

Young the Giant

Young the Giant plays at Harrah's Lake Tahoe on Jan. 21 at 7:30pm.

Tickets are \$29.50. Must be 21 to attend.

More information is at 800.786.8208.

Alpine, telemark skiing demos on North Shore

Alpenglow Sports has partnered with Alpine Meadows Ski Resort to put on the 5th annual Alpine Touring and Telemark Demo on Jan. 7 from 9am-3pm.

The event provides a forum to perpetuate the enthusiasm for all aspects of in-area and backcountry skiing. Free to all, the event will showcase the latest and greatest in telemark and Alpine touring equipment.

Participating vendors include Black Diamond, Dynafit, G3, Scarpa, Garmont, Rossignol, Volkl, Marker, Moment, Ski Logic, and DPS. Valid lift ticket or season pass purchased from Alpine Meadows/Squaw Valley required, along with a driver's license and credit card for deposit.

For more information, call Alpenglow Sports at (530) 583.6917 or email brendan@alpenglowsports.com.

Budget gift: Making original necklaces or key rings

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News is looking for gift ideas that are less than \$20. Find out how to make a suggestion.*



Make your own unique necklaces and key rings as gifts at Gaia-Licious Global Gifts in South Lake Tahoe.

With many words and sayings to choose from, these pewter charms make a great budget gift. Each piece of the necklace or key ring is only \$2.50, so you can make a nice necklace with three charms for only \$10 or make a key ring with four charms for \$12.50.



It's a fun way to make a unique gift that is great for everyone in the family and the price is up to you.

Gaia-Licious is at 987 Tallac Ave.

– Kelly Brosch

California, Nevada join forces to fight mortgage fraud

By Alejandro Lazo, Los Angeles Times

An alliance by California and Nevada to jointly investigate misconduct and fraud in the mortgage business further divides efforts by the nation's attorneys general to bring the home-lending industry to account for improper foreclosure practices.

The two states, which are at ground zero of the nation's housing bust, will join forces to probe allegations of foreclosure fraud and other wrongdoing in the mortgage markets, including the packaging and selling of mortgage-backed securities by Wall Street players and scams by smaller players offering to help troubled borrowers.

The agreement to work together, announced in Los Angeles on Tuesday by California Atty. Gen. Kamala D. Harris and Nevada Atty Gen. Catherine Cortez Masto, comes a week after Massachusetts said it was suing the nation's five largest mortgage servicers over alleged foreclosure illegalities. The moves escalate pressure on the nation's biggest financial institutions already in high-level negotiations with a coalition of state attorneys general over their alleged abuses.

"This potential partnership with the Nevada AG may cover a fairly broad array of issues," said Paul Leonard, California director for the Center for Responsible Lending. "Having the prospect of investigations and litigation could very well raise the stakes for – and put added pressure on – the financial institutions to come up with a settlement."

California bowed out of the multistate talks this summer, saying the banks were being let off the hook too easily, and has opened a number of probes into the mortgage business. Harris characterized her pact with Masto as an intensification of her efforts. The offices will share litigation strategies, evidence in ongoing investigations and link both the civil and criminal teams of each office.

Read the whole story

When does a writer become a writer?

By Betsy Morais, Atlantic

A 48-year-old high-school biology teacher from France, Alexis Jenni, won the country's top literary prize this year, the Prix Goncourt. When he received the honor earlier this month, Jenni told reporters, "I didn't even think that I would be published, so I could hardly dream of the Goncourt. I was a little resigned to anonymity."

Jenni's winnings are, officially, a symbolic check for 10 Euros, and, unofficially, a boost in sales for his 600-page novel, *L'art français de la guerre* (The French Art of War). In the recent past, Goncourt winners have gone on to sell around 400,000 copies of their books. But Jenni, a father of three, said he has no plans to give up his day job as a science teacher at Le Lycée Saint Marc in Lyon. He intends to remain, as he has been, "a Sunday writer."

The astounding honor that plucked Jenni from his humble weekend scribbling to rank him among the French literary

elite—past Goncourt winners include Marcel Proust, Marguerite Duras, Simone de Beauvoir, and Georges Duhamel—is the rare acknowledgement of a former “nobody” as a “somebody.” Since completing his education in his twenties, Jenni had been writing this and that. He sent a manuscript off to some editors, and they all rejected it. Another he did not send at all. *L’art français de la guerre* was mailed only to one publisher, Gallimard, which decided to give it a go. Upon Jenni’s receipt of the prize, Le Lycée Saint Marc posted félicitons on their website under the banner: “Un Prix Goncourt au Lycée Saint-Marc.” It was, perhaps, their win as much as his own.

