Not enough parking in Tahoe for all the skiers

By Kathryn Reed

TWIN BRIDGES – Some ski areas in Lake Tahoe are discovering there are consequences to too much snow. And that would be not enough parking to cater to all those people who want to ski and snowboard.

A sign at the base of Echo Summit on Highway 50 warns people that traveling will be slow because the lots at Sierra-at-Tahoe are full. Traffic headed west on Highway 50 was backed up Sunday morning to Sawmill Road.



Sierra-at-Tahoe's lots on Feb. 27 are full before noon. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Once people get to the resort they are not allowed to turn up the driveway and must continue on the highway.

About 11am Feb. 27 one law enforcement official told *Lake Tahoe News* it had been this way for a little bit. California Highway Patrol officers, El Dorado County sheriff's deputies and Sierra employees were working the entrance of the ski

resort.

Calls to the resort were not returned before this story was published.

A spokeswoman for Heavenly Mountain Resort had no information about parking, but based on this Tweet from the resort at 11:17am, lots are likely to be full as well as Ski Run Boulevard: “Don’t want to mess with driving or pesky parking? We have four base lodges and complimentary shuttles running between all of them!”

Victoria Sabelmik, guest services manager at Kirkwood Mountain Resort at about 11am said, “We are getting close to capacity for parking.” She added Presidents’ Weekend was definitely busier.

Besides the fresh snow, the North American Freestyle Championships are drawing people to Kirkwood today.

Ski report: Not enough superlatives to do it justice



Bring the sunscreen and plenty of layers today for what could be another epic day on the slopes of Lake Tahoe.

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

Vonn, Mancuso share podium in super G

By Ski Racing News Service

ARE, Sweden – It couldn't have been any closer on the super G track today. German overall leader Maria Riesch secured her sixth World Cup victory of the season just one-hundredth of a second ahead of friend and chief rival in the overall standings, Lindsey Vonn of Vail. Riesch now leads by 196 points (1,516 to 1,320).

Fellow American Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley, the recently crowned super G world championship silver medalist, was 0.79 seconds back in third place for her third World Cup podium of the season.

"It's a lucky win but it's good to have luck on your side from time to time. It has not always been the case," Riesch, who finished second to Vonn in the overall standings the past two seasons, told Reuters. "I have great hopes now (for the World Cup), especially after this weekend in which I managed to beat Lindsey twice. I think I turned the odds on my side and if I cannot win more points, the goal is now not to lose any."

It was Riesch's first super G win in since 2008.

The World Cup's top duo had all the attention this weekend as the World Cup tour resumed following a two week "break" for the 2011 World Championships in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. Riesch, a double bronze medalist at her home championships, got things going again on Friday with the win in the super combined thanks to a great showing in the afternoon slalom leg after Vonn had lead in the morning's

super G portion before finishing sixth. Yesterday it was Vonn, with a brand new downhill Worlds sliver medal in her pocket, on top of the downhill podium and Riesch in third.

Today, the two friends literally could not have been any tighter as the sunny skies that had graced the area all week were blanketed with overcast conditions as Riesch crossed the finish line in one minute, 13.24 seconds, a half a hair a head of Vonn. All Vonn could do was throw her head back in disbelief. The pair has finished 1-2 five times this season.

“I thought I skied a good race, unfortunately I lost by one hundredth of a second, which is a snap of your finger. That’s life,” said Vonn, who was on the right side of the hundredths in late January when she won a super G over Riesch by five hundredths. “It’s definitely frustrating, especially at this time of the year, with the overall World Cup so tight. One hundredth is twenty points. It would have been great if we could have just tied.”

Vonn, who maintains a 131-point lead over Riesch in the super G standings with three wins and two second-place finishes this season, came down the freshened up track following a TV break in the No. 16 bib to take the lead from Austrian Nicole Hosp (fourth today) by 0.80 seconds. Three racers later, Riesch had lost most of a 0.15-second advantage at the last split timer, but flicked her wrist across the finish line beam just in time to beat Vonn and claim her 14th podium of the season over all five disciplines.

Another three racers later, Mancuso was the last to come close, but didn’t quite have enough to unseat the top duo as she continues to have her best season in three years. Mancuso, Vonn and Riesch have shared three World Cup podiums this season. Mancuso, a four-time World Cup winner, has gone four years without a victory.

Nine races remain on this season’s women’s World Cup schedule,

four of those being speed races which Vonn has relied on this season as she has struggled in giant slalom and slalom races.

