Winter White Holiday Party

Tahoe Regional Young Professionals will bring the Lake Tahoe community together to raise funds for Tahoe Youth & Family Services on Nov. 19 from 6-10pm at Riva Grill in South Lake Tahoe.

TRYP’s Winter White Holiday Party not only benefits a family in need, but provides an opportunity for locals from around the basin to get to know one another.

The evening includes live entertainment, holiday games and door and raffle prizes donated by local businesses including ski resorts tickets, gear tune-ups, wine tasting, and more.

Attendees are encouraged to wear “winter white” (though not required). Light hors d’oeuvres will be served and drinks will be available for purchase.

Tickets are $15 in advance at Tahoe Production House (2291 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe) and Lake Tahoe TV (3445 Lake Tahoe Blvd., Ste. A, South Lake Tahoe) or $20 at the door.

Cash or checks will be accepted.

Questions, tickets, volunteer opportunities or to donate raffle prizes, email TahoeTRYP@gmail.com.

State panel allows firearms

in Nevada parks

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – A regulation eliminating a prohibition on carrying firearms in state parks has been approved by the Legislative Commission.

The regulation still prohibits the discharge of a firearm in a state park with some limited exceptions, such as designated target shooting areas.

But a provision included in the original draft regulation to specifically recognize the right to self-defense in a state park was not part of the final changes approved last week by the panel of state lawmakers.

A state lawmaker who supported the regulation said the ability to use a weapon for self-defense is covered elsewhere in state law.

Statutory changes were mandated in Assembly Bill 282, a pro-gun omnibus measure that passed with bipartisan support during the 2011 legislative session.

The ban had also been the subject of a federal lawsuit.

Steve Silva, senior law enforcement specialist for the Division of State Parks, told the Legislative Commission that much of the public comment concerned a desire to include, "an affirmative acknowledgment of the right to self-defense."

But the language was removed from the regulation when it was returned from the Legislative Counsel Bureau, he said.

The wording was supported by some who testified at a public hearing on the regulation on Oct. 12, particularly from concealed weapons instructors who argued that not including self defense language would cause confusion in teaching their

classes, Silva said.

It did not end up being a part of the regulation, however, he said.

“I’ve been with the division for just short of 32 years,” Silva said. “In that entire period we’ve never prosecuted somebody for utilizing a firearm in self defense.”

Sen. James Settelmeyer, R-Gardnerville, said in a phone interview Friday that the right to self-defense is provided for elsewhere in Nevada law, and that it was not needed as part of the state parks regulation.

“That was my concern as well and that’s why I pulled the regulation during Legislative Commission . . . to have it reviewed by us,” he said. “Because it kind of perplexed me that, yes you can carry a gun on a state park however you cannot discharge it.”

But Settelmeyer said it is covered elsewhere allowing the discharge of a weapon to protect one’s self or another.

“You don’t have a right to walk down the center of the street and discharge a weapon, but you do to save your life,” he said.

Valhalla faire kicks off S. Shore holiday season

The Valhalla Grand Hall of the vintage 1924 Heller Estate which is listed on the National Historic Register of Historic Places hosts the 16th annual Valhalla Holiday Faire. Featuring a 40-foot high natural stone fireplace, the Grand Hall will be

decorated in a festive holiday mode Nov. 19 10am-5pm and Nov. 20 from 10am-4pm.

Twenty-three local vendors and artists will be offering a varied assortment of handmade and other special items for purchase at this South Shore event.

Father Christmas comes to visit as local school choirs and other musical groups perform through out the two-day holiday festival.

Raffle tickets for raffle packages of items donated by the vendors will be available as well as chili, clam chowder, hot mulled wine, hot cider, water, sodas, and cookies will be available for purchase.

The event is free.

Overflow parking will be available near the gate on Highway 89. A shuttle will be provided if people don’t want to walk in.

Opinion: Reasons to vote for Measure R

To the community,

Several months ago at JPA public meetings on Measure R, I made arguments similar to those in Stephen Reinhard’s recent letter opposing Measure R. Unlike Reinhard who didn’t attend any of the meetings, I participated in all of the JPA public meetings, and learned about important facts Reinhard has wrong.

The JPA will not seek voter approval again for using the accumulating money for fields or “old” bike trails if Measure R is defeated. They have other options to resolve the situation; those options will make the “extra” money unavailable in the future for fields or “old” bike trails.

The JPA has had unplanned increases in revenue that will amount to several hundred thousand dollars over the life of Measure S. Fields will get $500,000, with bike trails getting the rest plus all the originally planned new bike trail maintenance money; over $800,000 more than if Measure R is defeated.

