# Budget gifts: Herb, spice blends for cooking, bathing




Stateline's Heart Rock Herb and Spice Company has 45 blends – most qualifying as a budget gift at much less than $20.

* Drawer Sachets – Several to choose from – $3.95/cup.

* Herbal Bath Blends – 2 cups with 4 muslin bath bags in a pretty muslin bag for $12.

* Hand Crafted Spice Blends – three tin sizes along with Hostess Gift Boxes.

Visit the website for the details.

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# Tahoe Magic to benefit from Vail Resorts charity program

For the 13th consecutive year, the 160-plus retail and rental shops of Specialty Sports Venture (SSV) located throughout Lake Tahoe, the Bay Area, and Colorado will rally customers making purchases in their stores to share the holiday spirit by contributing to a vital cause in the local communities where the shops operate.

Through Vail Resorts Echo, the company's corporate stewardship program, each region identifies its cause or charity and then

with the support of all employees, educate shoppers about the organization they are supporting and encourage shoppers to contribute whatever they can. Cashiers simply ask shoppers when finalizing their purchase if they would like to contribute.

Last year, through guest donations and a company match, SSV stores raised $190,000, benefiting 15 organizations.

SSV was purchased by Vail Resorts Inc. last spring and the commitment to Adopt-A-Cause remains intact. This year, Vail Resorts Echo which encompasses three core efforts – environmental stewardship, charitable giving and community engagement, will continue the same matching program, donating 50 cents for every dollar up to $100.

Community regions and the causes they are supporting this year are below:

Heavenly/Lake Tahoe – Tahoe Magic

Any Mountain Sports (Bay Area) – Big City Moutaineers

Aspen – Aspen Challenge

Bicycle Village (Denver) – Bikes for Tykes

Boulder Ski Deals – Toys for Tunes

Breeze Rentals (all Colorado) – Adaptive Adventures

Breckenridge/Keystone/Silverthorne – Summit County Rescue Group

Colorado Ski & Golf (Denver/Colorado Springs) – Children’s Hospital

Copper Mountain – Adaptive Adventures

Crested Butte – Hospice of Gunnison

Glenwood Springs Mountain Sports Outlet – Garfield Search and Rescue

Taylor Creek (Aspen) – Roaring Fork Conservancy

Telluride – Angel Baskets

Vail/Beaver Creek – Vail Mountain Rescue

Winter Park – Adaptive Adventures

For more information about Adopt-A-Cause and this year's selected recipients, contact Nicky DeFord of Echo Vail at ndeford@vailresorts.com or (720) 524.5020.

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# N. Nevada's tourism priority – special events

**By Rob Sabo, Northern Nevada Business Weekly**

Big special events such as Hot August Nights, Street Vibrations and the National Championship Air Races help define tourism in Northern Nevada, and the Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority wants to bring more of them to the region.

New special events – either homegrown or wooed from other locations – would fill slow winter months and generate business on free weekends during the summer, says RSCVA President and Chief Executive Officer Ellen Oppenheim.



Events like Street Vibrations attract crowds, bring money to region. Photo/Brenda Knox

But the challenge is balancing the needs of existing special events with the energy needed to bring new ones to the calendar.

“Special events are very important to this community. They are a proven draw for bringing visitors here, and as locals we have the added benefit of taking advantage of those events and being able to enjoy them,” Oppenheim says.

Ideas for new special events include a Western heritage festival, or a singles festival.

The RSCVA seeks both small events that might establish a strong following, such as the Santa Pub Crawl, as well as large-scale events. However, Oppenheim cautions, such events often come with large price tags.

**Read the whole story**

# Opinion: Tahoe Senate seat Jan. election could have cost less

**By Foon Rhee, Sacramento Bee**

It’s worth noting the painful irony today for California taxpayers.

The new Legislature began a special session called by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to fill the $6 billion hole in the current state budget.

At the same time, mail balloting started for the special election Jan. 4 in the 1st Senate District.

Lawmakers flubbed a chance to save cash-strapped counties some real money by not allowing mail-only balloting for the race, which is not likely to be competitive because it is a Republican stronghold.

Instead, election registrars will have to open polling places just like they did Nov. 2, even though a tiny fraction of the electorate will turn out.

**Read the whole story**

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# Wine, burgers benefit Heavenly Foundation

The Red Hut Lake Tahoe will host a Burger Night fundraiser to

benefit the Heavenly Ski and Snowboard Foundation on Dec. 15 from 5-7:30pm at the Ski Run Boulevard location.

Open exclusively for this event, the Red Hut will be serving up combos that include a burger, homemade chips and a fountain soda for a $10 donation to the foundation. Ice cream treats and shakes will be $1 off. Proceeds will benefit the foundation scholarship fund.

There are 500 tickets for this week's Red Hut Burger Night which will enable the foundation to receive a $5,000 donation. Tickets are available at the foundation building Tuesday and Wednesday from noon to 4pm or by calling (530) 314.9285.

In the spirit of the holidays the Après Wine Co. will also host a Wine Down fundraiser event to support the foundation on the same day from 11am to 10pm. The Après Wine Co. is located in the Ski Run Center across from the Red Hut. Mention you support the foundation when making a purchase; 10 percent of purchases will be donated back to the foundation.

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# Ritz-Carlton at Northstar receives LEED certification

The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe that sits mid-mountain at Northstar-at-Tahoe has officially been awarded its LEED certification from the U.S. Green Business Council, becoming the first LEED certified Ritz-Carlton resort.



