Storm advisory for Lake Tahoe

A winter weather advisory is in effect from 10pm Thursday to 10am Friday for the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Moderate to heavy snow is expected late tonight into the morning. Expect 2-6 inches below 7,000 feet and 6-9 inches above that elevation, the National Weather Service says.

Winds will be in the 15 to 25mph range, with gusts of 45mph and the ridges likely to see 85mph gusts.



Expect chain controls in and out of Tahoe on Friday. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The forecast is for much of the same on Saturday, though a weather advisory has not been issued yet.

With temperatures not expected to get out of the 30s during the day (thatâ€™s at the lake, not the slopes), it should just be snow falling, not rain like late January.

As with most winter storms, chain controls over the passes are apt to be in place when the white stuff starts coming down. Road conditions can be accessed via the Home page of *Lake Tahoe News.*

Girls basketball clinics on South Shore

Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department Girls Basketball Clinics for grades 3-8 will be at Kahle Community Center in Stateline March 6 and March 13 from 4-6pm

Cost: $8 per clinic, payable to the instructor,

Kahle Community Center will offer a girls 3 on 3 basketball league next fall-winter.

For Information, call (775) 588-5309 or email tracyowenchapman@gmail.com

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CPR class on the South Shore

A BLS CPR class is being offered Feb. 15 from 5:30-9pm. Cost is $50 for this one-evening class. Fee includes manual. This course is geared for the general public, covering the 30:2 CPR for adults, children and infants, AED, airway, masks and choking. With successful completion, students will receive a two-year CPR certificate.

The instructor is Duane DeClerck.

Sign up early to guarantee that you will get your book in advance. Need a minimum of six students for this class to run.

To register, stop by the South Lake Tahoe Parks & Recreation

Complex at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (530) 542.6056.

Collegiate hockey tournament in South Tahoe

The South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena will host the Pacific Collegiate Hockey Association Tournament this weekend. Starting Friday, five West Coast teams will vie to advance to the National Tournament.

Play continues all Saturday afternoon and concludes Sunday morning.

Watch a lot of action for $5 per game or $20 for the entire tournament.

For game times and more information, call (530) 542.6262, or go by the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena at 1176 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

South Tahoe Farmers Market

Organic certified farmers market in South Lake Tahoe at the American Legion parking lot every Tuesday from June through September from 8am-1pm.

Bottled water v. tap – the movie

The Reno-Tahoe community will have an opportunity to view “TAPPED”, an award winning documentary on the issues surrounding bottled water vs. tap water.

Three local screenings are being sponsored by the Tahoe Water Suppliers Association this spring in the south and north Lake Tahoe areas.

“TAPPED” is currently only available for viewing at theaters or licensed public screenings. There is no admission charge for attending the “TAPPED” screenings; donations will be accepted for the hosting locations.

Scheduled screenings:

Feb. 25 at 6:30pm; free; Aspen Room in the library of the Lake Tahoe Community College, 1 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

March 31 at 6pm, free, UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center, Sierra Nevada College Campus, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village.

A third screening in the Tahoe City area is being arranged for May.

Is access to clean drinking water a basic human right or a commodity that should be bought and sold like any other article of commerce? Stephanie Soechtigâ€™s award winning feature film, “TAPPED” is an unflinching examination of the business of the billion dollar bottled water industry.

From the producers of “Who Killed the Electric Car” and

“I.O.U.U.S.A.” this documentary is a behind the scenes look at the unregulated and unseen works of an industry that aims to privatize and sell back one resource that ought never become a commodity, our water.

From the plastic production to the ocean where so many of these bottles end up, this inspiring documentary trails the path of the bottled water industry, and the communities that were unwitting chips on the table. A powerful portrait of the lives affected by the bottled water industry, this revelatory film features those caught in the intersection of big business and the publicâ€™s right to water. From the website: www.tappedthemovie.com

The February and March screenings are presented by the Tahoe Water Suppliers Association in partnership with the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences and Lake Tahoe Community College.

For more information, call Madonna Dunbar at (775) 832.1212, email mod@ivgid.org, or go to www.tahoeh2o.org.

