CTC close to closing Alta Mira deal in S. Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

It doesn't matter if one is on the street or the beach, the area near the Alta Mira building in South Lake Tahoe is not visually appealing.

At lake level there is a large pipe coming out of the bluff that is delivering water into Lake Tahoe.

At curbside the structure blocks the view of the lake and the bike path is less than ideal.



Water, this month, flows from the pipe below the Alta Mira building in South Lake Tahoe into Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

All of that is about to change.

While the California Tahoe Conservancy has been talking about acquiring that 0.55-acre parcel for years, the deal is about to close.

At the CTC's board meeting March 20 money was allocated for relocation expenses. This is expected to be no more than

$40,000, though $120,000 was set aside just in case something goes awry.

The actual purchase could come before the board at the May or June meeting.

In March 2012 the board agreed to enter an 18-month option for the building and land at 3339 Lake Tahoe Blvd. The paperwork was finalized late that year, so the agreement expires this June. The $10,000 was essentially a down payment so the owner – Alta Mira Partnership – did not sell to someone else.

It is going to cost about $2.5 million.

“When we negotiated the option we had about a $500,000 gap. Fortunately, the State Lands Commission stepped up to fill the gap,” CTC Executive Director Patrick Wright told the board.

He said the Tahoe Fund, Soroptimist and other groups are focusing on fund-raising efforts so the parcel will be restored. This will likely include dealing with the pipe.

“There is tremendous interest in that we don’t just buy it and let it sit there,” Wright said.

This area is the end point for what started as the 56-acre project. Beautification from that parcel to El Dorado Beach would complete the Lakeview Commons project. That will take more than $4 million to complete. No money is in the bank to start it. (Lakeview Commons cost more than $6 million.)

The remaining acreage in the bigger project is across the street and includes Campground by the Lake.

Mary McCall told the board she is a bit perturbed because she owns the land to the east of the Alta Mira building and no one from the Conservancy has talked to her about what is going on next door.

McCall is the daughter of Knox Johnson and part of a pioneer

family in South Lake Tahoe that still has substantial land holdings. On their property is Don Cheapos ski rentals.

McCall told *Lake Tahoe News* she does not want the history of the area to be lost. After all, it was on what is now Johnson Boulevard where the railroad would came down to the lake by their property, carrying logs when timber was a big commodity in the basin.

After the item was heard by the board McCall spent a significant amount of time with Bruce Eisner, the point man on the project for CTC.

Editorial: California drier than it has to be

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the March 7, 2014, Orange County Register.***

Despite the recent heavy rain, California's water situation remains dire. Data from the U.S. Drought Monitor, a partnership between the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shows that 100 percent of California is "abnormally dry."

But the state still seems bent on pushing ahead with water policies that appear to make the drought artificially worse, from the New Deal-style public-works Bay Delta Conservation Plan boondoggle that seeks to upend the Sacramento Delta for dubious water supplies and the benefit of a bait fish, the Delta smelt, to projects closer to home.

Read the whole story

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5 people hurt in 2-vehicle accident in Glenbrook



An accident on Highway 50 near Glenbrook on March 20 sends five people to the hospital. Photo/Provided

A two-car accident on Highway 50 in front of the Lakeridge development near Glenbrook sent five people to the hospital.

The March 20 collision occurred about 7:30pm. Traffic was affected for a couple hours.

Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper John Jessee told *Lake Tahoe News* that a white 4Runner driven by a 16-year-old Stateline boy "failed to yield" to approaching traffic. The teen was turning left toward Zephyr Cove.

The youth claimed the vehicle stalled. Jessee said based on how the SUV spun it was evident it was not moving when it was hit.

“Either way, it was still a failure to yield,” Jessee said. And he was cited for failing to yield.

A woman heading toward Cave Rock hit the SUV, causing the 4Runner to spin around. The boy did not seek medical attention. The female driver of the Highlander and her four passengers were taken to Barton Memorial Hospital in South Lake Tahoe. The driver is from Carson City and passengers from Gardnerville.

