Truckee Tahoe Community Chorus

The Truckee Tahoe Community Chorus of Sierra College, directed by Susan K. Horst, Chris Nelson, and Thomas Acord, will present “Spring Pops Potpourri” at The Resort at Squaw Creek.

The chorus will be accompanied by the Diablo Valley College Philharmonic Orchestra from Pleasant Hill, directed by Owen J. Lee.

The “Pops” program will delight the young with selections as The Tortoise and the Hare and The Syncopated Clock; the comic opera buffs with Offenbach’s Neighbors’ Chorus, a musical jest: Italian Salad, and the not so young with some great choral literature. A fine finish for the menu of songs is a medley of Broadway show tunes by Kern, Bernstein, Sondheim, Wilson, Stein, Gershwin, and Loesser.

The concert, which celebrates spring through the lightness of popular music, is a great way to enjoy the season in the beautiful setting of the “Resort at Squaw Creek”.

Shows are April 30 at 7pm and May 1 at 2pm. Tickets are $15 for adults and can be purchased online, from chorus members, or at the door. Students and children are admitted free of charge.

Serene Lakes explosion

prompts officials to evacuate area

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

SERENE LAKES – Emergency services officials on Sunday ordered an indefinite evacuation of a Tahoe area community after a propane gas explosion leveled a three-story house Friday and officials confirmed nearly two dozen more propane leaks in the area.

“We’ll notify homeowners through the media and by reverse 9-1-1 calls when the order’s lifted,” said Richard Simmons, program manager for Placer County’s Office of Emergency Services. “But we don’t expect that to be anytime soon – weeks at the earliest.”

The order affects Serene Lakes, a community of 850 homes near Donner Summit in Placer County. Only about 20 of those houses, however, are occupied by permanent residents. The others are ski rentals or are used occasionally by the owners for skiing, said Steve Lieberman, Truckee Fire Protection District Battalion Chief.

A shelter has not been set up during the voluntary evacuation, Simmons said, as “most are vacationers and they can leave; others can contact their insurance companies and go to a hotel.”

Read the whole story

Ski report: Make sure you have the correct wax



Spring has sprung on the slopes of Tahoe. Time to reapply the wax to get through the slow spots.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Belle is a 2-years-old pure bred dog who was used to breed puppies until her owner couldn’t have her anymore.

Now she is looking to be a loved family pet. Belle has lived with other male dogs and small children. She is house, crate and leash trained.



Belle is microchipped and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

— Susan Baumflek

Opinion: Mountain Collective looking for support from community

To the community,

The medical cannabis industry is already operating here in our community of South Lake Tahoe. However, we as a community are not benefiting from it as much as we could be. People in the community may not realize, but Mountain Collective, run by longtime locals, was unjustly denied permission to open a collective in the fall of 2009 when they originally applied with the city of South Lake Tahoe.

The city was biased by making exceptions on the applications for some of the current collectives, but not for Mountain Collective. The other three collectives are all spin-offs of other bigger collectives out of San Jose, Los Angeles and Sacramento.

Since 2009, Mountain Collective has been impeded by ongoing negotiations with the city, while the other three collectives have been allowed to operate. After decisions being prolonged and no conclusion being drawn, Mountain Collective is left with no option but to sue the city, in order to defend their rights and heavy investment in opening this collective. This lawsuit [that is expected to be filed today in El Dorado

County Superior Court] could definitely go either way, therefore each and every one of our emails, letters, and if we show up to City Council meetings on important days will help to make or to break this case. Blogging online on press articles about what is going on and showing your support of Mountain Collective is also very beneficial. This grassroots approach may be the last chance Mountain Collective has and depends on each and everyone of you reading this and your demonstration of support.

We, as a community, need to write quick emails or letters saying it is about time Mountain Collective be recognized as a collective within the city of South Lake Tahoe. People in the community need to be informed about what has gone on so please spread the word. Mountain Collective needs any and all support, so please step forward. You can email our City Council at hcole@cityofslt.us, cfortier@cityofslt.us, aswanson@cityofslt.us, tdavis@cityofslt.us, and bgrego@cityofslt.us.

