Winter driving class

The California Highway Patrol is offering a driving class called Winter Driving Safety & Survival.

Winter Driving Safety & Survival is aimed at helping educate all drivers about the hazards of winter driving. The class was created in an effort to preemptively reduce the incidence of injuries and deaths resulting from winter-related motor vehicle collisions and incidents.

With the use of still photographs and videos, officers in attendance will address drinking and driving, winter preparation, snow tires, speed limits, snow chain installation, anti-lock braking systems, stopping distances, restraint use and more. This class is conducted within the classroom and does not offer any behind the wheel training.

The class will be Nov. 16 at the South Tahoe High School Library and is free. Class starts at 6pm and will conclude at approximately 8pm.

This class is highly recommended for new drivers, drivers unfamiliar with winter driving conditions and drivers wishing to learn more about winter driving.

SnowFest in North Lake Tahoe

North Lake Tahoe celebrates its long winter season with SnowFest, a 10-day carnival. SnowFest is scheduled for March 4-13 and will beat a variety of venues throughout North Lake Tahoe.

In its 30th year, SnowFest is expected to draw thousands of

attendees, with the majority of events free to spectators. The annual favorites are back, along with expanded special events, including the Opening Night Ceremonies, Laser Show, Torchlight Parade and Fireworks; Mamasake Extreme Food Challenge for those with a strong stomach; 21th Annual Gar Woods Polar Bear Swim in Tahoe's frigid waters; SnowFest Parades in Tahoe City and Kings Beach; Sunnyside Luau; the Great Ski Race, an annual cross country adventure; Kings Beach Ice Castle and Lighting Contest; Wacky Winter Human Bowling with snow saucers and inflatable pins; Tahoe City Golf Course's "Dog Pull"; the Dragon Snow Palace; Dummy Downhill at Diamond Peak in Incline Village; the highly creative and 23rd Annual Snow Sculpture Contest at Tahoe City's River Ranch Lodge; Special Olympics Polar Plunge at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe; and the 3rd Annual Ta-Hoe Nalu Arctic Standup Paddleboard Race.

For more information about SnowFest and a complete list of events, visit the website.

Sparks plans to be a player in 2022 Olympic bid

By David Jacobs, Reno Gazette-Journal

If the Reno-Lake Tahoe region were to land a bid for the 2022 Winter Olympics, Sparks would play a key role, the leader of the Regional Transportation Commission is telling city leaders.

"Clearly, Sparks first off has a significant number of the region's hotel rooms, and that's where folks are going to stay," RTC Executive Director Lee Gibson said. "Secondly, Sparks is a strong partner in the RTC."

Gibson made his comments during a recent visit to Sparks City Hall.

Besides hotel rooms for an Olympic Games, Sparks also would serve an important transportation center.

Read the whole story

Lovell, Santiago not interested in Assembly seat

With a potential vacancy in Assembly for the seat representing Lake Tahoe, speculation is two women well known to South Lake Tahoe would vie for it.

But the rumor mill is inaccurate this time around.

Kathay Lovell and Norma Santiago told *Lake Tahoe News* they have no interest in running for the seat if Ted Gaines were to win the Jan. 3 special election for the state Senate seat. Gaines faces Ken Cooley for the seat of the late Dave Cox.



Kathay Lovell and Norma Santiago

“I am confident Ted Gaines will be successful winning the

Senate seat. No, I am not intending to run for his Assembly seat," Lovell said.

Santiago responded, "That's a big no. I have many projects to complete in my remaining time as county supervisor. There is no way that I would walk away from my constituency at what to me is a very pivotal time."

– Kathryn Reed

Pioneer Trail area control burn today

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews will continue prescribed fire operations in the Pioneer Trail area of the South Shore today, weather permitting.

Additionally, fuels crews will conduct operations on an urban lot in Tahoe City. If favorable weather conditions continue, operations are expected to continue through the week.

Residents and visitors can expect to see smoke from prescribed fire project areas. Smoke management is part of every prescribed fire burn plan, and efforts will be taken to reduce actual or potential smoke impacts on community areas.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Aimi Xistra-Rich is leaving her PR job at Heavenly to be executive director of the Heavenly Ski and Snowboard Foundation.

• Boulder Bay hearings before the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency for November have been canceled and will be rescheduled at the applicant's request. The Nov. 10 APC meeting has been canceled.

• Expect boat inspections starting in May at the following bodies of water: Boca, Stampede, Prosser Creek and Martis Creek reservoirs, and Donner, Independence and Weber lakes.

• The Tuesday-Thursday lunch deals provided by Lake Tahoe Community College culinary arts students are sell-outs. The last one for the quarter is Nov. 11 – it will be Chinese.

• The U.S. Forest Service is hosting a meeting Nov. 18 at 6pm at the South Lake Tahoe office to discuss the Meyers Landfill.