Led by their top guns on the podium, the U.S. squad had another strong day as Leanne Smith recorded the second-best result of her World Cup career in 12th and and Laurenne Ross just made the points in 29th. Stacey Cook, fifth in yesterday's downhill, finished 33rd.

Britt Janyk led the Canadians in 25th ahead of teammate Marie-Michele Gagnon in 36th.

It was a heartbreaking weekend for local hero Anja Paerson. After leading both downhill training runs on her home snow, the fourth all time winningest woman ski racer just missed the podium in fourth in the super combined and failed to finish the downhill. She was 15 seconds into today's race when she intentionally skied off course, clicked out of her skis and dropped to the ground clutching her right knee. The severity of the injury is not yet known. She was the only competitor not to finish today.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• College Week at Sierra-at-Tahoe is March 14–21. College students can purchase $56 lift ticket (regularly $71) for a full day of skiing or riding with a valid student ID card.

• As Borders bookstore goes through bankruptcy and closes stores, it is keeping the Carson Valley location open.

• Placerville based El Dorado Savings Bank had earnings in 2010 of $10.9 million, a 2 percent increase from a year ago.

• Jonathan and Penny Bourne of Mono County paid the federal government $1 million this month for damages caused by a September 2006 wildfire that spread from their fire pit.

• The 2011 Amgen Tour of California has volunteer opportunities posted on its website.

• South Tahoe Refuse if offering free tire disposal twice a month. Click on schedule to find out details about the program in South Lake Tahoe.

North Tahoe hands out slew of community awards

More than 250 local business and community members attended the 57th Annual Community Service Awards presented by the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce this month at the Resort at Squaw Creek in Olympic Valley to recognize the outstanding achievements of residents.

Emilio Vaca, executive director of the North Tahoe Family Resource Center, received the Citizen of the Year Award for his leadership in turning a small social service organization into a major force in the large regional community it now serves. Vaca has also established relationships with other key community agencies.

Larry Sevison was awarded the Distinguished Community Service Award for his significant contributions during a period of 55 years since he first arrived in North Lake Tahoe in 1956,

including serving as Placer County Board of Supervisors District 5 Representative and chair of the California Tahoe Conservancy more than 20 years.

The Large Business of the Year went to the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe for its continued professional and outstanding service to visitors, customers and clients. Moonshine Ink took home Small Business of the Year for its fresh, contemporary and in-depth focus on issues relevant to the Tahoe-Truckee mountain lifestyle.

Nonprofit of the Year was presented as a collective award to the Boys & Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe, North Tahoe Family Resource Center and Tahoe Women's Services for their service integration, helping families get their needs met.

Tahoe Cross Country Ski Resort received the Hospitality Award for its exemplary commitment to hospitality and customer service and active participation in the community.

The Positive Environmental Impact Award was given to the Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships for its educating students throughout the school district about environmental issues and how they can impact them positively. The Special Celebration Award went to Squaw Valley USA, a prime example of Tahoe's past and future.

The Special Community Service awarded was given to board Trustees Bev Ducey and Kristy Olk of the Truckee Tahoe United School District for stepping forward to help the community through the major endeavors and challenges faced by the district.

Arts Supporter of the Year was awarded as a collaborative effort in the desire to entertain both our local community, as well as the many visitors that vacation in our region. It was a grass roots effort that took shape as High Notes – North Lake Tahoe's Summerlong Music Series that highlighted free music, every night throughout the region. Recipients are

Northstar-at-Tahoe, North Lake Tahoe Business Association, Tahoe City Downtown Association, Tahoe City Public Utility District, the Squaw Valley Village Neighborhood Company and Truckee Donner Parks and Recreation District.

The Placer County-Lake Tahoe Film Office also recognized community members, with the Film Commission Outstanding Support for Film and Media Production presented to the Tahoe City Public Utility District and North Tahoe Public Utility District.

The North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce also thanked North Lake Tahoe Resort Association board Members Deb Dudley and Alex Mourelatos, who have now stepped down, for their leadership.

A number of volunteers were recognized: Rosie Smith, California State Parks; Pete Bansen and Phyllis McConn, Arts for the Schools; Laura Helsel and Steve McQuinn, UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center; Melanie Jackson, Tahoe City Public Utility District; Ed Miller, Tahoe City Downtown Association; Courtenay Silvergleid-Wallpe, Tahoe Women's Services; Mary Ellen Vogt and Dick and Nileta Morton, The Orchestra & Community Choral Artists of the Tahoe Area; Lindsay Harbison, Sierra State Parks Foundation, Jackie Benson-Dehaan and Nicola Kerslake, Squaw Valley Institute; and Don and Jeanne Davis, North Lake Tahoe Historical Society.

