

Sorensen's Natural History Stroll

Look for signs of winter approaching and what it means for the flora and fauna of Hope Valley. How do native creatures survive harsh winter conditions to thrive once spring arrives? Join William Tweed, former chief naturalist at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National parks, as he shows how plants and critters prepare for the long, cold months ahead. Bring binoculars and wear warm layers, and water-resistant footwear for this fun and informative outdoor adventure. For reservations and to book a stay at Sorensen's, call 800.423-9949.

Cost: \$50 for Sorensen's guests/\$75 non-lodging guests, includes lunch.

Runners lace-up to run in snow



By Brenda Knox

Sunday morning's heavy snow and below freezing temperatures did not keep more than 200 enthusiastic runners away from the 20th Annual Lake Tahoe Kokanee 5K, 10K, and Half Marathon Trail Runs.

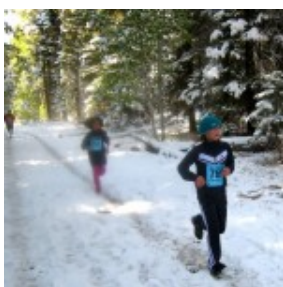
As volunteers and runners started arriving, the thermometer showed a mere 24 degrees. This is a run dominated by South Shore runners. A few inches of snow never deters the hearty souls of the Lake Tahoe area.



The Tahoe Mountain Milers and Sagebrush Stompers running clubs have put on this event for 20 years, but never with snow until Sunday.

The first overall finisher for the 5K run was Harley Norton with a time of 20:57 and for the women, Laurel Weil with a time of 24:43.

The first overall finishers for the 10K run for the women was Maureen Sheehan, with a time of 47:49:44; and for the men, Ryan Elliott finished at 47:03:15.



Runners in the 20th Annual Kokanee races did not let snow stop them.

Photos/Brenda Knox

Finishing first in the Half Marathon were Chris Badolato for the men with a time of 1:34:36.52 and Amy Bottenberg for the women with a time of 1:44:23.36.

Despite the subfreezing temps, runners seemed to fly over the snowy trails and past the aid station at Fallen Leaf Lake Dam.

The top three finishers in each age division, male and female, received a bottle of wine (if of legal drinking age) and a unique handcrafted award in the design of a Kokanee salmon. Top-three finishers in each age division are listed below.

Thank you to all the volunteers and congratulations to all the finishers who came out to participate on this snowy morning in Tahoe.

Proceeds from the 20th Annual Lake Tahoe Kokanee Runs benefit the Tahoe Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit organization that supports U.S. Forest Service environmental education programs at Lake Tahoe.

The next event sponsored by the Tahoe Mountain Milers and Sagebrush Stompers will be the Annual Turkey Trot at Bijou Community Park on Nov. 21. For more information, visit <http://www.tahoemtnmilers.org/>.

5K Top 3 Finishers (Female)

Age: 0-10

1. Blanca Sosa
2. Katie Fischer

Age: 11-15

1. Emily Stimac
2. Kerry Norton
3. Desi McCully

Age: 20-29

1. Laurel Weil
2. Rosana Ramirez
3. Kayla Francis

Age: 30-39

1. Briana Sullivan
2. Katie McRae
3. Jennifer Roman

Age: 40-49

1. Cynthia Novak
2. Claire Boyle
3. Elizabeth Bredall

Age: 50-59

1. Trish Hall
2. Peg Hellman
3. Carla Martin

Age: 60-69

1. Linda Roman
2. Cheryl VanFleet
3. Christina Schlosser

5K Top 3 Finishers (Male)

Age: 0-10

1. Connor McRae
2. JD Buchholz
3. Tobin McRae

Age: 11-15

1. Harley Norton
2. Mark Bredall
3. John Bredall

Age: 20-29

1. Scott Blomquist
2. Tayler Haught
3. Kyle Francis

Age: 30-39

1. Rick Roman
2. Chad Andres

Age: 40-49

1. Paul Noah
2. Lars Macleod
3. Dave Eveland

Age: 50-59

1. David Hellman
2. Lewis Martin
3. Dennis Furr

Age: 60-69

1. Richard Roman

10K Top 3 Finishers (Female)

