Ski report: First powder day of the new year



Freshies to start the new year. Three inches fell in South Lake Tahoe overnight and it’s still coming down.

Read the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, to know total on the slopes.

K’s Kitchen: Portabella fajitas – perfect for a group

By Kathryn Reed

Flexibility in the dinner menu is critical when guests are arriving at various times and the weather is sketchy enough that travel time might be longer than usual.



On occasions like these I like to make portabella fajitas. They are easy to make and don’t take much time.

Another nice thing is that not knowing what your guests have eaten earlier in the day, fajitas allow them to eat as much or

little as they like by serving themselves.

I first had portabella fajitas at a restaurant in Alexandria, Va., several years ago. Unfortunately, I have not found them on a menu anywhere else.

To make the dish even simpler I “cheat” by using packaged fajita spices. Yes, they would probably taste better if I were to blend the spices myself, but sometimes simplicity wins out.

Another thing that saves time is buying the mushrooms pre-sliced.

The amount of veggies you will need depends on how many you are serving and how big of eaters they are.

I put the toppings (which I label below as optional) in individual bowls on the table. Sometimes I make Spanish rice – which can go in the tortilla or be served on the side.

Portabella Fajitas – Serves 6

2 packages sliced portabellas, cut slices in half

1 large red pepper, cut into 1-inch matchsticks

1 large red onion, cut in rounds or something resembling matchsticks

2 packages fajita seasoning

Tortillas (minimum 2 per person)

Avocado (chopped) or guacamole, optional

Sour cream, optional

Salsa, optional

Cilantro (chopped), optional

Cheese (grated), optional

Sauté onion until opaque, add pepper until just tender. Add mushrooms. Keep stirring. Add seasoning and follow directions on package. (Extra water may be needed to have a sauce.) Cook until mushrooms are hot all the way through.

Heat tortillas.

Fill tortillas with fajita mixture and the rest of the fixings.

Top political buzz words of 2010

By Leslie Savan, The Nation

For decades now, there's been a gap between the left's and the right's ability to talk populist. Liberals tend to trip over their own subtlety, uncertainty and/or ambivalence (an example of which you maybe just read), while the right produces categorical words that stick: media elite, death tax, and of course Democrat as an adjective, emphasis on rat.

And 2010 was no different. Not all of this year's top political buzzwords were born in 2010, but this is the year they've been popularized. And when it comes to rhetoric that evokes strong imagery, rouses emotion, and can roll over inconvenient facts and memories, the Red State words (many elevated into a kind of American sign language by Sarah Palin) tend to outshout the Blue ones.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Films looking for most extreme huntress

By Mike Campbell, Anchorage Daily News

Since she was a 13-year-old Anchorage teenager, Stacee Frost has embraced bow shooting.

Her father got Frost started using a traditional recurve bow. Before long, she moved up to a fire-engine red compound bow that she still owns. Nine years ago, she shot her first big-game animal, a Sitka blacktail deer on Kodiak Island.

Since then, bowhunting has taken Frost, 35, to hunting spots in Alaska and throughout the world, pursuing species as diverse as warthogs, wildebeest, Dall sheep and polar bears.

Now she’s among 10 finalists for the title of Most Extreme Huntress, a contest sponsored by Tahoe Films and the television show “Primal Adventures” that airs on the Versus cable channel. Contestants submitted essays about their experiences and the winner will earn a hunt valued at $20,000 for several exotic species with Frasier Safaris New Zealand.

Read the whole story

Fall of high-end vacation

club reaches shores of Lake Tahoe

By David Migoya, Denver Post

It was to be a worldwide playground for the middle-class millionaire with nouveau riche vacation getaways for stunningly little outlay.

Denver-based High Country Club and its creator, Christian Kirschner, were tenderfoots in the rising destination- resort industry, a high-flying sector that in 2005 seemingly couldn't miss.

In the time it operated, the club went from the world's fastest-growing and one of the most desirable to a debt-strapped shell operating out of a coffee shop.

Existing clubs had focused on the top tier of the economic ladder, individuals whose income started in the high seven figures. Kirschner keyed in on those a few rungs down.

The one-time commercial leasing agent with a killer smile

had tapped into an overlooked client base – budding executives who had it all but didn't want to spend it all.

Properties in desirable vacation spots were easy to come by, and as the mortgage bubble inflated, seemingly limitless amounts of money were available to buy them.

"He really did have a clever idea and an excellent execution of it," said William Scherer, a Florida podiatrist who was among the first to join the club and traveled to most of its destinations. "But they got greedy, sloppy and went awry of their business plan."

While some club members say they got their money's worth, many

others say they didn’t. Lawsuits and interviews paint a picture of Kirschner living as large as the members he tried to sign up, even as the financial markets pivoted against him.

Read the whole story

Making and keeping resolutions for ’11 that matter

A new day, a new month, a new year, a new decade. Welcome to 2011.

Resolutions so often fall flat. Either the conviction to make them happen wanes or their unrealistic nature renders them unachievable.

What if we started small with our resolutions for the coming year? Whether you call it paying it forward or random acts of kindness or following the golden rule – let’s start by first being more focused on family and friends.



What would your home life be like if you turned off the television a little more often and played a game or talked to each other? Start with doing it once a month. Fond memories are not created in front of the TV.

Look at how you define family. It doesn’t have to involve blood relations. Families come in many forms.

What would your street or neighborhood be like if you helped

each other shovel or blow the driveway? Maybe you would learn that person's name instead of just waving. Maybe it would all get done faster because of the camaraderie involved instead of the drudgery of doing it alone.

What about a neighborhood block party when it warms up?

What about a few households bonding over a barter club where you do work for each other? Think of the skill set involved with a group compared to doing it solo or as a couple.

