Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• El Dorado County Fair has a deal for dads on Father's Day – June 19.

• Lilly's Tires is thriving. The South Tahoe store's sign is down only because first a truck took it out and then a windstorm finished it off.

• South Tahoe Public Utility District is having a meeting May 5 at 6pm about the proposed sewer rate increase that would take effect July 1. The meeting is at 1275 Meadow Crest Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

• Barton Auxiliary blood drive dates are June 6, Aug. 1, Oct. 3 and Dec. 5. They are at the El Dorado County Library in South Lake Tahoe from 11am-6pm. For more information, contact Dan Kerr at (775) 781.5354.

UC Davis study critical of imported 'extra virgin' olive oil

By Mark Glover, Sacramento Bee

For the second time in a year, a University of California, Davis, study has found that most olive oil imported into the United States fails to meet the international criteria for

“extra virgin.”

The new study released by the Olive Center at UCD found that 73 percent of 134 samples of the five top selling imported extra virgin olive oil brands failed the International Olive Council sensory standards based on the results of two IOC-accredited sensory panels.

Sensory defects are indicators that the oil samples were oxidized, of poor quality or adulterated with cheaper refined olive oil.

A UCD study released in 2010 found that 69 percent of samples of imported olive oils labeled as extra virgin and sold in California failed to meet international extra virgin standards since the oils were too old, poorly made and/or adulterated.

Read the whole story

Beacon & Eggs event at Alpine

Combine an Easter egg hunt with an avalanche beacon search practice session, and the result is the 5th annual Beacon & Eggs beacon search contest at Alpine Meadows Ski Resort.

Beacon & Eggs is a fun, free beacon hunt out on the mountain on April 24.

Avalanche beacons will be buried in a 1-acre area at Alpine Meadows. The hidden beacons are wrapped in a protective pad and placed below the snow surface, which are then groomed over via snowcat to hide any “hints” as to their whereabouts.

Competitors will start en masse and will race on foot in search the buried backpacks using their beacons in “search”

mode. Competitors work individually or in teams (up to four people), sharing the prizes for recovering the beacon. Competitors redeem a found beacon, which corresponds to an incredible prize pack, including outdoor and adventure gear from local sporting goods stores.

Free registration is at the Beacon & Eggs event tent near the top of Subway Chair Lift (next to the base lodge) from 9-11:45am. The start is at noon near the top of the Subway beginner lift, adjacent to the base lodge.

Competitors must provide their own beacons, probes, and shovels.

For additional information and details, call (530) 583.4232.

Fallen Leaf Lake to allow alcohol, but has no seller

By Kathryn Reed

Alcohol will be sold at Fallen Leaf Lake this summer. That is assuming a concessionaire is ever hired and then that person acquires the necessary permits.

After a 3½-hour meeting Saturday that was dominated by issues related to the operation of the store and marina at the South Shore lake, the board voted 4-0 for the store to sell alcohol to be consumed on the premise (stopping at 6pm) when food is bought, as well as allowing unopened containers to sold for consumption off-site.



Fallen Leaf Lake still does not have a concessionaire. Photo/LTN

Last season alcohol was not sold at the store/café when Rob and Sandy Wirth ran the operation because they never secured the necessary permits from Alcoholic Beverage Control.

Prior to that, when John and Ruth Rich had the concessionaire, they operated under a No. 20 permit that allows sales without onsite consumption. However, for decades people had open containers without being told to leave.

A No. 41 permit allows sales at an establishment selling food.

Issues for the next concessionaire are the lack of No. 20 permits available from the ABC. However, people at the April 16 meeting at Lake Tahoe Airport said the Richs have such a permit that expires next month. Although No. 41 permits are available for a few hundred dollars, protests have been filed with the ABC by Fallen Leaf Lake residents that could make the acquisition of one a time consuming endeavor, if not impossible.

Three people sent the board paperwork indicating an interest in operating the seasonal marina and store at the edge of Desolation Wilderness. One has withdrawn from the process and another does not want a background check done.

