North Shore looking to fill business expo booth space

North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce's 25th Annual Business Expo is June 15 from 5-7:30pm at the North Tahoe Event Center, 8318 North Tahoe Blvd., Kings Beach.

Prizes, raffles and merchandise values will be available at this interactive community event. The expo also offers free admission, along with free parking, for attendees, food and beverages, and is open to chamber and non-chamber members.

More than 50 exhibitors are expected.

Deadline to register is May 25. For more information, call Kym Fabel at (530) 581.8764 or email kym@puretahoenorth.com.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Ender is an 8-month old Lab-pit bull mix who is a real sweetheart.



When he plays with a group of dogs at the shelter, he is the most mellow one of the bunch – his Labrador characteristics clearly show through.

He has lived with small children. Anyone who is interested in a pit bull mix with a great personality should come to the

shelter to meet Ender.

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

Opinion: Now is the time for solutions, not stones

By Tony O'Rourke

In response to Mr. (Bill) Crawford's May 12, 2011, opinion piece in the *Lake Tahoe News* I would like to set the record straight.

It was grossly misleading of Mr. Crawford to state, "the city manager of South Lake Tahoe will advise the City Council to donate $250,000 of city reserve funds to the school district for upgrading the football field at South Tahoe High School." Mr. Crawford further stated, "This is an example of undisciplined behavior by the city manager because the gift has nothing do with meeting the needs of the city."

First, the May 3 memorandum to the City Council on this matter clearly states that Dr. (Jim) Tarwater, superintendent of Lake Tahoe Unified School District, was scheduled to make a presentation requesting the City Council consider a contribution of $250,000 toward the Viking Stadium and softball field improvements. Nowhere in the memo am I, as city manager, or any other member of the city staff recommending

anything other than to hear Dr. Tarwater's presentation and consider his request. Furthermore, the item was postponed until June because the request required additional information and needed to be discussed in the broader context of the city's proposed five-year Capital Improvement Plan.


Tony O'Rourke

In Mr. Crawford's own words, "The school district should run the district and the city should run the city … *but there should be no free exchange of tax dollars*." (emphasis added). I find it incredulous that Mr. Crawford would suggest the notion of a potential partnership between the city and school district as ill-advised" and "undisciplined behavior," yet as a council member Mr. Crawford repeatedly supported a partnership between the city and school district as exhibited by the following:

• Voted multiple times to support the school district financially, most recently in 2010 to spend $52,913 for a South Lake Tahoe police officer to serve four days a week as a school resource officer at South Tahoe High School. The school district contributed $52,105 for this "financial partnership."

• Voted to support the expenditure of $28,000 for a land appraisal and master plan for a government center in partnership with the school district and El Dorado County.

• In 2009, voted to support the development and shared operating costs of a city-school district multipurpose room at South Tahoe High School.

• At the Feb. 6, 2007, City Council meeting, Mr. Crawford expressed his opinion of the importance of securing maintenance funding for the renovated athletic track and newly constructed soccer field at South Tahoe Middle School – the same track and soccer field for which the city had in 2006 contributed $270,000 to the school district to build. At the February 2007 meeting Mr. Crawford stated, “this renovated facility should be available for all of the community.” Now, Mr. Crawford criticizes simply the idea of considering the very kind of City-School District partnership he supported as a council member.

Mr. Crawford is correct, “The city can’t fix the streets.” During Mr. Crawford’s tenure as City Council member virtually nothing was done to invest in city streets. In fact, the city last adopted a Capital Improvement Program in 1999.

