Art auction benefits LTCC, Rotary

The Lake Tahoe Community College Foundation and Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe are teaming up for the third annual Off the Wall Art Auction this month.

Participants may bid on art created by locally and regionally known artists while supporting local education and charitable organizations.

Local artists, including nationally known artist and LTCC Art Department Chair Phyllis Shafer, and other Art Department faculty members, have donated the pieces.

The first viewing is at the kickoff party on March 24 from 5-7pm in the Haldan Gallery and Aspen rooms. Auction items can also be viewed March 25-28 from 3-6:30pm.

The auction is March 29 from 6-9pm at the gallery. A silent auction will be from 6-7:15pm, then a live auction from 7:30-9pm. There is a $10 charge at the door to attend and bid at the auction, which includes one drink coupon and appetizers.

All of the proceeds from ticket and art sales will be split between the LTCC Foundation and the Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call 530.541.4660, ext. 245.

Ganong 6th in World Cup downhill

By USSA

LENZERHEIDE, Switzerland – Two-time Olympic champion Ted Ligety (Park City) became only the second American man in history to podium in all five events, tying for second in the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup Finals downhill in Lenzerheide.

Ligety, who started fourth to set the early pace, was just 0.11 off the winning time of Austrian Matthias Mayer, tying with Italian Christof Innerhofer. The finish bumped Ligety up to third in the World Cup overall chase with three races remaining.

Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) was sixth and Bode Miller (Franconia, N.H.) eighth.

Ligety joined an elite group of only eight men – including Miller – who have scored podium finishes in all five World Cup disciplines.

Norway's Aksel Lund Svindal was fifth to move ahead of Marcel Hirscher for the World Cup overall lead. Ligety overtook Alexis Pinturault of France to jump into third.

Svindal hoisted the World Cup downhill crystal globe for the second consecutive season, after clinching the title a week ago in Kvitfjell.

Miller led the U.S. Ski Team in the final downhill standings with seventh, Ganong was ninth and Ligety pulled into the top 30 with 26th.

Mancuso finishes downhill season ranked 15

By USSA

LENZERHEIDE, Switzerland – Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) was 10th to lead the U.S. Ski Team in the final downhill of the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup season Wednesday.

“Last downhill of the season and you just really have to go for it. It’s a really tough course. It’s a fun hill,” Mancuso said. “There’s definitely room for improvement (in my downhill season), so I’m just going to keep working to improve and hopefully next year will be going better. I just had a lot of things going on with equipment, and that always gets into your head, especially when it’s an important year to be in top form.”

Swiss Lara Gut picked up the win, while Germany’s Maria Hoefl-Riesch took the crystal globe, despite not finishing the race. Hoefl-Riesch was helicoptered off the slope.

Austria’s Anna Fenninger had a chance to catch Hoefl-Riesch, but was sixth, however she did leap into overall points lead surpassing Hoefl-Riesch by 11 points with three races remaining.

Lindsey Vonn (Vail) had won the women’s downhill title the past six consecutive seasons.

Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) was 18th.

Mancuso finished the downhill season ranked 15th and Cook 18th. Leanne Smith (N. Conway, N.H.) also finished in the top 30 at 30.

Stateline man hurt in Carson Valley accident

A Stateline man was injured Tuesday when the Subaru he was driving collided with a Peterbilt tractor towing a semi-trailer with 66 head of cattle.

The March 11 accident happened about 3:53pm on Highway 88 at the intersection of Waterloo Lane in Douglas County.



Twenty-five head of cattle died March 11 in the Carson Valley when the truck they were in overturned. Photo/Provided

Nevada Highway Patrol troopers said evidence at the scene and witnesses indicate truck driver Grant T. Terpstra, 25, of Stockton, who was traveling south on the two-lane highway, failed to obey the traffic signal and proceeded into the intersection on a red light and struck the right side of the Subaru, which was traveling west on Waterloo Lane.

After hitting the Subaru, the big-gig struck the traffic signal light pole and sheered an adjacent power pole.

George N. Jaqua, 61, of Stateline was airlifted to Renown Medical Center in Reno with non-life-threatening injuries. Terpstra was not injured.