• Truckee resident Gaylan Larson has been appointed to the vacant seat on the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District board.

• Mammoth Mountain opens Nov. 11.

Sugar pines get a little help from Soroptimist

By Sharon Sterling

Members of Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe participated in the Sugar Pine Foundation's community planting event Nov. 6, helping to plant 750 sugar pine seedlings on U.S. Forest Service land in the Angora Fire burn scar area near Coyote Ridge Circle in South Lake Tahoe.

According to the Sugar Pine Foundation, the sugar pines of the Lake Tahoe Basin have been devastated by white pine blister rust, an incurable fungus that threatens the future of the world's largest species of pine, known for its beautiful, enormous cones.



Sue Novasel and Ellen Camacho

White pine blister rust kills 90 percent of all the trees it infects and natural white pine



regeneration cannot keep up with the pace of blister rust die-off. Fortunately, the Sugar Pine Foundation, founded in 2004, has identified and collected seeds from 64 rust-resistant trees in the Tahoe area which have been used to grow seedlings that are then planted by volunteers at community planting events such as this one.

Fewer than half of the 1-year old seedlings planted at the event are expected to survive, yet that didn't dampen the spirits of the dedicated group of Soroptimist volunteers.

"It is such an honor to be a part of helping to restore the forests of Tahoe for future generations," said SISLT President Ellen Camacho.

Restoring white pines in Tahoe forests not only benefits nature-lovers; it has many long-term benefits for wildlife, watershed health and the local economy as well.

For more information on the Sugar Pine Foundation, visit www.sugarpinefoundation.org.

They have another event planned for this weekend; Nov. 13, 10am-noon: Community Planting at Zephyr Cove Park near Whittell High School.

Sharon Sterling is a member of Soroptimist International South Lake Tahoe.

NDOT examining gusty Washoe Valley

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

One of the windiest places in Northern Nevada, Washoe Valley can be just plain scary.

Erik Wingfield of Reno certainly knows. He commutes through the valley daily to his job in Carson City. Driving there with his girlfriend during a recent storm, “it was just scary, period. It was blowing us all around,” Wingfield said.

The wind blew over a truck whose driver ignored an advisory to avoid the highway, Wingfield said.

“That person didn’t do what he needed to do,” said Wingfield, 29. “That’s what bothers me – the possibility of being crushed by a big truck that isn’t obeying.”

Jerry Howry has concerns as well. The Eastlake Boulevard resident says trucks often detour through his neighborhood during wind closures of the highway, even though they are supposed to use Old U.S. 395, or Bowers Mansion Road, on the valley’s western edge.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Prop. 26 will change

Sacramento gridlock

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the Nov. 4, 2010, Los Angeles Times.***

California voters have given the majority party the power to adopt a state budget on a majority vote. But in passing Prop. 26, they have stripped the same lawmakers of one of their chief budget-balancing tools.

Were California voters especially wise Tuesday when they adopted both Proposition 25, which erases the Legislature's crippling two-thirds vote requirement for adopting a budget, and Proposition 26, which imposes a new two-thirds mandate for imposing or raising a fee? End the gridlock, perhaps they were saying, but not at the expense of taxpaying families or businesses.

Or were they being especially clueless, telling Democratic lawmakers to adopt the budget they want, but without knowing or caring that they were simultaneously making the job close to impossible by depriving those same politicians of one of their chief budget-balancing tools?

It's tempting but in the end pointless to try to find a consistent voter philosophy among the confusing and often contradictory ballot measures. The electorate's role is to say "yes" or "no" to individual questions; it's up to their elected leaders and representatives to make those decisions work. In the coming year, lawmakers and the once-and-future Gov. Jerry Brown will be presented with an opportunity in Proposition 25, the majority-vote budget, possibly the most important reform adopted at the ballot box in a generation. They will have to demonstrate wisdom, leadership and self-restraint to take good advantage of it without being snared by Proposition 26 and the other ballot-box budgeting mandates sent them by voters in this election and others over the last

30 years.

Read the whole story

Rubber mats ridding Tahoe of invasive clams

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Rubber mats laid atop beds of Lake Tahoe’s invading clams seem to have done their deadly job.

Last week, divers removed mats from two half-acre-sized swaths of clam-infested lake bottom. While data still are being analyzed, the test indicates the mats appear to be the most effective weapon against Tahoe’s Asian clam population, experts said Monday.

“There are definitely lots of visibly dead clams,” said Kim Boyd, an invasive species specialist with the Tahoe Resource Conservation District. “It looks very promising.”

The mats, measuring 10 feet wide and 100 feet long, kill clams by robbing them of oxygen and nutrients. The mat were laid on the lake bottom last July at Marla Bay and South Lake Tahoe’s Lakeside Marina.

Read the whole story