

Opinion: Homewood mega-development could hurt Tahoe

By Tom Rosenberg, Sacramento Bee

Some 40 years ago, the Perini Corp., a major national builder headquartered in Massachusetts, purchased the Chambers Landing resort on Tahoe's west shore.

"Lake Tahoe is a place of unmatched beauty," John Perini told neighboring homeowners, "We intend to develop Chambers Landing into a premier resort."

Tahoe's west shore, located in Placer County, consists of single-family homes and extends about 15 miles south from Tahoe City to Rubicon Bay. Perini bought 700 acres zoned prime recreational and residential, and a half-interest in what is now the Homewood ski area.

Read the whole story

Water-saving technology tested in vineyards

By Mike Treleven, Napa Register

Robert Mondavi Winery is field testing a new, simple technology that allows young grapevines to thrive by getting needed water from the atmosphere and not from an underground aquifer.

The invention, the Groasis Waterboxx, can potentially save

grapegrowers 175,000 gallons per year per acre, said inventor Pieter Hoff, 57, who lives in the Netherlands.

“You are seeing a historic launch today,” said Bart van Bolhuis, consulate general of the Netherlands, who attended Tuesday’s unveiling at Mondavi. “The Waterboxx is low-tech and high-tech at the same time.”

Because it saves water and promotes reforestation, his invention is “great in fighting against climate change,” Hoff said.

Read the whole story

Mancuso up for an ESPY award

By U.S. Ski Team

Eight 2010 Olympic and Paralympic athletes, including Julia Mancuso (Olympic Valley), a 2010 double Olympic silver medalist and 2006 Olympic gold medalist highlight the heavy hitting list of athletes nominated for 2010 ESPY Awards.

Also up for awards are gold medalists Lindsey Vonn (Vail), Bode Miller (Franconia, NH), Shaun White (Carlsbad), Hannah Kearney (Norwich, VT), Alana Nichols (Farmington, NM) and Stephani Victor (Park City), along with Paralympic bronze medalist Andy Soule (Pearland, TX).



Julia Mancuso

The ESPYs will be hosted by Saturday Night Live star Seth Meyers and broadcast live on ESPN from the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles on July 14 at 6pm. Winners are determined by popular vote and polling is now open.

Vonn, whose record shattering 2010 season included the Olympic gold medal for downhill and a bronze in super G in addition to capturing her third consecutive Audi FIS Alpine World Cup overall title, is nominated in the Best Female Athlete category and Best Female U.S. Olympic Athlete.

Fellow Olympic gold medalist White is also up for ESPYs in two categories with nods for Best Male Action Sports Athlete and Best Male U.S. Olympic Athlete after defending his 2006 Olympic halfpipe gold.

Joining White in the Best Male U.S. Olympic Athlete division is Miller, who captured a royal flush of medals in Vancouver with bronze in downhill, followed by super G silver and a dramatic gold medal in super combined.

Mancuso's stunning silver medals in downhill and super combined notched her a spot in the Best Female U.S. Olympic Athlete category joining Vonn and Kearney, the women's moguls gold medalist.

Beijing wheelchair basketball gold medalist turned first-time winter Olympian Nichols rolled to a four-medal alpine skiing haul in Vancouver with gold in both downhill and giant slalom, plus silver in super G and bronze in super combined. With that, she became the first American woman to earn gold in

summer and winter Paralympics and earned a slot in the Best Female Athlete with a Disability category along side teammate Victor.

A three-time Paralympian Victor carries a 2010 gold medal in super combined and silver medals in both super G and giant slalom into the category of Best Female Athlete with a Disability, while Soule, a military veteran, lands on the men's side with a bronze medal in biathlon just five years after being introduced to nordic skiing.

Camp Sunrise extends registration deadline

Children's parents now have until July 21 to register for Barton Foundation's annual children's bereavement camp – Camp Sunrise – set for Aug. 27-29 at Galilee Camp & Conference Center in Glenbrook.

There is no cost to attend.

