

Hospitality worker training

For any business, getting a customer through the door is important. Getting that same customer to return again is essential.

To address these concerns and provide those in the South Shore hospitality industry with customer service training tools tailored for Tahoe, the Leadership Lake Tahoe class is offering “Ask Me” concierge training.

Training will be April 13 from 9-11am at the South Shore Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce office, 169 Highway 50, Stateline. Cost is \$20 for chamber members and \$30 for non-members.

To sign up, call (775) 588.1728.

Snowpack at 106%; water allocations increase

With the Sierra snowpack's water content above average, the Department of Water Resources on Thursday increased its State Water Project allocation to 20 percent.

“As the water picture for this year becomes clearer, we can increase our deliveries to farms and communities throughout the state,”



Lake Oroville
on March 21,
2010.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

DWR Director Mark Cowin said in a press release. "But the aftermath of three years of drought and regulatory restrictions on Delta pumping to protect fish species will keep this year's allocation far below normal. This underscores, once again, the need to implement long-term solutions to improve water supply reliability."

Manual and electronic snow survey readings from April 1 indicate that statewide snowpack water content is 106 percent of normal for the date. This time last year, the reading was 81 percent of normal.

Results of today's manual snow survey by DWR off Highway 50 near Echo Summit are as follows:

Location	Elevation	Snow Depth	Water Content	% of Long Term Average
Alpha	7,600 feet	71.5 inches	32.3 inches	97
Phillips Station	6,800 feet	65.7 inches	25.9 inches	92
Lyons Creek	6,700 feet	82.9 inches	31.8 inches	102

Tamarack Flat	6,500 feet	missing	missing	missing
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Electronic sensors show northern Sierra snow water equivalents at 126 percent of normal for the date, central Sierra at 92 percent, and southern Sierra at 105 percent.

Snowpack water content normally is at its peak the first of April, although DWR makes a final manual survey the first of May, and electronic readings report conditions daily. DWR may be able to increase the State Water Project allocation to more than 20 percent as hydrologists refine runoff projections from today's snowpack readings and conditions continue to develop.

Lake Oroville, the State Water Project's principal reservoir, is recovering slowly after three consecutive dry years. Its storage level today is at 47 percent of capacity, 60 percent of normal for the date.

In addition, fishery agency restrictions on Delta pumping continue to reduce the amount of water that can be delivered to contractors and customers in the Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast and Southern California. The final State Water Project allocation, to be set later this spring, will partially depend on how the pumping restrictions to protect fish including Delta smelt, salmon and longfin smelt are applied.

In 2009, the State Water Project delivered 40 percent of customer requests.

Putting perspective on SLT's

proposed redevelopment area

Dear City Council,

I am a 35 year resident with 16 years as a restaurant owner at the Y. I have also run several other Y area businesses. Sadly, I must say that the buildings in that area are predominantly the same ones that were already old when I moved here in 1974. The area is a strip development frozen in time and behind in competition with other tourism towns and under-equipped to compete even with RDA 1 in our own town.

While some might say too bad for those businesses because they bet on the wrong end of town. I disagree because RDA 1 was voted on by all our citizens and business owners so an unfair advantage was created through RDA 1. It wasn't done on purpose. Most of us believed that the improvements would continue throughout our community. We wanted more than just a welcome mat into Nevada. But it was the logical place to start with large businesses willing to take the risk.



Duane Wallace

I clearly remember the very few jobs in place on those parcels at the state line prior to redevelopment. Now there is a clear advantage. The signage permitted is better at the state line, and the ability to walk from business to business that shoppers love is also in place. Redevelopment worked well on that side of the street. We have also learned lessons from the side of the street that didn't work well. RDA is currently one for two. But had we not taken that risk, those paltry jobs

that were there would have also seen a slow death. We are partially competitive now as a result of our bold risk. We need to take another.

While I do not believe government creates wealth but rather lives off it, there is an opportunity to rectify the tilted playing field the Y finds itself in. It is risky to do business in Tahoe. That is because there are more government agencies eating at the trough.

As a former elected official, I saw firsthand how each agency did not consider what other agencies were doing to projects by piling on to the point that projects either failed due to the delay in time to complete them or because the fees were endless as everyone took pieces of a pie that had not yet been baked. Or the agencies fought over which one had dominance over a project. It is a death by a thousand cuts.

Thousands of room nights, restaurant meals, bags of groceries and sales of all types have been lost each year as a result. Each of those losses meant more lost stable families for our schools. The reality was partially masked. For instance, as the actual number of rooms rented plummeted, prices rose for a while leaving revenues to local governments appearing stable.

