwell, and his agent, Ryan Tollner, did not respond to calls and emails requesting comment.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Rand McNally lists South Lake Tahoe as the second best ski town in the United States. No. 1 is Sandpoint, Idaho. Mammoth also makes the list.

• Burn restrictions for El Dorado and Amador counties have been lifted by CalFire.

• There will be a young actors workshop at the Lake Tahoe Community College for eight weeks starting Jan. 28. Cost is $120. Go online to register.

• Here is Caltrans’ El Dorado Tahoe and Sierra road work schedules for the coming week.

• South Lake Tahoe Women’s Center is now called Live Violence Free Center.

• Tioga Pass leading into Yosemite is finally closed for the season.

Real estate numbers show no neighborhood is recession-proof

By Robert Stiles

Single-family residential home sales increased 7 percent in the South Lake Tahoe area last year. Distressed home sales accounted for 49.4 percent of the single-family residential homes sold. That’s 269 distressed home sales divided by 544 total annual sales.

We currently have a median sales price in the area of $265,000. This is a 17 percent decline from December 2010 values when the area median price was $319,000.

The last time we saw prices this low was in 2002.

Short sales increased by 18.6 percent last year. Bank owned property sales increased by 9.3 percent.

The condominium and town home median price value increased 45.3 percent from 2010 to 2011. Condominiums sold in 2010 mostly averaged less than $200,000, while last year those costing more than $200,000 finally hit the market.

Same thing happened in the Tahoe Keys, with the highest priced area holding out on price declines until it also finally succumbed.

The recession is hitting on all cylinders, with no neighborhood area exempt.

Robert Stiles is a real estate broker with Tahoe Real Estate

Services.