“Receiving this award is a further example of the Ritz-Carlton’s continued commitment to innovation in the hospitality industry while developing environmentally sensitive and sustainable resorts,” Allen Highfield, general manager for the Truckee hotel said in a press release.

LEED is the internationally recognized green building certification system, providing third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance across all the metrics that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

San Francisco-based Hornberger + Worstell was the design architect for the project.

LEED recognized features of The Ritz-Carlton Highlands, Lake Tahoe:

• Recycling/re-use of construction waste – 16,000 tons to date, which is 88 percent of all construction waste for the project

• Reduced building footprint – provided 66 percent of site as open space

• Provided daylight and views to 75 percent of the building

• On-site re-use of rock for retaining walls

• On-site re-use of trees for mulch

• Use of recycled materials – $5 million value, or 9 percent of all materials used

• Use of local materials – 63 percent were extracted locally,

31 percent were manufactured locally

• Provided bike racks and lockers for employees

• Stormwater retention management – no net increased run-off and stormwater treatment.

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# Christmas Eve torchlight parade at Granlibakken

Staying true to its Norwegian roots, Granlibakken welcomes Santa and his elves for the resort's 30th annual torchlight parade on Christmas Eve at 6pm.

Hailing from the Scandinavian region of Northern Europe, Santa Claus (or Sinterklaas in his native Holland) and the Granli'Barbarians (the resort's three Viking ambassadors from Norway) will join forces during the resort's annual holiday celebration welcoming children and the young at heart for a festive evening at Granlibakken's ski and sled hill.

Santa will deliver gifts to kids staying in Granlibakken's lodging while sharing hot chocolate, hot mulled wine, and holiday cookies after the parade.

To join the torchlight parade, skiers should be intermediate or better. Complimentary lift tickets will be provided to parade members.

Granlibakken Resort Conference Center & Lodge is in Tahoe City. Visit www.Granlibakken.com for directions.

# Tahoe-Reno struggling to find identity for sustainable future

**By Jason Hildago, Reno Gazette-Journal**

It’s the early 1930s.

At one West Coast university, an engineering professor laments about how many of his graduating students have to move East because of a lack of tech jobs in his area.

The area without enough tech jobs? Palo Alto.



Region trying to define what it is once visitors leave the Reno-Tahoe airport.

The professor? Stanford University’s Frederick Terman.

“Terman had a real interest in what happened to the students produced here,” said Henry Lowood, curator of the History of Science and Technology Collections at Stanford University. “He was seeing students like David Packard taking his degree and

going to the East Coast to work for General Electric because there weren't enough jobs here in his field. So, the problem for him was figuring out how to seed something here so his own students don't end up going somewhere else."

Less than a decade later, Terman convinces Packard to return to the area to form Hewlett-Packard with another fellow student, William Hewlett. By 1951, Terman's pet project Stanford Industrial Park opens, attracting tenants such as HP, Varian Associates, Eastman Kodak and Lockheed.

Today, the Palo Alto area is known as arguably the most storied place for tech in the world. Terman, meanwhile, is affectionately regarded as the "Father of Silicon Valley."

As Northern Nevada works to wean itself from a heavy diet of gaming and tourism, Silicon Valley's story shows how it's possible to create a thriving, new sector with enough vision, effort and just the right amount of luck.

The area is wrestling with many of the same challenges Terman tackled decades ago, but Northern Nevada also is dealing with a key wild card: one of the worst economic downturns in its history.

The recession still casts a large shadow over the area, and the challenge for Northern Nevada is to stay the course on economic development without losing sight of the big picture, said Richard Bartholet, research director for the Bureau of Economic Research at the University of Nevada, Reno.

"It's much more challenging to do growth and economic development while working out of a hole," Bartholet said. "We've got in excess of 14 percent unemployment and significant fiscal challenges at the state and local level. But while it would be nice to have some short-term ideas under way, it's also important for business, community and political leaders to not get so focused on short-term challenges – like filling this budget gap – that they lose sight of where we

want to go and who we want to be in the long term.”

**Read the whole story**

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# Snow Gods Ball

Squaw Valley Ski Patrol is hosting the 19th annual Snow Gods Ball on Dec. 18. Proceeds from the Snow Gods Ball allow Squaw Valley Ski Patrol to grant full scholarships to community members for Avalanche Level 1 education courses.

Open to the public, the Snow Gods Ball is set to take place at the all new Bar One in Squaw Valley’s Olympic House. The doors open at 8pm and the music starts at 9pm. All party goers must be 21 or older.

This year’s ball features live music by Truckee Tribe and a host of great raffle prizes. The Snow Gods Ball raffle prizes include a Squaw Valley USA Bronze Season Pass, lift tickets, avalanche gear, Helly Hansen Stoneham Jacket and Pants, Armada skis, Louie Vito Monster Energy custom snowboard, Dragon Goggles, Hestra Gloves, UNR basketball tickets and more.

Tickets to the Snow Gods Ball are $15 in advance and $20 at the door. Tickets may be purchased in advance by calling Squaw Valley Ski Patrol at (530) 581.7260 or at Porters in Tahoe City and Truckee. More information about this year’s celebration is also available by calling (530) 581.7260.

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# Preschool Story Time

Preschool Story Time at the South Lake Tahoe branch library through June 17 starting at 11am.

A fun-filled half hour of stories, games and crafts suitable to younger children, ages 3-5.