Now a stark reality has been discovered because the economic downturn exposed the fact that business was already dying here. Raising prices to increase business has the opposite effect. Governments, including TRPA, now realize that they only survive if the businesses and projects they regulate survive. As local governments raised their prices for services their revenue dropped as projects stopped. At the macro level the federal and state governments are seeing it as well. Even those including the unions who often have animosity toward big businesses had their retirement funds invested in the stocks of those very same companies. The down turn in the economy exposed the failure of the process by exposing the actual relationship of government needing a thriving business

community in order to survive themselves.

The project really is the fix. By allowing better square footage, adequate parking, a third story with appropriate setbacks and mixed use including housing, we can put more locals back to work. Not only through the construction work itself creating jobs but also through the subsequent jobs created by businesses that are able to make it by taking a shared risk in a public private partnership. This can all be done at the Y while still being environmentally responsible. In fact the poorly drained business that are replaced by better designed businesses will accomplish what staying frozen as a monument to the '60s has never accomplished.

I do not want to be accused of ignoring the hole in the ground at the state line. It isn't our best foot forward as a community. My answer is that real estate seeks its own level. At some point the cost of doing a project there will lower because of the drop in land values or because the reduced size of the project makes it more feasible. It will happen eventually.

I clearly remember how desperate the mostly motel owners at the state line were for a project as their only hope to end the slow death they were slipping toward. Without the financial ability to remodel on their own leaving a non competitive product in place they were more than willing to take a chance on redevelopment. Someday that land will produce jobs again. We, as a community, must insist on that.

And although Monday morning quarterbacking makes geniuses of us all, the truth is that what was there would not have survived. We had more of that type of room than tourists were willing to rent. With 6,000 motel rooms on the California side and the growth of timeshares and vacation rentals motels couldn't fill up. Then as our main economic engine [gaming] sputtered due to not being able to make the changes they needed to compete and the advent of Indian gaming we became a

Saturday only town. If it weren't for our ski areas going through the expensive gauntlet of the master plan process for increased investment things would have been even worse. However, we must learn from our mistakes and make RDA 2 a better project. But, act we must.

I don't know for certain how we will make it succeed, but I am certain how we will fail. That is if we do nothing. So let's take a calculated educated risk on improving the opportunity for more jobs in our town. Let's put our finger pointing aside and work together with each other to reinvigorate the lives of our families by giving them a place to earn a living. Both our chambers, our county, our city and all the agencies including the utilities need to cooperate to create the buildings that create the jobs that keep us all enjoying and protecting this beautiful place.

Respectfully,

Duane Wallace, South Lake Tahoe

Soroptimist morning meeting

Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra meeting at the Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Paul Middlebrook with KTHO AM-590, FM-96.1 will be the speaker April 8 at 7:30am.

Everyone is welcome.

Cycle, barbecue, ice cream in Carson Valley

Tour of the Carson Valley Barbecue & Ice Cream Social is June 20.

A bicycle tour of the Carson Valley starts and finishes at the legendary Pony Express stop of Genoa. Bicycling routes and distances for all abilities. The event includes live music, barbecue and ice cream social.

For more information, visit www.bikethewest.com or call 800.565.2704.

Lake Tahoe ski report, April 1



The sun is out in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Tour de Nez cycling race

The 18th Tour de Nez is June 19.

One of the country's top professional cycling stage races will be at Northstar-at-Tahoe in Truckee. For more information, visit www.tourdenez.com or call (775) 287.3599.

Riding the Wild Sierra cycling event

Alta Alpina Challenge: Riding the Wild Sierra is June 12.

A variety of ride options are available with "The World's Toughest Double Century" covering eight mountain passes. For more information, visit www.altaaplina.org or call 877.845.2453.

America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride

The 19th America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride on June 6 features 3,500 cyclists riding around the Lake.

This is the Teams in Training's largest fundraising event for Leukemia/Lymphoma Society. There are five rest stops, and three distance options: 35 miles, 72 miles, and a full

century.

To learn more, visit www.bikethewest.com.

Bike Derby in Tahoe City

Bicycle Derby on June 5 from 10am–2pm in Tahoe City.

Get ready for a fun and safe summer of bicycling around Lake Tahoe. Come to Rideout Community Center and learn basic bicycle repair, safety and participate in a fun obstacle course.

Rideout Teens will have a fundraising BBQ. Local bike shops will be on site as well as local fire department. For more information, contact Tahoe City Parks & Recreation.