Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Maple is a beautiful 6-year-old Weimeraner who needs a special home. As is true of most dogs of this breed, she needs lots of exercise, she will jump fences if given the chance, and she is not crazy about being left home alone.



She would do best in an active home with another dog.

But Maple is very sweet and affectionate, and has lovely manners – she is worth the extra attention she needs.

Maple is spayed, microchipped, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz

Budget gift: Books from Lake Tahoe publisher

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

For another shop local option, consider Meyers' Bona Fide Books, the South Shore's own small press. For the readers in the house, a great budget choice is one of two titles out from Bona Fide Books. "Permanent Vacation: Twenty Writers on Life and Work in Our National Parks" is perfect for nature lovers and the armchair adventurer. For those inclined to poetry, "Mud Cakes" is great for adults and YA.



Books are $15 each, and can be purchased onsite at Bona Fide HQ in Meyers or ordered online. (If you buy at Bona Fide, you'll get a complimentary gift with your purchase.)

Bona Fide Books also carries a selection of books by local writers, so if mystery or history is your thing, drop in to Bona Fide for your holiday book needs.

Bona Fide is behind the Getaway Cafe in Meyers at 1069 Magua St., No. 4.

– Kim Wyatt

Poll: Majority of California voters support Occupy movement philosophy

Publisher's note: ***Occupy South Lake Tahoe canceled the Dec. 1 event at the Y because of the weather. Organizers will congregate Dec. 8 from noon-4pm at Heavenly Village.***

By Kevin Yamamura, Sacramento Bee

Nearly three-fifths of California voters agree with the sentiment driving the Occupy movement, though voters split when asked whether they identify with protesters, according to a Field Poll released Monday.

The statewide survey found that 58 percent agree with the reason behind Occupy demonstrations in cities and on college campuses.

But 49 percent said they don't identify much with Occupy protesters, compared with 46 percent who said they identify some or a lot.

"The second question is much more of a personal one, as in, 'Would you go out into the streets if things got bad, if push came to shove?' " said Field Poll Director Mark DiCamillo. "The first question is broader: 'Where are your heartstrings?' "

Nearly nine in 10 "strongly liberal" voters said they agree with the Occupy sentiment, compared to 66 percent of "strongly conservative" voters who said they disagree.

While the Occupy movement tilts left, nearly one-third of Republicans said they agree with the reason behind it, as did 62 percent of nonpartisan voters.

Read the whole story

Private grocery labels promoted for deal hunters

By Matthew Boyle, Bloomberg Businessweek

Like many U.S. grocery chains, Safeway wanted to improve its private-label offerings during the economic slump, when consumers were eager for brands that offered better value. So three years ago it poached veteran marketer Diane Dietz from Procter & Gamble and named her chief marketing officer.

Since joining Safeway, Dietz has been digging into P&G's bag of branding tricks. In June, to promote the introduction of Safeway's Open Nature line of antibiotic-free meat, she had a 305-foot-long picnic table (a Guinness World Record) constructed in San Francisco's Marina District, where celebrity chef Tyler Florence of Food Network fame helped prepare a meal for several hundred people. The resulting buzz was a publicity bonanza for the house line.

Store brands have come a long way from their copycat days, when they confined themselves mostly to yellow boxes of faux Cheerios and black-and-white cans labeled "beans." Back then, grocers were loath to anger the Kraft Foods and PepsiCos of the world by pushing their own labels too hard.

Now, with deal-hunting shoppers increasingly brand-disloyal, Safeway, Kroger, and Supervalu — which together account for 40 percent of U.S. retail food sales, according to Citibank analyst Deborah Weinswig — are increasingly willing to devote more shelf space to their own merchandise.

As of mid-November, store brands accounted for 31.4 percent of the 14,400 new food and beverage items introduced in the United States this year, according to market researcher Packaged Facts, based on data from Datamonitor's Product Launch Analytics. That's double the share logged in 2010 and up from just 8.7 percent in 2009.