The city has a meeting coming up on April 19. Information about agendas is usually posted the Friday before the meeting on their website. City Council members make different decisions in front of a room full of people than they do when no one is in attendance. It is imperative to physically attend meetings. Meetings are at 1901 Airport Road, South Lake Tahoe.

Mountain Collective needs to have friends, family and members of the community standing behind them because they have been treated unfairly by the city of South Lake Tahoe and deserve to be able to open after all of this time of loss profits.

It is time to rectify this situation, which has been drawn out way to long, by helping Mountain Collective get the proper permits and permission to operate as a collective within South Lake Tahoe alongside the City of Angels 2, Tahoe Wellness Center, and Patient to Patient 2. The Zieglers have fully committed themselves to this business and have demonstrated

over the course of the last 20 years their commitment to the local community and economy. Their livelihood, as well as their two young daughters. among others depend on Mountain Collective being officially acknowledged. Denying them the right to operate will be highly detrimental to their family and current employees.

As longtime locals, Chris and Stacie are committed to supporting and revitalizing the economy here. Mountain Collective is run on a closed loop system, which means all medical cannabis is produced in secure, discrete principally industrial areas locally and distributed locally to patients. It will be very clear where all the cannabis is coming from and where it is going. It will all be grown in Clean Green Certified locations which means it will meet Chris Van Hook's statewide Clean Green Certification standards in spaces that meet all local building and safety codes and have appropriate insurance. Clean Green Certification insures products are produced in manner that is both healthy and safe for the environment.

With the proper permission and permits Mountain Collective will be able to create many local jobs. Unemployment levels are reaching all time highs. By employing local people, supporting local businesses with their purchasing needs the economy here will be positively impacted. There is also an opportunity for the city to benefit from taxes. It is scary but true the economy here needs major improvements and to diversify. We really need to open ourselves to new ideas and concepts and support locally owned and operated businesses.

We as a community need to stand up for each other by supporting each others' visions. Let's step in and help Mountain Collective make their vision a reality.

Together healing naturally,

Layla Green, South Lake Tahoe

Myriad events lead up to Amgen bike race in Tahoe

Lake Tahoe is hosting a 10-day celebration as a countdown before May's Amgen Tour of California starts in Stateline.



May 5: Hard Rock Cafe at Harveys Lake Tahoe is hosting the official Amgen Tour of California kick-off party, with a percentage of the evening's proceeds donated to Amgen's title sponsor, Breakaway from Cancer, an initiative that helps empower people affected by cancer.

May 6: Sammy Hagar and the Wabos will be playing at Harrah's South Shore Room on Friday and Saturday, while the historic Bar of America in Truckee will host DJ Zeb Early.

May 7: Tahoe's nightclubs will be stocked and ready for weekend partiers. Opal, Vex and Crystal Bay Club, along with the Village at Squaw Valley, will keep the beats bumping May 6-7 and 13-14.

May 8-10: At South Shore casinos throughout the week, visitors and locals can view One Voice Starring Bethany Owen at the Horizon, The Improv at Harveys with host and emcee Howie Nave, and the Party with Arty at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

May 11: The Biking for a Better World Winemaker Dinner is at PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn. Dinner will support an organization that brings accessibility to communities in need around the world.

May 12: The Slow Rollers Bicycle Club presents the Spirit Bike Parade where all types of bikes and costumes are encouraged –

almost mandatory. Bikes will be rolling from the Y in South Tahoe to MontBleu in Stateline.

In North Lake Tahoe, the Squaw Valley Institute hosts Soulcycler, Around the World Bike Tour with South Tahoe photographer/cycling enthusiast Rick Gunn.

Barton Health 2011 Lecture Series features topics ranging from nutrition, preventing injuries, maximizing performance and more at Embassy Suites from 6–8pm.