By comparison, the current City Council in less than 100 days of service has:

• Right-sized the city organization through department consolidations, layoffs and early retirements saving the South Lake Tahoe taxpayers $10.2 million over the next five years;

• Adopted a Strategic Plan that addresses and prioritizes the needs of the community for the next five years by focusing on Fiscal Sustainability, Economic Development, Improving the Built Environment, Improving Public Trust and Accountability, and Partnership Development;

• Adopted a five-year financial plan that eliminates a projected $17 million budget shortfall over the next five years by right-sizing the city organization to live within its means and investing $25 million in public roads, sidewalks, drainage, lighting and community facilities;

• Started developing the first Capital Improvement Plan since 1999 to improve streets, sidewalks, lights, bike paths and community facilities;

• Taken action to provide the public what the public has loudly indicated it wants, which includes better government, better streets and infrastructure, better facilities for youth and better partnerships among government agencies. In the December 2010 Citizen Survey, a mere 32 percent of residents indicated services for our youth were excellent or good and 81 percent rated community appearance and infrastructure as an essential or very important priority to address.

Ironically and unfortunately, when former Councilmember Crawford had the opportunity to put the city on a fiscally prudent and sustainable course as the current City Council has done, he chose to use over $5.2 million dollars in operating reserves in 2008, 2009 and 2010 largely for personnel costs to balance the city's budget rather than permanently right-sizing the city and investing in public infrastructure.

Mr. Crawford, please spare the public lectures on what is prudent or appropriate fiscal discipline. When Mr. Crawford had the opportunity to demonstrate fiscally prudent action, he chose to kick the can down the road.

Every citizen, every city employee, every City Council member in the wake of these financially challenging times must share part of the burden of saving our city. I publicly request Mr. Crawford to commit to finding constructive and positive solutions for our City and not merely sit on the sidelines and criticize those who are making the tough choices now, taking the heat now, for choices that could have been made years ago. These are times that require bold and innovative leadership, not carping from the bench.

Tony O'Rourke is city manager of South Lake Tahoe.

Trade groups to help homeowners with repair ideas

Granlibakken Resort in Tahoe City is hosting an event about maintenance challenges for year-round and second home owners. The event is geared toward people living on the West Shore and in Tahoe City.

Contractors and material suppliers representing multiple trades will be available to answer questions and offer advice.

The meting is May 28 from noon-5pm.

The event is free.

For more information, call Kay Williams at Granlibakken Resort, (530) 581.7307 or email Kaywilliams@granlibakken.com.

Sprint to Capitol expected in today's leg of Tour de California

By John Schumacher, Sacramento Bee

After the climb up Donner Summit, the long descent toward Sacramento strongly suggests a familiar finish today in the second stage of the Amgen Tour of California.

Get ready for another field sprint in front of the state Capitol.

That’s the consensus among riders and team directors asked about the 133.2-mile trek from Squaw Valley to downtown Sacramento on Day 2 of the sixth annual pro cycling race.

A 2.3-mile ascent on Donner Pass Road early in the stage includes 829 feet of elevation gain, giving ambitious riders plenty of opportunity to stage a breakaway.

But the course drops 7,000 feet from there, heading down Interstate 80 and Highway 20 before going through Nevada City, Grass Valley, Beale Air Force Base and Wheatland.

Read the whole story

Wooden boats revving up engines for summer show

Classic boats from a classic era. That’s what guests will discover at the 2011 South Tahoe Wooden Boat Classic July 29-30 at the Tahoe Keys Marina & Yacht Club.

The STWBC is one of the West’s largest classic boat shows, and this year the headliner will be White Smoke which was originally delivered to South Lake Tahoe’s Pope Estate and is currently part of the Tahoe Maritime Museum’s collection. White Smoke is a 1930, 30-foot Sea Lyon, model 45 triple cockpit runabout. The George A. Pope family enjoyed their home and the boat on Lake Tahoe for years before finally gifting the estate to the U.S. Forest Service.



Wooden boats will return to the Tahoe Keys Marina in July. Photo/LTN file

While White Smoke will command center stage at the STWBC, it will have plenty of company. More than 65 antique and classic boats will be on display at the Tahoe Keys Marina & Yacht Club.

A new attraction this year will be a kit boat, newly built by Tahoe City Boy Scout Troop No. 266 which will be on display in the sponsor tent area. The boat is a project being built by the Scouts and their fathers with guidance and support from ACBS member John Lahti of Tahoe City.

