Gaines sworn in as Tahoe's assemblywoman

Assemblywoman Beth Gaines, R-Roseville, today took the oath of office as the new representative for the 4th Assembly District at the state Capitol.

Gaines said she will remain fully committed to protecting taxpayer's resources during her tenure in the Assembly.

"I have chosen to voluntarily not accept per diem or use a state-issued car to carry out my responsibilities as your assemblywoman," Gaines said in a statement. "We as legislators should lead by example and tighten our belts and cut costs where we can to save taxpayer money."



Beth Gaines, center, is sworn in May 12 to represent Tahoe in the California Assembly. Photo/Provided

Prior to her election, Gaines served as a successful marketing consultant for her family's business, Point West Insurance Associates. She also previously worked in sales and marketing for a business supply company and gained management experience

at a local branch of a national workforce employment firm.

Gaines fills the vacancy left by the election of her husband Ted Gaines to the state Senate in January.

The 4th Assembly District includes the communities of South Lake Tahoe, Tahoe City, Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, Cameron Park, Placerville, Auburn and Loomis.

Cyclemania takes over the streets of South Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

There appeared to be more shapes and sizes of bicycles than of people in the parade down Highway 50 this afternoon.

Thursday afternoon's parade from the Y in South Lake Tahoe to MontBleu in Stateline was for the average rider. It's one of the many events leading up to Sunday's start of the Amgen Tour de California that takes off from the state line area.

At the start of the parade at 4:15pm May 12 someone was overheard saying, "This is going to be the slowest trip ever to Stateline."



South Shore

residents
parade through
town May 12 on
their
bicycles.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

A couple hundred bicyclists were taking up the right lane of the highway under police and fire escort. Slow Rollers Bicycle Club of Lake Tahoe put on the parade.

People were in costumes, horns being honked, kids being pulled and tricycles pedaled.

Friday night is the black-tie optional gala for the professional ride. As of Thursday afternoon, 408 guests were expected. This is about the same number Sacramento had for its gala last year. Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority Executive Director Carol Chaplin said they were prepared to accommodate 600 if need be.

At the LTVA meeting Thursday afternoon it was announced the California Highway Patrol will be arriving a day early because of weather concerns with the start of the multi-day event on May 15.

“The road being wet is not an issue. The problem is accumulation of inches (of snow) and that has not been in any forecasts,” Chaplin told the LTVA board in regards to Sunday.

On Sunday all lanes of the roads the professionals are on will be closed.

“These guys ride where they want. Wind direction has a lot do with where they are on the road,” Chaplin said.

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Forest Service planting 4,000 seedlings in Angora burn area

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is planting native seedlings in the Angora area this week.

Planting will occur on 24 acres of National Forest System lands off Tahoe Mountain Road near South Lake Tahoe.

Forest Service crews will plant approximately 4,000 Sugar and Jeffery pine seedlings. Funding for the seedlings came from donations to the Penny Pines program. The Forest Service Placerville Nursery supplied the seedlings, which are about 1 year old and 6-inches tall.

Reforesting the area with native species will speed up progress toward healthier forest conditions. Without this helping hand, little to no natural regeneration of conifers would occur in the high severity burn areas. In areas where natural regeneration occurs, seedlings would mainly consist of white fir, which is susceptible to drought, disease and fire.

Because anywhere from 30 to 60 percent of seedlings may not survive, initial planting is at much higher densities than what is eventually desired. To increase the seedlings' chance of survival, crews will remove competing vegetation surrounding the seedling during planting and as needed during future years.

For now, wet weather means fewer Tahoe bear problems

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

When it comes to weather's impact on bear problems, biologists are hoping for not too much of a good thing.

A wet winter set the stage for healthy summer forage in the mountains, a situation that would probably have fewer black bears raiding garbage, breaking into homes and otherwise causing trouble.

But if winter-like storms continue too late into the summer, the opposite could prove true.

"It really depends on how late it lasts," said Carl Lackey, a biologist and bear expert with the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

During the record year of bear problems in 2007, when the department received more than 1,500 complaints over bears, the problem was drought. Dry conditions withered berry bushes that bears depend upon as a natural food source, driving many wild bears into neighborhoods in the Reno-Tahoe area to raid for food.

Opposite conditions last year had frosty storms hit the mountains through June and produce a different problem.

"It basically freezer-burned a lot of berries," Lackey said. "It just froze all the berry-producing shrubs that bears rely upon in late summer and fall."

The result was another very busy year for bear troubles, with about 450 complaints received.

