Ski report: Mix of sun, clouds



The morning is starting off with a few clouds, but those are not expected to be around all day.

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

Janitor accused of killing principal was not going to be fired

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

John Luebbers, the elementary school janitor accused of gunning down his principal, told investigators he shot the boss because he had been fired from his job, Placerville police said Thursday.

But school district officials said later in the day that the lead custodian at Louisiana Schnell School in Placerville wasn't dismissed at all.

They said Luebbers apparently confronted principal Sam LaCara, his friend and longtime golfing companion, over the fact the school district had assembled a panel to hire a new night janitor, whose job wouldn't have affected Luebbers'

employment.

“Mr. LaCara told him that he needed to go home and cool off for the day,” Placerville Union School District Superintendent Nancy Lynch said.

Instead, Luebbers went home and retrieved a gun, said Placerville Police Capt. Mike Scott.

Luebbers, who was arrested after he went back to his home after the shooting, confessed to police that he had entered the principal’s office and fired two shots at his friend, Scott said. He is scheduled to be arraigned today in El Dorado Superior Court.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• MontBleu is hosting the Lake Tahoe Body Building Competition Aug. 26-28.

• Did you know subscribing to *Lake Tahoe News* is free? Go to the bottom right of the home page, enter your email address. This gets you an email each morning listing what has been posted in the last 24 hours.

• South Lake Tahoe has written a check for $10,000 to Armstrong Teasdale LLP as a retainer for the law firm to handle the MV-STATA transportation lawsuit.

• Kragen Auto Parts in South Lake Tahoe is gone and O’Reilly Auto Parts is in its place.

• Life Time Fitness will have a presence at the Amgen Tour of California as it produces a group ride May 14 for age-groupers in conjunction with the kickoff of the cycling event in South Lake Tahoe.

• Looking to share a ride to the slopes in Lake Tahoe? Check out this website.

Officers: No tolerance for drunken driving Super Bowl Sunday

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department is reminding football fans that if your Super Bowl celebration includes alcohol, make the right decision before kickoff and always have a designated sober driver.

This local message to Super Bowl fans joins with the national "Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk" message from the National Football League, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the HERO Campaign and Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management Coalition.

The El Dorado County Avoid the 6 DUI Task Force will be deploying special roving DUI patrols in several communities throughout the area looking to stop and arrest drivers who are impaired. These DUI patrols are in addition to regularly scheduled patrol officers, all looking for the tale-tell signs of an intoxicated driver behind the wheel.

Funding for the Avoid DUI Task Force is from the California

Office of Traffic Safety.

The Fans Don’t Let Fans Drive Drunk message supports the league-wide designated-driver campaign called Responsibility Has Its Rewards. Celebrating its eighth season, the campaign encourages fans to participate in designated-driver programs supported by beer and concessionaire companies at every NFL stadium nationwide. Throughout the season at all 31 NFL stadiums, more than 170,000 fans made the responsible decision by pledging to be designated drivers this season. Those fans now have a chance to earn the ultimate reward – a trip to Super Bowl XLV.

If you are hosting a Super Bowl party:

• Make sure all of your guests designate their sober drivers before kick-off or help arrange ride-sharing with other sober drivers

• Find unique ways to recognize the designated drivers at your party

• Give them a great spot to watch the game

• Whatever non-alcoholic beverage they are drinking, make sure their glass is always full

• Let them have the first pass at the buffet table

• Make sure their cars are easy to access when it is time to start driving people home

• Serve plenty of food

• Offer a variety of non-alcoholic choices like non-alcohol beers, soft drinks, juice, and water

• Serve one drink at a time and serve measured drinks

• Only serve alcohol to guests over 21 years of age

• Determine ahead of time when you'll stop serving alcohol, such as one hour before the end of the party or at the end of the third quarter of the game (just like NFL stadiums) and begin serving coffee and dessert

• Add the numbers of local cab companies into your phone so they are just one touch away

• Take appropriate steps to prevent anyone from driving while impaired

• Be prepared for guests to spend the night if an alternative way home is not available

If you are attending a Super Bowl party or watching at a sports bar or restaurant:

• Designate your sober driver before the party begins and leave your car keys at home if you plan to drink

• Find unique ways to recognize the designated drivers when you are out at a bar or restaurant

• Offer to be the designated driver the next time you go out

• Cover the cost for parking or even pay for a tank of gas

• Whatever non-alcoholic beverage they are drinking, make sure their glass is always full

• Pick up the tab for their food and drink

• Before you go out, add the numbers for local cab companies in your cell phone so if you find yourself in need of a ride, it is just one touch away

• Avoid drinking too much alcohol too fast. Pace yourself—eat enough food, take breaks and alternate with non-alcoholic drinks.

• Take appropriate steps to prevent anyone from driving while

impaired. Remember, Fans Don’t Let Fans Drive Drunk.