Lake Tahoe ski report, Feb. 4



Weather is on its way – though most likely Friday is the powder day. Here is today’s ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

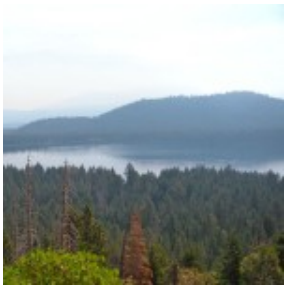
Fallen Leaf Lake board president resigns

By Susan Wood

Another chapter unfolds in the continuing saga of the Fallen Leaf Lake Community Services District.

The CSD board is expected Saturday to discuss how to fill one of its seats left vacant with President Dana Clark resigning last month amid turmoil over who will run the marina and general store. The meeting is at 11am at Lake Tahoe Airport in South Lake Tahoe.

The board and vocal community members have debated the issue for months, resulting in shouting matches, harsh feelings and even the threat of legal action. In some cases, the quandary has caused a rift between board members leaning toward an option of the district running the concessionaire and some in the community insisting it should stay in the hands of Fallen Leaf Landing. The company, managed by the John Rich family, has run the dual operation that's the hub of the mountain village outside South Lake Tahoe for 14 years. No contract exists between the two entities.



The water may be tranquil, but the business of Fallen Leaf

Lake is anything but that. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“It appears to me that some community members have already made a decision, and the CSD will run into more legal resistance if the board does anything other than contract with Fallen Leaf Landing. (It) may have the experience of running this operation, but that is not the only factor to be considered,” Clark wrote in his resignation letter.

The two sides have fought over issues ranging from accounting practices to an agreeable rate for rent of the facilities.

According to Clark, the district has spent $7,600 in legal fees with the intent of countering the threat of legal action.

Beyond the monetary issues, the dispute has created arguments between board members and residents of the ordinarily quiet mountain hamlet at the base of the Desolation Wilderness.

“I am unwilling to serve in an environment where my every move and decision is judged and possibly escalated to legal action,” Clark added.

The environment was rocked six months ago when Lee Vestal, the CSD general manager, resigned over disagreements with the community on how to run the district.

Board member Mike Kraft, whose own negotiations broke down with Rich a few months ago, will take over for Clark as president. He wrote a letter to the community declaring the latest departure of such a high profile person within the district represents “the embarrassing truth in our community at this time.”

Kraft commended Clark for all his work, including a major

repair of the marina dock and the move into the new general store in 2003.

It’s unclear the direction the board will take in filling the vacant seat or the concessionaire post. A new board member may be appointed or elected this weekend.

Facts, figures, opinions delay SLT’s plastic bag ban decision

By Kathryn Reed

Enough information about the merits and hazards of banning plastic bags was disseminated Wednesday that the commission tasked with making a recommendation to the South Lake Tahoe City Council deferred its decision for a month.

“The goal is to reduce and eventually eliminate one-time use plastic bags,” Chairwoman Kirstin Cattell said at the beginning of the meeting.

Assistant City Attorney Jacqueline Mittelstadt told the 40 people gathered at the city offices at Lake Tahoe Airport that a court ruling came down last week calling the prohibition of plastic bags in one city illegal because adequate environmental reports were not done.



Promoting reusable bags in South Lake Tahoe.

Mittelstadt also enlightened everyone that in 2007 the state Legislature ruled cities couldn't impose a fee to use plastic bags. However, the state can. But two bills relating to that matter have died.

At the end of the meeting Cattell said she wants more details on the legalities of the issue before making up her mind.

Some of the people who spoke said waiting for the state to implement a fee is the right course.

Ellen Camacho spoke out in favor of a ban on plastic bags.

"We need to make it hurt to use plastic bags," she told the commissioners.

Ellen Nunes, who runs Clean Tahoe, rattled off a slew of statistics about the billions of plastic bags produced in the world each year. She said this as slides of trash scattered about Tahoe – in marshes, the street and meadows – filled the screen.

She said Clean Tahoe picked up 108 tons of trash in 2009 – that's just in South Lake Tahoe – and has nothing to do with normal trash service. How much of that was plastic bags she didn't know.

Nunes said her crews have found plastic particles in animal

scat.

Environmentally, that’s one of the arguments to ban the bags – that they get loose and animals ingest the toxins. Also, as the bags slowly decompose they leach chemicals into the soil and waterways. It takes hundreds of years for ordinary plastic bags to decompose.

