Orbitz: Tahoe top ski destination

The once and current king of the early ski season is Lake Tahoe, which last year topped Orbitz's list of top ski destinations.

Colorado makes the most appearances of any state with five destinations, led by Breckenridge at No. 3 overall.

Orbitz said, "We bent the rules a bit for our only non-U.S. entrant – Whistler, in British Columbia, Canada – due to its size, scope and popularity as a top destination for the U.S. Pacific Northwest."

Orbitz Index – Top 2010 Ski Destinations

1. Lake Tahoe, CA/NV

2. Park City

3. Breckenridge

4. Vail

5. Whistler, BC

6. Aspen

7. Mammoth

8. (tie) Jackson Hole and Snowmass

10. Steamboat.

Valhalla Gala

The annual Valhalla Gala in the Valhalla Grand Hall on is Dec. 4 from 5-11pm.

It’s an evening of fine wine, hors d’oeuvres, dinner and dancing in front of the 40-foot high stone fireplace.

A silent auction will be before the end of the evening. This is a sell out every year so early reservations are recommended.

For more information or ticket purchase, call (530) 541.4975 or visit www.valhallatahoe.com.

South Tahoe tree and menorah lighting

South Lake Tahoe’s Annual Community Tree and Menorah Lighting is Dec. 3 from 5-7pm at the visitors center on Highway 50 by the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center.

Festivities include:

· Santa Claus and his elves

· Free sleigh/carriage rides from Borges Sleigh and Carriage Rides compliments of Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority

· Music by Derek Tarpey, Lake DJ, and carols sung by Tahoe Schools Choir

· Complimentary hot chocolate, cider and cookies.

· Food and toy drive – please bring donations for Christmas Cheer

· Santa will be available for picture taking – bring your own camera

Additional parking available at South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center on Rufus Allen Boulevard.

TRPA's Dennis Oliver dies after short illness

Publisher's note: ***A more formal obituary is pending, in the mean time, Lake Tahoe News and TRPA want to share the following email Executive Director Joanne Marchetta sent to TRPA staff and board members.***

Dear Staff, Governing Board, and APC members,

It's with a heavy heart this morning that I'm writing to share sad news. Dennis Oliver, TRPA's public information officer, passed away late afternoon yesterday. Dennis had been seriously ill for the last month and was hospitalized in Carson City. Those of us who were close to Dennis had the opportunity to be with him during his final days and he seemed at peace.

Dennis was a treasured employee of TRPA for just over three years. He represented the agency well and used his superlative writing talents to educate the public on environmental issues. Above all else, he loved Lake Tahoe and made no bones about sharing his passion for the lake with others.

We will keep you informed as arrangements and services are

scheduled. We are planning to set up an arts and environmental education fund in his memory in lieu of flowers and we'll share those details soon.

Thank you,

Joanne

Krolicki retains seat; Douglas County questions pass

Updated: Nov. 4, 2010, 8:22am.

In Douglas County, 76.37 percent of the 28,597 registered voters turned out. Most voted early – 34.18 percent, while on Nov. 2 33.64 percent voted, and the remaining 8.55 percent voted absentee.

Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki is headed back to Carson City with a resounding trouncing of Democrat Jessica Sferrazza.

Krolicki, a longtime Stateline resident, won with 51.26 percent of the vote. Sferrazza has 41.87 percent.



Republican Jim Settelmeyer easily took Capital Senate District seat with 70.38 percent compared to Kevin Ranft's 25.25 percent.

Former Douglas County Commissioner Kelly Kite won state Assembly District 39 seat with 57.21 percent of the vote.

All the results are unofficial until certified.

On the Kingsbury General Improvement District board Darya Vogt and Dan Norman were elected. However, there is a tie for the third seat between Natalie Yanish and Robert McDowell.

Douglas County Question No. 1 – the airport ordinance – passed with 50.67 percent. The yes votes are 10,468 to 10,190 no votes.

Question No. 2, which would restrict the state from raiding county coffers, was approved with 62.96 percent of the vote.

– Kathryn Reed

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Need an art fix? Listen to Robert Schimmel's Tahoe Art Scene on KTHO radio (FM-96.1 and AM-590) every Thursday at 1:15pm.

• Tahoe residents have another way to get to Mexico. Southwest has a deal with Volaris airline to connect people flying out of Sacramento and Reno to Volaris in Los Angeles.