• Always buckle up – it’s your best defense on the road.

– South Lake Tahoe Police Department

K’s Kitchen: Super Bowl worthy dip

By Kathryn Reed

Something showed up in my kitchen. And it’s not a good thing.



That something is a full bag of potato chips.

“The last time we had a bag I completely missed out on those,” Sue said when I asked about the unopened bag that just appeared.

You see, I don’t often eat potato chips. But I love them. Oh, that crunch, the salt. Sometimes it’s the flavored ones like vinegar or the Hawaiian style that keep my jaw in motion.

The problem is I don’t know how to eat a handful. I know how to eat a bagful. Yes, really. It’s awful. Awfully good, to tell you the truth.

I can pass on the baked kind. Let’s be real. If you are going to be bad, be bad. Baked potato chips are as silly as low-fat

ice cream. What’s the point?

It’s good to identify your compulsions. My way to avoid a spike in my cholesterol count and clogging my arteries is to not buy potato chips except on those rare days when I’m at the grocery store shopping while I’m hungry.

Sometimes the bag doesn’t make it in the house. This is why I received a stern reprimand of sorts from Sue. “They are not to be opened until the weekend.”

Whatever.

Apparently there is some football game on that she wants to watch because she is a Steelers fan. Being a Dolphins fan, it’s been years since I’ve watched football past December.

A dip I like with chips and veggies is an ideal crowd pleaser for things like Super Bowls. It comes from my friend Carol, who is like a second mom to me. It’s best if it’s made the day before so the flavors meld.

Dilly Dip

1 C mayonnaise

1 C sour cream

2¼ tsp dill weed

Onion and garlic salt to taste

Mix all the ingredients. Chill a few hours.

First cycling team invited to 2011 Tour de California

By Pro Cycling News

The Jamis/Sutter Home Pro Cycling Team has been invited to race the 2011 Amgen Tour of California. Directeur Sportif Sebastian Alexandre made the announcement.

“The Amgen Tour of California is one of the most important stage races in professional cycling,” said Alexander. “We are proud to be selected and look forward to lining up with the best riders in the international peloton.”

“The Amgen Tour of California is the premier road racing event in North America,” said Carine Joannou, President of title sponsor Jamis Bicycles. “We are thrilled that our squad and our bikes will have the opportunity to compete against the world’s top pro teams.”

NRC Champion Luis Amaran, now in his fourth season with Jamis/Sutter Home, is a favorite for a stage win. In 2010, Amaran captured his first NRC overall win at the Joe Martin Stage Race and finished on the podium in nearly every major event, including his stage two victory at the SRAM Tour of the Gila ahead of three-time Amgen Tour of California winner Levi Leipheimer.

Alexandre also expects podium appearances for Jamis/Sutter Home veteran Alejandro Borrajo. An accomplished sprinter with the strength and endurance for climbing, Borrajo delivered Jamis/Sutter Home’s first major win of the 2010 season with his victory in the stage two road race at the UCI 2.2 Rutas de America in Uruguay. He went on to win the Redlands Bicycle Classic road race, the Wilmington Grand Prix, and the opening stage of the Fitchburg Longsjo Classic.

Read the whole story

Caregiver class in South Tahoe

Caregiving is a difficult and often challenging role that one can undertake, and taking the opportunity to share information and feel connected to others who are providing care is a vital step to perform this task to the best of your ability. Take the opportunity on Feb. 10 from 5:30-7:30pm at the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Highway 50, South Lake Tahoe to become connected and rejuvenated at your local support group.

Refreshments will be served. Free respite care is available to qualified caregivers. Pre-authorization is required for respite services.

Questions? Contact the Family Caregiver Support Program at (530) 621.6151.

S. Tahoe roads a jarring ride with no cash to fix them

By Kathryn Reed

Sitting water is asphalt’s nemesis. Water erodes the road surface, potholes develop, and then the edges start chipping away to make an even bigger hole. It’s a cycle that is

repeated each winter in Lake Tahoe.

With an unseasonably warm January and no white stuff in sight for the next week, snow is in a constant state of thaw in the basin.

South Lake Tahoe road crews drive around with bags of all-weather mix to fill in potholes they see or ones that have been reported to them. But this is just a temporary solution.



Venice Drive in South Lake Tahoe practically requires a mountain bike or four-wheel drive. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Summer, when the temperatures allow for it, is when a more permanent fix to the problem can be applied.

John Greenhut, South Lake Tahoe Public Works director, said each winter some of the same areas develop potholes because water accumulates and has nowhere to go.

“We don’t have proper drainage,” Greenhut said of the city’s streets.

The city has a master drainage plan and a master erosion

control plan, some of which overlaps, but funding is a constant barrier to make all corrective measures. Plus, snow precludes work from being done on a year-round basis.

