Placer Valley hires former Tahoe marketing exec

By Mark Anderson, Sacramento Business Journal

The board of directors of Placer Valley Tourism hired Dave Attaway as the chief executive of the tourism bureau for Roseville, Rocklin and Lincoln.

Since 2005, Attaway was executive director for the Switzerland County Tourism in Vevay, Ind.

Prior to that Attaway worked 13 years in South Lake Tahoe, with most of that time at what was Caesars Tahoe in Stateline in hotel entertainment and marketing.

He led the merger of the South Tahoe Marketing Council with the South Lake Tahoe Visitors Bureau into what is now the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority.

Read the whole story

Washoe County adopts rules to address problem bears

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

New rules designed to keep bears and other animals away from garbage will take effect across Washoe County within a few weeks, health officials say.

Regulations adopted by the Washoe County Health District are primarily driven by mounting problems with garbage-raiding

bears but are also designed to address other animals, including coyotes, raccoons and domestic dogs, said Jeanne Rucker, an environmental health supervisor for the district.

For years, Washoe County took fire from officials with the Nevada Department of Wildlife and other critics for not having a trash ordinance on the books to help deter garbage-raiding bears. In Washoe County, only Lake Tahoe's Incline Village General Improvement District has enacted a law that prohibits giving wildlife easy access to garbage.

Lack of such a law in other parts of the county where bears are common, including Verdi, Washoe Valley, Galena, Sky Tavern and Caughlin Ranch, represented "an exasperating problem," said Carl Lackey, a biologist and bear expert with the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Bears gobbling protein-rich garbage – many of them much larger than normal wild bears – are an increasing problem. Many break into homes and cars and end up being killed by authorities as a result.

Read the whole story

Ground continues to shake near Reno

By Steve Timko, Reno Gazette-Journal

The eight new earthquakes today near the Arrowcreek area southwest of Reno brings the total quakes in that area since Nov. 26 to about 43.

This comes after a pause when there was no quake greater than

magnitude 1 between 1:50pm on Tuesday and 4:07am on Thursday.

“It looks like it slowed down a little bit, but it’s difficult to tell within a 24-hour period,” said Tom Rennie, a seismic analyst with the Nevada Seismological Laboratory. “These sequences last for a long time.”

The swarm started Nov. 26 as part of normal movement of the chunks of the earth’s crust – called tectonic plates – that move because of the forces of the earth. This swarm is in the area of the Mount Rose fault but these quakes are not on that fault, the seismic lab said.

Read the whole story

South Tahoe hires recreation director from Sparks

By Kathryn Reed

Parks and recreation may be the toy department of any city, but being the leader is more than fun and games. Stan Sherer knows that reality all too well.

Sherer is leaving his job as director of the Sparks Parks and Recreation Department for the same job in South Lake Tahoe. He starts in January.

His 16 years of experience in Sparks and more than 30 years in the industry are reasons City Manager Tony O’Rourke wanted him to take the helm. (Gary Moore retired Oct. 1 after 35 years.)

“He has tremendous energy. He is similar to Gary in that he has charisma and energy,” O’Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I

see him as an asset for the whole city given his experience and leadership style.”



The new parks and recreation director will need to deal with issues at the ice arena.

Sherer knows what he is walking into – a city with financial troubles, a city manager who has been on the job four months, a City Council majority that will be new this month, facilities that are in need of repair, and residents who are not all thrilled with what has been going on in the department.

The 58-year-old is versed in having to work with less money and knows the pain involved in laying off employees. He also has been involved in creating parks, reducing hours at facilities, establishing partnerships with Reno and Washoe County to save on maintenance expenses and seasonal employees, being part of special events, opening a restaurant at a park, and launching a whitewater park.

Coming to a smaller department with fewer amenities than Sparks, or what he had the previous 14 years in Redding, doesn’t matter to Sherer.

“You look at the potential and successes they have had in South Lake Tahoe and it is really exciting,” Sherer said. “Initially, when you think about it, the area is one of the

greatest recreation destinations on the West Coast.”

He wants to build on that. He also recognizes the need to rehabilitate some facilities, which could mean creating partnerships to financially solve those problems.

With ice hockey parents disgruntled and leaving town in swarms because of how they have been treated and policies that point to favoritism, Sherer will need to jump into that fray immediately. (O’Rourke has another meeting with parents today.)

Chris Hawken, No. 2 under Moore and interim parks director, had applied to be director. He was unavailable for comment so it’s not known if he will want to stay on. And it’s too early to know if Sherer will want to make personnel changes.

Sherer and his wife plan to move to South Tahoe – having spoken to a real estate agent Dec. 2. They have two grown sons – one of whom is trying to convince his dad to get into mountain biking. Sherer said the move to Tahoe would likely spur him to do so. For now, road bike riding is what he prefers.

Sherer told *Lake Tahoe News* he expects to be an active member of the community. Athletic-wise he is at the gym every day, and he loves to golf and hike. Skiing is out after three knee surgeries – one related to skiing, the others to football.