Camp Sunrise is designed for children ages 7-14 who have experienced the death of a family member. These children receive grief education and support from trained councilors and social workers, and they are able to work through any bereavement issues they may have. The weekend is designed to leave them with a more positive outlook for the future.

The camp is funded by the Barton Foundation and is a program of Barton Hospice.

Camp Sunrise is founded on the understanding that every child deserves the opportunity to grieve in a safe, supportive and

understanding environment. The camp will be at Galilee Camp & Conference Center, beginning late afternoon Aug. 27 and ending midday Aug. 29.

Residents of the South Shore, Minden, Gardnerville and the Carson City areas may apply to attend.

For more information or to register, call (530) 543.5909, or visit www.bartonhealth.org/events.

Wright: Land trust would provide South Lake recreation

By Kathryn Reed

For 30 years, Les Wright has wanted to start the Lake Tahoe Land Trust.

He first proposed the idea to South Lake Tahoe officials three decades ago. At that time he thought increasing the hotel tax by 2 percent would accomplish the goal. The goal being to raise money so property could be bought and either turned into parks, bike trails or open space.

As he tells the story, city officials liked the idea, too. They raised the transient occupancy tax. But it all went to the general fund, not to a land trust, not even designated just for recreation.



Les
Wright

Now Wright's idea is to increase property taxes for everyone living in the boundaries of Lake Tahoe Unified School District so \$1 million could be raised each year. How much this would cost the average homeowner or business has not been analyzed.

With this most likely being formed as a 501(c)3 nonprofit, it would not be possible to tax property owners. So how Wright will actually secure the funding remains a mystery.

He also doesn't want the cash collected from taxpayers to be used for maintenance and operations – just land acquisition.

Wright also wants the tax to go on indefinitely. No type of sunset clause was brought forth by him. The concept was not considered until *Lake Tahoe News* questioned the legality of his idea. It could mean generations from now would be taxed without representation.

Any tax idea has to go before the voters, with two-thirds saying yes for it to pass.

Wright, who has been on the city's Parks and Recreation Commission as long as he has had the land trust idea, talked about bringing his dream to fruition at last week's Recreation Commission meeting.

"I wonder what South Lake Tahoe would look like today if we had that 2 percent (from the TOT)," Wright said.

Wright, who is best known for having created the Lake Tahoe Marathon, is seeking the commission's endorsement for the idea. The commission may take a vote at its next meeting. The June 28 session was just a discussion. The vote would not be on the land trust itself, but whether commissioners support developing the idea further.

Neither the commission nor the Parks and Rec Department would ever be directly involved. The trust would be a private entity.

The dictionary describes a “land trust” as – a trust created to effectuate a real estate ownership arrangement in which the trustee holds legal and equitable title to the property subject to the provisions of a trust agreement setting out the rights of the beneficiaries whose interests in the trust are declared to be personal property.

The idea for the Tahoe trust, according to Wright, is to buy vacant land or rundown buildings, and then give the land over to entities that could turn them into a recreational facility. He envisions a 21-member board being the stewards and overseers of the whole process.

Peter Eicher, with the California Tahoe Conservancy, was at the meeting because he knows about buying land.

“It’s not easy to just acquire property and let it sit. You need to keep it fire safe and you’ll run into encroachment issues,” Eicher told the group.

Some people at the meeting brought up the idea of partnering with another trust instead of starting from scratch.

To that, Wright said, “I don’t want anything to do with another trust.”

But he also said when the Lake Tahoe Land Trust is a reality he plans to donate the first lot.

Routine holiday weekend for law enforcement

It was a fairly routine Fourth of July for law enforcement. That's not to say there weren't plenty of arrests. That's what made it normal.

South Lake Tahoe officers described it as a young crowd with lots of drinking.

"There was nothing out of the ordinary," South Tahoe police Lt. David Stevenson said. "The boat guys thought there were fewer boats on the water."

Five people were arrested in Incline Village at the DUI checkpoint over the weekend.

"It was a fairly quiet weekend for us – with no major problems; although the crowds at the casinos and the beaches at Elks Point and Zephyr Cove were larger than last year," Douglas County sheriff's Sgt. Jim Halsey said.

