NLTRA looking for marketing committee members

The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association is accepting applications for five seats on its Marketing Committee. Four of the seats will serve a two-year term, January 2011 to December 2013, and one open seat will be appointed to serve the final year of a two-year term to end December 2012.

The NLTRA Marketing Committee is made up of four board members, eight appointed community members and a Placer County CEO representative. Lay members are selected based on their relevant marketing experience, geographic area and industry representation. The NLTRA board of directors will appointment the new Marketing Committee members at the January meeting.

Individuals for consideration need to submit a letter of interest and qualifications to NLTRA Tourism Director Andy Chapman by Dec. 27 by 5pm via email, Andy@PureTahoeNorth.com, or by mail at Attention: Marketing Committee Application, P.O. Box 5459, Tahoe City, CA 96145.

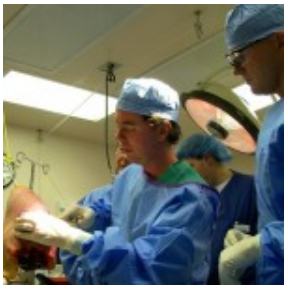
The NLTRA operates the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce and the Tahoe North Convention and Visitors Bureau, and is a partner with the Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau in the North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative. The NLTRA also serves as a partner with Placer County and other public agencies in the development and funding of infrastructure, transit and community mobility projects designed to enhance tourism and community quality of life for the benefit of all in the North Lake Tahoe region.

Tahoe docs teach intricate orthopedic surgery techniques

By Jessie Marchesseau

ROUND HILL – Seven doctors, nurses and assistants, two monitors, multiple trays of surgical tools and two large adjustable spotlights fill the cadaver lab Dec. 3 at Tahoe Orthopedic & Sports Medicine in Round Hill.

The things that resemble raw turkeys on metal stands – those were the cadavers. They were not full bodies, just shoulders. There were two of them set up at separate surgical stations; one for each of the two doctors participating in the Lake Tahoe Sports Medicine Fellowship.



Dr. Brian Duggan, left, prepares to operate on a shoulder as Dr. Kyle Swanson observes. Photos/Jessie Marchesseau

The doctors, known as fellows, will take part in four of these cadaver surgeries during their year in the program. Sometimes they use knees, other times hips, this day it is shoulders.

“It’s a way to give the fellows the most realistic way to practice a surgical technique and to learn new ones,” said Dr. Keith Swanson, program director for the Lake Tahoe Sports Medicine Fellowship and one of its founders. “You can try things, new things that you wouldn’t try on someone if you haven’t done it before.”

This was exactly why Dr. Brian Duggan, one of the fellows, was so excited about Friday’s cadaver lab. He was looking forward to performing suprascapular nerve decompression on a shoulder. It is a relatively rare surgery that he has only encountered once.

“This is something that most surgeons have never done,” he said. “It’s one of the most complicated surgeries.”

Duggan, originally from Detroit, did his residency in Maryland before moving to Lake Tahoe in July for the fellowship program. He says his goal is to have a general orthopedic practice specializing in sports-related injuries.

The fellows are not medical students. They are fully trained orthopedic surgeons when they arrive. They choose to participate in the fellowship as a way to acquire more in-depth training specifically in the field of sports medicine.

Duggan applied for the fellowship because he says he knew it would give him the opportunity to see a variety of cases, get a wealth of hands-on experience and work with experts in the field of sports medicine. He has already seen an improvement in his surgical skills since starting the fellowship four months ago.

“Because of the complexity of orthopedics, the more training you can get in your specialty, the better,” Swanson said.

When it comes to additional training in the field of sports medicine, doctors’ options are relatively limited. The Lake Tahoe Sports Medicine Fellowship is one of 95 across the

country and the only one in Nevada. What's even more unique about the program is that it is not located in a big city or associated with a large metropolitan hospital or medical school.

"The only reason we can do a sports medicine fellowship in a small town like this is because of the high volume of sports injuries here," Swanson said.

Swanson and six other local doctors make up the fellowship faculty. Drs. Steve Bannar, Jeffrey Cummings, Roger Rogalski, Kyle Swanson, Robert Rupp, and Daniel Robertson all donate time to the program. However, the fellowship benefits these doctors almost as much as it does the fellows, giving the seasoned surgeons an opportunity to work with doctors who have just finished training in the latest techniques and assist them with research projects.