City council after city council has heard presentation after presentation regarding the state of disrepair of South Lake Tahoe's roads. The current council was told last month it would cost about $312 million for the city to have a complete streets infrastructure.

"Complete streets" is a term meaning a street will have drainage, curbs and gutters, bike trails, sidewalks, lights – and a street without potholes or the need for four-wheel drive on dry surfaces.

"Most pavement on city streets, it's a layer of pavement, maybe an overlay on native soil. Old oils that were used shrink up and you get cracks," explained Stan Hill, chief engineer with the city. "As we move through projects, we would like to rebuild to a higher standard. Assuming we have the money, they would be better engineered, have a thicker substance and would last longer."

South Tahoe, like most cities, has three classifications for roads – arterial, collector and local. Examples of arterials are Pioneer Trail, Al Tahoe and Tahoe Keys; collectors are Venice, Lakeview and Blackwood; locals are Kubel, Armstrong and Alameda.

Even though the city knows what needs to be done, the dollars aren't sufficient to correct the problem.

In the report presented to the council last month the same funding analysis from March 2010 was brought forward.

Primary sources include: grants in aid, increasing the transient occupancy tax, increasing the sales tax, creating an assessment district, and creating a parcel tax. Supplemental sources of money include: inspection and license fees, storm

water discharge fees, redevelopment tax increment, gross vehicle weight fees, street cut fees, parking fees, TRPA mitigation funds, and development fees.

Jim Marino, engineer with the city, told the council his department applied for federal stimulus dollars but was denied because the government was looking to fund larger projects.

“There is not much federal or state money to rebuild streets,” Marino said.

Marino recognizes as the city attempts to create complete streets “sidewalks are only as good as when they are dry. Many out there now are not usable.”

He wants the city to get creative with creating a funding source for roads. He mentioned how South Tahoe Refuse does not pay a fee to drive its trucks on the city streets that were not designed to handle that weight. He pointed to Truckee, which has a percentage of sales tax dollars and parking fees going toward its streets.

With grants the city goes after, most come with strings – at least in terms of requiring matching dollars the city may not have.

“We need to hold developers accountable for improvements around their projects,” Marino added.

In 2009, the estimate, according to Marino, was it would take $5.2 million a year for 25 to 30 years to get the streets up to par.

“We need to get a funding source in place,” Marino said.

City Manager Tony O’Rourke has floated the idea of a general obligation bond to repair roads.

At the City Council’s strategic planning session improving infrastructure was one of the goals. In the coming weeks it’s

expected the council will begin to set specific goals. The next council meeting is Feb. 8 at 9am at Lake Tahoe Airport.

Kindertown day care wins round 1 in court; stays open

By Kathryn Reed

Kindertown day care in South Lake Tahoe will remain open for at least 120 days based on a judge's ruling Thursday afternoon.

El Dorado County Superior Court Judge James Dawson had little to say before issuing his decision to grant the stay. He asked Brenda Ray, deputy attorney general representing the Department of Social Services, if any child at Kindertown had been put in harms way since August when a child left the center on his own and was found wandering on Highway 50, a couple blocks from the day care. Ray did not know of any incidents.

It is the August incident that led the state to initiate proceedings to close the three-decade-old facility. This is the second time in 16 months the state has tried to close the center.

Ray said the state is appealing last fall's decision that allowed Kindertown to keep its doors open.



Attorney Mike McLaughlin and Kindertown owner Maria Barrows-Crist outside the courthouse on Feb. 3. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Kindertown owner Maria Barrows-Crist prevailed the first time with the help of attorney Mike McLaughlin of Feldman-Shaw-McLaughlin LLP.

When asked outside the courthouse Feb. 3 if he believed there would be a different outcome at the end of all of this, McLaughlin told *Lake Tahoe News*, "no."

"It's a continuing pattern of abuse by the state," McLaughlin said.

He said much of the same during the brief court hearing, which was attended by about 30 supporters of Kindertown.

The state had asked Judge Steve Bailey to be removed from the case, which was granted. Bailey is the one who ruled in Kindertown's favor last year.

Further hearings regarding Kindertown will be before Judge Warren Stracener in Placerville.

Although officials with the state Department of Education were

at Kindertown this week letting parents know where else they could enroll their children, Barrows-Crist said no child has left the center because of the latest turmoil.

McClintock to speak at Placer County dinner

Rep. Tom McClintock will be the keynote speaker at the annual Placer County Republican Party Lincoln Reagan Dinner on Feb. 12.

The Republican candidates for the 4th Assembly District special election are also on the agenda.

The event is from 6:30-8:30pm at the Timber Creek Ballroom at Sun City in Roseville. Cost is $60/person, $110/couple in advance.

For more information, call (916) 672.8446.