Age: 20-29

1. Rebecca Eckland
2. Amy Kight
3. Sarah Syed

Age: 30-39

1. Kristi Bray
2. Heather Morgan
3. Angie Arcadia

Age: 40-49

1. Maureen Sheehan
2. Lynni Weibezahl
3. Marlaina Smith

Age: 50-59

1. Sharlee Cotter
2. Judy Guinn
3. Jo Kilpatrick

Age: 60-69

1. Nancy Peppin
2. Fran Gayer

10K Top 3 Finishers (Male)

Age: 30-39

1. Ryan Elliott
2. Seth Albert
3. Changfan Liu

Age: 40-49

1. Dennis DeLange
2. Michael Cantor
3. Brian Coonradt

Age: 50-59

1. Doug Cichowicz
2. Rick Conti
3. Dave Martini

Age: 60-69

1. John Campbell
2. Chad Arnold
3. Newel Knight

Age: 70+

1. Monte Coffman

Half Marathon Top 3 Finishers (Female)

Age: 20-29

1. Kate Oâ€™Driscoll

2. Kelly Huck

3. Sarah Garcia

Age: 30-39

1. Amy Bottenberg

2. Sarah McMahan

3. Erika Mathews

Age: 40-49

1. Julie Young

2. Bridget Matos

3. Rita Frank

Age: 50-59

1. Meredith Mills

2. Jennifer Singh

3. Ann Boeser

Age: 60-69

1. Carole Nageotte

Half Marathon Top 3 Finishers (Male)

Age: 20-29

1. Brandan Fletcher

2. Sean Cronin

3. Lane Martin

Age: 30-39

1. Chris Badolato
2. Piers Stockwell
3. Dusty Lachapelle

Age: 40-49

1. Keith Barker
2. B. Bottenberg
3. Jeff Murphy

Age: 50-59

1. Tom Eckert
2. Chuck Martin
3. Adolfo Maestas

Age: 60-69

1. Bill Land
2. Frank Kight
3. Bill Prowse

Brenda Knox is an outdoor enthusiast who lives in South Lake Tahoe.

Ex-Cabo Wabo employee caught

up in Roethlisberger case

Associated Press

RENO – A former Harrah's employee at Lake Tahoe claims he was fired in July 2008 because Ben Roethlisberger complained to the hotel-casino's regional boss that the worker had demanded to see identification for a young-looking woman at the NFL quarterback's table at a Harrah's restaurant where they were drinking.

Alvaro Brito, former assistant manager at the Cabo Wabo Cantina who had worked for the company 12 years, leveled the allegations in a lawsuit filed against Harrah's and its Lake Tahoe president John Koster.

[Read whole story](#)

Full agenda for Sustainability Commish

South Lake Tahoe's Sustainability Commission will host a guest speaker on Oct. 7 at 4pm in the City Council Chambers (aka Lake Tahoe Airport).

Leon Churchill, Tracy city manager, will share with commissioners information regarding methods to improve opportunities for financial collaboration to achieve sustainability goals, just as he recently shared with the League of California Cities. Tracy is the second city to receive the Emerald City designation from the Department of Conservation.

In addition to the special presentation, the commission will discuss plastic bags and Styrofoam and whether they should recommend a survey of local businesses to assess the impact should a fee or ban be considered.

Other items on the agenda include their first quarterly report and whether to request the city to adopt an internal energy efficiency policy which would include establishing a city Green Team.

Trial for 1985 murder begins



Today begins the trial of a man accused of killing his 4-year-old son in 1985 at his Tahoe Keys residence.

Alexander Olive's body has never been found.

Ulysses Roberson has been in the Placerville jail since being extradited from a Washington prison in 2003.

Blood at the South Lake Tahoe house led authorities to arrest Roberson. DNA tests showed the blood was that of the boy's.

The trial is expected to last for months.