Outstanding employees getting top honors included Mitchell Penning, Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe; Linda Van Fossen, Tahoma Meadows Bed & Breakfast; Bob Kellogg, Eagle Ridge Snowmobiles; Sarah Schaefer, North Lake Tahoe Historical Society; Ana Liz Servin, North Tahoe Family Resource Center; Corina Botorea, Mourelatos Lakeshore Resort; Joel Walker, Avelina Cruz and Chef Chad Shrewsbury, Resort at Squaw Creek; Mirian Guerrero, Granllibakken Resort; Jake Lewis, Homewood Mountain Resort; Jessica Swan, Alpine Meadows Ski Resort; Jess Weigel, Tahoe City Public Utility District; Bill Loveland, Tahoe City

Marina; Dave “The Wave” Pierce, Squaw Valley USA; Don Yuhas, Mike Hafer, Susan Malvolta, Ted Theodore and Chris Hargrave, Northstar-at-Tahoe Resort’s Ski and Snowboard School; and Jeremy Jacobson of the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association.The 57th Annual Community Service Awards was sponsored by the Resort at Squaw Creek, Jeff Leep of Leep Entertainment, Sierra Nevada Ad Partners, Tahoe Ridge Winery and The Store . . . Copies and More.

Sand Harbor boat launch to have limited spring hours

The boat launch facility at Sand Harbor will open March 3. Boating hours will be 7am-3pm, Thursday through Monday through the end of April.

Boat inspectors will be present during these hours.

Closures or delayed opening may occur due to weather.

Lake levels are still low and launch conditions may be hazardous, especially for boats more than 16 feet.

Summer hours from 6am-8pm will begin May 1. Boaters only using Lake Tahoe are encouraged to get their watercraft inspected early this year prior to summer crowds.

Beginning May 1, watercraft inspections will take place only at roadside inspection stations. Please visit the Nevada State Parks website for locations, 2011 fee structures and other information.

Watercraft inspectors are provided by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District.

Opinion: Linking transportation to lake clarity

By Joanne Marchetta

Since the dawn of time, transportation has been a driver of human culture. From the onset of wheeled carts in 3,500 BC to air and high-speed rail travel today, humanity has relied on transportation to live, work, play and thrive.

It’s no different at Lake Tahoe present-day. With private automobiles the transportation mode of choice for most local residents and visitors, our roadways have come to define our communities for better or worse.



Joanne Marchetta

At Lake Tahoe, what happens on land, especially on our roads, affects the health and clarity of the lake. Recent scientific research has proven the main cause for the lake’s transparency loss is fine sediment runoff which is carried to the lake by roadways. During the winter, the challenge is even greater because the sand and salt we use to keep our roadways safe are entering our watershed – all you need to do is look around at

the dirty snow along our streets and highways to see the problem.

What are we doing about it?

A few weeks ago, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Governing Board voted unanimously to prioritize the update of our Regional Plan on a few key areas:

• Protecting water quality and lake clarity

• Improving land use planning, air quality, and transportation

• Addressing catastrophic threats such as wildfire and invasive species

• Implementing a sustainability framework that addresses climate change issues.

Transportation issues are embedded within all of these high priorities. How and where we locate homes and businesses affects our traffic patterns which in turn affects the lake. Ozone pollution caused by traffic congestion is also harmful to human health, affecting the lungs and heart, especially in children. Our Regional Plan update is addressing these issues while at the same time work is under way with many partner agencies to tackle the transportation challenges at Lake Tahoe.

Here are some highlights:

• Using better street sweepers – TRPA is working with local governments to help fund the highest efficiency street sweepers on the market. Just this month, we're distributing local project mitigation funds to South Lake Tahoe to purchase sweepers to keep fine sediments out of the lake. You can also see one soon in Incline Village.

• Providing continuous bike trails – there are major bike trail projects in the planning pipeline to give locals and

visitors alternatives to their cars. The South Tahoe Greenway Shared-Trail Project, the Sawmill II Bike Trail project, and the El Dorado Beach to Ski Run Trail are just three of many bike trail projects in the works. Partner agencies like the California Tahoe Conservancy, South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County are the lead agencies working diligently with us on these projects.

