S. Tahoe agrees to 3-year deal for SnowGlobe

By Kathryn Reed

The number of people who spoke Tuesday before the South Lake Tahoe City Council voted to enter a three-year agreement with the promoter could indicate the apparent acceptance of SnowGlobe.

No one from the public spoke at the March 4 meeting. A once contentious event now doesn't seem to matter to people.



SnowGlobe will be returning to South Lake Tahoe for the next three years. Photo/Lesia Witkowsky

The city agreed to Chad Donnelly's request to contribute more money. In cash will be a $25,000 sponsorship. Still to be worked out is what that cash will buy. For instance, the $50,000 Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority contributed for the 2013 music festival went toward marketing.

Another $25,000 will be contributed by the city in in-kind costs, covering South Tahoe Refuse's bill and Tahoe Transportation District's costs. However, the council expressed interest in working with entities so the city

doesn’t have to absorb the entire expense.

SnowGlobe actually saves the fire and police departments in terms of overtime. In past years a substantial amount of resources has been allocated to the revelry at Stateline. The advent of SnowGlobe has almost rendered that spontaneous gathering irrelevant. The city anticipates a cost savings of $5,000 by not paying overtime for employees.

That means the actual cost to the city to bring SnowGlobe to town for the last three days of December is closer to $45,000.

The vote was 4-1, with Mayor Hal Cole in the minority. He was against the $25,000 in cash.

However, cities paying promoters to bring in an event is the norm these days. And it was said Tuesday that what South Lake Tahoe is paying is rather cheap.

Donnelly, who attended the meeting, said he has had offers to go elsewhere with SnowGlobe, but wants to make it work in South Lake Tahoe.

The plan is to use the field at Lake Tahoe Community College for the next three years. The college board still needs to approve this.

It’s likely after the contract is up the field will need to be replaced at a cost of $500,000. At that time a new location for SnowGlobe will probably have to be secured.

The city’s belief is the $6 million the event brings into the community is a significant return on investment.

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In other action:

• The plaza area being built as part of the Harrison Avenue project is going to be called Champions Plaza in honor of area

Olympians. Details are being worked out.

I-Did-A-Run dog competition in Truckee

As part of North Lake Tahoe's SnowFest, the 10th annual I-Did-A-Run event returns to Tahoe Donner March 9.

It takes place at the Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Area.

Dogs of all shapes and sizes will compete in this timed dog pull race. The event pits dog against dog in a race against the clock as they pull covered wagon sleds over a snow-covered course.

Prizes are awarded to the speediest finishers among four weight divisions.

Registration is at noon and the race starts at 1pm. Entry fee is $20.

Proceeds benef the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe.

For more information, email Ali Kovach at ekovach@tahoedonner.com or call (530) 587.9424.

K's Kitchen: A warm

traditional Italian soup

By Kathryn Reed

One of the great things about Lake Tahoe is soup season lasts a long time.

With there being so many soups in the world, it’s possible to have a different one nearly every night. And they also make for great leftovers.

Sometimes I will increase the ingredients to ensure I have leftovers. Such is the case with the soup below.

This recipe is so easy that it would be a good one to have your kids make. And not many ingredients are involved. Often I have everything on hand so a trip the grocery story is not required.

Use small pasta because a larger one like a bow tie will absorb too much of the liquid and what you are left with is not soup. It’s still good, just different. It seems like no matter the size of pasta that by the second day the consistency is more solid than liquid soup. If soup is what you desire, add water or broth.

The name of the soup means pasta and beans. It’s a traditional Italian dish.



Pasta e Fagioli

1 T olive oil

1 medium onion, diced

2 celery stalks, diced

1 medium carrot, diced

1 (23-ounce) carton vegetable broth

4 large garlic cloves, minced

1 C small pasta shells

1 (15 ounce) can tomato sauce

1 (15 ounce) can white or pinto beans, drained

1 tsp dried basil

½ tsp dried sage

½ tsp ground pepper

Heat oil in medium saucepan over medium heat. Sauté onion, celery and carrot until onions begin to change color. Add broth and bring to boil. Uncover, add garlic and pasta. Cook until the pasta is the consistency you prefer. Stir in tomato sauce, beans and spices. Cook until heated through. Adjust seasonings if necessary.