• Lahontan Water Quality Control Board is having a public hearing Nov. 16 at 9am at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe regarding the Total Maximum Daily Load rules.

• Northstar-at-Tahoe's village will open a movie theater in December.

• The Truckee Donner Land Trust website now features interactive maps, trail map downloads, updated land conservation projects, donation tools, and volunteer information.

• Homewood Mountain Resort plans to open Dec. 17.

• North Lake Tahoe's 11th annual Learn to Ski and Board Weekend is Dec. 11-12, when beginners pay $25 for ski rentals, lesson and a lift ticket at a handful of downhill resorts.

Toccata sets Winter MusicFest schedule

Toccata – Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – kicks off its 2010-11 Winter MusicFest with a program featuring selections from Handel's Messiah along with many holiday favorites.

Performance dates:

Dec. 15, 7:30pm, Trinity Episcopal Church in Reno.

Dec. 17, 7:30pm, St. Theresa Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe.

Dec 18, 2pm, St. Francis of Assisi Church on Mt. Rose Highway and Highway 28, Incline Village.

Dec. 19, 3 pm, Squaw Creek Resort in Olympic Valley.

Dec. 26, 3 pm, Christ the King Lutheran in Tahoe City.

The Truckee Tahoe Community Chorus will collaborate with Toccata on the Dec. 15 and 19 performances and the Sierra Nevada College Choir will collaborate on the Dec. 17 and 18

concerts.

Tickets are $35 preferred, $20 adults, $15 seniors, $5 students with children under 12 free. Tickets may be purchased at the door or online. Call (775) 313.9697 for more information.

Women’s center looking for help to make holidays special

To the community,

With the holidays just around the corner, many of us are beginning to think about warm meals with loved ones, and the joys of exchanging gifts.

Many local families with few resources are struggling to rebuild their lives after experiencing violence and they are solely focused on how they will pay rent, and provide food and winter clothing for their children. For the 10th year in a row, South Lake Tahoe Women’s Center is organizing an opportunity for community members to come together to provide happier holidays for struggling adult and child survivors of violence. Last year, the community adopted 300 individuals working closely with the Women’s Center. Each mother and child adopted expressed gratitude, and many mothers cried when they saw and wrapped the gifts donors brought for their children. We know that in these challenging times, more families than ever need your help.

There are many ways you or your business can help local families who have been working closely with South Lake Tahoe Women’s Center:

· Adopt a family and receive the Wish List completed by the family. There are families of all sizes to fit any budget.

· Donate non-perishable groceries or gift certificates for pre-cooked holiday meals at local grocery stores (such as Safeway) so that families can enjoy special holiday meals and make happy memories together.

· Make a special end-of-the-year tax deductible donation toward the Women's Center's Adopt-a-Family Program or to support our other comprehensive and trusted services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

· Donate a $25 Safeway card to support our Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter's life-skills program.

· Donate BlueGo bus passes to help our clients get to work, doctor's appointments, counseling, and to other agencies providing support toward self-sufficiency.

· Drop off your holiday party bottles and cans at South Tahoe Refuse and let them know you'd like to donate the proceeds to South Lake Tahoe Women's Center – they take care of mailing us a check.

· Call to learn about the many different ways we could put your energy to good work as a volunteer – one hour per week or even one per month would really help.

Please call Sarah at the Women's Center, located at 2941 Lake Tahoe Blvd., at (530) 544.2118 or email ssanchez@sltwc.org to let us know how you would like to make a difference in the life of a family affected by violence this holiday season.

South Lake Tahoe Women's Center's business office was financed through a low-cost loan by the Rural Community Assistance Corporation.

Liliana E. Sanchez, outreach advocate South Lake Tahoe Women's

Center

Memorial to honor South Tahoe's fallen soldiers

The public is invited to attend a dedication ceremony Nov. 10 at 10am for Sgt. Timothy M. Smith and Pfc. Phillip Brandon Williams adjacent to the Children's Memorial on the corner of Wildwood and Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe.



The dedication is to recognize the young members of the South Shore who have given their lives as the ultimate sacrifice while serving their country. They will be memorialized on a commemorative plaque on a monument in their honor.

Totals change, winners don't as they plot path for S. Tahoe

Updated Nov. 5, 2010, 8:28am.

By Susan Wood

A qualified congratulations came early and from far away Wednesday to longtime South Lake Tahoe resident Claire

Fortier, when her 86-year-old father L. “Ren” Renshaw called at 5:30am Eastern time to wish his daughter well for ending up as the prospective front-runner in the City Council race.