It’s the stuff of dreams: proof that those evenings spent hunched over a desk, typing furiously might, just might, not be in vain; that Paul Giamatti’s character from *Sideways* does not represent an undiscovered middle-aged writer’s inevitable fate. Or, as Jenni put it, “It’s not because you don’t do concerts that you can’t play the piano.”

In the Alexis Jenni school of thought, a writer may be someone, anyone, with a compulsion to scrawl or the conviction of having something to say. A writer is not defined by his career, but the simple act of writing regularly. And authors who found success through the muck of making ends meet have taken that approach for some time now, in practice at least.

Franz Kafka was a legal secretary at the Workmen’s Accident Insurance Institute for the Kingdom of Bohemia in Prague (later: In the Czech Lands), where he wrote reports like “Accident Prevention in Quarries,” and rose to a top office position, Obersekretär. Though his bureaucratic labors bore literary fruit—providing context and imagery for his fiction writing—Kafka came to feel bogged down by the daily grind. “Writing and office cannot be reconciled, since writing has its center of gravity in depth, whereas the office is on the surface of life,” he wrote to his fiancée in 1913. “So it goes up and down, and one is bound to be torn asunder in the

process.”

Read the whole story

Opinion: Time for the city to stop clowning around

To the community,

In September of 2000, Measure S passed and for 11 years it has been a mess. The latest episode is the city’s contract with a private party to operate the ice rink.

Both parties to the contract signed the documents without knowing the IRS rules that govern such relationships. Thus, the private party can’t make a profit because of the goof up.



Bill Crawford

But when we recall the screw-ups on the Lakeview Commons contract, the Measure S snafu is not a surprise. It is business as usual.

So now the city is attempting to tap dance around the IRS rules by turning the non-taxable bonds into taxable bonds at an unknown cost to the city. The architect for the fiasco is City Manager Tony O’Rourke, the knight in rusty armor, who

preaches partnerships between the private and public agencies. Thus, the city rushed to close the deal on the ice rink while operating in the dark.

As an aside, at the Measure S JPA meeting on Dec. 5, a member of the board, Mayor Hal Cole, was 35 minutes late. It seems he doesn't know the time of day. Nothing new there.

So where are we when we view the management of the public's business in the city of South Lake Tahoe. I think the answer is provided by Frank Sinatra's "Bring in the Clowns" which goes like this: "Bring in the clowns. Don't worry, they're already here."

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

Meyers creates sense of place without fancy ad agency

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS – Embracing and celebrating what they have. That's what Meyers is doing.

"Our little niche out here is we are a recreation Mecca," Rene Brejc said.

"We are celebrating Meyers tonight," Kim Wyatt said.

"Our 10-year plan is to be one of the top 10 outdoor places in *Outside* magazine," Josh Welch said.



Santa is
escorted by
sheriff's
Deputy Damian
Frisby Dec. 9
to all the
waiting
children in
Meyers.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

These three people live and work in Meyers. For them, and many others who call this hamlet at the base of Echo Summit home, Meyers is already on the map. They don't struggle with who they are, what they want to be, or why they live and work where they do.

For others, though, Meyers is merely where the bus station is, the first or last gas stop in or out of the basin, or just another place to slow down before going 55 on Highway 50 again.

That is about to change.

Friday night was the first event put on by what is loosely being called the Meyers Business Group. Brejc of Got it Real Estate & Development Corp., Wyatt of Bona Fide Books, and Welch of Safe Haven Chiropractic are the backbone of a grass roots movement to unite the business community, while at the same time sharing with others just what it is Meyers has to offer.

On Dec. 9 they attracted about 300 people to the parking lot of Divided Sky for the inaugural tree lighting. (About 75 more were warm inside.) It may have been the first time locals caused a traffic jam in Meyers.

Three-year-old Kylee Caudillo had one of the best seats of the night – atop her grandpa Jon Kolb's shoulders. He has been on the South Shore for 42 years, most of that time in Meyers, and can't remember a time when there was a tree lighting.

Savannah Caudillo, 9, of Meyers was giddy in anticipation of seeing the "special surprise" – aka Santa's sleigh.