Read the whole story

Pro cyclists expect to ride in snow on Sunday

By Kathryn Reed

Teams participating in this weekend's Tour de California bike ride have been taking to the roads in South Lake Tahoe to get acclimated to the elevation and familiarize themselves with the route of the first stage.

It's hard to miss all that lycra, especially as some groups take up whole lanes of Highway 50 to avoid the debris on the side and the wetness of the road from errant sprinklers.

Although the National Weather Service in Reno is calling for a 90 percent chance of snow on the May 15 start date, the race is still on. Overnight temps will be below freezing, with the high on Sunday close to 40 degrees.



Team NetApp rides down Highway 50 in South Tahoe on May 12. Photo/Kathryn Reed

AEG President Andrew Messick told *VeloNews* Monday rider safety is his top priority if the weather turns bad. “We’re not going to get too worked up about it. We’ll make sure we protect the safety of the athletes, that is always a top priority, as long as it is safe to ride, we’ll ride.”

Alternatives include shortening the first stage, but neither race officials nor Lake Tahoe tourism officials are releasing details about what happens if a blizzard strikes. Messick is already on the South Shore. Carol Chaplin with LTVA said a decision about alternatives would probably not be made until Sunday morning.

“The only problem is if we get accumulation (of snow),” Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority Executive Director Chaplin said May 12 at the South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association meeting.

“We’re working carefully with all relevant public safety and weather forecast entities,” Messick said in a statement Thursday. “We have developed a number of contingency plans, and when the Sunday weather forecast becomes clearer we will, in consultation with the teams, public safety organizations, and commissares, make a decision which will represent the best and safest course of action.”

AEG owns and operates the race.

Chaplin added that the professional riders are used to nasty weather – even if it’s not something the average cyclist would want to endure.

As it stands, the riders will leave the South Shore at 10:30am Sunday from the Stateline area, make their way around Lake Tahoe (clockwise) 1.5 times before ending at Northstar-at-Tahoe. Stage two leaves from Squaw Valley on May 16, where there is a chance of snow for the start that morning.

Kids Day Tahoe

Kids Day Tahoe is May 21 from 11am-3pm. The event will provide essential information on health, child safety, and environmental awareness.

Many local businesses will be present with activities for the children.

Joshua Welch will provide free health screenings, and will be distributing vital information on disease prevention and health promotion.

The event is free.

It will be in the West Gate Building (3170 Highway 50), Meyers.

Call (530) 577.5433 for more information.

El Dorado County offering limited summer school program

The El Dorado County Office of Education’s second annual Summer Enrichment Experience begins June 20.

This summer school opportunity is designed for middle school students who are interested in taking enrichment classes. Course offerings include Astronomy, All things Internet, Creative Writing, Conversational Spanish, Drama, Human Figure

Drawing and Our Local History. The program is intended to be a unique summer program that allows for academic and creative discovery.

Classes run for one week from 9am to 3pm. Morning and afternoon sessions are available to students who are entering sixth, seventh or eighth grade at $175 for the week (includes two courses).

Complete registration information will be available at local middle schools and online. Registration deadlines will run until May 27.

For more information on this program, contact Lisa Laird at llaird@edcoe.org or at (530) 295.2415.

North Shore business expo

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.

For more information, call Kym Fabel at (530) 581.8764 or email kym@puretahoenorth.com.

Joint chamber mixer in Truckee

The North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce and the Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce will host a joint Chamber Business Mixer at Pullen Realty Group May 18, 5-7pm, 10270 Donner Pass Road (Brickelltown) in Truckee.

For more information about the mixer, call Kym Fabel, North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce manager, at (530) 581.8764 or kym@puretahoenorth.com.

Echo Summit closure surprises Amgen crew

By Andria Borba, FOX 40

ECHO SUMMIT– Day one of the two week road closure has left Highway 50 eerily quiet.

A one mile section of the rock wall separating the road from the plunging canyon below is in bad shape, patched in some place by sandbags.

The signs west of Echo Summit say ‘OPEN’, but there are few customers. At Silver Fork Gas Station, in six hours only four people pulled up to the pumps that are packed during ski season. “This is the slow season. now no business, no customers, complete none. So, we have hard time for the next two weeks,” said owner Mike Choi. In fact, Choi says if the dismal business keeps up, he’s going to take a break, “I’m thinking about it, maybe tomorrow, maybe the next two weeks,

I’m going to close.”

It seems the massive “Way to Tahoe” campaign sponsored by Caltrans didn’t reach everyone. A support truck from the Amgen Tour of California headed to South Lake Tahoe was turned around, unaware the road was closed.

Read the whole story