Next summer, fields and bike trails each get about $235,000. Then fields get all of the money until about 2016 because fields need money “up front” for major work that must be done all at once, and for matching fund donations. We agreed so fields people will support using Measure S money for “old” bike trails. Bike trail renovation can be done in smaller increments and after fields get $500,000, bike trails will get all of the money until Measure S sunsets in 2030.

Reinhard omitted the important final words of the Measure R sentence he quoted. It actually says the JPA can “… direct up to 100% of available JPA funding to pre-September 19, 2000 separated bicycle trails renovation.” This allows money to also be used for “old” bike trail maintenance or additional “new” bike trail maintenance.

Vote “Yes” on Measure R and give “old” bike trails $235,000 now.

Charles W. Nelson, founding member and board member of Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition

Polar Express train travels through N. Nevada

Carson City’s Old West meets the North Pole this holiday season as the Polar Express train will take weekend railway runs across the frosty Northern Nevada landscape Thanksgiving through Dec. 23

The Virginia & Truckee Railroad is one of the officially licensed Polar Express Train Ride events nationwide this holiday season. This historic 100-year train, complete with decorated passenger cars and Christmas music, leaves the Carson City Eastgate Depot (located seven miles east of downtown Carson City) and travels nearly two miles before staging at Santa’s mythical North Pole retreat. The Polar Express departs Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 4pm, 5:30pm and 7pm, Thanksgiving weekend through Dec. 23.

Tickets include keepsake silver bell, hot chocolate, cookies, entertainment and reading of Polar Express. Tickets are free for children 2 and under, $25 for ages 3-12 and $34 for 13 and older.

Early reservations are recommended. To book tickets, call (775) 687.7410.

Northstar part of U.S. Revolution ski-snowboarding

tour

By USSA

PARK CITY – Young riders and skiers eager to make an impression on the world of competitive winter action sports are gearing up for the Dec. 19 start of the U.S. Revolution Tour. The well-established series will feature snowboarding and freeskiing events at each stop.

In its eighth year, the Revolution Tour is a proving ground for up-and-coming athletes looking for a chance to compete against their peers on the national stage. The 2012 Tour will feature two new venue stops, bookended by returning resorts Copper in December and Mount Snow in March.

“With the addition of slopestyle skiing and snowboarding, and halfpipe skiing to the Olympics, it’s definitely making this coming season exciting for the Revolution Tour because the kids have an understanding that if they do well on the Tour, they have a direct path to Olympic qualification,” U.S. Snowboarding and Freeskiing Event Manager Nick Alexakos said. “Athletes competing at the Revolution Tour have a shot at qualifying for the Sprint U.S. Grand Prix series, which is an Olympic team qualifier.”

The tour kicks off Dec. 19 at Copper Mountain in Colorado’s Summit County with halfpipe skiing and snowboarding and slopestyle competitions held the week after the Sprint U.S. Grand Prix series.

“The 22-foot-pipe is a huge, early-season advantage that Copper has. Summit County is the epicenter of the snowboarding and freeskiing world early season and it’s great to have the first stop of the Tour in December when everyone is there,” Alexakos said.

Following its stop at Copper, the Revolution Tour moves

farther west to Northstar on Jan. 9 where, in addition to halfpipe skiing and snowboarding and slopestyle events, the event will also feature skicross and snowboardcross.

“Northstar brings a world-class venue and it’s Shaun White’s new home mountain reiterating the quality of that venue for Revolution Tour competitors,” Alexakos said.

On Jan. 29 the Revolution Tour makes a Midwestern stop at Otsego Resort in Michigan where halfpipe, slopestyle and cross sports will all be on tap for skiers and snowboarders.

“It’s an Olympic-training style venue with a 22-foot pipe and it’s going to be a great place for us to be,” Alexakos said.

The tour touches down for its final stop at Mount Snow in Vermont on March 13 for halfpipe skiing and snowboarding and slopestyle. Mount Snow will mark its third year as the final stop on the Revolution Tour in 2012 where the overall champions will be crowned.

The Revolution Tour’s top male and female athletes have the chance to qualify for the Sprint U.S. Grand Prix, USASA Nationals spots, the US Open, the Aspen Open and Project Gold Team.

2012 U.S. Revolution Tour Schedule:

Dec. 19-22 Copper, Colo.

Halfpipe snowboarding, slopestyle snowboarding, halfpipe skiing, slopestyle skiing

Jan. 9-13 Northstar, Truckee

Halfpipe snowboarding, slopestyle snowboarding, halfpipe skiing, slopestyle skiing, skicross, snowboardcross

Jan. 30-Feb. 3 Otsego Resort, Mich.