Throughout Friday afternoon and all day Saturday, guests at the Wooden Boat Classic will hear the thunder of these classic beauties while having the opportunity to stroll through the sponsor and charity booths and buy a memento of the day in the Antique & Classic Boat Society’s Ships Store. Snacks, drinks and a barbecue lunch will be available at gourmet refreshment booths. The Tahoe Maritime Museum will also have their boat in the marina and will be giving rides to families who join the museum at the boat show.

Amgen totally bypasses Tahoe; cycling fans left in cold

Updated May 16, 2011, 7:10am:

Due to uncertain weather and road conditions, race organizers have determined that the best way to ensure a complete course for Stage 2 of the 2011 Amgen Tour de California is to move the official start to 12:15pm starting on Broad Street in Nevada City.

Today's start was originally scheduled to take place in Squaw Valley. This means Lake Tahoe totally missed out on the race.

Riders will finish 61 miles later in Sacramento.

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By Jessie Marchesseau, Stephen Ward and Brenda Knox

Sunday morning's snowstorm had cycling enthusiasts bundling up in their down jackets and winter beanies to cheer on racers on what was supposed to be Day 1 of the Amgen Tour de California.

They were at the would-be start in Stateline, the scheduled finish at Northstar-at-Tahoe, at the Y in South Lake Tahoe and other locations around the lake.



Even though the first stage of the

Amgen Tour de California was canceled May 15, some elite cyclists ride to Cave Rock. Photos/Lisa J. Tolda

Dozens of fans lined the curb at the intersection of highways 50 and 89 about 1:15 pm, the scheduled start time after a morning snow delay that had also altered the course from 118 miles to 50. With flakes still coming down, little girls with painted faces, babies in strollers, parents, grandparents and all-around bicycle enthusiasts waited not-so-patiently for the first riders to arrive.

Every time a car with the word Amgen or the name of another sponsor drove by, cowbells were rung, cheers erupted and arms were raised. But soon, a wave of disappointment moved through the crowd as news spread the race was canceled at the last-minute.

Across town, at the start line, cowbells rang out and the crowd along the casino corridor started to cheer as they saw the racers turn onto Highway 50, but seconds later “race canceled” was announced.

Disappointed fans headed into the warmth of the casinos and back to their cars. After waiting for hours as the snow showers came and went, listening to South Lake Tahoe Mayor Hal Cole describe Lake Tahoe as a year-round playground, and hearing cyclist Dave Zabriskie describe the day as “unbelievable”, the first stage of the 2011 Amgen Tour de California was officially canceled.

While the expos at Stateline and Northstar went on as planned, the delay in the start that never happened and wicked weather

had fewer people turn out than originally expected or organizers had hoped for.

Eager to root on riders

Much of the South Shore was a bit like a ghost town during a mid-winter blizzard.

Driving down Lake Tahoe Boulevard from Stateline to the Y, South Lake Tahoe seemed eerily quiet Sunday. Hotel parking lots were mostly empty and traffic was sparse. Many of the spectators gathered at the Y were locals.

“I didn’t think it would be quite so cold,” commented Meyers resident Skye Schumaker.

“Oh well, it’s Tahoe,” his wife Kristie Schumaker said. “We’re used to it.”

The Schumakers, along with their daughters Jazmyn and Juniper, had pulled out their winter attire to come watch the day’s festivities. None of them had ever seen a bike race in person and were looking forward to it.

The hardy from near and far had gathered to watch the start of the United States’ most prestigious road race. The crowd wore heavy jackets and gloves, beanie caps and smiles.

Maria Laudau, Greg Stevenson, and 3-year-old Sophia Landau, who was dressed in a warm, pink snuggly suit, waited at the start at Stateline. Laudau’s excitement at having this “amazing event” in our backyard was apparent.

Kelly Barber and her 5-year-old twins were waiting to see their favorite team, the Jelly Bellies. This was the third year the Reno threesome had followed the tour.

Steven Castelletto and Jeannette Montgomery of Fresno had no trouble getting to the South Shore despite Echo Summit being closed. They enthusiastically called the event “fun, and

loving it.” Castelletto will be working security for the event in Sacramento during Stage 2, where it ends after starting in Squaw Valley today.