To fuel sales of their in-house lines, retailers are recruiting veteran marketers to help out-innovate traditional packaged goods companies.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Looking for substance in South Lake Tahoe

To the community,

A few days back, as my spouse and I were returning from Carson City, near the gondola site there were a few people with placards that said Occupy South Tahoe. The trouble is as Gertrude Stein said when asked about Oakland, "There is no there, there."

How true about the city of South Lake Tahoe after 46 years as a "city" there is no city hall, no civic center. But there is a huge



Bill Crawford

redevelopment debt. There is a city dysfunctional airport. There is redevelopment bankruptcy three times. And there appears to be a failure of the deal between the city and private management of the ice rink. And there are gigantic unfunded liabilities.

So, is there a there, a there called the city of South Lake Tahoe: It looks shaky at best.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

Fire safety comes before fun at Festival of Trees and Lights

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Feathers. Cross them off the list of decorations to go on the Christmas tree. No matter how "in" they are this year, they combust rapidly.

This was evident Wednesday as Eric Guevin set fire to decorations from trees assembled at MontBleu for the Festival

of Trees and Lights that starts today.



A marshmallow becomes toasty on a school tree and needs treating to remain. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Guevin is the acting fire marshal for Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District. It's his job to make sure this event with its 14 designer trees and assorted holiday decorations don't go up in flames if they were to catch fire.

Snipping pieces of fabric he assembles a handful to take to the back loading dock to set on fire.

A feather becomes unrecognizable charred debris in seconds.

"Maybe you should tell them no feathers," Guevin says to Denise Earls with Barton Foundation and Anna Vopalensky with MontBleu.

Earls says they'll try treating it one more time with a fire retardant spray. If it burns again, that tree won't be lighted.

Last year two trees didn't pass muster and therefore could not have the lights on.

"Someone flocked their own tree last year. It was scary when

he tested it," Earls said.

Barton Foundation, sponsors of the event, order the trees so they come treated. They can even get flocked trees that are flame resistant. It's the stuff people use themselves that can spark to make it be like a Fourth of July celebration.

Guevin says many of the things he inspects for in a commercial setting apply to homes. Artificial trees need to be fire resistant. Fresh trees need to have water – and the needles should be hard to pull from the branches.

A non-grounded extension cord is a no-no and not allowed to be used at the festival. Guevin advises following the same policy at home.

One tree is being backlighted with a floodlight. Guevin shakes his head. Vopalensky finds a casino employee to replace it with something they have that won't set the place on fire.



Eric Guevin with Tahoe Douglas fire watches material go up in flames.

"This could be a good ignition source," Guevin says of the light. It's almost like a heat lamp.

At home, lights on trees should not have damaged strands, no more than three strands per extension cord, and all lights

should be off and/or unplugged when going to bed or leaving the house.

To pass the fire marshal's test the item cannot burn for more than 12 seconds, will extinguish itself, and if it drips, the matter goes out and does not continue to burn.

"Some designers come to us ahead of time to be preapproved," Guevin said. "We've done training for designers so they know what products are acceptable to use."

Barton Foundation has two people patrolling the premise at all times who are called fire watchers – just in case.

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Public viewing of the trees is $5 for adults, $3 for children and seniors. Both Raley's in South Lake Tahoe have discounted tickets for $3 for all ages. Those prices are good Dec. 2-4 from 10am-2pm. Special events associated with the Festival of Trees and Lights are throughout the three days, with information online.

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2 tree lightings in South Lake Tahoe today

South Lake Tahoe is officially turning the lights on two trees today – at the Y and by the senior center.

Last year was the first time the big tree by the Y was lighted. That will take place at 4:30pm.



Liberty Energy crews on Nov. 23 weave strands of lights into the tree by the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center. Photo/LTN

The larger event – which includes Santa – is from 5-7pm.