Ski report: Freshies on top

While it was raining at lake level much of Thursday afternoon, it was snowing at the higher elevations. Many ski resorts are reporting more than 6 inches of fresh stuff on top.



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

Fong will be the emcee at MontBleu in Stateline Friday and Saturday nights for the showing of the latest Warren Miller movie.

Budget gifts: Music from a harpist

Publisher's note: ***Lake Tahoe News is publishing idea for gifts costing less than $20. Click here for information.***



Two CDs from South Shore harpist Anne Roos fit the criteria for a bargain holiday gift – less than $20 each.

The collections contain music Roos arranged and performed over the past decades.

"Velvet: Timeless Standards on the Solo Harp" and "Blue Jeans: Modern Pop on the Solo Harp" are the names of the discs.

They are available for purchase on amazon.com, CDBaby.com, and at your favorite retail store. These albums, and their individual tracks, are also available for download at iTunes.

Roos' CDs are sold locally at Cork & More in South Lake Tahoe and Borders in Carson City. They are also available online or call 800.255.6318.





'Wonder Woman' leaping snowbanks in South Tahoe

Publisher's note: ***This article first appeared in the November 2010 issue of ABHOW Words.***

Carol Crosby-Ferges Christensen fearlessly lay her body across the windshield of a moving car. She jumped through a ceiling and in and out of trees. She even leaped between tall buildings in a single bound.

No surprise. She was Wonder Woman, after all, or rather a stunt double for actress Lynda Carter, who starred in the late-1970s TV series.

Now 64, Christensen has lived at Kelly Ridge in South Lake Tahoe since it opened in 2009.



Carol Crosby-Ferges Christensen

How did she come to stand in for a superhero strong enough to lasso a plane, hurl a spaceship or single-handedly snatch someone away from an oncoming tsunami? It seems she was born for the part.

Christensen grew up in a family of acrobats and gymnasts and recalls they “had a trampoline in the backyard since before I could walk.”

When she was 6 or 7, she started performing with her parents and siblings as a family act in Muscle Beach near her hometown of Playa del Rey in Southern California. They did gymnastics and tumbling, and their signature act was a human pyramid.

“Dad would be standing and his feet would be the only two on the ground,” she says. “My twin brother and my older sister would be on their knees on his two legs, my mom would be sitting on his shoulders, I’d be sitting on her shoulders, and my little brother would be in front.”

All except her dad joined her in spending several summers touring the West Coast with a one-ring tent show called The DeWayne Circus.

“That’s a kid’s dream,” Christensen says. “We did not only the trapeze and the trampoline and the gymnastic, acrobatic things we were used to doing already, but we also did acts with ponies and an elephant.”



Memorabilia of Carol Crosby-Ferges Christensen's days as Wonder Woman. Photos/Provided

By the time she was 20, she had gotten to know a number of celebrities – Liza Minnelli was her best friend when she was a child – and through these connections, she started doing stunt work for TV shows, movies and commercials.

“I never had to go on one interview or scratch my way in to get a job,” Christensen says. “They always called and said, ‘Here’s something we need somebody for.’”

Her first movie gig was as Sharon Tate’s double in a film that also starred Tony Curtis. She later performed on the TV show “The Mod Squad,” in the movie “Brewster’s Millions,” and in other movies with such stars as Julie Andrews, Gene Wilder and Dom DeLuise.

When Lynda Carter’s original stunt double, Kathy Lee, was injured, Christensen stepped in. She was one of five called on to do stunts for Carter, and she says modestly that whenever she thought somebody could do a stunt better than she could herself, she would let them.

“I was never frightened, I never have been,” she says. Still, recalling her most challenging stunt does give her pause these

days.

“There were 18-story buildings on the studio lot, fairly high, and I had to jump from one building to the other with no net, nothing down below. I used a mini-trampoline. I had to run and jump off that to the other building with no safety belt. I don’t even know why I did that one.”

Crash course on S. Tahoe inner workings for council-elect

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe’s three incoming City Council members got a taste Thursday of what it is going to be like once they are sworn in Dec. 14 for their four-year term.

Walk into council chambers at Lake Tahoe Airport with a clear schedule for the day because you don’t know how long the meeting will last. That was one lesson. The 9am meeting was supposed to be done about noon. It was over closer to 2:30pm.

Don’t expect the agenda to follow what’s printed. In the case of the Dec. 2 meeting, public safety moved up three spots to accommodate Police Chief Brian Uhler needing to be at another meeting.



Angela Swanson, Tom Davis, Claire Fortier

This was the first of two initiation sessions for Claire Fortier, Tom Davis and Angela Swanson. The Dec. 2 meeting was all about getting a lesson on open meeting laws, who may talk to whom when, what is considered a gift and if it can be accepted or needs to be declared. It was also about all the department heads sharing what is going on and their concerns.

Next week's get-together is with outside agencies which are partners with the city so the three have an idea of who else is in the sandbox.

Fire Chief Lorenzo Gigliotti was after Uhler. This led to another lesson. It can take multiple questions by a councilmember to get an answer to the first question.