Twenty-five cows were killed, while the remaining 41 were either uninjured or sustained minor injuries. They were secured in a nearby pasture. The cattle were being transported from Yerington to Escalon.

The intersection was closed for nearly six hours. As of Wednesday morning the traffic light was still not operating. Four temporary stop signs have been erected to control the flow of traffic until those repairs are made, which may take several days.

Terpstra was cited for failing to obey a traffic signal light.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Douglas County's economic recovery in place; infrastructure, employment challenges remain

By Anne Knowles

MINDEN – Douglas County is back on track, but it's unlikely the county will return to the earlier high growth that once fueled its budget.

In 2013, 947 homes were sold, the most sales since 2005, at an average price of just less than $300,000, the highest since

2008. Assessed values, which dropped 29 percent from 2009 to 2014, are expected to increase 4 percent in 2015. And 108 residential building permits were issued last year, the most since 2007, although well below the 537 permits issued in 2005.

“Building permits are a good leading economic indicator,” Steve Mokrohisky, county manager, said at the second annual Financial State of the County on March 10 at Carson Valley Inn. “That pales in comparison to the 500 plus permits we had in the 2004, 2005, 2006, but we probably won’t get back to those levels ever.”

Taxable sales are also up. In 2013, they approached $600 million, the highest since 2008, and are already ahead of $300 million at the halfway point in fiscal year 2014. But Mokrohisky warned that taxable sales fund little in the county, which depends on Nevada’s consolidated tax for more than a quarter of its budget.

And unemployment in Douglas County, he said, remains stubbornly high at 9.6 percent in December 2013, although that’s the lowest rate in five years.

Among the highlights for the county is a recent bond upgrade to AA from Standard & Poor’s, the first upgrade in 10 years and the highest rating in the county’s history.

Mokrohisky, who is leaving April 11 to take a new job in Lane County, Ore., said the county faces several challenges, including deteriorating infrastructure such as roads and water systems. On March 20, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners is having its meeting in Stateline to discuss consolidation of aging water systems at Lake Tahoe.

Another goal is to revitalize the downtowns of Gardnerville, Minden and the South Shore using Genoa as a model, said Mokrohisky.

And the county must balance the need to control expenses with maintaining “our greatest asset,” a vibrant workforce, he said. During the downturn of the last half decade, the county has reduced its personnel costs by $1 million, eliminating 65 full-time equivalents and negotiating contracts with employees that have stabilized costs. That’s helped bring expenses below revenues. From 2002-09, county revenues grew 5.7 percent while expenses climbed 7.5 percent. From 2010 to 2013, revenue growth dropped to 1.8 percent while expenses were kept to 0.4 percent growth. The projected annual average growth for the next five years is 2.3 percent for revenues and expenses.

At the meeting, the county also launched an annual award for local businesses called the Spotlight Award. Seven businesses were honored in categories such as retail, manufacturing and hospitality. The businesses were American AVK, a maker of water hydrants and valves in Minden; Carson Valley Inn, the Minden casino/hotel/motor lodge/RV park; Edgewood Companies, owner of 500 Lake Tahoe acres and operator of Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course; Fresh Ideas, a Gardnerville gift shop; RO Anderson, an engineering firm; Red Hut Café, the 55-year-old restaurant operator with locations in Lake Tahoe, Carson City and Reno; and Soaring NV, a gliding school which took home the entrepreneur award for its owner, Laurie Harden.

Letter: Filipino community cooks at Bread & Broth

To the community,

Bread & Broth would like to thank the Filipino community for

coming together to sponsor an Adopt A Day of Nourishment on March 3. With the generous donation of $250 by an anonymous Filipino community member and the help of a very eager and hard working crew, the dinner guests were treated to a hearty, traditional Filipino dinner that everyone enjoyed.

As the dinner guests were served chicken adobo, rice, chicken chow mien, egg rolls and green beans with bacon, Mila Seals spoke for her fellow Filipino community crew members: “We all have an amazing energy and happiness for serving our community. The effort shown and the great dedication from the Filipino community to the needy was a fantastic experience.”

It was a pleasure to watch the Filipino volunteers joyfully prepare a meal in which they so generously donated their time and skills to provide a meal that was filled with love and caring.