Later trash pick up best thing for Tahoe bears

By Cheryl Millham

The problems of bears and garbage have gotten worse over the past 15 or so years.

Put yourself in a bear's mind for the next few minutes. It's about 5:30am with no humans and no cars in sight. You (the bear) walk around the corner and the street ahead of you has bear-size bowls (trash cans) at every house. How kind the humans are to feed me out of these wonderful bear-size bowls or easy to open plastic bags.

Now I don't have to go out of my way to forage out in the forest all day. Never mind the mess I make. The humans will clean it up.

This is the thinking of a bear.

Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care starts getting calls about "bad bears" because of situations like this. People want us to come and take the bears back out to the forest. We try to educate the public that we are in the forest and that the bears come to where the "easy" food source is located. We try to plead with them to not put their garbage out until just before it is to be picked up.

That will help solve the problem of bears coming around neighborhoods for food.

One comment we hear is, "I'm not going to get up out of bed at 5am to put out my trash. Period!" I can totally understand. I am not a morning person either, but, Tom gets all the trash ready the night before and at 5:15am on trash day, he gets up and takes it out. What a guy.

We have spoken with the South Tahoe Refuse company and asked if there were any way the trash pick-up hours – for residents – could be a little later in the morning. We were always told what a large job it would be to change all the pick-up routes and we were always told how sorry they were, but "no".

About two weeks ago, as I was sorting through the mail, I threw out a flier from the refuse company, but noticed on the front cover a line (in red) that said there would be a change of pick-up hours. I was so excited I picked up the flier. This is monumental. I would encourage all South Lake Tahoe residents (and visitors) to get behind these new hours and clean up Tahoe's trash problems.

The new hours started March 1. So, we all have time to figure out what time pick up will be at your house.

The male bears should start coming out of hibernation in the middle of March. If they find no garbage to eat, they should go back to the normal grazing on grasses, which should be plentiful then because of the rain we have received lately.

Another interesting fact is that if the sows don't have all that food out of garbage cans to put on the extra weight, they should go back to having one cub and not 2 or 3.

So, come on Tahoe, let's get behind the new pick-up times. You have no more excuses.

Oh, and one more thing, thank you South Tahoe Refuse.

Cheryl Millham is executive director of Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

Calif. carbon tax would be first at the pump

By Michael B. Marois, Bloomberg

California would be the first U.S. state to impose a "carbon

tax” directly on motorists at the fuel pump under a plan by a leading Democratic lawmaker to ease greenhouse-gas pollution.

Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg wants to shift responsibility for emissions on gasoline sold by companies such as Chevron Corp., a cost that would otherwise be passed on to consumers in fuel prices. Instead, Steinberg wants to directly tax motorists 15 cents a gallon, rising to 24 cents in 2020.

California was the nation’s first state to set a limit for most carbon emissions, with regulations that aim to achieve a reduction of about 15 percent by 2020. The state auctions a limited number of pollution permits that industries can use to help meet the limit under a system called cap-and-trade.

Read the whole story

Gloved rule for handling food being rethought

By Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee

Just months after Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law a measure compelling bartenders and chefs to don gloves when handling ready-to-eat food, the bill’s author has responded to a food industry uproar by unveiling an effort to undo the change.

“It didn’t sound that dissimilar to the existing law, which said that we should minimize hand contact and that there should be good hand-washing procedures,” said Assemblyman Richard Pan, D-Sacramento, who wrote the bill.

But soon after it passed, Pan said, “we started hearing from

local restaurants, smaller restaurants, and also bartenders about the impact it would have on them.”

The glove guideline was mixed into a broader food safety code package that sailed to Brown’s desk with no opposition (among other things, the overall bill contemplated that ancient riddle of what, exactly, goes into a hot dog). Strictly speaking, the bill doesn’t require gloves. Rather, it prohibits bare-handed contact with foods that are ready to eat.

Read the whole story

Horizon hotel-casino to be reincarnated

By Kathryn Reed

Say goodbye to the Horizon.

While it isn’t going to be bulldozed, it is going to be gutted after the lease with LV Casino LLC expires March 31.

Taking over operations is Warner Hospitality Group out of Las Vegas. The company is under contract with the owners to remodel the dilapidated Stateline casino. It will be a multi-phase project, with the first phase slated to open in June.