Councilwoman-elect Swanson wanted to know more about the ladder truck that was supposed to be bought through Redevelopment Agency funds once Lake Tahoe Development Company was given its building permits for the now bankrupt convention center near Stateline.

Gigliotti didn't have an answer for why the city didn't receive its money before developer Randy Lane filed for bankruptcy in October 2009. What was revealed is the original price tag to replace the 26-year-old outdated ladder truck was $675,000. With California law changing, the vehicle now costs $800,000 – and it would not fit into any of the fire stations.

The city worked the ladder truck into the original agreement because it would be needed to fight a fire at the center. Now it's possible the city will lobby to get a firehouse built with mitigation funds from whatever might rise from the rebar and concrete.

But, still, no funding exists for the ladder truck. Gigliotti's first answer, when pressed by Swanson about how to fund it, was to tax property owners. The second idea was to up the transient occupancy tax.

This discussion all came after Finance Director Christine Vuletich detailed what a sorry state of affairs the city's finances are in – which isn't news.

"The days of wine and rose are over and I don't anticipate them coming back soon," City Manager Tony O'Rourke said.

He said it is possible to use the operating reserve one more year as a stopgap measure before dipping below the 25 percent threshold, which is about $8 million.

"Our biggest problem is a complete infrastructure deficit," O'Rourke said.

A sign of the economy improving is the peak unemployment of 18.1 percent for South Lake in spring 2010 has dropped to 15.9 percent in October.

Councilwoman-elect Fortier, who is touted to be the next mayor pro tem, asked if the drop relates to those people not living in town anymore.

To this, Vuletich said, "It could be."

She had no reason why unemployment numbers are changing.

The general fund is expected to have a deficit of $2 million to $3 million for the next five years.

Vuletich spoke a bit about the five-year budget plan O'Rourke has told her and others to come up with. She expects a report and plan to be presented to the council in February.

Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation hands out $43,500

Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation's board of directors announced grants totaling $43,500 to nine organizations through the fall 2010 granting cycle. Other TTCF grants programs include one specific to basic safety net services, one dedicated to environmental projects, and a spring general granting program.

Arts, Culture, and Civic Life

Three grants were awarded in this focus area. Within this area, the foundation looks for specific outcomes. These include ensuring growing participation in arts and cultural experiences, imparting the unique history of our region to residents and visitors, and building a strong community through enhancing regional cultural institutions. Grants were awarded to:

Boys and Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe to support a fine arts program that culminates in an art show in a local gallery ($3,000).

Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival to offer mainstage and educational outreach programs ($5,000).

Truckee Downtown Merchants Association for funding toward self sufficiency for Truckee Thursdays, a strong community-building

activity for full time residents, part time residents, and visitors ($5,000).

Education and Youth Development

TTCF awarded three grants for education and youth development. Outcomes for grants in this focus area include encouraging student success at home, school, and in the community through youth development programming; supporting early literacy skills, school readiness, and school success; and providing parents with information, training, and support. Grants were awarded to:

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Nevada County North Lake Tahoe to provide professionally supported mentoring for children ages 6-18 ($5,000).

Get in the Action! Arts in Action to underwrite a Science Fusion Theater at Kings Beach elementary. This program combines theater, inquiry, and participation to inspire and engage students in science learning ($5,000).

Plaza Comunitaria Truckee Tahoe to allow public use of the Plaza’s computer lab and homework center to provide internet access to local residents for academic and personal pursuits ($5,000).

Environment, Recreation, and Animal Welfare

One grant was awarded in this funding cycle in this focus area. Priority outcomes for grants in this area include educating local youth on the ecosystem of our region and increase their awareness of environmental issues; protecting and restoring the local environment; protecting native wildlife and improving the lives of domestic pets; and increasing access to recreational activities while safeguarding against negative impacts on the environment.

Wylie Animal Rescue Foundation received a $5,000 grant to

continue its spay/neuter program to pets of low-income residents.

Health and Human Services

Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation awarded two grants to organizations providing health and human services. The two outcomes identified for this focus area are maintaining the safety net in order to meet the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing etc. for all local residents; and increasing access to preventative care, intervention and case management to keep people out of crisis and help those who are in crisis. Grants were awarded to:

CoRR (Community Recovery Resources) for a student intervention program to reduce the recurrence of youth substance abuse and increase student school attendance ($5,500).

SPIRIT Peers for Independence and Recovery for core operating support to bring an Empowerment/Welcome Center to the community ($5,000).

Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation is building a strong community driven by philanthropy. For more information, visit our website at www.ttcf.net or call (530) 587.1776.

‘Sounds of the Season’ concert at Squaw

The Truckee Tahoe Community Chorus concert “Sounds of the Season” is Dec. 11 at 7pm and Dec. 12 at 2pm at the Resort at Squaw Creek.

The program has something for everybody, from light Christmas

pops, Hanukkah selections, contemporary religious musical settings, to arias and choruses from Handel’s Messiah.

All children will be admitted free of charge and are invited to join the chorus on stage for our traditional sing along at the conclusion of the concert. For tickets or more information, go to www.singttcc.org. General admission is $12 and preferred seating is $20.