Kings Beach meeting focuses on commercial core project

The public is invited to a meeting to address design features of the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project on Dec. 1 at Kings Beach Elementary School, 8125 Steelhead St., Kings Beach, from 6-8pm.

The contract for the design phase of the project, which is more than a decade in the planning and approval process, was approved by the Placer County Board of Supervisors in September. Construction will likely begin in the spring and the project is expected to take three building seasons to complete.

When done, Highway 28 through the center of Kings Beach will be transformed into a three-lane highway which utilizes roundabouts at two key intersections to slow traffic through the North Lake Tahoe community. The project will significantly improve water quality on the North Shore, in addition to improving bicycle and pedestrian access and safety. The project will also improve the aesthetics of the area.

In addition to the Dec. 1 meeting, there will be a series of additional public meetings on various phases of the design process. Those meetings will be announced when firm dates have been scheduled.

Even the wealthy looking for

deals on ski lodging

By Scott Condon, Aspen Times

Even the rich want a bargain on a ski vacation – and they're getting them at high-end resorts across the West this year.

An increasing supply of four- and five-star hotel rooms and stagnant demand from travelers is forcing properties to drop prices or add value to try to entice guests, according to tourism officials.



Ritz-Carlton
at Northstar

Aspen's premiere property, The Little Nell hotel, isn't immune to the trend. The five-star hotel owned by the Aspen Skiing Co. is offering free lift tickets and extra nights for customers throughout the ski season, with blackout dates only during Christmas and Presidents Day weekend. High rollers can get two free lift tickets for each full day they are at the hotel, or they can book four nights and get a fifth night free.

The deals are being offered to guests who can afford to stay in a hotel where a standard, town-view room goes for $840 per night in March.

"I think everybody is out there looking for a deal, even those that don't need a deal," said John Speers, Little Nell general manager.

The St. Regis Aspen also touts an Aspen ski package that includes two adult lift tickets per day, as well as $50 food and beverage credit, to customers who book at least two nights.

Read the whole story

Ski report: Plenty of snow to be thankful for



Happy Thanksgiving skiers and riders.

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

National Auto Museum honors Bill Harrah's centennial

By Mel Shields, Sacramento Bee

As we near the centennial of the birth of William Fisk Harrah (1911-1978), Reno should be the site of several commemorative celebrations.



Nothing yet out of his first hotel, Harrah's Reno, but the National Automobile Museum is honoring him with a "Bill Harrah Legendary Collection" exhibition through Dec. 11, 2011.

In fact, the entire museum is based on the Harrah Automobile Collection, which was broken up and mostly sold off after his death. Harrah owned 1,400 automobiles in what has been called the largest and most historically significant collection in history.

These days, most visitors pay little attention to the museum's subtitle, The Bill Harrah Collection, and it's about time to remind them, or educate them, as to the man himself.

This exhibit hardly does him justice – a few showcases of memorabilia, some explanatory and educational posters, some showgirl outfits, and a stunning centerpiece, a 1933 Duesenberg originally owned by Tahoe's George Whittell – but it is a good introduction to Harrah and his legacy, as is the film, running on the hour, which accompanies it.

Read the whole story

Study: Motorists most fear aggressive drivers

By Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

What do California drivers consider the most dangerous behavior on the road? Despite the notoriety and horror stories

of the last few years, it’s not drivers on cell phones.

Motorists most fear speeding and aggressive driving, a state Office of Traffic Safety survey found. More than one out of five drivers surveyed said they worried more about speeders than cell-phone chatters or any other erring drivers. Cell phone use came in second, followed by bad road surfaces and drunk driving.

Read the whole story

Festival of Trees and Lights needs volunteers

Barton Health’s second annual Festival of Trees and Lights is seeking eager volunteers to help kick off the holiday season at the MontBleu Convention Center Dec. 3-5.

Festival volunteers may participate as costume characters, tree angels, Polar Express assistants, Teddy Bear breakfast and hospital helpers and much more.

The festival will feature nonstop holiday entertainment with trees decorated by local designers and businesses, Barton employees and local schools.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, please call Denise Earls at Barton Foundation (530) 543.5909 or sign up online.

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2 locations for Barton’s Tree of Remembrance

The annual Tree of Remembrance Interfaith Ceremony hosted by Barton Hospice and the Barton Foundation is Dec. 8 in South Lake Tahoe and Dec. 10 in Carson Valley. Attendees have the opportunity to reflect on the memories they share and celebrate the lives of those they have lost.

Attendees will be able to say the name of the person in remembrance and light a candle in their honor.

Music and song will be performed by OneVoice of Unity at the Lake at both locations.

Handmade porcelain ornaments, glazed with iridescent mother-of-pearl, will be available for $25. All proceeds benefit Barton Hospice, a specialty program providing comfort and relief of symptoms to those who are terminally ill.

South Tahoe:

Dec. 8

5:30 to 6:30pm

Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian Church

(2733 Lake Tahoe Blvd.)

Gardnerville:

Dec. 10

5:30 to 6:30pm

United Methodist Church

(1375 Centerville Lane)

For questions or information, call (530) 543.5909.