• Planning projects – our partner agency, the Tahoe Transportation District, is targeting five important transportation infrastructure projects:

• Nevada Stateline to Stateline Bikeway Project

• Highway 50 Stateline Corridor Project

• Lake Tahoe Waterborne Transit Service and Landside Facility Project

• Highways 431/28 Operational/Safety Improvement Project

• Highways 89/89 Realignment-Fanny Bridge Project.

These “big 5” projects would go a long way toward redefining transportation in the Tahoe Basin over the next 15 years and could curb traffic congestion and reduce auto emissions while at the same time delivering water quality benefits. Another project that’s been 10 years in the making is the Highway 50 Caltrans project from Trout Creek to Ski Run Boulevard. This project is scheduled to break ground this year and will help us create a safer, more walkable and bikeable community on the South Shore.

With approximately 3 million visitors coming to Lake Tahoe per year, most still by car, transportation choices can meaningfully influence our environment and quality-of-life. Many of our visitors arrive from the Bay Area, where drivers waste nearly 60 hours per year in congestion, according to a national 2009 Urban Mobility Report. While our traffic backups

here in Tahoe are generally confined to peak holiday weekends, long lines of vehicles on clogged roadways are not what we should accept for Lake Tahoe.

The Bi-State Compact creating TRPA mandates we reduce our dependence on the private automobile. This mandate is an extraordinarily high bar to reach and can be achieved only through partnerships, perseverance and public support. And building partnerships and public support are TRPA's two new focus areas for delivering environmental gain on the ground at Lake Tahoe. The delivery of critical transportation infrastructure projects will create a foundation to help rebuild our economy and reinvigorate our communities all while protecting Lake Tahoe.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

UNR research leads to AIDS treatment

By Michael Martinez, Reno Gazette-Journal

He has been doggedly pursuing the mysteries of a single organism, one that causes deadly fungal meningitis, since he was an undergraduate at the University of Iowa in the 1960s.

But the research by microbiology professor Tom Kozel of the University of Nevada, Reno has earned a satisfying dividend: a new, rapid blood test that could lead to early diagnosis and potentially save the lives of thousands of people stricken with fungal meningitis, a leading cause of AIDS-related deaths in developing countries that is close going to market.

“It’s great when something you do helps people,” Kozel said Wednesday after walking visitors through his lab in the Center for Molecular Medicine.

He discussed the antibody that would make testing people in emerging countries, where there are limited medical facilities, more practical.

Normally it takes a spinal tap to extract fluid and lab analysis to detect fungal meningitis or cryptococcus.

Read the whole story

Disabled veterans prove their abilities on Sierra’s slopes

By Jessie Marchesseau

TWIN BRIDGES – On the hill they looked just like any other snowboarders. But underneath the helmets, goggles and bulky snowboard gear, the riders at this weekend’s Pipeline Learn to Ride and Race camp are truly unique.

Amy Purdy, a tall, slender young woman with long auburn hair explains that she is a double-leg amputee. She lost both legs to meningitis more than 10 years ago. Today, she is development director and co-founder of Adaptive Action Sports, the organization putting on the camp.

In the Aspen Café at Sierra-at-Tahoe’s base lodge, Purdy explains the uniqueness of each member of the group. Jasmine, with the perky ponytail of dreadlocks, is an amputee, as is Tanner in the white jacket. Chris has limited movement and feeling in his left arm. Gary suffers from a traumatic brain

injury that left him blind in one eye and with no feeling in his left leg. And Beth, at 27, has several fused vertebrae in her lower back, nerve damage and is a two-time breast cancer survivor.



Former Army Ranger Gary Nolte doesn't let the lack of feeling in one leg stop him from taming Sierra's slopes. Photos/Jessie Marchesseau

They hail from all over the U.S., and all are disabled veterans.

Beth Wolf had always wanted to join the military, but waited until after college to do so. She joined as a combat medic, but was diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer while still in training. She was 22. Wolf received surgery and radiation therapy, and continued on with her military career. Just a few years later, while serving in Iraq, she was carrying a wounded soldier on her back when an RPG hit a nearby building. The force collapsed the discs in her back and left her in a wheelchair for six months.

Doctors were able to fuse the vertebrae so she could walk again, but her range of motion is limited, and she has little feeling left in her right leg, except for the constant pain.

“It’s not too bad though,” she laughs. “I can walk. There’s these folks out here missing their limbs, and they’re rockin’ it. So I’m really lucky.”

