USFS to enforce use of bear proof containers

By Kathryn Reed

While bear proof containers and trash receptacles exist at most developed campgrounds owned by the U.S. Forest Service, people aren't always using them.

This is creating a problem. It means bears are learning campgrounds are an easier way to get food than foraging for it in the woods.



All that food needs to be stored in a bear proof container. Photo/LTN file

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is looking to enforce the rule that people must use the containers. An environmental assessment is being prepared for a forest order. Comments are being sought until March 14. More info is available online or contact Stephanie Coppeto at (530) 543.2679 or sacoppeto@fs.fed.us.

"The idea is not to punish people. It's for their own safety," Lisa Herron, spokeswoman for the local USFS office, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We are trying to promote good habits."

The other goal is to reduce the number of human-bear

conflicts.

Kiosks at the entrance of campgrounds explain the importance of using bear boxes. But people either aren't reading the signs or they are blatantly disregarding the rules.

If they keep violating the regulations, they could be fined.

Several national parks have had a zero tolerance policy for years. If a ranger sees food out, they confiscate it. And if you don't get back in time, they could have your cooler overnight. A lecture and fine come with getting the food back.

The Forest Service is taking action now to try to get ahead of the camping season.

Day use areas like Kiva, Pope and Baldwin beaches on the South Shore would also be affected.

The proposal is to phase in the enforcement. Fallen Leaf Lake Campground, Meeks Bay Resort and Meeks Bay Campground would be the first areas in the basin to be monitored more rigorously.

Mancuso 16th in downhill after losing a pole

By USSA

CRANS MONTANA, Switzerland – Olympic super combined bronze medalist Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) lost a pole, but hung on to lead the U.S. Ski Team by placing 18 Sunday in the final downhill prior to the March 10-17 World Cup Finals.

Only the top 25 athletes in each discipline qualify to start

at World Cup Finals. Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) finished 21 in the race and will also have a downhill start during the March 12 women's race.

Andrea Fischbacher, who did not make the 2014 Austrian Olympic Team, produced a stunning charge from bib 29 to win the race ahead of teammate Anna Fenninger.

Cook, Mancuso and Leanne Smith (N Conway,N.H. have also qualified for super G at World Cup Finals. They are ranked 13, 14 and 23, respectively, in the discipline.

Then and now: Urban environment changes



Photo No. 1: Highway 50 circa 1967. Photo/Don Lane

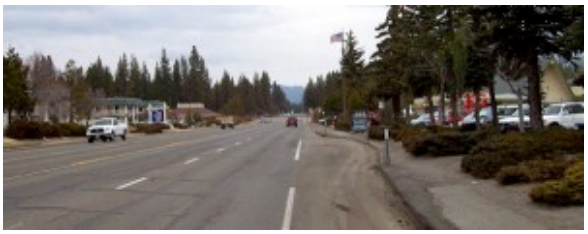


Photo No. 2: Highway 50 in 2014. Photo/Bill Kingman

Ogden Nash wrote this parody of Alfred Joyce Kilmer's 1914 classic poem "Trees":

I think that I shall never see

A billboard lovely as a tree.

Indeed, unless the billboards fall,

I'll never see a tree at all.

South Lake Tahoe had many billboards until they were banned in the last half of the 1960s, as was all off-premise signage with few exceptions.

Photo No. 1, circa 1967, shows the landmark Outdoorsman (now Grocery Outlet) with a Harvey's billboard just beyond it.



Photo No. 3: Highway 50 approaching Al Tahoe Boulevard in 1967. Photo/Don Lane



Photo No. 4: Highway 50 approaching Al Tahoe Boulevard in 2014. Photo/Bill Kingman

Across the street, a large vacant lot (now Motel 6 and a restaurant, photo No. 2) had billboards for Sahara-Tahoe (now Horizon) and Harrah's Lake Tahoe. Notice the old telephone poles and overhead wires before the new city mandated underground replacement.

Photo No. 3 shows another Harrah's billboard on Highway 50 approaching Al Tahoe Boulevard; 1967 at the earliest. That same meadow also contained a short-lived narrow-gauge railroad.