Giving thanks today and throughout the year

Thanksgiving is about people, more than a plate of food – at least that's what it should be about.

It's a time to come together, to break bread (yes), but more important, to say thanks. Look around at all you have, not what you don't have or wish you had. Life isn't about keeping score. It's not about the best wine served with dinner, the biggest bird, the most number of pies. It's not even about the biggest celebration. And it certainly isn't about football.



For those of us in Tahoe it's not about the bountiful harvest (though one could make the argument the snowfall is our harvest).

What if it's not a good snow year or the people don't come? What would you be thankful for then?

We tend to forget that happiness is not measured by what is in one's bank account. Truly rich people have an abundance of friends. That, friend, is something to be thankful for.

Thanksgiving is that day we in the United States tend to overindulge. Maybe it's really a metaphor for how we live our lives. Most take it for granted and celebrate having a four-day weekend. Yes, that is something to be thankful for. But if

it’s that big of a deal to have time off from work to spend with family and friends, perhaps re-evaluating your priorities is in order.

Take a moment to look around today. Who are you choosing to spend it with – alone, with family, with friends? Think about those who don’t have a choice – shut-ins, hospitalized, no longer able to travel.

Yes, it’s been a tough couple of years for most people. But we’re here. We’ve survived. That, alone, is worth being thankful for.

For some, there will be an empty chair at the Thanksgiving dinner table. But that is no reason not to be thankful. Be thankful for the time that special person was in your life and for the memories that will always be there.

Be thankful today – and carry that sentiment forward for the next 364 days until we all gather again.

Happy Thanksgiving from *Lake Tahoe News*.

Unforgettable lines – on a board, by foot

By Alyssa Roenigk, ESPN

He has come here to complete his journey. It’s taken almost two years to reach this place, hidden deep within the backcountry of California’s Sierra Nevada mountain range, and even deeper within himself. But it’s taken Jeremy Jones a lifetime – 35 years – to accumulate the knowledge, skill and desire to find it.

It’s shortly before 5 a.m. on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, a day most people begin by incapacitating their alarm clocks. Jones, on the other hand, needs only anticipation to stir him from his sleeping bag. He dresses in the deep dark of the great outdoors: well-worn yellow snowboard pants, a sky-blue jacket and a white beanie he pulls tightly over unruly auburn waves. He laces into his snowboard boots and calls out to his crew – a photographer, a videographer and up-and-coming big-mountain snowboarder Ralph Backstrom – to make sure each is awake and vertical. Once they are, the men gather around the camp’s makeshift kitchen and fill their bellies with warm coffee and oatmeal.



Jeremy Jones

As Jones lays out the day’s objective, his voice – which is deep, paced by long, thoughtful “um”s and almost indistinguishable from movie star Christian Slater’s – is the only sound echoing through the canyon. But as the time comes for the crew to depart base camp, even that sound disappears. Later, at dinner, Jones will be animated and chatty, as he toggles between conversations about the lack of role models in pro sports and the vacation he’s taking to Disneyland on Monday with his wife, Tiffany, and their two kids, Mia, 5, and Cass, 2. But this morning, as he fills his daypack with food and water, he becomes intensely and inwardly focused.

A few moments later, Jones sets out on the day’s hike, urging Backstrom and the crew to stick close behind. Then he offers an observation: “I woke up last night thinking the snow might be soft in areas because it warmed up during the day and got

cold last night.” The 27-year-old Backstrom nods, but doesn’t appear to grasp the seriousness of his mentor’s message. “I know the avalanche danger is low, but we need to be careful up there,” Jones says. “I know I’m obsessing, but I can’t shut off my mind on days like these.”

You need to spend only a short time around Jones, the most accomplished big-mountain snowboarder in the world, to understand that his mind never shuts off. In the weeks leading up to a trip, he spends hours each day worrying over every imaginable detail. He watches the weather and monitors snowfall using apps on his iPhone. He consults avalanche websites and checks in repeatedly with local guides. He analyzes maps of the mountains to select the safest area to set up camp. He also spends weeks each year tuning up his avalanche and first-aid training. In the off-season, roughly July through October, the 5’8″, 145-pound Jones maintains his fitness by “playing in the mountains,” which includes hiking, climbing, biking, yoga and Pilates.

Read the whole story

Douglas County rancher dies in SoCal traffic accident

By Steve Timko, Reno Gazette-Journal

A Douglas County rancher who knew Bill Harrah and played a prominent role in the founding of the National Automobile Museum in Reno died Tuesday in a head-on collision with a fire vehicle in Southern California.

People involved with the National Automobile Museum were

grieving the death of Milton Edward “Ted” Bacon, 83, who ran the Jubilee Ranch south of Genoa.

Bacon met Harrah in the 1960s and Harrah got him involved in car collecting, said Jackie Frady, executive director of National Automobile Museum.

After Harrah’s death Bacon helped get the museum formed to house what was left of Harrah’s automobile collection. A Carson Valley rancher who raised angus cattle, he served on the original building committee and on its board of directors for many years, Frady said.

Read the whole story