Slowly, that sense of community begins to build at the most local of all levels – in your home, on your street.

Imagine this spreading.

What if you take this sense of togetherness and bring it to work? Would the phrase "hostile work environment" disappear? It's time for bosses to spare an employee to leave his or her desk to shovel the sidewalk or go do it themselves. It's time to take pride in what buildings look like, what the landscaping looks like, the cleanliness of the parking lot.

It's time to have a sense of pride in your community. Government is not the answer. People are the answer.

It's time to look in the mirror to see who is responsible for making South Lake Tahoe, the South Shore, the Lake Tahoe Basin, California, Nevada and the United States of America all better places to live, work and play.

Lake Tahoe News would like to publish your stories in 2011 about how you are making your slice of the world a better place. Maybe what you are doing will trigger others to do the same or come up with a different idea. Send your stories, with your name (yes, it will be published), and phone number (it will not be published) to info@LakeTahoeNews.net.

Happy New Year from *Lake Tahoe News*.

Skier reported missing at Heavenly

El Dorado County Sheriff's Department search and rescue crews were searching for a missing skier at Heavenly Mountain Resort on New Year's Eve.

Sheriff's officials and ski resort officials did not return calls late Friday. With El Dorado County being the lead agency, with assistance from Douglas County, it means the incident is on the California side of the bi-state resort.

More details will be forthcoming when they are available.

What could hamper rescue operations is the storm that is moving into the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a winter weather advisory for the Lake Tahoe Basin from 1-10am New Year's Day. Expect 3-5 inches at lake level, with 4-8 inches above 7,000 feet.

The heaviest amount is expected to come down between 2-7am.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

North Shore 10-day SnowFest

expands list of events

North Lake Tahoe celebrates its long winter season with SnowFest, a 10-day carnival March 2-11 at a variety of venues throughout North Lake Tahoe.

In its 31st year, SnowFest, presented by the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, is expected to draw thousands of attendees, with the majority of events free to spectators. New events include the Snow Fiesta in Kings Beach with its mariachi bands, authentic Mexican food served a la carte and piñatas; the Snow “What” Building Contest, where contestants build their most creative snow display; the Truckee River Winery Ice Carving Extravaganza with ice sculptures and games; as well as the adults-only Paws & Claws Pub Crawl starting in Incline Village and ending in the Crystal Bay casino corridor.

The annual favorites are back, along with expanded special events, including the Opening Night Ceremonies, Laser Show, Torchlight Parade and Fireworks at Squaw Valley (March 2), which has partnered with World Champion medalist and former alpine ski racer Daron Rahlves. Rahlves and his Olympic buddies will officially kick off SnowFest and the Rahlves’ Banzai Tour at the Opening Night Ceremonies. The tour, scheduled for March 3-4, is a race that combines mountain freeride action with ski and boarder cross strategy in a mad-dash race with stops at regional ski resorts with the winner taking home a significant cash prize.

Also scheduled is the Mamasake Extreme Food Challenge for those with a strong stomach; 22nd Annual Gar Woods Polar Bear Swim in Tahoe’s frigid waters; SnowFest Parades in Tahoe City and Kings Beach; Sunnyside Luau on the West Shore; the Great Ski Race, a 30-kilometer cross country race from Tahoe City to Truckee; Tahoe City’s Wacky Winter Human Bowling with snow saucers and inflatable pins and “Dog Pull”; the Dummy Downhill at Diamond Peak in Incline Village; the highly creative and

24th Annual Snow Sculpture Contest at Tahoe City's River Ranch Lodge; Special Olympics Polar Plunge at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe; and the 4th annual Ta-Hoe Nalu Arctic Standup Paddleboard Race in Kings Beach.

For more information about SnowFest and a complete list of events, go online.

Gaines: Wife may run for Assembly seat

By Susan Ferriss, Sacramento Bee

Roseville Republican Assemblyman Ted Gaines will be giving up his Assembly seat if he wins a special election Tuesday – and his wife could be a contender to fill that seat, he told *the Bee* on Wednesday.

"She's contemplating it," said Gaines, who lives in Roseville and now represents the 4th Assembly District.

Gaines faces Democrat Ken Cooley, the mayor of Rancho Cordova, in a special election to represent the 1st Senate District. The winner will replace the late GOP Sen. Dave Cox.

Read the whole story

Environmentalists dismayed by governor’s corporate turn

By Michael J. Mishak, Los Angeles Times

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s efforts to give a boost to corporate California are colliding with his image as an environmental crusader in his final days in office.

Administration officials say their moves are needed to protect jobs in a fragile economy. But environmentalists are dismayed by what they see as a feverish push to limit restrictions on toxic chemicals in retail goods, ease key air pollution rules and permit the use of a known carcinogen to treat soil in strawberry fields.

The Sierra Club grumbles that the governor’s plan for implementing the state’s landmark global warming law is a giveaway to industry.



Arnold Schwarzenegger

The administration’s maneuvering highlights a tension present at the outset of Schwarzenegger’s tenure: the environmental activist versus the business executive.

Schwarzenegger spokesman Aaron McLear said the governor’s environmental record is indisputable, citing big strides he has made in curbing greenhouse gas emissions under the

landmark global warming law, AB 32, signed by Schwarzenegger in 2006.

“This governor has implemented the most historic aggressive environmental regulations in the country and sometimes the world,” McLear said. “It’s just not credible to argue otherwise.”

But activists say they are sorely disappointed by some of the governor’s recent moves.

“I think they’d rather take heat from some environmental groups and some scientists than they would from Dow, DuPont and Exxon Mobil,” said Bill Allayaud, director of government affairs for Environmental Working Group, an advocacy organization focused on toxic chemicals.

Read the whole story