Bread & Broth is very grateful for and humbled by the support that the Filipino community has shown in feeding the less fortunate of the Lake Tahoe South Shore community.

For more B&B information, go online or find us on Facebook.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Meeting centers on broadband for rural areas

California Public Utilities Commission, Sierra Economic Development Corporation and El Dorado County are looking at ways to help bring broadband service to densely populated

rural communities.

There will be a community meeting on the topic on March 17 from 6-7pm at the Holiday Market Meeting Room, 5030 Ellinghouse Drive in Cool. This meeting is for citizens living in the Cherry Acres area and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Gold Country Broadband Consortium is one of 14 regional consortia in the state funded by the California Advanced Services Fund Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia grant program to leverage regional, state and national resources as an investment in improving and expanding broadband access.

For more information, call 530.823.4703 or email randy@sedcorp.biz.

Doggie gadgets becoming more common

By Nick Wingfield, New York Times

A half-century ago, dogs lived in barns or backyards, domiciled in shabby little doghouses. Now they have the run of our houses and apartments. They sleep in our beds (full disclosure). In some cases, they are considered by their owners to be like children, and possibly a bit cleaner.

So it is not so strange that the connected technologies that are creeping into the lives of humans are doing the same for pets.

Wearable pet activity trackers keep tabs on Bella’s or Bear’s exercise. Some go further, monitoring dogs’ heart and

respiratory rates and tracking locations in case they escape their homes. Webcams allow people who are away from home to monitor, communicate and play games with their pets, breaking up the monotony of lonely days.

Read the whole story

Google building off-road map for hikers

By Jame Sturz, Outside

Last summer, Google launched a unique program in which it loans out backpack versions of its car-mounted Street View cameras, called Trekkers, to intrepid explorers. It’s an ingenious idea: put these devices in the hands of the people who know a trail, river, or stretch of wilderness best, and let them map it out.

Last August, the first loaner was taken to Hawaii’s Big Island, where Rob Pacheco, cofounder of outfitter Hawaiian Forest and Trail, was charged with mapping the island’s most important and accessible trails. Street View product manager Evan Rapoport says he chose Hawaii from “tens of thousands” of applications because of its ecological diversity, visual lushness, focus on preservation, and accessibility. “It’s a place where people go, but it’s also a place they dream of going,” he says.

On Nov. 25, 2013, I joined Pacheco for his final day of mapping the 116,000-acre Kahuku section of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. We hiked past koa and ohia lehua trees, lava flows, and a 400-foot-deep pit crater. (Rangers were still

talking about how a mouflon had recently tumbled into it.) The unit, which came with a 32-ounce Nalgene that dangled from one side at hip-level, was wired to a Galaxy Nexus, housed in a near-indestructible case that dangled from the other. The phone served as the pack's controller, letting users tap in their manner of travel, with options including everything from canoe, to dogsled, to horseback. It also streamed a checkerboard of images across its screen as we hiked. Then the GPS-stamped, 360-degree pictures were saved to an ejectable, 480-gigabyte SSD disk.

Read the whole story

S. Tahoe among few communities without water meters

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News

Despite urgent calls for water conservation amid one of California's worst droughts, more than 255,000 homeowners and businesses across the state can still use all the water they want without paying higher bills.

And nobody even knows how much water they are using.

From Bakersfield to Sacramento to Shasta County to Lake Tahoe, 42 communities in California have not installed the most basic tool of water management – water meters – for all of their connections.

People without meters are charged a flat monthly rate in those areas for water, usually between $20 and $35 a month. And

those communities use 39 percent more water per capita than the state average, according to an analysis of state Department of Water Resources records by the San Jose Mercury News.

Most California residents have had water meters for generations.

Communities have different explanations for why they've been slow to install meters. In South Lake Tahoe, officials had to upgrade sewer systems that were in danger of polluting the lake, and they still need to modernize water systems for fire protection, said Richard Solbrig, general manager of the South Tahoe Public Utility District.

"Basically our community had other priorities that were a lot more important," he said. "A lot of people get upset when we say Lake Tahoe is different than other places. But the reality is that it is."

Read the whole story