The crowd went wild as the hum of a helicopter could be heard coming from the north. Ah ... that would be CalStar with Santa onboard. After all, when Santa was asked where his reindeer were, he told all the boys and girls that the animals were home resting for the big event later this month.

As the helicopter circled the area a few times looking for a spot not filled with a vehicle, the pilot decided to land in the lot neighboring where everyone had gathered. Kids and adults ran through the field to greet the helicopter. His special elves, aka law enforcement, made sure the little ones didn't rush the chopper.

Under escort by an El Dorado County sheriff's deputy, Santa was led to the decorated Lake Valley fire truck to talk to every child who wanted to whisper in his ear.

Clutching free cups of hot cocoa to ward off the bitter cold 28-degree Tahoe night, (or is that Meyers night?), adults could be overheard saying what a wonderful event, why didn't it happen sooner, and they hoped more events are planned.

More are in the works.

When the snow begins to fly and enough is on the ground, a snowman, woman, family, village – (depends how much white

stuff there is) – will be created in a communal effort.

The Meyers Business Group intends to focus on art, culture, recreation, and health and wellness.

Events are one thing, but creating a more cohesive sense of community is another goal. Sprucing up some of the dilapidated buildings is on the to-do list.

Brejc wants to continue the “wow factor” of being at the top of Echo Summit all the way through Meyers.

While Brejc, Wyatt and Welch know plenty of reasons to stop in Meyers – each of their businesses, the restaurants, the yoga-Pilates studio that just opened, among other reasons – they want more people to see Meyers as a place to go to, not drive through.

For the Dec. 9 event all but one business that was asked to donate money did so. Collaboration and cooperation seem to come naturally to folks in Meyers.

As a gateway to Desolation Wilderness, an area with road and mountain biking, rock climbing, bouldering, backcountry skiing, cross country skiing, fly fishing and other sports – Meyers is the outdoors – not a gateway to it.

A logo and tagline are in the works for the group. The idea is there will be more ways to unify Meyers.

Brejc is the person to contact for anyone wanting to know more about the Meyers Business Group – (530) 577.7111. The group also has a Facebook page – search Meyers Community.

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Opinion: A big thank you to thoughtful roofers

To the community,

A big shout out of thanks to Roof Masters.

I am a lucky lady to still have my husband after his fall from our roof last week. Aside from a head injury, the next step was to have surgery on his fractured wrist. We arrived home from the hospital to a completed roof project done by Scott of Roof Masters.

“Da Boys” know each other through hockey and Scott is very familiar with Paul’s stubborn streak. Thank you for taking the worry of Paul heading up a ladder again in a cast to finish the job.

You are amazing.

Lisa Huard, South Lake Tahoe

**USFS looking for
environmental education**

volunteers

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is looking for volunteers to assist with the Winter Trek Express environmental education program for fifth-graders from Jan. 9-March 30.

This three-hour environmental education program takes place at 9,000 feet at Heavenly Mountain Resort via the gondola. U.S. Forest Service rangers lead the class through the wilderness to learn snowshoe skills and discover winter-adapting animals.

This is an opportunity for individuals who wish to gain experience in the environmental education field and have a strong desire to work outdoors and give back to their community. The ideal applicant should have experience working with children, good communication skills, an outgoing friendly personality and the ability to commit to a minimum of one day a week for 12 weeks.

The Forest Service will provide a uniform, training and snowshoes if needed. Volunteers must provide their own winterized boots.

Prospective volunteers should submit their resume electronically by Dec. 11. Interviews will take place beginning the week of Dec. 12. For more information, contact Jean Norman at (530) 543.2673.

Winter Trails Day events on

both ends of the lake

On Jan. 7 from 10am–2pm the Tahoe Rim Trail Association will partner with local businesses and organizations to kick off the winter season with the free Winter Trails Day family event.

While this is a national event, TRTA is putting on events on both ends of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

National Winter Trails Day is all about introducing folks to the joys of winter trails and using them safely.

South Lake event – Snowshoe through the newly opened Van Sickle Bi-state Park, outdoor gear demonstrations and a Warming Party (with food donated by Stateline Brewery and Baja Fresh) at Explore Tahoe after the hikes.

North Lake event – Snowshoe hikes on themes ranging from winter animals to avalanche awareness, winter survival demonstrations and activities.

Participants are encouraged to register in advance. Register online or call (775) 298.0012 or email Tom at programs@tahoerimtrail.org.

These events are subject to cancellation due to winter weather.