But Ryan Kenny with the American Chemistry Council said environmentally plastic bags are better than paper when it comes to the production process. Kenny said plastic produces less emissions, use less water, less energy and more can be transported at once compared to paper bags.

Mike Murphy, who owns Road Runner gas station, said he would need a warehouse to store paper bags, whereas plastic are so compact.

He said a big issue is with tourists who don’t know what to do with their trash and who don’t believe a garbage company sorts recyclables by hand, like South Tahoe Refuse does.

Jeff Tillman of the refuse company said about 45 percent of what comes on the conveyer belt is pulled off to recycle. That number is expected to jump when the new facility opens this spring.

Education was a big theme of the discussion.

It was noted that consumers don’t recycle their plastic bags at grocery stores. Mike Schouten, owner of the local Grocery Outlet, said he estimates about 1 percent of the bags are recycled. They offer plastic bags and have reusable canvas bags for sale.

Schouten said he believes customers are speaking – they want the convenience of the plastic bags. He says this because only about 10 customers a day come in with reusable bags.

But that gets back to the education component – to make the

public aware of what it takes to create plastic and paper bags, and what happens to those bags at the end of their life. And plastic bags are said to average 12 minutes of use before becoming trash.

Sustainability Commissioner Do Lee said he would like a cost analysis regarding how a ban would affect small and large businesses. He also wants to now the financial impact to customers before he decides how to vote.

Former Mayor Margo Osti is adamantly in support of banning plastic bags. She said the commission needs to work with Clean Tahoe, tell the council to have a dedicated code enforcement officer for trash related issues and should seek grants that could possibly provide reusable bags to everyone in the city for free.

Others who spoke questioned the logic in having South Tahoe ban the bags at stores when tourists come here with bags and so many locals shop off the hill where plastic bags are the norm.

Minutes before the meeting, *Lake Tahoe News* received a phone call from Jim Coalwell, who runs the farmers market in South Tahoe each summer. He said his organization is willing to cooperate with whatever decision is made, but hopes any change would be phased in.

Some of the discussion centered on getting rid of Styrofoam as well.

Jeremy Bauer, purchasing manager for Sierra-at-Tahoe, said all of the products at the resort are recyclable, with many made from corn resin.

“Our consumers have told us they appreciate that,” Bauer said.

David Hansen, director of engineering for Embassy Suites South Lake Tahoe, said he agreed with just about everything that had

been said that afternoon, recognizing there are trade-offs with every decision.

Embassy doesn't use plastic or Styrofoam. With its composting program and recycling efforts, in 2009 STR picked up 45 percent less waste at the hotel.

Speaking on behalf of the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, Hansen said, "We support your decision if it makes economic and environmental sense."

The Sustainability Commission is expected to make a recommendation at its March 3 4pm meeting.

Cremations top full burials at South Tahoe cemetery

By Kathryn Reed

Happy Homestead Cemetery in 2009 continued the trend of more people seeking cremation over full body burial.

Of the 73 burials at the South Lake Tahoe cemetery, 45 were cremations, 28 full body – or 62 percent v. 38 percent.



John McChesney

This is consistent with 2008, with 48 cremations (64 percent) and 27 full body (36 percent).

The five-year average is 57 percent cremations and 43 percent full body burials.

At the cemetery district's board meeting Wednesday, two members were added to make it a five-member board. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors appointed John Poell and Joe Tillson.

Their terms expire in January 2013.

John McChesney, who has been on the board for 35 years, said he expects to step down when his term expires next January.

Technically the members serve at the pleasure of the seated District 5 supervisor. If Norma Santiago is not re-elected in November, the incoming supervisor could seek to appointment some or all new cemetery board members.

Perhaps the hazard of showing up late for your first meeting is being nominated to be chairman of the board for the next year. Such was Tillson's luck. When it came to voting, he said, "I guess" in regards to his role.

Poell is vice chairman and Del Laine secretary.

At the next meeting in the spring the board is going to consider having subcommittees, which it couldn't have before because of being a three-person board.

Another agenda item is likely to be discussion of cooperating with the Lake Tahoe Historical Society for the preservation of Pioneer Cemetery in the Al Tahoe neighborhood.