Below are the stats for the weekend for DCSO:

Criminal Arrests	Valley	Lake
Affray		1
Alternative Sentencing Violation	2	
Battery		4
Disorderly Conduct	1	
Disturbing the Peace	1	
Domestic Battery	1	3
DUI	1	1
Minor Consuming		1

Petit Larceny (shoplifting)		1
Possession of a Controlled Substance	1	1
Possession of Hypodermic Device		1
Probation Violation	1	
Resisting/Obstructing a Peace Officer		2
Trespassing		4
Warrant Arrest		1
Total	7	20
Non Criminal Arrests	Valley	Lake
Civil Protective Custody		2
Mental Health Arrest		1
Total	0	3
Criminal Citations	Valley	Lake
Battery		1
Disorderly Conduct		1
DUI		1
Minor Consuming		4
Trespassing	2	2
Total	2	9

CHP reeling from loss of officers

To the community,

Since May 7, 2010, the California Highway Patrol has suffered the loss of five officers in the line of duty. The CHP appreciates the assistance and outpouring of support it's received from throughout the nation, which gives us comfort during this difficult time.

"No words can describe the loss felt by our department and the families of these fallen heroes," said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. "As we mourn their recent loss, our brave and dedicated officers vow to honor the memory of their fallen comrades by continuing to carry out the CHP's mission of providing the highest level of safety, service, and security to the motoring public."

For more than 80 years, CHP officers have put their lives on the line to make sure our roadways and communities are safe. During that time, 220 uniformed members of our organization have made the ultimate sacrifice in their efforts to make California's roadways some of the safest in the nation.

"It's times like these that re-emphasize how dangerous this profession is and it strengthens the resolve of the men and women of the CHP," said California Association of Highway Patrolmen President Rob Nelson. "It is imperative that the loss of these officers serve as a reminder to the public to be cautious when approaching emergency incidents on the highway."

In 2007, the Move Over, Slow Down law went into effect in California. This law requires a person who is driving a vehicle on a freeway and approaching in a lane immediately adjacent to a stationary authorized emergency vehicle that is displaying emergency lights, or a stopped tow truck that is

displaying flashing amber warning lights, to move out of that lane when legal, safe and practicable, or slow to a reasonable and safe speed.

“Many of these tragedies involving our officers and other highway workers and emergency personnel could be avoided,” added Farrow. “While the department is committed to the highest level of training for every officer, it is every motorist’s responsibility to drive attentively and exercise caution on the roadway.”

Jeff Gartner, CHP South Lake Tahoe

California seeks OK to sue Stateline man in CalPERS case

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

California officials have asked a bankruptcy judge for permission to pursue their lawsuit against Alfred Villalobos, the former CalPERS board member they’ve accused of bribing top pension fund officials.

“Bankruptcy is not a haven for wrongdoers,” lawyers for Attorney General Jerry Brown said in papers filed last week in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Reno.

Villalobos filed for bankruptcy protection in June, a month after Brown’s office sued him and former CalPERS Chief Executive Fred Buenrostro. Normally, filing in bankruptcy court would automatically shield a debtor from being sued.

But Brown’s lawyers argue that the bankruptcy shield doesn’t apply to “police and regulatory actions,” including the suit

they've filed against Villalobos.

Read the whole story

Weather Service issues fire warning



Dry conditions and the threat of thunderstorms have prompted the National Weather Service in Reno to issue a fire warning for the Lake Tahoe Basin as well as the Carson City-Reno area.

A fire weather watch means that critical fire weather conditions are possible.

Scattered dry thunderstorms are being forecast for Wednesday afternoon into the evening.

In the watch area, fuels have been deemed critically dry. Dry fuels combined with expected lightning would result in critical fire weather conditions, the Weather Service said. Erratic and strong winds are expected Wednesday as well.

Williams & Ree in Stateline

Williams & Ree – “The Indian & The White Guy” at Harrah’s Lake Tahoe on Aug. 7 at 8pm.

Tickets are \$25.

Purchase tickets online at www.SouthShoreRoom.com.