"If you want to really get good at something, you need to become a teacher at it," Swanson said. "I think they teach me almost as much as I teach them."

Swanson credits the program with keeping the orthopedic care here on the South Shore some of the best available.

This was evident as Duggan and Kyle Swanson performed the rare decompression surgery. It is an arthroscopic procedure, meaning the doctors use a tiny camera to do the surgery rather than cutting the flesh open, and one that is currently a hot topic among the medical community.

Water dripped from the shoulder as Duggan maneuvered the long metal tool equipped with the camera through tissue to the suprascapular nerve. The doctors intently watched the monitor in front of them, pointing out the rotator cuff and different types of tissue they were passing through.

On the other side of the room, fellow Dr. Cecelia Pascual Garrida watched a different monitor as she performed an

arthroscopic rotator cuff surgery on her shoulder with Robertson assisting.

“I think the bottom line of all this for the public is because of this program, it keeps the orthopedic care very high in this community,” Keith Swanson said. “It’s the very highest care available.”

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Nevada tourism conference focuses on changing industry

A panel of top hotel executives and gaming experts will address the changing hospitality industry and their strategic plans for 2011 at the Nevada Governor’s Conference on Tourism next week.

The panel consists of John Farahi, co-chairman and CEO of Monarch Casino Resort Inc.; Jonathan Halkyard, senior vice president and CFO of Caesars Entertainment Corporation; Bill Hughes, director of marketing operations of the Peppermill Resort Spa Casino; and Ryan Sheltra, general manager of the Bonanza Casino.

Panelists will discuss how their properties have diversified over the years to meet the changing needs and desires of visitors, as well as their plans for 2011.

The conference, produced by Nevada Commission on Tourism, opens Dec. 7 with the quarterly tourism commission meeting, followed by the first General Session at 1pm. The General Session will address the economic outlook for Nevada’s target

markets. It will look at the factors that travelers must weigh when deciding to travel and how those factors affect decision-making.

Two afternoon sessions follow the General Session, both aimed at learning how to better communicate with travelers and set one's destination apart from the rest. Bill Siegel, CEO of Longwoods International, will present "Rules of Engagement," a session on how to connect with visitors on an emotional level and increase business through customer interaction. A panel of marketing executives from throughout Nevada will discuss the tools to communicate with travelers. Jennifer Cunningham of the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, Cathy Tull of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and NCOT's JoLyn Laney will share how they target visitors and shift their communications based on needs of the markets.

The General Session on Dec. 8, will start with two representatives from Google to discuss "new media" and how to allocate advertising dollars to the appropriate media channels to reach visitors where they consume information. This session will be immediately followed by a presentation on the status of international travel by the U.S. Travel Association.

Afternoon sessions include an update on what's ahead for the air-travel industry; measuring return on investment in advertising; and the use of members-only sales websites.

Wednesday's lunch program will include a special presentation to former Sen. Richard Bryan, who was governor when the Nevada Commission on Tourism was created. Bryan and the 1983 Nevada Legislature designated a fraction of the state room tax to be spent on tourism promotion, thus creating the tourism agency and its self-perpetuating budget to increase travel to the state.

The conference will be held at the Peppermill Resort Spa Casino in Reno. Registration is available online and onsite.

Visit the website for a full agenda and information on keynote speakers.

Uncertainty swirls around pesticide OK’d for state strawberries

By Kurtis Alexander, Santa Cruz Sentinel

State regulators plan to give strawberry growers the OK to use methyl iodide this month.

The pesticide, which kills bugs, weeds and disease that are particularly threatening to berries, is touted as a better alterative to methyl bromide, which is being phased out because of harm it’s done to the ozone layer. But a last-ditch campaign is under way to halt approval of methyl iodide, citing problems with the alternate choice.

“We’ve heard that methyl iodide is a carcinogen. That’s not disputed…. So why are we even having this conversation?” said state Assemblyman Bill Monning, D-Carmel.

Monning was among a coalition of environmentalists, researchers and organic farmers that gathered Monday at Jacobs Farm in Santa Cruz County – and at six other sites statewide – protesting the impending use of methyl iodide and asking the governor or governor-elect to block it. The Legislature, Monning said, was not in a position to intervene now and future legislative efforts would be slow and uncertain.

“We want to stop it before it’s in the fields,” he said.