Roberson could face life in prison without the possibility of parole if the jury finds him guilty.

Li'l Smokey's rescue retold in captivating book

Publisher's Note: *California Department of Fish & Game reports Li'l Smokey's signal was picked up via telemetry on Sept. 30 in the same general area where he has been heard from in the past.*

By Susan Wood

CalFire firefighter Adam Deem will carry a story of a lifetime, but it doesn't involve saving a home or human.

The Redding-area forester, who has fought blazes since being a teenager, made national headlines when he saved a bear cub in July 2008 – a season marked as one of the worst for wildfires in California history.

His story and that of bear cub Li'l Smokey are brought to life in the book "Saving Li'l Smokey – A True Story." Deem's rescue and diligence along with the rehabilitative expertise of Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care are all part of the book.

The journey of Li'l Smokey from his burned paws to being released back to the wild in early 2009 is chronicled in this children's book. (I enjoyed it so much I'm not sure it really should be categorized as a kids' book.)

Deem and his wife, Celeste, co-wrote the short story. Illustrations are by art student Ryan Lamb. The art is so good it's as if Lamb was with Deem and Li'l Smokey during the ordeal.

After working 27 consecutive days, Deem recounts his drive up to Shoemaker Bally beyond Whiskeytown Lake near Redding and

finding the cub limping with melted paws. Even the most cynical reader can't help but hurry through the pages to discover what happens next.

Page by page, the book is apt to prompt readers of all ages to coo at the heartwarming firsthand account and artwork of the little bear's early defiance-turned-gratefulness. Amid the tragedy of fire, the cub's rescue presents an uplifting turn-of-events in Northern California.

One cute note, Deem must have pondered long and hard about the noise the bear cub made in displeasure. Hint, that's on Page 7.

The self-published book is available at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care (www.ltwc.org). A portion of the proceeds of the book benefit the wildlife rehab center outside South Lake Tahoe. For more on the story, go to www.lilsmokey.net.

Soroptimist gearing up for annual wine tasting

Fifteen local restaurants and 25 Northern California wineries are onboard to serve the throng of people expected to turn out of the 39th annual Soroptimist Wine Tasting.

More than \$63,000 was raised at the 2008 event. Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe uses the money to help groups like the SLT Women's Center, Boys and Girls Club, OPEN, Special Olympics, A Fighting Chance, Lake Tahoe Community College and others.

Formerly called An Evening of Food and Wine, the event is Nov.

13 at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

The service club still needs silent auction and raffle items.

For information about donating or buying tickets, contact Valerie Conners at (530) 544.8545 or email valerieconners@yahoo.com.

ST Chamber speaks out on 2011 Hwy. 50 closure

South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce Position Paper 2011 Echo Summit Repair

ISSUE

The rock wall at Echo Summit on Hwy. 50 was installed after WWII and needs to be repaired. Caltrans has proposed five options for this project, anticipated to begin May 1, 2011. The consequences of this repair work will be traffic delays and rerouting, which could significantly impact the local economy.

BACKGROUND

CalTrans started a public awareness campaign early in 2009, holding forums with the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce South Shore, the City of South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County Supervisors, and others. Caltrans proposed five options, but recommends Option 5, which calls for a forty-four day project, commencing May 1, 2011. Under this option, Echo Summit would be closed for 18 to 24 days, with 20 or more additional days of delays with pilot cars. Further, traffic into and out of South Lake Tahoe would be

rerouted from Placerville, CA, onto Hwys 49 and 88, and through Jackson, CA. Johnson Pass Road would be open only for local and emergency vehicles. LTVA, LTCCSS, and others have publicly supported Option 5. There is an advertising budget of \$750,000. designated to offset the economic impact to South Lake Tahoe.

DISCUSSION

The South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce (STCC) first became aware of the CalTrans public forum in May of 2009. Concerned that alternative roadwork projects may provide less impact upon the local economy, STCC gave presentations throughout the county to educate a larger segment of the business community about the proposed CalTrans project, and to seek additional public feedback. The essence of the public poll has shown that most, but not all, respondents (95% or more) had heard of the Echo Summit repair project, but did not know when it would occur or that there were 5 options connected with the project.

