Spring whites, rose tasting

May 17 at 6pm – Spring Whites & Rosés tasting at Après Wine Company in South Lake Tahoe.

Cost – $20 advance, $25 at door. It includes five wines and appetizer pairings.

RSVP to (530) 544.9463.

Big red wine tasting

May 10 at 6pm – Cabs & Zins & Blends, Oh My! tasting at Après Wine Company in South Lake Tahoe.

Cost – $25 advance, $30 at door. It includes five wines and appetizer pairings.

RSVP to (530) 544.9463.

Steals & Deals wine tasting

May 3 at 6pm – Steals & Deals at Après Wine Company in South Lake Tahoe.

Five great deals to get you through shoulder season.

Cost is $15 advance, $20 at door. It includes five wines and appetizer pairings.

RSVP to (530) 544.9463.

Boating season on Tahoe begins May 1; inspections mandatory

The 2011 summer boating season starts May 1. Lake Tahoe boat inspection procedures are changing.

The following changes are taking place:

· All inspections will take place at roadside inspection stations.

· Blue Tahoe inspection seals from 2010 must be kept on boats.

· Plan ahead to ensure awareness of new requirements, inspection locations and to pre-purchase 2011 stickers.

· Remember to clean, drain and dry boats and equipment to protect boats and Lake Tahoe .

For more information, call 888.824.6267 or go online.

To receive Twitter updates on mobile phones, text “follow tahoeaquatic” to 40404.

The Sand Harbor and Cave Rock boat ramps will be open for the summer season from 6am to 8pm May 1 through Sept. 30. Watercraft inspectors will be provided at both sites by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District to check seals and stickers.

This process is important in protecting Lake Tahoe from the

threat of aquatic invasive species such as quagga and zebra mussels.

Echo Summit off-limits to cars for 2 weeks starting May 11

Caltrans today announced it will temporarily close Highway 50 at Echo Summit for two weeks beginning May 11.

This means the route to the South Shore will be less direct for those coming to the area for the Amgen Tour de California cycling event May 15.



The wall on Echo Summit will be replaced starting May 11. Photo/LTN file

The closure is part of the first stage of a safety enhancement project that will remove damaged rock walls and replace them with a barrier that meets current safety standards. The

project is funded in part ($1.9 million) by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

There will be one-way controlled traffic on May 9-10, and Mondays through noon on Fridays for up to six weeks after Highway 50 is reopened.

The highway will be open with no restrictions on Memorial Day weekend.

Alternate routes around the closure take travelers through the Gold Country of El Dorado and Amador counties. Motorists should allow approximately one hour extra travel time during the two-week full closure to reach South Lake Tahoe.

Alternate routes are:

• From Sacramento: Exit at Power Inn Road and take Highway 16 east to Highway 49 south, at Highway 88 in Jackson, turn left (east). Take that to Highway 89 and turn left again (north), and follow it back to Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe.

• From Placerville: Exit at Missouri Flat Road and take Highway 49 south. Follow it to Highway 88 in Jackson and turn left (east). At Highway 89 turn left (north) and follow it back to Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe.

Motorists coming through the Stockton area can exit Highway 99 as usual at Highway 88 east, continuing onto highways 88/49. In Jackson, turn left to continue on Highway 88 east. At Highway 89 turn left (north) and follow it to Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe.

Caltrans will place electronic message signs at key positions on all of these highways to direct travelers. During the temporary full closure, Highway 50 will be open for visitors to Placerville and other locations as far east as Sierra-at-Tahoe Road near Echo Summit.

Caltrans has a website (www.Way2Tahoe.com) featuring a map,

up-to-date information about the project, information about the alternate routes and sites to visit along the way, live traffic cameras, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Lake Tahoe Wildfire Summit

The second annual Lake Tahoe Fire Summit is June 24 at Granlibakken in Tahoe City.

Great Gatsby Tea and Fashion Show

The annual Great Gatsby Tea and Fashion Show is Aug. 14 from 2-4pm at the Valhalla Grand Hall near Camp Richardson.

Death Ride

Annual Tour of the California Alps – better known as the Death Ride – is July 9 starting in Markleeville.

For information about the cycling event, check out this website.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• The National Ski Areas Association honored Heavenly Mountain Resort for having the Best Safety Week Program. Heavenly shared the honor with sister resort Vail.

• Lynne Bajuk of the Lake Tahoe Historical Society will discuss how the library can help people in their research, and what resources are available online. The talk is May 14 at 2 pm at the South Lake Tahoe branch library, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe. For more information, call (530) 573.3185.

• El Dorado County's Mental Health Commission is looking for three members – someone in business, someone who represents Latinos, and a family member of someone who suffers from a mental illness. Call (530) 577-4740 for information.

• Free e-waste recycling at South Tahoe Middle School on June 4-5 and Aug. 13-14 from 9am-3pm.

• Every national park is offering free admission on June 21 – the first day of summer.

8th-grader wins LTCC poetry

slam

By Kathryn Reed

“That’s so gay” isn’t a phrase that sits well with Joemae Santos.

The eighth-grader at South Tahoe Middle School wrote a poem about how hurtful those three words are. How derogatory they are. How teachers say just let it go. How she isn’t letting them go.

Her words, her passion, her delivery and her conviction earned her bragging rights as the winner of the inaugural Lake Tahoe Community College Poetry Slam, which is part of the college’s Writers’ Series.



Joemae Santos wows the poetry slam crowd April 26. Photo/Suzanne Roberts

The April 26 event was open to anyone who had $5 to spend and two poems to read. On the other end of the age spectrum was Vern Lee. A cowboy hat covering a head of white hair, Lee took second place. His first poem was called “The Frog that Rocked.”

It was a night hosted by Matt Blesse and Denise Jolly, poetry grand slam champions. They'll be at Sierra Nevada College tonight. Blesse is a word poet, activist and educator from Truckee. Jolly lives in Washington where she co-hosts and facilitates the Seattle Poetry Slam.

They got the crowd going with riveting poems delivered with such passion that the audience was whopping it up as they spoke.

Poetry slams are a bit like rap without the music. But it's better – if only because much of what is said is personal, not full of hate like so many rap lyrics.

Had some of the eight contestants at LTCC put a little more oomph into their delivery, their scores from the five judges would have undoubtedly been higher.

It was such a raucous event that the class next door had to be moved.

Santos' second poem was about being Filipino in the United States.

"Asia-America, can you tell me where you are?" she said.

Her provocative topic had the crowd thinking just like the first time she took the mic.

"Never take a microphone for granted. You, miss, did not take the microphone for granted," Jolly told Santos after her first stint.

As the winner, Santos was asked to share some words of wisdom with the more than 50 people in attendance.

"Always have confidence in yourself. Never doubt yourself. You never know when you'll do something great," Santos said.