They aren’t the only ones headed onto the next stage.

Mike and Trish Hallman and their two kids, Shayna, 12, and Hayden, 13, from Seattle, are avid fans, having been to all the Tour de California races. Last year they watched the finish in Thousand Oaks. Hallman called her husband “the biggest race fan” and said “we always bring our own cowbells with us.” Saturday, they were excited to see the Italians practicing and said at other venues they had never been able to get so close to the racers.

Having never been to Lake Tahoe, they drove around the lake scoping out good spots to watch the racers. Now they are headed to Sacramento to see the Stage 2 finish today.

One business doing well on Sunday was Starbucks – on both ends of the lake.

Scott Trevithick and his family had come from Reno on Saturday to watch the race for the first time. Instead, they kept warm at the coffee house at the Horizon.

Trevithick said, “We just couldn’t miss this world-class event in our own backyard.”

They had hoped to go to Brockway Summit to watch the racers head into Northstar. That obviously didn’t happen.

After hearing about the race being canceled, Ryan Emery, 27, of Nevada City settled at the Starbucks coffee shop at the Village at Northstar.

“I have no idea what I’m going to do now, but I have coffee and banana bread, so I’m good,” Emery said, shrugging his shoulders.

Disappointment lingers

“Well, it’s snowing so it’s probably a high risk to the riders … so I guess it’s understandable,” Emery said.

Sid Forman, a 71-year-old, self-described avid biker from Incline Village, came to the event with his wife, June. Although he knows the decision was correct, Forman saw the cancellation as a lost opportunity for the region.

“I think it’s sad for the area. This would’ve been a great boon for the retailers here, hotels here, and the community at large that loves cycling,” Forman said from the Village at Northstar.

Lauren Lindley, manager of the Pearl Izumi store at the Y in South Tahoe, was disappointed in the cancellation, but said the store had been “shockingly” busy the last few days.

“If it had been sunny and amazing and the pass was open, it would have been crazy in town,” she said.

Adding to the day’s disappointment was the cancellation of the BMX exhibition by Olympic medalists Donny Robinson and Mike Day. It was the wind, not the snow that put a damper on their riding. A lake wind advisory by the National Weather Service predicted gusts up to 40 mph over the lake.

“If we had snow and no wind, they’d be riding right now,” Lauren Thomaselli, one of the BMX event’s organizers, said.

But with wind in the air, and snow coming down, organizers of both events had little choice but to cancel for the safety of the riders.

With the economic impact to Tahoe from the race predicted to be down the road from media images of picturesque Lake Tahoe luring people to travel to the region, images of substantial snow in May could backfire.

“We chose the West Shore of Lake Tahoe because, in an ideal world, you look at the lake and our broadcast coverage would have been able to include Emerald Bay, and the decent into Northstar would paint an incredible view of Tahoe,” race director Jim Birrell said.

Time, though, will be needed to see if picking Lake Tahoe was a bad financial decision for all involved.

As for tour operators, they have already picked Santa Rosa as the 2012 start city. That’s not to say the route will not take a sharp turn east to hit the Sierra again. But considering their desire to move the race from February to May was so Tahoe could be part of it backfired, they too may not want to make that investment.

“When deciding to have Lake Tahoe host the start of the 2011 Amgen Tour of California, we looked carefully at weather patterns up here in May as part of the decision-making process with the local organizing committee,” said Andrew Messick, president of AEG, which owns the race. “The likelihood of severe winter weather in May was statistically low – we thought it might be cold, rainy and maybe windy, but we didn’t contemplate that it would be snowing, cold and windy. Our team and the athletes arrived here in the middle of the week and the weather was fantastic. We would consider Lake Tahoe again to host the race in the future.”

Too treacherous to cycle

Amgen officials cited rider safety as the reason for the cancellation of this first stage of the largest cycling event in the Unite States.

“At this point in time, it’s probably better for cycling in general to play it safe,” said Allison Oliver, one of Sunday’s spectators and a former rider for the UC Davis bicycle team.

