Placer County fighting to keep its water

By Gus Thomson, Auburn Journal

Placer County has plenty of water and that's creating increasing challenges to keep it, a Placer County Water Agency told the Board of Supervisors Tuesday.

The water agency is attempting to galvanize support for a regional effort to fight a new round of proposals for the Delta that Strategic Affairs Director Einar Maisch said pose serious risks to the water supplies, economy, environment and quality of life in the Sacramento region and Northern California.

Maisch showed a slide of a nearly dry reservoir at Folsom and posed the question whether that will be "our future?"

The water agency board recently adopted a resolution seeking regional collaboration on a solution and is seeking a similar resolution from the Board of Supervisors. The board heard Maisch's presentation Tuesday and asked staff to place the agency's resolution request on a future agenda.

The proposed resolution calls on any solution for the Delta water supply to be based on "sound science" and one that doesn't shift any negative economic, environmental or societal impacts to areas in the Sacramento region.

The regional water coalition would include the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, the Northern California Water Association and the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association.

Read the whole story

Resort at Squaw Creek operators face federal lawsuit

By KCRA-TV

A property management company in Lake Tahoe violated federal law when it improperly handled a sexual harassment claim of a Resort at Squaw Creek employee, according to a lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The commission said that the resort operator retaliated against the employee who filed a sexual harassment complaint against a co-worker.

The lawsuit claims that Shira Garfinkel was sexually harassed by a co-worker while she worked as a server and bartender between 2005 and 2007 at the resort which is run by Destination Hotels & Resorts. The suit states that she underwent unwanted touching and sexual advances. The harassment eventually led to the break-in of Garfinkel's home.

The EEOC's investigation determined that Resort at Squaw Valley failed to remedy the situation properly. The company took too long to implement steps to separate the two workers, and when it did, it violated federal law, the EEOC said.

Read the whole story

Hwy. 50 crews to work 12-hour shifts Friday, Saturday

With the weather forecast to change dramatically next week, Disney Construction crews are going to be spending more time on Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe.

This means more delays.



Construction season in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

On Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 from 7am-7pm the eastbound and center lanes will be closed from Lyons Avenue to Trout Creek Bridge.

Caltrans does not expect delays to be more than 10 minute delays while grinding and paving operations continue.

While many have complained that the work should have been at night, that wasn't always possible.

"Paving needs to occur during 55 degree weather and rising," Caltrans spokeswoman Deanna Shoopman told *Lake Tahoe News*.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Bicycle Achievement nominees being sought

The Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition, a bicycle advocacy organization promoting bicycle use and safety in the region, is accepting nominations for the third annual Lake Tahoe Bicycle Achievement Awards.



The purpose of the awards is to bring attention and recognition to those who have significantly contributed to the advancement of bicycling in Lake Tahoe area.

There are four categories that anyone may submit nominations for (one or all four) and they are: Individual, Business, Governmental Agency and Nonprofit organization. Nominations must accompany specific details, materials, press clippings and or biographies that demonstrate the nominee's significant contributions to bicycling in the area.

The deadline for submitting nominations is Oct. 15.

Nominations and the related materials may be sent to the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition, P.O. Box 1147, Zephyr Cove, NV 89448 or by email to biketahoe@aol.com. Winners will be announced early in November.

For more information, contact (775) 586.9566 or email at biketahoe@aol.com.

Opinion: Time to sell the Olympic idea to the people of Tahoe-Reno

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the Sept. 29, 2011, Reno Gazette-Journal.***

The return of the Winter Olympics to the Reno-Tahoe area took another step forward last week when officials of the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition confirmed to the U.S. Olympic Committee their interest in bidding for the 2022 games.



That's just one step in a lengthy process that won't culminate until the International Olympic Committee chooses a winner in 2015. Among the other nations that have said they're interested in hosting the 2022 games are Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Norway and Sweden. And Reno-Tahoe might first have to compete with Denver for the U.S. bid.

It's entirely possible that the U.S. won't even bid. The USOC and IOC continue to negotiate over the sharing of TV broadcast revenue. Unless that disagreement is resolved, there will be no bid.

Yet, Friday's announcement is an important milestone that tells the nation – and this community – that Reno-Tahoe is serious about bringing the games back to the area, which last played host to the world's winter Olympians in 1960.

Before the coalition can sell the Reno-Tahoe games to the USOC and then the IOC, however, it's critical that it sell the

games to those who live here and will play a major role in ensuring that the event is a success.

Read the whole story

Army specialist with ties to S. Tahoe dies in Afghanistan

By CBS

AMERICAN CANYON – U.S. Army Spc. Garrett A. Fant, 21, of American Canyon, was killed Monday by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan's Helmand Province, the Department of Defense announced Thursday.

Fant, who attended South Tahoe High School, was on patrol in southern Afghanistan when the explosive device detonated.



Garrett Fant

He was assigned to the 4th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat team, 1st Infantry Division in Fort Riley, Kansas.

Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Smith, with the 1st Infantry Division's Public Affairs Office, said other soldiers were present when Fant was killed.

Read the whole story

Smoke detectors in homes save lives

By Teri Mizuhara

“There is no getting around it, smoke alarms save lives. It is your first line of defense in a structure fire. Fifty-one percent of residential structure fires resulting in a fire death occur between 10pm and 6am and 55 percent of these deaths occur in the bedroom, so it is critical to have working smoke alarms in your sleeping areas of your home,” says CalFire’s Amador-El Dorado Unit Chief Kelly Keenan. “For as little as $4.45 you can buy a smoke alarm at Home Depot and sleep soundly knowing your family is protected.”



