Win an e-book reader

The El Dorado County Library in South Lake Tahoe will celebrate National Library Week by giving away a NOOKcolor, e-book reader at 10am on April 16.

The drawing will be held during the demonstration of OverDrive, the library's new software that allows you to check out downloadable e-books and audio books on a variety of devices.

Ski report: What spring?



Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, is reporting Boreal, Alpine and Soda Springs are closed.

Also, many of the roads getting to the Lake Tahoe area ski resorts either have chain controls, are limiting traffic or are closed. Be sure to check the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News* to keep up with road conditions.

Tomorrow might be a better ski day. Here is the ski report from Fong.

El Dorado County keeps making cuts; deficit remains

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County continues to struggle to create a balanced budget for the 2011-12 fiscal year that begins July 1.

The Board of Supervisors at the weekly meetings seem to have an item related to the budget on most agendas. The shortfall is at about $10.2 million, of which $7 million was predicted. Cuts last fall brought the number down to $7 million.

“The numbers are still swirling” is how one county employee put it.

Like most entities in California, without a state budget it’s hard to definitively go forward. Plus, property tax dollars keep declining which affects revenue projections.

Predictions are no department will be spared. Further personnel and program cuts are likely to bridge the fiscal divide.

Changes have been ongoing. A recent one saw the shift of Mike Applegarth as full-time analyst in the Chief Administrative Office to a full-time air pollution control officer and part-time CAO analyst.

“We also have an analyst assigned as acting IT director and another that continues to manage county purchasing,” Applegarth said.

The economic developer’s position has been eliminated

One area to receive a boost in funding this month was the Film

Commission – by $10,000.

Students to hear from athletes about climate change

Professional snowboarders Jeremy Jones, Nick Visconti, Ralph Backstrom, Iris Lazzareschi and Moss Halliday will talk climate change with nearly 1,500 Truckee-Reno students March 22-28.

As atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide continue to rise, the Sierra Nevada is beginning to feel the effects.

Hot Planet/Cool Athletes aims to educate and mobilize the generation that stands to lose the most by presenting engaging science and solutions on climate change with leading pro snow sports athletes.

Learn about being a grand juror

On March 22 at 6:30pm at the South Lake Tahoe Branch Library the Friends of the Library will welcome El Dorado County Judge Steven Bailey who will speak to the duties and qualifications of being a grand juror.

With the deadline to apply to be on the grand jury approaching in May, this is a great opportunity for the public to hear

about the process and ask questions. The library is at 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Refreshments will be served.

Call Gail Kolb with any questions at (530) 545.9195.

Washoe Indians knew how to pick idyllic locations

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – History and natural beauty come together in a magical way along the easy Lam Watah trail.

“This beautiful piece of land has many fascinating connections to the past. For centuries, the Washoe used it as a summer encampment. It has been logged, and grazed by cattle,” reads the interpretive sign. “Pony Express riders came through here, and it was home of Tahoe’s first airport. Most recently, two full-scale casinos were almost built here.”



Rabe Meadow in Stateline is worth visiting year-round. Photos/Kathryn

Reed

Oddly, the trail today would not resemble what it looked like when I was last on it the first week of February. Then it was muddy. With the recent white stuff, snowshoes or cross country skis are going to work better.

Improvements to the area in the last few years by the U.S. Forest Service have made it an even more pleasurable trek. Mini walkways have been installed over the low areas. Signs explain a bit about what is in this meadow.

The Forest Service has owned this plot of land on the South Shore since the 1980s.

More work is going on now to make facilities compliant with the American with Disabilities Act.

Rabe Meadow is a place to visit in every season. Like so much of Lake Tahoe, it has something special to share every month. The landscape seems to change as snow arrives and melts; the aspens regain their leaves and turn color; birds migrate – singing their arrival; other critters come and go.

Burke Creek meanders along the western edge, bringing lushness to some areas.

The main trail is completely flat, creating a meandering jaunt that ends at Nevada Beach, with a short jog through the campground.

The splendor of the beach competes against the meadow for which is most spectacular.

This particular Saturday a few others are strolling on the beach. It’s just cool enough to want to keep moving and not pause long at the snowcapped mountains ringing the lake.

Seldom do I venture here in the summer. Perhaps knowing the tranquility of the other seasons has me jaded about wanting to

be among the masses. Just once, though, I want to get a campsite for Fourth of July. Rumor has it this beach is the best for watching the fireworks shot off from the barge sitting in Lake Tahoe.

This is one of those outings where it’s about the walk, the beauty, the solitude, as well as the company of the one you’re with. It’s not about endurance or speed or working up a sweat.

Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, head east on Highway 50. Go past the casinos. Turn left on Kahle Drive. The parking area is immediately on the right.

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Expect snow all day Sunday in Tahoe

A winter storm warning is in effect from 5am to 11pm Sunday.

The National Weather Service in Reno is calling for 1 to 2 feet above 7,000 feet and 4 to 8 inches below 7,000 feet, with 8 to 12 inches along and west of Highway 89.

KGID employee receives state

water award

Eric Johnson, operations supervisor for the Kingsbury General Improvement District, has won the Operator of the Year award from the Nevada Rural Water Association.

This award is given to one operator in Nevada each year in recognition of their dedication and expertise of water operators throughout the State of Nevada.

KGID is the water supplier for the residents of the Stateline area, and is one of the most complex water treatment and distribution systems in Northern Nevada. The water is treated by an ozone disinfection process before being pumped more than 1,500 feet vertically through a series of tanks and pumping stations to reach the customers homes on upper Kingsbury.

Truckee authorities investigating fire, apparent suicide

At about 8:38 this morning, Truckee police responded with Truckee Fire Protection District personnel to a structure fire on Lemon Court in Truckee.

Upon the arrival, firefighters found the residence fully engulfed in flames.

They also discovered an adult male in a vehicle parked in the driveway to the residence. Emergency medical personnel determined the male was deceased from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The identity of the male has not been confirmed.

It is believed, however, that he lived in the house that burned.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

The circumstances surrounding the death are being investigated by Truckee police.

Lighting changes earn Truckee school district rebate check

A partnership with the Truckee Donner Public Utility District paid big dividends for the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, as the district received $18,736 from the TDPUD at its regular board meeting this week.

The rebate was part of the TDPUD's Commercial Lighting Rebate Program and the school district's investment in high-efficiency lighting will save money for years to come.

The school district worked with the TDPUD and contractors in 2010 to define the most cost-effective projects using energy-saving fluorescent and LED lighting. The TDPUD then contributed one-third of the project cost via rebate.

Participating schools included Truckee High, Truckee Elementary and Alder Creek Middle School.

The lighting projects will save the schools an estimated $10,000 per year and offer an approximately five-year simple payback.

The TDPUD has helped local businesses and agencies invest in cost-effective lighting projects by providing more than $80,000 in rebates in the last two years. The lighting program is one of several energy and water savings programs the TDPUD offers its commercial and business customers.