Less than a week earlier, 26-year-old cyclist Wouter Weylandt

was killed in a bicycle crash during the third stage of the Giro D'Italia in Italy.

"I think it's always better to err on the side of caution," Oliver said as she waited in the snow at the Y. "No one wants to see anyone get hurt."

Oliver was on the sidelines with friend and coworker, Lindley, waving a cardboard sign reading "Go Paul Mach." Mach, one of the races' participants, was one of the Oliver's former teammates at UC Davis.

"Safety is paramount," Birrell said. "We do everything in our power to provide the best chances of success on the road. Our team and course directors spend countless hours identifying any danger out there. We really take it to heart."

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Opinion: Time to recognize EMS workers

To the community,

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Holidays and bad-weather days included. These are the times that paramedics and emergency medical technicians of the fire departments are on the job serving the communities we live in. Long shifts, extreme weather conditions and an ever-changing and unstable work environment make pre-hospital Emergency Medical Services truly a labor of love.

Monday marked the beginning of National EMS Week and presents an opportunity to honor the men and women who deliver pre-

hospital 911 emergency medical care throughout the Lake Tahoe region and beyond. This vital service in our area is provided primarily by cross-trained multi-role emergency responders who are based at South Lake Tahoe Fire Department, Lake Valley Fire Protection District, and Tahoe-Douglas Fire Department. Over the last 20 plus years, the fire services have been re-tooled to be an all hazards responder including the provision of pre-hospital emergency medical care.

Fire service-based EMS providers are located, trained, and equipped to provide local communities with timely pre-hospital 91-1 emergency medical response and patient care. Pre-hospital emergency providers respond quickly, professionally, and compassionately in serving the community – and they do it everyday– 24/7.

California Tahoe Emergency Services Operations Authority (CTESOA) the EMS operations portion of Lake Valley Fire Protection District and South Lake Tahoe Fire Department has completed its first 10 years of providing reliable high quality 911 services to the South Shore community. Because of this exceptional performance El Dorado County Department of Health has awarded CTESOA a new 5 to 10 year performance based contract to continue serving the local community.

National EMS Week is a time to pause and say thank you to the entire EMS Community, including Paramedics, Firefighter/EMTs and Dispatchers – our nation's emergency response professionals.

Bryan Pond, CalStar South Lake Tahoe

Countdown to Fair Play Wine Festival

The artisan winemaking families of Fair Play are putting on the 27th Annual Fair Play Wine Festival June 4-5 from 11am to 5pm.

The 17 participating wineries are planning festivities, including gourmet fare paired with Fair Play wines, live music, barrel tasting, art, demonstrations, wine specials, and much more.

Participating in the festival are Busby Cellars, Cantiga Wineworks, Chateau Routon, Colibri Ridge, DK Cellars, Fitzpatrick Winery, Granite Springs, Iverson Vineyards, Latcham Vineyards, Mellowood Vineyards, Mount Aukum, Oakstone, Perry Creek, Sierra Oaks, Single Leaf, Skinner Vineyards, and Toogood.

In addition to access to all of the festivities on both days, participants will receive a complimentary souvenir glass and a VINGO playing card. Prizes will be awarded for the completion of your card.

Tickets are $20 online, $15 at participating tasting rooms, and $20 at the door.

Financial problems soar for Red Hawk Casino

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

Red Hawk Casino’s financial woes show few signs of abating – a situation that illustrates both the harsh new business reality confronting Indian gambling and the murky legal issues that arise when a tribe can’t pay its bills.

The company that runs Red Hawk said Wednesday that the management fees it gets from the Shingle Springs casino declined during the first quarter compared with a year ago. The fees are directly tied to the casino’s profits.

That same company, Lakes Entertainment Inc. of Minneapolis, revealed in March that Red Hawk had halted payments on a $66 million loan from Lakes. That made Red Hawk the latest in a series of tribal casinos to experience significant debt woes in the past two years.

“Until fairly recently, tribal casino growth was just phenomenal,” said Nelson Rose, an expert on Indian gambling law at Whittier College.

Read the whole story