The Park family has forever been the property owners. Family members were having disagreements on how to manage the business that includes cattle in the Carson Valley, the Horizon and MontBleu casinos, Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course and the future Edgewood Lodge so they opted last year to divide holdings among family members.



Called “The Ho” by locals, the Horizon hotel-casino is about to undergo a remodel. Photo/LTN

Jon and David Park now own the Horizon and the cattle company. Neither is returning phone calls.

Horizon Stadium Theaters operators have been told they will be out of business at the end of the month. Reservations for the hotel are not being accepted beyond the night of March 30.

“We are in the dark,” a reservation specialist said of his future and the property’s after this month.

Warner Gaming officials declined to say anything other than a plan is being worked on.

A person close to the changes, but who could not speak on the record, *told Lake Tahoe News*, “They’re looking to do some Hard Rock-related stuff with the Horizon, but some licensing stuff has to be worked out, including what to do with the corporate owned Hard Rock in Harveys.”

Warner runs the Hard Rock hotel-casino in Las Vegas and is developing one in Sioux City, Iowa, among its other properties.

The Hard Rock inside Harveys is a concessionaire for the casino company. This means Caesars Entertainment, parent company of Harveys, does not have a say if a Hard Rock-themed

hotel goes in next door. Nor have Harveys officials been approached about what Horizon plans to become.

The local Hard Rock, which has a restaurant and retail outlet, deferred comment to corporate PR, which deferred to Brookfield Real Estate Management Partners in New York. Multiple calls were not returned.

Nichols Engineering and Environmental Services in Stateline is working on the remodel, but would not comment about specifics.

“Both the county and TRPA will sign off on the permits. TRPA will authorize the changes under their conditional permit, and building department will authorize any construction required of building and fire codes – e.g., electrical, mechanical, plumbing, structural, etc,” Mimi Moss, Douglas County community development director, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Jeff Cowen, with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, told *Lake Tahoe News*, “They are looking to do improvements at the property that are consistent with the South Shore Vision Plan.” He said no application for a permit has been submitted.

The 539-room hotel has been on the decline for years. The gaming floor only has slot machines. The place is often like a ghost town.

The building opened in 1965 as Del Webb’s Sahara-Tahoe. In its heyday Elvis Presley, Phyllis Diller and the Osmond Brothers would play there. It was like having a Las Vegas style hotel-casino in Lake Tahoe.

In 1983, it was renamed Del Webb’s High Sierra. At that time it had a western theme.

Columbia Sussex took over the operations and renamed it the Horizon in 1990. LV Casino, a subsidiary of Columbia Sussex, took over operations in 2009.

Editorial: Is Internet poker good for California?

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the Feb. 27, 2014, Sacramento Bee.***

California's multibillion-dollar gambling industry could grow significantly if bills introduced last month to legalize Internet poker become law.

Neither would be an advance.

Indian tribes that own casinos and are major forces in the Capitol are seeking to form consensus among themselves on legislation to legalize Internet poker. Some lawmakers seem willing to serve as their vessels.

Read the whole story

Injured bear interrupts skiing at Heavenly



A bear is rescued March 3 from Heavenly. Photo/ Jeff Cassetta

A bear rescued from Heavenly Mountain Resort on Monday is recovering at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

The 1-year-old was getting first tracks off Powderbowl when ski patrol saw it the morning of March 3. The bear caused some delays for skiers.

Nevada Department of Wildlife officials found the bear had a cut on its shoulder and was bleeding. It’s pads were also torn.

LTWC veterinarian Kevin Willitts took X-rays and found no broken bones.

Normally bears would still be in their dens this time of year. However, the spastic winter of Lake Tahoe this year has animals acting like it is spring.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

S. Tahoe annual parking permits for sale

South Lake Tahoe is selling parking pass permits to residents.

Permits will allow residents to park in city-designated residential permit areas as well as in areas where paid parking kiosks exist. Passes do not include the garage at Heavenly Village.

Permits are available to people in the 96150 through 96158 ZIP codes, 89448 and 89449 ZIP codes.

The cost is $40. It is valid Monday through Friday, and good for the calendar year. No refunds will be issued if the paid parking program is changed or terminated.

Passes may be purchased at:

- City Administration Offices: 1901 Airport Road
- City Services Center: 1052 Tata Lane
- Recreation Complex: 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd.
- Police Department: 1352 Johnson Blvd.