Search for missing Reno hiker called off

By Reno Gazette-Journal

The Washoe County Sheriff’s Office has suspended the search for a Reno hiker missing since Sunday, KOLO-TV reported, saying it is unlikely he is still alive after four days in the snowy wilderness.

The search could continue next week if the weather permits, but deputies said it will be a recovery effort, not a rescue mission, KOLO-TV said.

Rick Gentry, 55, used his cell phone about 5:20 p.m. Sunday to call 911, reporting he was lost and was wearing only jeans and a windbreaker, Washoe County sheriff’s Deputy Armando Avina said. However, Gentry was extremely physically fit and had great endurance, Avina said.

Read the whole story

Ski report: Good conditions today, storm on Saturday

Enjoy the slopes today because a winter weather advisory has been issued for almost all of Saturday.



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

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued the advisory for Nov. 27 from 10am to 10pm. Light snow is expected in the morning, then increasing as the day goes on. Three to 6 inches are predicted at the lake, with 6 to 10 inches above 7,000 feet.

Roads will have restrictions. Carry chains. Be sure to check the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News* to find out all the latest road conditions.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Jim Tarwater, superintendent of Lake Tahoe Unified School District, will be part of a webinar on Dec. 15 about technology in classrooms.

• Weidinger Public Relations of Stateline is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

• Fifth-graders at the magnet school in Meyers are having a Gingerbread Festival Dec. 1 at 7:30pm. It includes chili dinner, decorating gingerbread houses and cookies, ornament making and more.

• Ernie’s is hosing a burger night Dec. 1 from 5-7pm for the South Tahoe High School boys basketball program. For tickets, call (530) 543.5472.

• Eastbound Interstate 80 from Sacramento to Lake Tahoe has been named one of the most congested roads in the United States.

• The Family Resource Center's tamale fundraiser is now. Tamales are $15 per dozen, sold only by the dozen, and are available in chicken, sweet (pineapple), and cheese. The deadline for orders (JoJo Conroy garten777@gmail.com) is Nov. 29 at noon. Tamales will be available Dec. 2 from noon-5pm.

Insect infestation destroying Nevada's pinyon pines

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

For some time, it's been clear to Melinda Cash that something was wrong with her trees.

Many of the pinyon pines on Cash's Mound House property east of Carson City looked sick and scraggly, their branches largely devoid of needles.

"You can see right through them. Usually you can't see through a pinyon," said Cash, 56. "I have a lot of trees dying with their needles falling off. It's crazy."

It wasn't until Cash attended a meeting of the Nevada Fire Safe Council last summer, when Gail Durham of the Nevada Division of Forestry spoke of a growing threat posed across much of Nevada by a tiny insect, that Cash realized what is killing her trees.

Read the whole story

Opinion: How to live with climate change

By Bjorn Lomborg

One of the scarier predictions about global warming is the suggestion that melting glaciers and ice caps could cause sea levels to rise as much as 15 to 20 feet over the next century. Set aside the fact that the best research we have – from the United Nations climate panel – says that global sea levels are not likely to rise more than about 20 inches by 2100. Rather, let's imagine that over the next 80 or 90 years, a giant port city – say, Tokyo – found itself engulfed by a sea-level rise of about 15 feet. Millions of inhabitants would be imperiled, along with trillions of dollars' worth of infrastructure. Without a vast global effort, could we cope with such a terrifying catastrophe? Well, we already have. In fact, we're doing it right now.

Since 1930, excessive ground water withdrawal has caused Tokyo to subside by as much as 15 feet. Similar subsidence has occurred over the past century in numerous cities, including Tianjin, Shanghai, Osaka, Bangkok and Jakarta. And in each case, the city has managed to protect itself from such large relative sea-level rises without much difficulty.

The process is called adaptation, and it's something we humans are very good at. That isn't surprising, since we've been doing it for millennia. As climate economist Richard Tol notes, our ability to adapt to widely varying climates explains how people live happily at both the equator and the poles. In the debate over global warming, in which some have argued that civilization as we know it is at stake, this is an

important point. Humankind is not completely at the mercy of nature. To the contrary, when it comes to dealing with the impact of climate change, we've compiled a pretty impressive track record. While this doesn't mean we can afford to ignore climate change, it provides a powerful reason not to panic about it either.

Bjorn Lomborg is head of the Copenhagen Consensus Center and an adjunct professor at Copenhagen Business School. He is the author of "The Skeptical Environmentalist" and "Cool It" and the subject of the movie "Cool It."

Read the whole story

Avalanche forecasts to be color coded

By Dana M. Nichols, Stockton Record

SAN ANDREAS – Avalanche season is here, and it's in color for the first time.

The snow will stay white, but avalanche forecasts in the United States this year are color coded, somewhat like the terrorism threat alerts issued by the federal Department of Homeland Security.

"In the last five to six years, we've seen different avalanche forecast centers expand the amount of information they are putting out to the public," said Sarah Carpenter, co-chairwoman of the education committee for the American Avalanche Association and owner of a Jackson, Wyo., business that does avalanche education.

The Sierra Avalanche Center operated by the Tahoe National Forest, for example, serves mountains in Northern California.

On Monday, the avalanche forecast for Sierra regions from Bear Valley to Lake Tahoe was moderate, signaled by the yellow danger level.

The scale ranges from green, for low danger, to black at the extreme danger level. Orange is considerable danger, and red is high danger.