May 13: The Opening Gala and Official Team Introduction at MontBleu Resort Casino & Spa. For a black tie evening.

The Village at Squaw Valley will hosts a free outdoor cycling movie, "Breaking Away "(1979), directed by Peter Yates and starring Dennis Quaid.

The Crystal Bay Club will have Jackie Greene and Band until the early morning hours.

May 14: The inaugural Start at the Top – Lake Tahoe Legends Ride, allows cycling enthusiasts to ride the Stage 1 first lap

The North Lake Tahoe Bike Swap, the Tahoe City Street Dance and the 3rd Annual Wellness Weekend at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe.

Eric Burdon & the Animals will be playing at Harrah's South Shore Room on the eve of the Stage 1 start.

California community colleges

to slash enrollment

By Carla Rivera, Los Angeles Times

Facing a state funding cut of up to 10 percent, California's community colleges will enroll 400,000 fewer students next fall and slash thousands of classes to contend with budget shortfalls that threaten to reshape their mission, officials said Wednesday.

The dire prognosis was in response to the breakdown in budget talks in Sacramento and the likelihood that the state's 112 community colleges will be asked to absorb an $800-million funding reduction for the coming school year – double the amount suggested in Gov. Jerry Brown's current budget proposal.

As it now stands, the budget plan would raise community college student fees from $26 to $36 per unit. The fees may go even higher if a budget compromise is not reached.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe News looking for writers

If you have a background in journalism, *Lake Tahoe News* would like to hear from you. Send five writing samples, a resume and letter outlining why you want to write for *LTN* to info@LakeTahoeNews.net.

Lake Tahoe real estate in stabilization mode

By Susan Wood

Lake Tahoe real estate agents and sellers hope to spring into a new season of renewal in this hard-hit industry. But most admit in this economy, it will take a lot of special treatment and unique touches to get buyers through the door and on the deed.

“Consumer confidence is a little down affecting house sales in general. But the median price has stayed steady for 16 months now, and the inventory is a little low, but the buyer could be coming to the mindset that maybe now’s the time to buy,” said longtime real estate agent Deb Howard, who runs her own company in South Lake Tahoe. “The stabilization is huge.”

The median price of a single family home on the South Shore in March was $310,000, the South Tahoe Association of Realtors reported in its multiple listing service. The median was $7,500 more at this time last year. Over the year, the prices have hovered between this price and $328,000, making many wonder if this housing market recession has reached its bottom at least in Tahoe.

Howard believes it has. Her company has logged recent sales – with a $2 million home in escrow – that have prompted her to raise her eyebrows at the prospect of seeing the end of a true market correction from Tahoe’s heyday between 1999 and 2002 when buyers were in bidding wars over homes. Some bought without even stepping inside.

Gone may be those days. However, Howard has seen the

international buyers poking around recently and activity is picking up. She's placed more effort and energy into Internet marketing and learned catch phrases to use such as "getaway," "exclusive" and "lifestyle" that tap into the desire for prospects to have a world-renowned mountain lake experience.

First-time homebuyers and even those with bad credit buying with cash have come around since "financing may not be possible" for the latter, Howard indicated.

Timing is everything. South Lake Tahoe announced last week it received approval for $800,000 in first-time homebuyer assistance awarded in California Housing and Community Development Department grant funds. The South Lake Tahoe Redevelopment Agency covers a portion of the administration costs, enabling a greater percentage of the funds to go toward the homebuyers.

Overall, the hope is spring will launch a new year of an upward swing. Month after month, national and statewide reports declaring drops in home prices and sales as well as billions tied up in banks with tight lending practices have prompted some to ponder the future of buying a home as the all-American dream. These reports don't necessarily represent the case for Tahoe, contends Howard, who serves on a resort community committee she once chaired for the National Association of Realtors. There are trends at work – and sellers at work doing the extras.

For one thing, Lake Tahoe has two peak real estate markets. They run from 4th of July to mid-October and New Year's to Easter. Baby boomers may either want to retire here with their recreational enthusiast war paint or transfer wealth at an astonishing rate to their children. Some of these so called "kids" got into the world of technology and are driving a new age of commerce, so they may not need daddy's money.