Following each lecture and utilizing discussions via telephone/Internet, STCC provided business community respondents a choice:

- 1.) Full closure of Echo Summit for 18 to 24 days in a single construction season (May to October) for a 44-day project
- 2.) Partial closure over two construction seasons, with a pilot vehicle guiding vehicles across the summit.

Interestingly, respondents were basically split 50/50 on these two options. However, most all (98%+) respondents sought to have Johnson Pass Road open to all small passenger vehicles, and commercial vehicles routed through Hwy. 88. Many respondents (especially those who had experienced closures of Hwy 50 in 1992 for the Cleveland Fire and the mudslide in 1997) wanted access to Sly Park/Iron Mountain Road, and desire Hwy 50 remain open for passengers and larger vehicles.

The results of STCC's lectures and public polls were presented to Caltrans at an STCC sponsored public forum on August 20, 2009. During this meeting, Tom Brannon, CalTrans Chief Officer of Project Management B, explained the construction process and their rationale behind Caltrans's decision to proceed with their proposed construction Option 5 decisions (full closure over a single construction season). Mr. Brannon related that although Johnson Pass Road would be available for local traffic under all five of their construction plan options, Caltrans has at least six reasons why they are opposed to encouraging, promoting, or advertising use of Johnson Pass Road to the general public (i.e., tourists, delivery vehicles). These reasons all relate to Johnson Pass Road itself and include:

1. Liability issues to Cal Trans – lawsuits
2. Granite sub-surface of the road
3. Absence of safety guards on this narrow road
4. Two very sharp turns (30-foot radius and 35-foot radius)
5. Very steep grade
6. An estimated \$100,000 cost to prepare for 18 to 24 days of high traffic volume over this road, plus expenditures to repair damages resulting from overuse of Johnson Pass Road.

During the same public forum, the possibility for using Sly Park Road/Iron Mountain Road was reviewed. This road is maintained by the US Forest Service and is normally open as a public thoroughfare only after the snow is melted and the road is dry. The primary issues cited by Caltrans for their opposition to using this route were:

1. Liability issues to Cal Trans – lawsuits
2. Road bed is normally very wet in May and water is under the sub-surface

3. It is a USFS road which lacks police patrols or other services for approximately 30 miles
4. Road is narrow
5. Unknown cost to prepare for 24-days of high traffic volume damage and subsequent repair
6. Danger of forest fire if the project was moved from May to October (we have subsequently verified with Captains Gigliotti and Michaels that our fire season is July and August).

To the issue of full closure of Echo Summit for 18 to 24 days during one construction season or partial closure with a pilot vehicle for two construction seasons (May to October), respondents were split almost 50/50. This question was difficult for most respondents to answer because there are no economic impact studies to review. However, historical data provides evidence of economic loss of \$1 million dollars per day to the south shore during closure of Hwy 50. Further, STTC spoke with local accountants who have reported that our economy is better equipped to weather a Hwy 50 road closure in October than in May.

Regardless of the options provided by Caltrans, there is overwhelming support to maximize the ease of traffic flow to visitors during the construction project by using both Johnson Pass and Sly Park Road/Iron Mountain Road. The most desired route (98%+) is to have Johnson Pass Road open for passenger vehicles, and Sly Park Road/Iron Mountain Road open for passengers and commercial vehicles. If Johnson Pass Road is unavailable, then the desired route is Sly Park Road/Iron Mountain Road open to all traffic. Conversely, the overwhelming least desired choice is to divert south shore visitors through Highway 88.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STCC's position is based upon its own research, discussions

with Caltrans, and STCC's informal data collection using polling at lectures, phone calls, and internet contact. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Use part of the advertising money to upgrade Johnson Pass Road for passenger vehicles with the above recommendations. Commercial vehicles will use Highway 88.

2. Even though there is a strong voice in the community for partial closure (approximately 50-50) there is not enough strong evidence to indicate a firm stance for either position.