Key points to consider before purchasing smoke alarms:

Photoelectric Smoke Alarms are better at sensing “smoldering fires” because smoldering fires produce large smoke particles. A smoldering fire may burn for hours before bursting into a flaming fire. Often these fires are caused by a cigarette, dropped match or stick of incense burning in a couch or in bedding.

Ionization Smoke Alarms are better at sensing small smoke particles which are usually produced by a flaming fire that is

burning items fast and spreading throughout an area very quickly. This may be a grease fire or a garbage can that caught fire. If your current smoke alarm goes off when you cook, consider replacing that alarm with a photoelectric smoke alarm and placing the other ionization alarm away from your kitchen.

Never disable a smoke alarm. Never remove the battery from your smoke alarm. National statistics indicate that 66 percent of people who died in house fires did not have a smoke alarm or the smoke alarm they had was not working. Consider interconnecting your smoke alarms, although this is more expensive, this would allow one smoke alarm to “talk” to the others by a hardwired system or wireless technology. If one alarm senses smoke it will relay the information and all the alarms in the home will go off making sure everyone is aware of a problem and allow them to safely exit the home.

For households with hearing impaired family members, there are smoke alarms designed to meet the needs of these individuals. The systems utilize extra loud (90dB) signaling combined with a bright strobe light to alert sleeping individuals and/or vibrating pager systems that transmit to hardware placed on bed frames, under pillows or to specialized wrist watches. Check the yellow pages under “fire protection services” to purchase this specialized equipment and make sure to get competitive bids.

If your household includes children, some studies suggest that smoke alarms that allow a parent to record their voice instead of the common “beep” alarm work better at rousing children from stage 4 deep sleep. Although they are more expensive, it is cheap insurance in the event of a house fire.

“In closing, make sure you have a smoke alarm in each bedroom, outside the sleeping area(s) and on each level of the home. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions when installing the smoke alarm, test the battery monthly and change the battery

twice a year (when you change your clocks). Don’t forget to vacuum the smoke alarms since dust and bugs can cause false alarms. Replace the smoke alarm a minimum of every 10 years; just because the light is on does not mean it will work properly, nothing lasts forever,” Keenan says.

For more information on fire safety, go online. www.fire.ca.gov.

Teri Mizuhara works for CalFire.

Special account, not a tax increase to pay for Washoe County tax refund

By Susan Voyles, Reno Gazette-Journal

Washoe County commissioners will not tax vehicle owners more to pay court-ordered tax refunds for Incline Village homeowners – a decision that risks the county not having enough cash if it should be hit with a big lawsuit or some other calamity.

The commission agreed Tuesday night not to act on a proposed ordinance to raise the vehicle registration tax by 1 percentage point.

“There’s a sort of axiom that you don’t raise taxes during a recession,” Commissioner David Humke said. “This is a broad-based tax paid by everyone who owns a motor vehicle in Washoe County.

“It’s just an onerous tax.”

County Manager Katy Simon cautioned against taking $7 million from the county’s risk management fund without a plan to repay the money.

“There is a risk of depleting those reserve funds and not replenishing them,” she said. “I know you are aware of that.”

The risk management fund pays for county liabilities, such as trip-and-fall accidents, lawsuits and medical expenses for retired public safety workers with heart and lung illnesses.

Read the whole story

Pumpkin festival

Lake Tahoe Community Pumpkin Festival is a free nonprofit event.

Local businesses will have booths, they’ve donated prizes and materials, there will be children’s games, contests and activities as well as a raffle and food.

The event is Oct. 14 from 5:30-8:30pm at 143 Michelle Drive, Stateline.

For more information, click on festival.

League appeals federal court

decision to allow Stateline project

Updated: Sept. 29 7:32am.

By Kathryn Reed

Back to court – that is where the Sierra Colina project is going because the League to Save Lake Tahoe is appealing last month's ruling.

U.S. District Judge Robert Jones in Reno had ruled in the developer's favor in August. The League on Sept. 28 took action to continue with its legal challenge regarding coverage of the proposed Stateline development.

"There are volumes of scientific research that indicates this type of exemption from coverage restrictions threatens the Lake's water quality and clarity," Carl Young, interim executive director of the League, said in a statement. "The project's additional coverage will allow sediment and harmful pollutants to make their way through the watershed and enter Lake Tahoe, worsening the Lake's clarity."

So far, the League is in the minority with that way of thinking.

When Jones first heard testimony about the case this summer he all but called the suit frivolous.

Steve Kenninger and Gail Jaquish plan to turn the vacant 18 acres into 50 housing units. Environmental improvements have begun even with the project mired in a legal battle.

"Judge Jones found that Sierra Colina's stormwater management system exceeds current regulatory requirements and will significantly reduce pollutant loads to Lake Tahoe compared to existing conditions," Kenninger told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The

certified EIS, which the League did not challenge, reached the same conclusion. The League’s positions are environmentally baseless and are harming the lake.”

Jaquish added, “Once again, the League promotes litigation obstructionism in Tahoe rather than environmental improvements and job creation for local workers.”

It will be up to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to decide if the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency made the correct decision or not in approving the project, as well as if the District Court judge was correct or not in his ruling.