Angela Swanson got an early-morning kiss goodbye from her husband declaring: “You’re ahead,” when in the darkness he left his wife, the third in line for three seats on the City Council. She later received a call from former fellow school board member Larry Green, who she encouraged to run for his seat for Lake Tahoe Unified. The gesture seemed to come full circle in South Lake Tahoe civics.



Tom Davis knows the fence at El Dorado Beach, aka Lakeview Commons, is a sore spot with residents. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Veteran former Councilman Tom Davis started the morning with a congratulatory call from current Councilmember Hal Cole, who has served alongside the former vacation rental property manager and casino marketer during his 12-year run on the town’s board.

This year, 10 candidates ran for the seats being vacated by Kathay Lovell, Jerry Birdwell and Bill Crawford. Fortier took

in 1,402 votes at 16.62 percent; 1,279 ballots, or 15.16 percent of the vote, were cast for Davis; while Swanson edged out the rest of the pack with 1,024 votes at 12.14 percent of the tally. The trio takes office Dec. 14. Those numbers were updated as of 5pm Wednesday.

However, 1,000 votes still need to be counted along with the 222 provisional votes, elections officials told *Lake Tahoe News* Thursday morning.

All results are preliminary pending until final tabulations, which are expected in the next 10 days. The deadline is cut short by the state from the usual mandated 28-day certification to be able to turn around results from the special election, which was on the same Nov. 2 ballot, for the 1st District Senate race. There will be a runoff Jan. 4 between Ted Gaines and Ken Cooley to replace the late Dave Cox. If Gaines wins, he'll vacate his Assembly seat and a special election will be necessary.

El Dorado County voter turnout was 54.57 percent. Election officials had predicted it to be 65 percent. In South Lake Tahoe, 41.8 percent of the 8,747 registered voters cast ballots. Those numbers could go up slightly as the provisional ballots – or problem forms – are counted by hand.

County elections data cruncher Joe Zitzelberger admitted the close contests are "subject to change." Swanson increased her lead with the latest numbers to 48 points over fourth place businesswoman Joy Curry.

The city's Measure E, which aimed to raise the business tax in the city, lost by seven votes based on the most current data. It had been a dead heat when first reported. Mayor Pro Tem Hal Cole did not know if the city would seek a recount.

"I don't think I've ever seen a 50-50," Zitzelberger said before the count changed.

Ready to take office

Despite the vote totals not locked in, the three frontrunners for council are looking ahead to tackle a lengthy list of tasks facing the city – from the beleaguered BlueGo transit system to Lakeview Commons' bankrupt construction project, a site designed as a gathering place for a community in need of something to cheer about.

"Yes, we have a heck of a lot to do, but rather than it seeming overwhelming, I'd like to think that this is one group who can focus on achieving," Fortier said.

Jumping out of the starting gate, Fortier – a former newspaper editor and medical office chief – wants to have at least one council retreat to "immediately" nail down a few priorities. Other councils have developed a long list of goals.

Davis, who has a prolific history of South Shore volunteerism, would also like to narrow the goals to ensure the emphasis remains on the highest priorities.

"What I learned on the campaign trail is we all have the same goals," he told *Lake Tahoe News*. Davis listed tourism, recreation, public safety and roads as core priorities in need of attention.

"I think we have a great council. This is not about me. It's about we," he said, later quoting the late city Mayor Norm Woods' advice to him: "Tom, all you need to do is count to three." Woods was referring to a quorum needed on a five-member board to get the work done.

Davis, Fortier and Swanson admitted to being three different people with varying approaches, but pledged to work together.

Swanson commended Davis' community mindedness and Fortier's smarts. The school facilities planning consultant and former school board member plans to use her contacts in Sacramento to

get the city a little help from the state. She was pleased to learn Proposition 22, which bans the state from taking funds from local jurisdictions, was headed for passage.

“I think people are sick and tired of the state not taking care of its financial house,” she said. Still, the reality of closing a $15 billion shortfall could prove painful for California, she added.

Like Fortier and Davis, Swanson anticipates working closely with the current council, consisting of Cole and Bruce Grego.

“We all have different approaches, and don’t always agree, but I’ve found myself saying ‘I’d never thought about (things) that way,’” she said. “We all share the same passion for the community.”