Jesse said he did not expect the women to be admitted to the hospital.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Mancuso third in GS on home slope

By USSA

SQUAW VALLEY – Olympic slalom gold medalist and World Cup slalom champion Mikaela Shiffrin (Eagle-Vail) continued her storybook season Thursday with a victory in the Nature Valley U.S. Alpine Championships giant slalom.

To kick off the first day of spring, the 19-year-old technical phenom posted a 1.5-second first run lead before expanding it to a massive 1.88-second margin of victory.

It was the third U.S. title of her young career, adding to the slalom titles she locked in 2011 and 2012.

Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley), who has won the giant slalom title for five straight seasons dating back to 2009, posted a

blistering second run to jump from ninth to third.

Race conditions again proved to be perfect on the challenging Red Dog at Squaw Valley.

Cholesterol guidelines could mean statins for more people

By Richard Knox, NPR

When sweeping new advice on preventing heart attacks and strokes came out last November, it wasn’t clear how many more Americans should be taking daily statin pills to lower their risk.

A new analysis provides an answer: a whole lot. Nearly 13 million more, to be precise.

If the guidelines were followed to the letter, about half of all Americans over 40 would be on cholesterol-lowering statins — more than double the current level.

Read the whole story

Storytime returning to Kahle

Community Center

The Douglas County Public Library’s storytime will resume at the Kahle Community Center in April and continue through June 5.

Preschool stories take place on alternate Thursday and Friday mornings from 9-9:30am. Thursday dates are: April 10 and 24; May 8 and 22; and June 5. Friday dates are: April 4; May 2, 16, and 30.

Younger children are welcome if accompanied by an adult.

The Kahle Community Center is located at 236 Kingsbury Grade in Stateline.

For more info, call 775.588.6411.

Utah plan would link 7 ski resorts

By Brady McCombs, AP

SALT LAKE CITY — More than three decades after the idea was first discussed, general managers at seven Utah ski resorts announced Wednesday they are committed to finally building a series of chairlifts that would link their ski areas and give the state a European-style experience.

But it won’t be available to skiers anytime soon.

Utah ski officials made clear during a news conference that it’s a concept, not a plan, with no hard timeline. Dozens of

key decisions still need to be made, and the project will require permits and approvals from government officials. One general manager said he thinks it could take a decade to complete.



Mike Goar of Canyons Resort speaks March 19 about reviving plans for a series of interconnected chairlifts that would link seven ski areas. Photo/Rick Bowmner/AP

The project is expected to cost up to $30 million, paid for entirely by the resorts, said Nathan Rafferty, president of Ski Utah, a trade organization representing the ski resorts.

It would link Alta Ski Area, Brighton Resort, Canyons Resort, Deer Valley Resort, Park City Mountain Resort, Snowbird Ski Resort and Solitude Mountain Resort. Skiers who buy one pass would have access to 100 lifts, 750 ski runs and more than 18,000 skiable acres.

By combining 25 square miles of terrain, the Utah resorts could offer North America’s largest skiing complex – three times the size of Vail, Colo., and twice as big as Whistler Blackcomb in British Columbia.

Rafferty said it would create an experience unique to North America. In Europe, lifts connecting ski areas are common. In the U.S., a daily pass to a ski resort usually confines you to

that resort no matter how close a neighboring resort is.

If completed, the linking lifts would bring the spotlight to Utah's ski community and put it in prime position to lure skiers from popular resorts in Colorado and California, ski officials said.

"You combine that with our accessibility and the airport, and there's not a ski community in this country that can beat us," said Jenni Smith, Park City Mountain Resort general manager.

The new proposal will reopen a debate that has long triggered strong opposition from backcountry skiers, wilderness advocates and municipal water officials.

Carl Fisher, executive director of Save Our Canyons, said the ski resorts already have a sufficient footprint on the Wasatch Range, and linking lifts would ruin pristine areas used by outdoor enthusiasts.

"It's a gimmick, a marketing ploy," he said. "They are trying to use to attract more tourists."

Rafferty said the resorts are committed to maintaining the watershed, preserving backcountry ski terrain and going through all the necessary public permitting. They'll continue talking with Fisher's group and others with concerns, he said.