Darin Carolus, who works for Sierra Outdoor, is the

concessionaire at Tahoe Keys Resort in South Lake Tahoe. He was at the Saturday meeting as the other concessionaire applicant.

Board members Wanda Kownacki (who was participating via telephone) and Dave Stumbos were tasked with finding a concessionaire to recommend to the board. They hope to be able to do so by the May 7 meeting. Operations usually begin Memorial Day weekend, so the new operator would have less than a month to get up to speed.

Throwing a unique twist into things was John Rich contacted Steve Malley that morning. Rich, through Malley, stated he would be interested in operating the facility again if the board contacted him and did a few other things.

Then Malley, a resident of Fallen Leaf Lake, was called during the meeting by Rob Wirth, who also said he'd run the operation, but would hire a manager for the day-to-day operation.

(People could listen via telephone to the meeting and comment at any time.)

Malley said John Rich offered to replace the dock and do all the maintenance if granted a 20-year contract.

To this, Carolus said, "I was at the marina (Saturday) morning for a site visit. You have new docks there; put in in 2009. So, you probably wouldn't need to replace them for 20 years, so I could add that, too."

The Richs were dismissed in February 2010 after operating the store/marina for 14 years.

The Wirths backed out after one year.

The issue has divided the community, with resentment and bitterness lingering and carrying over into the most recent meeting. Board President Tom Bacchetti had little tolerance

for belittling of people, trying to keep the discussion on the issues and not people.

In the end, the board said there is time for others to apply, but they won't seek anyone out and no special favors will be granted to past operators. And the proposals must be in writing, not delivered verbally by someone else.

In other action:

• The board voted to accept applications to fill the vacancy left by the abrupt resignation of Jennifer Thornton, who had been on the board for about a year. A vote on the appointment is likely at the May 28 meeting. (Thornton did not respond to earlier emails from *Lake Tahoe News* for comment.)

• Fire Chief Gary Gerren's contract was extended through May 31, with the anticipation a longer contract will be entered into at the May 28 meeting.

• Wanda Kownacki was elected vice president of the board.

• Non-motorized watercraft will not have to pay a launch or boat cleaning fee. The thinking is this will get people to clean their kayaks or canoes to prevent bringing in aquatic invasive species instead of skirting the fee and launching elsewhere on the lake without the cleaning.

• Mooring and launch rates for motorized boats will remain the same.

Condos at Resort at Squaw

Creek on auction block

International real estate investment and services company Kennedy Wilson is auctioning off a limited collection of ski-in ski-out luxury condominiums at Resort at Squaw Creek on April 30.

Starting Bids on the 17 one- and two-bedroom condominiums range from $130,000 to $185,000 on homes whose original (2005) launch prices ranged from $374,900 up to $965,900.

The April 30 event will also feature live online bidding, available to qualified registered bidders who are unable to attend the auction and have had their Auction Registration Forms approved. Kennedy Wilson will broadcast the entire event over the Internet, with real-time audio and video of the live auction of the live auction.

The auction will begin promptly at 1pm that Saturday at 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley. The auction is expected to last approximately one hour.

Further information and details on the auction and online bidding are available at the auction website.

Kingsbury Grade control burn resumes

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews will resume prescribed fire operations on Kingsbury Grade near North Benjamin beginning April 18, weather permitting. The project area is approximately 10 acres.

Operations are expected to continue through the week if favorable weather conditions continue.

Residents and visitors can expect to see smoke from prescribed fire project areas.

Tahoe bike group takes wait-and-see approach to Measure S revision

By Ty Polastri

In 2000, the residents of South Lake Tahoe approved a bond to raise monies for recreational facilities and bicycle path maintenance. In 2009, an effort by the Joint Powers Authority, who administers the bond monies, advanced a Measure B to reallocate the accruing bicycle path maintenance funds for recreational facilities beyond the scope of the original Measure S. That measure was narrowly defeated – requiring a two-thirds vote for passage.



The JPA is presently taking steps to revisit the possibility of advancing another measure in which to allocate as much as $500,000 bike path maintenance funds to ball fields and broaden the scope of bike path maintenance to include paths built prior to the 2000 Measure stipulations.