Behind the billboard at the Al Tahoe Boulevard intersection (no stoplight then) on the corner was the wood-frame Al Tahoe Post Office where Denny's now stands. That post office building was moved and now serves as the Tahoe Art League Gallery on Highway 50 next door to the Lake Tahoe Historical Society Museum, across from the Sno-Flake Drive-In.

The rest of that Al Tahoe Boulevard corner was a large empty lot which became the Tahoe Center (although then we called it the Lucky-Payless Center for its two largest, best-known businesses) starting in 1970.

— Bill Kingman

STMS students express themselves in writing

By Kathryn Reed

Fifteen South Tahoe Middle School students proved their generation could express themselves in more than 140 characters. And they can do so about serious topics.

Soroptimist International Tahoe Sierra honored the students last week at the annual Writing Festival awards breakfast. These aren't all overachievers. Some are English learners, other are average students. But what they have in common is they are the top writers out of a school of nearly 800 students.

Most of the first-place winners chose to read their essays. They did so in a room full of Soroptimists, parents, siblings and grandparents.

Eighth-grader Leah Marino was the last to go, but seemed to captivate the audience the most with her essay on the need for schools to be a safe place for students. She advocated for having surveillance cameras in schools to thwart the threat of violence.

"It's only a matter of time before it becomes normal," Marino said of school shootings.

She's not worried about stomping on the privacy of students.

"What privacy is there to invade at school?" Marino asked.

Marino said the cameras would curtail the use of guns, fights and drugs.

Seventh-grader Alexis Andersen wrote about the need to have a teen curfew.



Alexis Andersen talks about

teen curfews while Soroptimist Wendy David listens. Photo/LTN

“Is it better to be at a party or get good grades and have a successful life?” she asked.

Sixth-graders McKenna Beisel and Emma Aaron tackled the topic of homework.

“I strongly believe kids don’t have time for homework,” Beisel said.

She questioned the importance of hours of homework after spending the day in school. Beisel added that homework takes away from time for sports and family.

While Aaron believes in homework, she said there is such thing as too much.

“It’s important teachers give out learning work and not busy work,” Aaron said.

The Writing Festival winners are:

6th Grade High Point Program

• Diana Chavez – first

• Saintychelle Bascao – second

6th Grade Language Arts

• Emma Aaron – first

• Logan Chapman – second

• Anne Edwards – third

7th Grade Read 180 Program

• Danny Guillen – first

• Ervin Espino – second

7th Grade Language Arts:

• Alexis Anderson – first

• Chase Cunningham – second

• Riley Turner – third

8th Grade Read 180 Program

• McKenna Beisel – first

• Faith Brown – second

8th Grade Language Arts

• Leah Marino – first

• Mia Idzorek – second

• Bailey Segers – third.

Letter: Kiwanis serve food to less fortunate

To the community,

It’s always rewarding to see the smiling and grateful faces of Bread & Broth dinner guests and how helping the less fortune of our community has become such a high priority for many members of the Lake Tahoe South Shore community. Bread & Broth is very fortunate to have the weekly support for our “Adopt A Day of Nourishment” program and the hot, nutritious meals our sponsorships provide.

On Feb. 24, the Kiwanis Lake Tahoe Sunrisers generously donated $250 to provide the evening's meal as B&B's Adopt A Day sponsor. Kiwanis Sunrisers' member Charles Nelson manned the serving line helping to dish out Dijon honey ham, scalloped potatoes, baked beans and an assortment of green and fruit salads.

"It's rewarding to help the community," said Nelson as he assisted the B&B volunteers with serving and cleanup.

The role of the Kiwanis Lake Tahoe Sunrisers is to conduct service projects to respond to community needs. There are many members of the south shore community that are in need and in selecting Bread & Broth's AAD program, the Kiwanis Sunrisers helped to feed a much needed hot meal to our community's members. Thank you Kiwanis Lake Tahoe Sunrisers.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

El Dorado County residents invited to job fair

El Dorado County residents looking for work may want to attend the free Tri-County Job Fair on March 21 from 9am to 1pm at the Folsom Community Center, 52 Natoma St., Folsom.