Wolf, who finished five and half months of chemotherapy in January to get rid of a second round of breast cancer, said coming to the three-day camp at Sierra has really helped to change her perspective.

“To be able to do something where you’re going fast without feeling pain, or as much pain, and feeling the wind in your face …,” she said. “I can’t run down a basketball court anymore or go for a jog, but I can get that wind going and feel the mountain air. It’s wicked cool. I’m addicted to it; I want to do it every day.”

She is not the only participant who has experienced the change that this and programs like it can make.

“I can honestly say programs like this saved my life,” Gary Nolte said.

Nolte, 29, a former U.S. Army ranger, sustained a brain injury while serving in Iraq when a mortar struck the building he was in.

“We go from being the toughest and the best-of-the-best to being hurt and being what we consider in our minds nothing,” he said, “and this kind of stuff shows us we’re still alive. This kind of stuff shows us that no matter what, we can do whatever we want to do, we just have to try, that’s it.”

He feels so strongly about the benefits of programs like this that he now works for a company offering whitewater boating as a means of therapy for disabled veterans.

An avid skier before his injury, this was Nolte's first time on a snowboard. And having no feeling in his left leg or vision in his left eye did not make it any easier. However, by the end of the camp he was turning both ways with a smile on his face. He said he is hooked and hopes to make snowboarding a regular pastime.

This is just the outcome Purdy and partner Daniel Gale are hoping for. They want participants in their camps to fully embrace the sport and make it a part of their lives, not just a one-time experience. With the possibility of snowboarding becoming an event at the 2014 Paralympics, they want adaptive riders to look at the possibilities of competitive snowboarding as well.

Purdy, who snowboarded competitively before her illness, is currently the top-ranked female adaptive rider in the world, having won two back-to-back World Cups. It is this passion for competition that prompted AAS to schedule the camp to coincide with the United States of American Snowboard Association (USASA) regional race at Sierra on Saturday. Purdy competed in the race and encouraged the other riders to do the same, hoping to inspire at least some of them to join the world of competitive snowboarding.

Since it was his first week on a board, Nolte opted not to enter the race this time around, but admitted he is a competitive type of guy, and he considered it.

"You got to constantly remember that you're enabled, not disabled," Nolte said. "It's not what you can't do, it's what you can do .… It's about just getting out there and doing it and having fun with what I can do."

This is the second year AAS has had an adaptive snowboard camp at Sierra, something the organization plans to make an annual event.

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Truckee’s Carroll wins World Cup slopestyle

By Elizabeth Karam, U.S. Snowboarding

CALGARY, Alberta -– In only her first slopestyle snowboarding and third career World Cup, Allyson Carroll of Truckee clinched victory Saturday in Calgary. Austria’s Clemen’s Schattschneider won the men’s contest.

Carroll headed into the Saturday afternoon finals having qualified in fourth. The 22-year-old threw down big launching a frontside boardslide to boardslide, 50-50 backside 180 out, switch boardslide as well as backside grab, backside 360 and backside 540 in the kicker section to take the “W.”

“I didn’t expect this to happen. Not a tiny little bit,” said Carroll. “I dislocated my left shoulder twice in January so I was hoping to be strong enough for this event after not ridding for three weeks.”

Carroll was joined by Canada’s Brooke Voigt and Pia Mesuburger of Austria on the podium in second and third. Serena Shaw of Bondville, Vt., finished next for the U.S. in fifth.

Schattschneider topped the men’s field landing a cab 270 to frontside boardslide on the downrail, cab 360 bonk on the Oakley-O, blunt frontside 270 out, 270 on 270 off the canon pole into a backside 900 to switch backside 900 and frontside 720 melon in the kicker section. Finishing behind Schattschneider was Canada’s Robby Balharry and Zachary Stone in second and third.

U.S. Snowboarding rookie Matt Ladley of Steamboat Springs,

Colo., fronted the U.S. men in eighth.

Official results, FIS World Cup, Calgary, Alberta, Slopestyle Snowboarding

Men

1. Clemens Schattschneider, Austria

2. Robby Balharry, Canada

3. Zachary Stone, Canada

—

8. Matt Ladley, Steamboat Springs, CO

14. Paul Brichta, Burnsville, MN

16. Zack Black, Breckenridge, CO

Women

1. Allyson Carroll, Truckee, CA

2. Brooke Voigt, Canada

3. Pia Meusburger, Austria

—

5. Serena Shaw, Bondville, VT

6. Mikaela Casey, Mound, MN

9. Kelly Marren, Hillsborough, CA