The reason there is nearly $470,000 currently accruing for bike paths is because expenditures are earmarked for trails built after 2000, which there are few and not needing attention, and to insure that sufficient funds be available

for future bike trails. Bike path maintenance funds are a condition for new paths being built and there are several in various planning stages.

Now, that the Bike Coalition is a 501(c)3 tax exempt educational corporation, it is restricted in what it can and cannot do with regards to advocating a political or legislative position. However, it is unclear about advocating for or against a ballot measure. Therefore, the coalition is seeking a legal opinion. Until then, the board of directors reached a consensus that it would remain neutral about the proposed measure until such time that it receives a legal opinion. The coalition will be providing information and analysis of details regarding bike path maintenance and the essential elements of being a bicycle-friendly community should the JPA decide to place this measure on the ballot.

Ty Polastri is president of the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition.

Opinion: How to dilute the power of politicians

By Steven Greenut

SACRAMENTO — When I lived in Iowa, I was an average citizen, and, one day, I had a question for the governor's office for an article I was writing for a small newsletter. I called the Capitol number and was transferred to an aide, who responded with something to this effect: "Why don't you come and ask the governor yourself? Are you free next Monday at 11:30?"

When I got there at 11:30, the governor was waiting and gave me a half-hour of his time.

Getting an audience with Gov. Jerry Brown – or any other recent California governor – would be nearly impossible for an average citizen, and, indeed, it is tough enough to get such access even for someone writing for a major newspaper. The chief executive of a state with 39 million people – especially a state wrestling with a $26.6 billion budget deficit – usually won't have time for Molly from Modesto, even if the governor of a state with 3 million people might occasionally be able to meet with Steve from Des Moines.

But while it's unrealistic to expect average voters to get a visit with their governor, they should have a chance to meet with their state representative. Unfortunately, California's residents have only a slim chance of meeting with their Assembly members, the ones who are supposed to be the people's advocates.

Iowans, for instance, are represented by 103 members of the House of Representatives, whereas Californians are represented by 80 members of the Assembly. Simple math: There's one representative for every 29,151 Iowans (using 2008 data) and one Assembly member for every 459,458 Californians (now 483,000). There's an elected representative in New Hampshire's house for every 3,290 Granite State residents, the lowest ratio of such representation in the nation.

I gave a talk last weekend at the state Libertarian Party Convention at Lake Tahoe. I spoke about the failure of California Republicans and focused on the party's failure to end redevelopment agencies. Activist Michael Warnken approached me afterward and handed me the above data. He said it made his point that the continuation of redevelopment, which Gov. Brown wants to end, is a "representation problem."

Steven Greenhut is editor of www.calwatchdog.com; write to him at sgreenhut@calwatchdog.com.

Read the whole story

Opinion: FAA’s problems run deeper than sleeping controllers

Publisher’s note: This editorial is from the April 13, 2011, Reno Gazette-Journal.

The Federal Aviation Administration has a problem.

It’s not simply that a controller fell asleep in the tower at Reno-Tahoe International Airport early Wednesday as a medical flight was attempting to land, as troubling as that is.

One incident of that nature can be excused as the action – or inaction – of a poor employee. It might even be possible to ignore a second incident as nothing more than a coincidence.

But Wednesday’s failure of a controller in Reno to respond to a pilot’s calls – as well as those of concerned airport officials – is the fifth time since the beginning of the year that there has been a serious lapse in an airport control tower and the fourth involving a sleeping controller.

That’s not happenstance. That’s a sign of a troubled agency whose employees and managers must be held accountable.

Read the whole story

SNC sponsors Cultural Festival

Sierra Nevada College’s free Cultural Festival is April 23 from 11am until 3pm in Patterson Hall, Incline Village.

This family-fun festival celebrates the diversity of cultures, languages, and histories in the local communities. Multicultural entertainment will feature five live music and dancing performances and two international film screenings.

Cultural activities and exhibits include origami, Buddhist prayer flags, piñata, and global storybook reading.

Sample international cuisine throughout the day at $1 ticket per taste.