Approximately 50 employers are expected at this event, which will include workshops on various job-seeking-related topics and a resume critique session.

Red Hawk Casino and El Dorado County Connections-One Stop have collaborated to offer free limited transportation to the fair

from select areas of El Dorado County. Since seating is limited, those interested in utilizing the free shuttle service must make a reservation by calling (530) 642.4850.

The Tri-County Job Fair is hosted by a number of public and private agencies in Sacramento, Placer and El Dorado counties.

More information about the job Fair is available online.

2nd rabid skunk found in El Dorado County

A rabid skunk has been found in a residential and commercial area of Pollock Pines.

The skunk was found in the 2900 block of Fir Drive in Pollock Pines on Feb. 21. The skunk, which exhibited highly aggressive behavior, entered the yard of a resident and came into contact with three dogs. Animal services was called and retrieved the skunk.

Animal services is not aware of any human contact with the rabid skunk. The dogs that came into contact with the skunk are current on their vaccinations and are being quarantined to ensure their health is monitored.

This is the second rabid skunk identified in El Dorado County in 2014. Another rabid skunk was found on Jan. 28 on Autum Way in Shingle Springs.

The following precautions should be taken to prevent the spread of rabies:

- Maintain current rabies vaccinations for pets

- Keep property free of garbage, stored bird seed, and left over pet food to avoid attracting wild animals
- Do not approach or handle any unfamiliar dogs, cats or wild animals
- Report any exposure to bats; bats are one of the most frequent carriers of rabies in California
- Call animal services if you see an animal that appears to be exhibiting signs of rabies
- Notify animal services immediately of any person or animal bitten or potentially exposed to a rabid or suspected rabid animal.

Brown signs $687 mil. drought-relief bill

By Alex Dobuzinskis, Reuters

Gov. Jerry Brown on Saturday signed into law a $687 million drought-relief package to deal with a water shortage he has called the worst in the state's modern history.

The legislation is intended to help residents, farmers and local communities, in part by tapping voter-approved bond money.

It includes measures to expand the recapture of storm runoff and the use and distribution of recycled water, as well as funding to secure emergency drinking water supplies for certain communities hard hit by the drought.

Read the whole story

Academy would be wrong to snub DiCaprio

By Jeremy Miller

It’s finally here! The Oscar season draws to a close Sunday night, with many of us sitting and watching Hollywood’s elite gather for the 86th Academy Awards.

Of the last five years, this year is by and far the most unpredictable.

This year we have an extremely widespread variety, especially when it comes to the Best Picture category. Nominated films include Spike Jonze’s “Her”, “12 Years a Slave”, “American Hustle”, “Gravity” and of course Martin Scorsese’s “The Wolf of Wall Street”. Paul Greengrass’ “Captain Phillips” also snuck into the running despite an early release in the season. When you put a guy like Tom Hanks into an inspirational, action packed powerhouse like this one, you can be sure you’d see it nominated for something, but with heavy hitters in every best picture nominee it’s not as if he’s got an easy competition.



Leonardo DiCaprio is up for best actor for his performance in “Wolf of Wall Street”.

Spike Jonze’s “Her”, the semi-futuristic love story involving a lonely man and his operating system, has won the heart of just about every critic in America. While it’s an underdog compared to the season’s blockbusters, I believe it has a strong chance. I also happened to be biased toward the film, as I’m a total sap for quirky indie romance flicks.

The real competition in my opinion is between Alfonso Cuarón’s “Gravity”, “12 Years a Slave” and “American Hustle”. Many think that Scorsese will walk away with a best picture Oscar; however I think that his film “The Wolf of Wall Street” was nothing more than a new-age remake of his classic “Goodfellas”.

The Academy Awards also tend to be heavily political. It’s as if there’s an unspoken agreement that a film can’t win based on certain principles of which “Wolf” definitely violates.

“Gravity” is a heavy contender as the film takes place in space and was an absolute masterpiece in terms of aesthetics and special effects. Sandra Bullock definitely takes away some of the power as I feel her performance was lacking, especially compared to co-star and legend George Clooney by her side.