Be sure to comment on *Lake Tahoe News*' question of the week. It's all about holiday lights.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Wind chill makes freezing temps feel even colder

Winds were blowing so hard for most of Thursday that Lake Tahoe looked more like the ocean. That was good news for surfers.

For most people, though, it was all about being inside on this freezing day. The high on Thursday was 36 in South Lake Tahoe.

It was not a record, though.



Surfers near the West Shore Cafe in Homewood on Dec. 1. Photo/Tim Rantz

“The wind chill made it feel like it was 15 or 20 degrees,” Jim Wallmann, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Reno, said.

More of the same is expected for the next couple days. Winds from the northeast will pick up Friday night into Saturday.

A remote chance of moisture is in the forecast for late next week. No telling when a powder day will be in the forecast.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Holidays can be a tempting time for problem gamblers

By Margaret Williams

The holidays are a time of celebration and joy for many people. However, for individuals who are struggling with problem gambling, the holidays may be especially challenging.

“People with gambling issues may use the season’s demands for extra cash as a reason to increase gambling,” said Christy White, supervising health education coordinator with the Public Health Division of the El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency. “Family-related stress over the holidays can also act as a trigger and send problem gamblers to bars, bingo parlors and racetracks to escape.”

According to White, problem gambling is sometimes called a “hidden” addiction because the gamblers themselves often don’t realize they have a problem. Problem gambling can lead to other problems such as substance abuse and depression. Some warning signs of problem gambling include:

• Losing time from work due to gambling

• Repeatedly promising to stop gambling, yet returning to it again and again

• Borrowing money to gamble or to pay gambling debts

• Lying to cover up gambling activity

• Suffering from feelings of remorse or depression due to gambling

• Gambling until the last dollar is gone.

White says that help is available for people who are struggling with problem gambling. The California Office of Problem Gambling Helpline offers free, confidential help over the phone at 800.426.2537. The helpline is open 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. Callers to the helpline can receive over-the-phone counseling, referral to a treatment therapist, and information about resources such as Gamblers Anonymous, and other help. The Office of Problem Gambling has additional information regarding gambling online.

Margaret Williams is the health program manager/communications officer for the El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency.

Nevada tourism officials map future; including 2022 Tahoe Olympics

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

Tourism is a complex machine and its numerous cogs – federal policymakers, state government leaders, convention and visitors bureaus, industry strategists and the airport – came together Wednesday to map out how they can team to lead Nevada out of its economic doldrums.

Several shareholders hold key individual pieces and shared their plans in presentations to about 300 people attending the 1 1/2-day Governor's Conference on Tourism that ended Wednesday at the Rio.

Among the plans:

• A definitive effort to attract the 2022 Winter Olympic Games to Northern Nevada. The state will team with California in 2013 to convince the U.S. Olympic Committee that the Lake Tahoe area would be the best place to host the games.

• The June 28 opening of a new 14-gate terminal at McCarran International Airport that will provide a new home for international flight arrivals and long-haul domestic flights.

• A new call to set aside regional rivalries and political differences to unite behind a strategy to use tourism to help diversify the state's economy.

• An effort to refurbish the Las Vegas Convention Center to bolster the city's grip on its place as the top convention and meetings destination in the country. Next year, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority will resurrect a makeover plan that was shelved when the recession hit.

• A single brand strategy to attract tourists to a diverse state that includes wide-open rural landscapes as well as entertainment and casinos, due for delivery in late May.

• Brand USA, the nation's first international marketing program, which will deliver its first ads to attract foreign tourists to the United States next year.

"The sessions have been super," said Claudia Vecchio, new director of the state's Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. "It's great that we can have this much expertise together at one place."

Experts from near and far offered presentations on their roles

to energize the industry.

Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki told attendees to put Friday, Feb. 11, 2022, at 7pm on their calendars – the lighting of the Olympic torch for the start of the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Northern Nevada.

Read the whole story