Halfpipe snowboarding, slopestyle snowboarding, halfpipe

skiing, slopestyle skiing, skicross, snowboardcross

March 13-16 Mount Snow, Vt.

Halfpipe snowboarding, slopestyle snowboarding, halfpipe skiing, slopestyle skiing.

Nation’s lone bi-state park a success based on popularity

By Kathryn Reed

Closed, but not off limits. That’s the status of Van Sickle Bi-state Park as of sunset Monday.

Considering the traffic to the nation’s first and only bi-state park exceeded expectations, it may come as a surprise to some people the gates won’t be open again for six months.



Van Sickle Bi-state Park in its first season is popular with locals and tourists. Photo/LTN file

The park near the state line on the South Shore was always intended to be open seasonally. Although this was a short season, with the park opening July 22, the plan is for it to be open each May through October – without snow.

People may still walk in. Driving is no longer an option. It's possible people will use the park to snowshoe and cross country ski, but no trail markers are set up.

The caretakers will continue to live on-site so someone is keeping an eye out on things.

In this inaugural season, locals and tourists have been flocking to the 725-acre park.

"It's good when locals adopt a place like that and they adopt it as part of their culture," Ray Lacey, deputy director of the California Tahoe Conservancy, said. "It's been astonishing and delightful for us how popular it has become."

When officials are out there they ask people where they are from to get a feel for who is on the trails. Local running groups are scampering up the dirt trails that lead to some magnificent views of Lake Tahoe.

Official user counts will be done next year.

Trail maps and interpretive signs are in the works, but not guaranteed for next summer.

"Explore Tahoe really has had the opportunity to be an urban trailhead now," Lisa O'Daly, program supervisor with CTC, said. "They are incredible at letting people know the adventure going on outside their door so they can walk straight to the park."

Explore Tahoe is in the Heavenly Village area, providing outdoor info to urbanites.

The Conservancy and Nevada State Parks are the owners of the

bi-state park, while the Tahoe Rim Trail Association has contributed substantially to the operation and trail building.

“The connector up to the Rim Trail is not completed in the sense that it is smooth and 100 percent built to standard yet,” Mary Bennington, TRTA executive director, said. “About one mile in the middle has been roughed in. You could hike it, but that part will be harder because it is not really finished.”

The idea is from the South Shore’s main bed base people will be able to hook up with the Tahoe Rim Trail at the Daggett Summit-Kingsbury Grade area.

Bennington expects the connector be done sometime in summer 2012. With the upper section not being able to be accessed until July because of snow, it made it impossible to have enough time this season to get the work done.

STHS grad using her hands to educate the deaf in Jamaica

By Megan Hicks

BROWN’S TOWN, Jamaica – For over a year and a half now, I have been working as a Peace Corps volunteer at the St. Christopher’s School for the Deaf in Brown’s Town, Jamaica.

I have revamped the school’s library by organizing existing books, giving the room a fresh coat of paint, and hiring a deaf artist from the community to paint a beautiful mural of the alphabet in sign language. The school has also received donations from various organizations – including the Moose

Lodge of South Lake Tahoe – that donated books, bookends, and DVDs. This generous donation allows students to read books in and out of the classroom and to participate in other reading-related activities during designated “Library Time”.



South Lake Tahoe's Megan Hicks is working with the deaf in Jamaica. Photo/Provided

Because the ability to read and comprehend is such an invaluable skill, I have endeavored to instill a love for reading among my deaf students. To this end, I have assisted in the implementation of a reading competition and a pen pal program for students in fourth, fifth and sixth grades with a school in San Ramon. The students not only learn about another culture, but they improve their writing skills through the pen pal program. And through partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development, St. Christopher’s School has also become involved in the Junior Achievement program, which teaches students financial literacy along with other valuable life skills.

I also teach sign language classes to ancillary staff members who work in the school dorms and to community members. I interpret meetings at my school and occasionally for the Jamaican Association for the Deaf in Kingston.

I initially learned about the Peace Corps from one of my college roommates, and later again, from a teacher in my interpreting program, who served as a volunteer working with the deaf community. Though I always thought that giving two years of your life to help others was extremely honorable, my teacher's experience made me think more seriously about becoming a Peace Corps volunteer. Growing up in South Lake Tahoe, I always felt so lucky to have amazing family and friends and I thought it was time to give back. The Peace Corps is the best way to do that.