“12 Years a Slave” is definitely a likely winner as its subject content is what the Academy lives for – controversial,

powerful, educational, and a thick emotional backbone.

“American Hustle” is also the talk of the town as its edginess and bold plot set it apart from its competition. It’s in a category all its own really as a period piece that’s packed full of drama, drugs, sex appeal and an all-star cast.

The best actor category is another unknown for those of us trying to predict the winners. The nominees are Christian Bale (“American Hustle”), Chiwetel Ejiofor (“12 Years a Slave”), Bruce Dern (“Nebraska”) Matthew McConaughey (“Dallas Buyers Club”), and last but certainly not least, Leonardo DiCaprio for his performance in “Wolf of Wall Street”.

I was a huge fan of “Nebraska”, and I absolutely love Bruce Dern. I feel he’ll get snubbed because the film didn’t have nearly as much opportunity for real power as the rest. McConaughey definitely pushed himself to the limits physically for his role, but as far as just all around acting, he delivered but didn’t blow me away. Christian Bale is one of my all-time faves, and I have a certain affinity for him as I am a huge Batman fan, so I’d be OK with him taking home the “W”. Chiwetel Ejiofor has always been a talented and often overseen actor. His performance warrants an Oscar, but honestly, because the Academy is so political, I almost don’t want him to win just based on that.

Now, as many of you may know, DiCaprio has had a rough streak at the Oscars. He’s been snubbed more times than anyone in the last 20 years. He was looked over for his most notable roles in “The Departed” and “Blood Diamond” and really I just want the guy to win an Oscar. He’s deserved one for years and I think that finally the Academy will take an honest look at his talents and give him the credit that he’s deserved for so long.

As far as the Oscar for best actress in a leading role, I believe it is between two of the five contenders. It’s between

Amy Adams for her role in “Hustle” and Sandra Bullock for “Gravity”. As previously stated, I don’t believe Bullock really brought the power, but I could see how she’d be nominated out of respect for the torture of shooting a movie that takes place in space. It’s not easy to sit in front of a green screen and act as though there’s no gravity, being suspended by wires all day long. If it were up to me, and I based it on talent alone, Adams would win it by a long shot.

The last category I’ll discuss is for best director. The nominees that have a chance are David O. Russell for “American Hustle”, Alfonso Cuarón for “Gravity”, and Alexander Payne for “Nebraska”. Payne definitely has a shot as almost all of his films bring him home a bucket of awards. His depiction of loneliness and familial bond was near perfect in his film “Nebraska” and though not a blockbuster with a shut out weekend at the box office, his film was moving and powerful and beautifully depicted. “Hustle” was a good time, sure, but best director material? I don’t think so. It wasn’t unique in the way its story was told, and the camera work was so-so. Alfonso broke the ceiling of science fiction with newly developed camera techniques and technologies and that right there is worthy of an Oscar.

All that being said who are my official picks for Sunday night?:

• Best Picture – “Her”

• Best Director – Alfonso Cuarón for “Gravity”

• Best Actor in a Leading Role – Leonardo DiCaprio for “Wolf of Wall Street”

• Best Actress in a Leading Role – Amy Adams for “American Hustle”

• Actress in a supporting role – Jennifer Lawrence for “American Hustle”

• Actor in a supporting role – Jonah Hill for “Wolf of Wall Street”.

I would like to end this piece by saying that if DiCaprio gets snubbed one more time by the Academy, I am going to flip out and lose faith in the members of the Academy. Though the movie wasn’t my favorite, he deserves it, just give him one. Enjoy the Oscars on ABC at 4pm. See you on the red carpet.

For a full list of nominees and any other information on the 86th Academy Awards, go online.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.

Monthly support group helps with grief

Barton Hospice’s Reflections of Life and Loss grief support group meets the first and third Thursday of each month, time varies so call ahead.

Meetings are at 2092 Lake Tahoe Blvd., Suite 600, South Lake Tahoe.

This group helps teach attendees how to cope with certain situations and encourages emotional connections with others.

For questions or more information, call Tina Bruess at (530) 543.5592 or Barton Hospice at (530) 543.5581.