Telephone townhall for small business owners

Board of Equalization member George Runner will host a telephone townhall for small business owners on Feb. 19 at 2pm.

The free event, co-hosted by the National Federation of Independent Business, will provide specific information to small business owners on how best to avoid common tax errors.

Those wishing to participate may register by calling (916) 445.3032. Individuals who pre-register will receive a telephone call at the start of the event inviting them to connect to the townhall.

The telephone townhall will inform small business owners about how to protect themselves from common tax traps such as missing records, successor liability, underreporting of tax, and invalid resale certificates. Information about these issues will help small business owners avoid making potentially costly mistakes.

Travel marketing proves profitable for U.S.

By Amy Langfield, CNBC

A little marketing can go a long way when it comes to luring travelers, even if you’re a well-known destination like the

United States. That’s the message from Brand USA, the public-private partnership created in 2010 to stop the U.S. from shedding its share of the world’s tourists.

The U.S. was increasingly losing out to spots such as Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean.

According to the Department of Commerce, 67 million international travelers visited the United States in 2012.

And Chris Thompson, CEO of Brand USA, said that not all of them would have come without a nudge from a $72 million marketing campaign focused on eight countries. That expenditure elicited 1.1 million trips and $7.4 billion in spending that otherwise would have gone to other destinations, according to a report that the firm released Thursday.

Read the whole story

El Dorado County, Miwok Indians create joint court

El Dorado County Superior Court and the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians are creating the first joint jurisdictional court of its kind in California for juvenile and family cases.

Christine Williams, chief judge of the Shingle Springs Tribal Court, and Suzanne Kingsbury, presiding judge of the Superior Court El Dorado County, will hear cases together and bring tribal and county services together. The two judges have just received a national grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the federal Department of Justice to create this collaborative court.

They will hear cases involving child welfare, domestic violence, juveniles, and substance abuse affecting families. The two judges will hear these cases together, alternating between tribal lands and Placerville.

Art auction benefits Rotary, LTCC Foundation

The Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe and Lake Tahoe Community College Foundation are joining forces for the third annual Off the Wall art auction.

Pieces created by local artists – including Art Department Chair Phyllis Shafer and other faculty – will be on display in the Haldan Art Gallery March 24-28.

The free auction kickoff party is March 24 from 5-7pm. The silent and live auction is March 29 from 6-9pm. Tickets are $10 to attend and bid in the auction (includes one drink and appetizers). All proceeds from tickets and art sales will be split between the LTCC Foundation and the Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe.

For more information and to preview some of the artwork to be auctioned off, go online.

$15 mil. in improvements planned for Diamond Peak

Diamond Peak Ski Resort in Incline Village wants to evolve into a year-round destination by providing more than winter recreation.

A draft of the master plan was unveiled last week that includes more than $15 million in upgrades. Build-out would take three years.

The first phase is estimated to cost $4 million. It would include a canopy tour, aerial challenge course, Alpine coaster, mountain biking and hiking.

Upgrading the lodge and expanding it would come in the second phase.

Winter improvements include more snowmaking and replacing Lakeview lift with a detachable quad.

The Incline Village General Improvement District, which runs the resort, did not take action at the Wednesday meeting.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Coalition not giving up on Tahoe-Reno Olympics

By Ed Vogel, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – The Sochi Olympics are expected to cost $51 billion. And a study shows that only six of the 19 cities that

hosted past Winter Olympics will have enough snow to host them after 2100.



There is a movement for the Olympics to return to Tahoe. Photo/LTN

Squaw Valley hosted the 1960 Winter Games, but it won't have the snow to host another Olympics by 2050, according to a study released in January by the University of Waterloo in Canada.

So what's going to happen to the dream of Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki and the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition? They repeatedly have tried to coax the U.S. and International Olympic committees to award a winter games to the Reno-Tahoe area.

"We still believe Lake Tahoe will be the next region in North America to host a Winter Olympics games," said Krolicki, chairman of the Reno Tahoe coalition for nearly a decade. "It is our passion. It is a dream you have to believe in. It would be an incredible chance to showcase our region and improve tourism and economic development for generations."

He noted Wednesday that 55,000 tickets were sold for a curling tournament in Las Vegas last month, evidence that even Southern Nevadans would be eager for a Reno-Tahoe Winter Olympics. Corny as curling might be, it has become one of the favorite Winter Olympics sports.

When the U.S. Olympic Committee decided against having an American city bid for the 2022 Winter Olympics two years ago, the Reno Tahoe coalition just changed the year on its T-shirts and immediately began talking about hosting the 2026 Winter Games.

Read the whole story

CalFire may bill Nutting for fire suppression

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

El Dorado County Supervisor Ray Nutting, already facing charges for allegedly failing to declare state income for brush clearing on his ranch, is now waiting to find out if he will be billed for a November incident in which fires broke out from smoldering burn piles that reignited.

CalFire says four small fires broke out Nov. 22 on Nutting's 340-acre timber ranch in Somerset. CalFire investigators recently completed their report on the department's response to the Nutting property. Since 2001, state crews have responded five times to fires on Nutting's ranch resulting from burn piles as part of work to clear vegetation and other fire hazards.

CalFire spokesman Daniel Berlant said the agency is reviewing the incident to determine if Nutting should be held liable for fire response costs and, if so, how much he should pay.

Read the whole story

Game warden shot in El Dorado County

By Andy Furillo, Sacramento Bee

A California Department of Fish and Wildlife game warden was listed in serious condition Saturday at Sutter Roseville Medical Center after being shot the previous night while on routine patrol in a rural area near Georgetown in El Dorado County.

Warden Bob Pera, 35, an 11-year veteran of the agency, was shot in the hand and neck around 8 or 9pm while he was conducting a compliance check on two hunters, according to Fish and Wildlife spokesman Lt. Patrick Foy.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

• Here is the weekly El Dorado-Tahoe roadwork schedule from Caltrans.

• The inaugural Gone Bonkers Kids Ski and Snowboard Race is March 2 from 1-4pm at Granlibakken in Tahoe City. It is for ages 5-12. Cost is $5 for Granlibakken guests and $25 for others.

• Dodge Ridge is open.

• Alice Jones is now director of fiscal services at Lake Tahoe Community College.

• Gov. Jerry Brown has reappointed Lai Lai Bui, 40, of Shingle Springs, to the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. She has been on the commission since 2005.

Then and now: Original Dixie now a barge



The original M.S. Dixie paddle-wheeler was retired

in the 1990s. Photos/Bill Kingman

The M.S. (Motor Ship) Dixie was brought to Lake Tahoe in sections in about 1948, having served on the Mississippi River.



The Dixie in 1972.

After the Amundson family of Lake Tahoe lengthened, widened, and added a third deck, the M.S. Dixie debuted as a cruise ship in 1972. It docked variously at Ski Run on the beach, at Timber Cove Pier, and at Zephyr Cove, which became its permanent port.

The initial dinner cruises to Emerald Bay offered steaks from several backyard-type barbecues placed outside on the Dixie’s rear deck.

Twenty years later, the M.S. Dixie was replaced by a brand new M. S. Dixie II, the largest ship on Lake Tahoe. It is based at Zephyr Cove.



M.S. Dixie II

Jim Amundson has converted the old retired Dixie into a service barge which remains the main platform for our annual 4th of July and Labor Day fireworks shows over the lake.



The original M.S. Dixie is now the barge used for the annual South Shore fireworks.

Singer Ray Donoho’s website details the debut Dixie where he performed.

– Bill Kingman