Volunteering in Jamaica has been enormously rewarding. Every day I am rewarded by seeing my students' beautiful faces light up when they pick out a book or when they run to give me a hug first thing in the morning. Knowing that I have helped the students increase their motivation to read is extremely gratifying.

A little background

I'm a true Tahoe girl. I was a Thunderbird at Tahoe Valley Elementary School, a Timberwolf at South Tahoe Middle School, and a Viking at South Tahoe High, graduating in 1999. I was even a Fighting Kokanee Salmon at LTCC until I graduated 2002 and transferred to UC Berkeley to get a degree in American studies with an emphasis in disability studies. After graduation, I attended Berkeley City College for two years to learn more sign language and the Interpreter Preparation Program at Ohlone College in Fremont. I became a freelance interpreter in the Bay Area for about two years, and then moved to South Lake Tahoe to spend time with my parents before leaving for the Peace Corps. In South Lake Tahoe I worked as an interpreter for the Lake Tahoe Community College, and also waited tables at new Red Hut on Ski Run Boulevard.

Eadington: Technology will continue to change gaming

By Bill O’Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

Bill Eadington has taught economics for 42 years at UNR, and along the way he’s become one of the world’s leading authorities on commercial gaming and gambling issues.

On Tuesday in Las Vegas, Eadington will be inducted into the American Gaming Association Hall of Fame with a Special Achievement Award for Gaming Education.

Last week, Eadington, 65, sat down with the *Reno Gazette-Journal* to discuss the uncertainties and challenges gaming and tourism face in the Reno-Sparks market and what the future may hold.

Question: You’ve been in Reno for more than four decades. You’ve seen the trends. Where is the area headed?

Answer: The tourism component of the economy is shrinking and likely will continue to contract. The local casino market will become a locals market, and that’s even more dire for Lake Tahoe as consumers in general are more convenience driven. Look at the last decade with the increase of casinos in California.

Read the whole story

Deputy accidentally kills bear; 2 cubs now without mom

By Kathryn Reed

A deputy not knowing he was shooting live ammunition and a tenant with more than a month's worth of garbage contributed to one bear being killed Friday night in Stateline and two cubs being orphaned.

"The odds are against those cubs," is what Chris Healy with the Nevada Department of Wildlife told *Lake Tahoe News*.

This is because normally the cubs would be spending the winter in a den with mom. It's possible they will know to find a den, but it's also possible the youngsters – albeit they are 60 pounds – won't know what to do as winter arrives.

However, Healy said if the bears can be captured and they are healthy, they would probably be taken outside the Lake Tahoe area so they would be less likely to become garbage bears. The other possibility is taking the bears – if caught – to a rehab place that knows about hibernation techniques.

Chuck Arnold, who owns the trailer where the bear and her cubs were foraging for food, today began the eviction process for his tenants.

Arnold said he received a frantic call from his tenant about 9:30pm Oct. 28. They also had called the Douglas County Sheriff's Office. He said the people had been living there three months and gave him no reason for storing garbage in the garage for more than a month.

"It's unfortunate we lost a bear. She was part of the community," Arnold said. "My issue is with the resident. I want to remind people not to hold on to trash in bear season –

that there are consequences.”

According to the sheriff’s department, deputies scared off one bear and treed two. Two rubber-projectile wildlife control rounds were fired at the bears, but to no avail.

A deputy, whose name is not being released, thought he was firing a rubber bullet. Instead, it was regular rifle ammo. The wounded bear then had to be put down.

“In this incident, in the darkness the deputy incorrectly stacked his rounds by mistake, thereby making the second round fired out of the shotgun a rifled slug rather than a rubber-projectile wildlife control round,” Sgt. Jim Halsey said in a press release.

The sheriff’s office will be conducting an investigation.

Healy on Monday afternoon said a game warden is still waiting to speak with the sheriff’s department.

His department set a trap for the cubs, but instead an adult bear was trapped. She was released higher into the mountains.

Healy said it’s been a quiet year for bear nuisance calls – mostly because for the past three winters the abundance of moisture has meant enough food for the animals. Plus, people are slowly figuring out the appropriate ways to deal with their garbage so bears are not attracted to the rubbish.

The number of bear calls for the Northern Nevada area has not been tallied to day, but in 2007, there were 1,500 calls about problem bears.

Bears begin hibernating between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Right now they are loading up on calories – taking in up to 30,000 a day so sustain them through the winter. Normal is 3,000 to 5,000 calories a day.

“If there is not much of a snowpack, they will go into semi-

hibernation. They will wake up, follow a garbage truck and then go back sleep," Healy said. "That is why we always root for a big snowpack."