If approved by the safety professionals (fire, ambulance and police), then select Option 5 and close Hwy 50 at Echo Summit for 18 to 24 days and 20 days of pilot vehicles for repair.

3. Move the project construction from May to October. According to local fire authority, any given year, the danger of fire is similar in May to the danger in October. This already represents a shoulder season where many accountants felt the financial impact to businesses would be less than in May and June. In October, Iron Mountain road would be dry after the summer and less susceptible to crumbling and damage in October vs May.

4. Create events to entice guests to use businesses from Meyers to Stateline during closure.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES / SUGGESTIONS

Construction Costs: During the poll, the question of differences in the cost of construction for each CalTrans option arose, however, STCC was not in a position to answer this question on Caltran's behalf. It was, however, suggested that night work be part of the process.

Advertising Budget Feedback: With respect to Caltran's \$750,000 advertising budget, creative suggestions included Caltrans purchase of liability insurance to cover lawsuits

which may arise from use of Johnson Pass Road. Another suggestion was to not advertise the construction project, and use the advertising money instead to open Sly Park Road/Iron Mountain Road and improve the safety of Johnson Pass Road. Advise commercial vehicles not to use Johnson Pass Road.

Media: We continue to have concerns about how the recent Bay Bridge closure media was handled. Most Californians saw the front page news and TV lead stories saying “not to go there” even though the San Francisco businesses were trying to cover overhead.

Hwy 88 Advertisement: Suggestions for the \$750,000 advertising budget for Hwy 88 diversion: Advertise Hwy 88 as a scenic route. Develop new events on the south shore to attract visitors. Advertise each south shore community Meyers, Y, Al Tahoe, Bijou, Ski Run and Stateline equally. Target high discretionary income market and provide an event that would draw them to Tahoe.

Pilot Car Use: Suggestions for rerouting over Johnson Pass Road for 18 to 24 days: Use a pilot vehicle for both directions on Johnson Pass Road. Use portable traffic signals and pilot vehicles going east and west throughout the week with only eastbound traffic Friday night and Saturday morning switching to westbound only traffic on Sunday. Restrict commercial vehicles to travel between 11pm and 5am.

New Year's Eve at MontBleu

This year's “Midnight Blu” New Year's Eve, Multi Venue Party offers three parties in one. One ticket gets you into all three venues, all night long. The pre-parties begin at both Opal Ultra Lounge and Blu the nightclub, with doors opening at

8pm.

Opal will feature top forty house and mash-ups, party favors and a balloon drop at midnight.

Blu the nightclub will also open at 8pm, featuring high energy dance music, party favors and confetti cannons at midnight.

MontBleu's 14,000 square foot convention center will open at 10p, and feature the live music from "Disco Inferno" presented by Boogie Nights, party favors and a balloon drop at midnight.

In and out privileges will be offered at all three venues, as guests will be allowed to float from party to party. Ticket prices are \$50 in advance for all three parties, \$75 day of. Tickets can be purchased on-line through Ticketmaster.com or by calling the Montbleu Box Office at (775) 588-3515, ext. 6151.

Songs of the Holidays

Truckee Tahoe Community Chorus at Sierra College presents – Songs of the Holidays and Community Sing Along.

The Truckee Tahoe Community Chorus at Sierra College, directed by Susan K. Horst and Chris Nelson, will present two holiday concerts: Dec. 6 at the Truckee High School Theatre and Dec. 7th at the Resort at Squaw Creek, Squaw Valley.

Both concerts will begin at 4pm.

The featured choral composition is "Gloria" by the noted contemporary English composer, John Rutter, accompanied by UNR's Brass and Percussion ensemble. The balance of the program features contemporary composers Morton Laudesen and

Eric Whitacre and Holiday classic choral literature.

General admission \$10. Students with ID and children are free. Tickets are available at Sierra College in Truckee, "Sassafras" in the Safeway Shopping Center, at the door or at www.squawvalleyinstitute.com.

For more information, go to www.truckeecommunitychorus.com.