Critics of methyl iodide cite not only the proven cancer-causing qualities of the pesticide but the potential for methyl iodide to leach out of the field and contaminate water supplies.

Read the whole story

‘Race To Nowhere’ coming to Truckee

Due to continued public demand, a third screening of the hard-hitting education documentary “Race To Nowhere” is scheduled for Dec. 15 at the Truckee High School theatre from 6:30-9pm.

Sponsored by Sierra Nevada College, Lake Tahoe in partnership with Parents for Public Schools of Truckee-North Tahoe and the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, this film has already drawn local educators, administrators, parents, and college students from around the Lake Tahoe Basin together for important discussions about the current state of the American school system. Members of SNC’s Department of Teacher Education, Excellence in Education, and the Tahoe Truckee Education Association will facilitate a panel discussion immediately following the film.

“Race to Nowhere” focuses on the saturation point many students, teachers, and parents have reached in the high-stakes, high pressure culture of the current educational system. It highlights the mounting pressures and stresses children experience – from elementary school through high school – in an effort to gain admission to top colleges.

The film is rated PG-13 and runs 1 hour, 25 minutes.

For more information on the event, contact Katrina Midgley at (775) 831.1314, ext. 7517, kmidgley@sierranevada.edu, or Leisa Peterson at (530) 448.1558, ntt.parentadvocacy@yahoo.com.

El Dorado County Food Bank needs volunteers, donations

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

The Food Bank of El Dorado County is inviting volunteers and donors to participate in its annual Holiday Outreach event, to be held Dec. 18.

The Food Bank hopes to hand out more than 1,000 holiday baskets that day. Each will contain a full holiday meal to benefit low-income families and at-risk children, families and seniors.

Read the whole story

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50 pounds of pot found in Stateline storage center

About 50 pounds of marijuana, other drugs and weapons were seized from a Stateline storage facility on Dec. 3 by Douglas County sheriff’s deputies.

The investigation was initiated after employees of Kingsbury

Self Storage alerted deputies about the strong odor of marijuana coming from within the storage units.

A search warrant was obtained for the unit, resulting in the seizure of approximately 50 pounds of marijuana, 2 ounces of cocaine and a loaded semi-automatic pistol. No suspects were located on-scene.

The estimated street value of the seized marijuana is $150,000. Estimated street value of the seized cocaine is $5,000.

Artist-novelist Manninen at Bona Fide Books

Artist and graphic novelist Jared Manninen will show his work and take orders for his first graphic novel at Bona Fide Books on Dec. 17 from 7-9 pm.

An assortment of his original artwork will be available for sale, and the art for his graphic novel will be on display.

Bona Fide is located behind the Getaway Cafe in Meyers.

Ski report: Weather system

moving in

More unsettled weather in the Lake Tahoe Basin and surrounding area through Monday. Today won't be a powder day, but another is on the horizon.



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

Catch Fong tonight at MontBleu in Stateline as emcee of "Wintervention" – the latest Warren Miller flick. Squaw's Jonny Moseley is the voice again of this action-packed movie. The skiing and boarding footage is great, with the Antarctica segment riveting. What seemed like an ad for Vail Resorts was a bit over the top, though.

– Kathryn Reed

Nevada commission votes to allow bear hunting

Updated Dec. 4 at 4:30pm: *The commission voted 8-0 to allow bear hunting in Nevada.*

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada wildlife commissioners are poised to approve the first bear hunting season in state history today following an impassioned hearing Friday in Reno.



Dozens of people testified to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, with supporters saying the state's black bear population can safely support a hunting season. Nevada is the only Western state that prohibits bear hunting.

But the idea has many detractors, some of whom asked commissioners not to proceed with a plan they call cruel and unnecessary.

With game wardens standing to enforce order, shouts of "murderers" and "killers" were issued by some audience members after comments made by commissioners at the close of Friday's meeting made it apparent that the idea will probably be approved when the panel reconvenes today.

No details about seasons or quotas have been determined, but early proposals called for seasonal hunting of about 20 bears, said Carl Lackey, a biologist with the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Nevada has a core bear population of between 200 and 300, mostly clustered at Lake Tahoe and adjoining areas of the Carson Range, Lackey said. The number could be higher, counting bears living in other areas such as the Wassuk and Sweetwater ranges to the south, Lackey said.

Read the whole story