Read the whole story

Slot makers listening to gamblers

By Liz Benston, Las Vegas Sun

Slot machine manufacturers, beaten up by gamblers who often complain about tight machines, have redirected their marketing campaign.



Three years into a recession that has decimated discretionary spending, slot makers at last week's premier trade show eagerly showed off their newest creations – and explained how the games aim to offer players more bang for their buck.

Aristocrat Technologies, for example, is developing games that offer a chance to win smaller amounts of money more frequently, allowing wagerers to play longer.

Many of these new games are programmed for more frequent bonus

rounds – free side games. The company's upcoming "Reel Tall Tales" machines will hit one of five bonus sequences every nine or so spins. Its "Rockin' Olives" machine, designed by Las Vegas pop artist Michael Godard, hits a bonus about one every three spins.

Read the whole story

Experiment turns olive oil into soaps, lotions

By Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

A graduate of UC Davis is helping her alma mater produce soaps and lotions made with olive oil from campus trees.

The olive oil based body-care products – lotion, soap, body butter and lip balm – are now on sale at the UC Davis bookstore. Proceeds will support the UC Davis Olive Center's research and education program.

The olive oil used in the products, which range in price from $4 to $12.95 each, would otherwise have gone to waste.

Read the whole story

South Tahoe to mandate

property owners plow sidewalks

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe's sidewalks – the few that are in the city – are about to be cleared of snow.

This is assuming the City Council OKs the idea Dec. 14. And assuming property owners give a hoot because they sure haven't seemed to care without the threat of being fined.

"The goal through this ordinance is to give us the authority to cite people," City Attorney Patrick Enright told the council this month.



Property owners will have to plow sidewalks in South Lake Tahoe starting in 2011. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The current council heard the first reading of the ordinance earlier this month and approved it on a 3-1 vote. Councilman Bruce Grego was absent and Councilman Bill Crawford abstained.

The new council that will be sworn in Dec. 14 will be asked to make the final approval.

The maintenance part of the ordinance reads, “It shall be the duty of all owners, and their tenants, of real property within the city whose property borders, or is in an easement, any improved sidewalk or walkway to maintain the sidewalk or walkway in a safe condition for its use by pedestrians and other members of the public. The duty created by the ordinance shall include the duty to keep the sidewalk or walkway free and clear of all dirt, sand, gravel, filth, rubbish, ice and snow.”

Staff recognizes people cannot be shoveling around the clock, but it will have to be done when needed.

Linda Borge, who is co-owner of the property on Highway 50 where Ken’s Tires is, said Caltrans piles snow in front of the store. With the store being closed from noon Saturday to Monday morning, she said no one would be there to clear the snow from the sidewalk.

John Runnels is all for clearing sidewalks, but wanted the city to create a panel to discuss the issue because there has been no outreach to the business community.

Enforcement will be complaint driven. It will be considered a nuisance if the property owner has not cleared the sideway. The city could clear it and charge the property owner the fee to do so or put a lien on the property if necessary.

The earliest the policy will take affect is January. Enright told the council this winter warnings would primarily be issued and that the city plans to do outreach to the public and chambers of commerce.

“It’s what state law requires. It’s putting people on notice,” City Manager Tony O’Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News* of the proposal to tweak City Code Chapter 26 to have city law

conform to state law.

O’Rourke realizes this means the city is going to have to come through with better maintenance of areas it is responsible for.

Currently Caltrans is liable for the sidewalks along the highway. However, as improvements are made in the coming years, the liability transfers to the city.

Next building season Caltrans is expected to start its multi-year project to improve the Ski Run to Trout Creek area along Highway 50. This includes installation of sidewalks, curbs and gutters.

Now Caltrans is proposing doing the same from Trout Creek to the Y. This will be before the council to approve soon, according to Public Works Director John Greenhut.

“This is maybe the beginning of a whole series of self-improvements. If we don’t take care of ourselves, why would others want to be part of it as residents or guests?” O’Rourke asked. “We need to take care of our own house, to make it safe, to make it reliable.”

Like other things that have gone on in South Lake Tahoe for years that make him scratch his head, O’Rourke hasn’t uncovered a reason as to why the clearing of sidewalks has not been enforced.

The storm that started last weekend had him baffled as he watched traffic on Highway 50 reduced to one lane while someone walked in the street because that was the pedestrian’s only choice.

“And people in wheelchairs. I don’t know how they survive. There is either a lack of sidewalks or the sidewalks are crumbling or not being maintained,” O’Rourke said. “This is not inviting for the community or tourists. Being a tourist

based economy it has struck me that the first impression is not a good one.”

Although what he is pointing out is not news to anyone who has lived in South Tahoe or visited the area, what is news is someone is doing something about it.

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Freezing temps threaten Placer County mandarin harvest

By Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

In the foothills of Placer County, people are keeping their fingers crossed that freezing conditions don’t harm the coveted satsuma mandarins.

“Say a little prayer,” said Josh Huntsinger, Placer County deputy agricultural commissioner.

Temperatures were hovering around freezing Wednesday in mountain mandarin territory from Auburn to Lincoln.

The cool nights and warm days of places like Loomis and Newcastle make the fruit sweet, but sometimes very cold overnights can turn the orange fruit tasteless and dry.

With much of the crop still on the tree, there is concern that the cold temperatures will linger for too many hours.

Read the whole story