The latest proposal calls for the lifts to be built on private land. However, Fisher said he doesn't think it's possible for linking lifts to avoid affecting public land. Even if the lifts are on private property woven amid public parcels, the ski runs likely would be on forest land, he said.

And it's not just about ski season. Hiking trails used in the summer would be affected as well, Fisher noted.

"You're going to be hiking around lift towers instead of rocks and trees," he said. "You're going to be looking at cable and chairs instead of wildlife."

Alta Ski Area general manager Onno Wieringa said he hopes the project can be accomplished in the next decade. But he said it will come down to each ski area crunching the numbers and seeing if it makes sense financially.

“Before we would invest $10 million or $5 million or whatever, we’ve got to feel that we’re going to get some return on that money,” Wieringa said.

Though completion of the concept may be years away, having all seven ski resorts agree on the parameters is a significant step, said Mike Goar, general manager at Canyons Resort. They’ve reached outlines for revenue sharing and identified three sites for connection points. The project now has a name, “One Wasatch,” and a website with maps and information.

“The idea was finally baked enough,” Goar said.

All seven said making it happen is long overdue. When Wieringa’s children, now in their early 20s, were tiny, he and his wife dreamed of their children being able to take an interconnected lift from the small town of Alta over the mountain ridge to Park City to go to school.

“It gets off the dime and makes us accountable to the process,” Wieringa said. “It is going to put a little heat on us.”

El Dorado County vineyard manager making a difference

By Mike Dunne, Sacramento Bee

We wine writers devote entirely too much space to wines and

the vintners who make them, not enough to grapes and the farmers who grow them.

Well, then, let’s catch up with Ron Mansfield, who farms 300 acres of wine grapes on and about Apple Hill in El Dorado County.

A big guy with a homespun drawl and laconic manner, Mansfield brings the sensitivity and precision of a bonsai artist to vines. As a consequence, on the short list of people responsible for El Dorado County’s standing as a fine-wine region he’s at or near the top.

Read the whole story

Exhibit celebrates Nevada’s history

In recognition of the Nevada’s sesquicentennial, Changing Faces and Places: Making Nevada is the second in a series of three Special Collections & University Archives exhibits commemorating 150 years of Nevada history at the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center at UNR.

In a free presentation related to the exhibit, Holly Walton-Buchanan, author of “Land of the Buckaroo: Historic Ranches of Western Nevada”, will discuss the origins of cattle ranching and truck farming in the Truckee Meadows, including the significant contributions of Italian immigrants to the economy. Her presentation will be April 2 at 7pm in the Faculty Graduate Room on the fourth floor of the Knowledge

Center.

The exhibit covers topics ranging from Nevada's immigrant population, ranching and snow surveying to women's suffrage and Nevada's societal changes with the passing of laws on divorce, gaming and the licensing of prostitution. Also included are historical aspects of past campus athletes, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the buildings of well-known architect Frederic DeLongchamps.

Located on the third floor of the Knowledge Center, Changing Faces and Places is open for viewing from 9am-5pm Monday-Friday and 1-5pm on April 12 and May 10. The exhibit runs through June 22.

Caltrans, Southwest Gas working on Hwy. 89

Caltrans and Southwest Gas Corporation will be co-hosting two meetings on March 26 to update the public on a project to improve Highway 89 on the West Shore.

The meetings will be at the Tahoe City Public Utility District office at 221 Fairway Drive in Tahoe City. There will be a morning session at 10:30 and an evening session at 6.

Caltrans and Southwest Gas staff members will be on hand to recap work completed in the 2013 construction season, as well as plans for 2014 and to answer questions from the public about the project.

Caltrans' contractor on the $41 million environmental improvement project, Road and Highway Builders LLC of Sparks,

installed nine sand vaults in the Homewood area last season. This year roadwork will begin near the county line in Tahoma and extend to Cherry Street. Work should start May 1.

Southwest Gas’ contractor will be working farther north on the highway, between Ward Creek and just north of Granlibakken Road, to finish relocating gas lines that are in conflict with Caltrans’ project. This work is scheduled to begin in April, weather permitting, and continue through October.

Caltrans’ project will extend into 2016 when work is completed at the junction of highways 89 and 28 in Tahoe City.