But nothing worth having comes easy. That's why, if sellers

want to move their homes, they need to be creative like Mike and Sue Zanetell. To show their four-bedroom home at 927 Candlewood in South Tahoe that he built from the ground up, she makes cookies and lets a pot of minestrone soup simmer in the kitchen.

“See, you come here and get fed,” Howard said, while Zanetell pulled out some pastries.

One unique selling feature has become a picture board of the home. One stood next to the traditional fliers and compact discs of more photographs.

“It’s critical to let the buyer know what it looks like in all four seasons,” Howard said. Zanetell’s back yard that’s good enough to be on the local garden tour was on display. For that, they’ve added Forget Me Not wildflower seeds into a baggie as an added touch for those who view the home.

Signs are put up telling viewers they can “leave their shoes on.”



Sue Zanetell shows the cabinetry in her home. Photo/Susan Wood

Zanetell’s persona envelops the Craftsman home, which comes with impeccable detail that only a builder may insist on. They’re selling the home to move to Mendocino County to care

for aging parents and plan to keep their cabin at Fallen Leaf Lake.

Listed at $529,000, Howard admits the price is higher than the average. But she's confident the high end buyer is back in the saddle. Those with money know to be the first to set the trends, and they're waited for the bottom.

Not your average seller or house

Entrepreneur and builder Chuck Bluth apparently got that same message. He's listed his 9,530-square-foot lakefront home in Incline Village with Chase International for $15.998 million.

To Bluth, the European home speaks for itself – with a bathroom that won an international award for the use of marble and a wood finish with five layers. More than 15,000 hours and 18,000 hours were placed in the masonry work and painting, respectively. If the privacy isn't enough to think of living in a resort, try owning a personal waterfall.

"Tahoe couldn't produce a house like this under $20 million," Bluth told *Lake Tahoe News*. "But someone coming from the Bay Area is used to this quality."

What's Bluth's reason for selling? He calls the Logan Shoals area house in Glenbrook the place he hangs his hat. To sell the Incline Village home, the former owner of the Cal Neva Resort and developer may assist as a lender to the ideal party.

"Basically, I sort of held off on marketing to some degree because the market had been so bad. There was no doubt the real estate market was hit hard, but what hit the wealthy especially hard was the stock market (plunge). But the market is back, and I believe this year's market coming into spring and summer is going to be a good market," he said.

Homes circling the Lake Tahoe Basin saw a 14 percent jump in

the average price, according to Chase's last quarterly report comparing 2011's figures with the prior year. The median sales price increased 1 percent from $417,500 to $422,500.

"The Lake Tahoe market is showing definite signs of stabilization," Chase Vice President Sue Lowe said, echoing Howard's statements.

Even the U.S. real estate market has economists noticing recently.

The National Association of Realtors reported a 2.1 percent increase in pending home sales about a week ago.

"Pending home sales have trended up very nicely since bottoming out last June, even with periodic monthly declines," NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun said.

Opinion: Questioning billions of bucks for Placer County bridge retrofit

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the April 10, 2011, Auburn Journal.***

Congressman Tom McClintock believes an Auburn dam will be built and as the ranking member of the powerful water and power subcommittee he has considerable clout.

"I am still an Auburn dam supporter," McClintock said during a recent visit with the Journal editorial board. "The only question is whether it will be built before the city of Sacramento is destroyed or after."

When told that the Foresthill Bridge was undergoing a $79 million earthquake retrofit and paint job, largely paid for by the federal government, McClintock seemed surprised.

“I would say that’s not a good use of money,” he said.

McClintock explained that the federal highway administration was in charge of bridges, and that money was probably allocated some time ago, before he took office

Spending $70-million plus on the Foresthill Bridge when there are so many other much more worthy local projects in need of funding is a boondoggle. It’s government waste.

Read the whole story