Editorial: McClintock complicating Rim Fire recovery

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the Jan. 12, 2013, Sacramento Bee.***

Gateway communities to Yosemite National Park suffered a triple-whammy in 2013 – the Rim Fire, the 16-day government shutdown and another winter with little snow. How this national treasure recovers from the 257,000-acre fire that swept through the Stanislaus National Forest, Yosemite National Park and private timberland from Aug. 17 until the end of September matters a lot, not just for the Sierra but for other wildlands that might be hit by fire.

The U.S. Forest Service has done a good job of bringing people together and working collaboratively. Existing laws that require public comment have garnered useful information and will make the recovery better. Thousands of people have weighed in. Still, the Forest Service has an extremely difficult task reaching consensus among competing interests in a way that avoids litigation.

Unfortunately, Rep. Tom McClintock, the Elk Grove Republican who represents Yosemite and the area scorched by the fire, seems determined to drive a political wedge, rather than forge agreement. He has called for immediate salvage logging that would be exempt from federal environmental laws, public comment and court review on the entire 257,000-acre burn area, including in Yosemite National Park.

Read the whole story

No snow: Time to water outside plants

Publisher's note: ***This is one of a series of blurbs about how the lack of winter is impacting the Lake Tahoe Basin. If you have an idea, please email it to info@LakeTahoeNews.net.***

Water plants in January? Yes, says gardening expert Carolyn Meiers.

This is because they are used to getting moisture throughout the year. And because that is not naturally happening this winter, the plants need people to turn on the spigot to keep them alive.

Meiers recommends people in Lake Tahoe – and other places that aren't getting moisture this winter – to water shrubs and trees that have deep roots.

"It doesn't apply to anything with snow or ice because that is protecting the plant," Meiers told *Lake Tahoe News.*

Watering in the afternoon when things have warmed is the best time. Water what you care about and possibly the items that are going to be expensive to replace.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Polar bear plunge to raise money for Christmas Cheer

The Tahoe Keys Polar Bear Plunge is Feb. 16.

People will be taking to the water at 356 Ala Wai. Blvd. in South Lake Tahoe at noon that Sunday. Registration and check in is from 10-11:30am.

This is a fundraiser for Christmas Cheer.

For more info, email ltpolarbear@yahoo.com or call 800.916.0900.

‘Expired’ food to get a second life

By Lindsay Abrams, Salon

The former president of Trader Joe’s thinks he can sell the food that other stores throw out.

At first glance, that sentence looks like it tells you everything you need to know: Like Jeff Bezos’ vision of delivery-by-drones, or Elon Musk’s proposed hyperloop, Doug Rauch’s new venture sounds at once promising and kind of out-there, and like it’s possibly just a publicity stunt.

In interviews with NPR and the New York Times magazine, Rauch laid out the basics: The Daily Table, due to open in May, will be part grocery store and part cafe, specializing in healthy, inexpensive food and catering to the underserved population in

Dorchester, Mass. What makes it controversial – at least at first glance – is Rauch's business model: His store will exclusively collect and sell food that had crept past its "sell-by" date, rendering it unsellable in other, more conventional supermarkets.

As it turns out, so-called expired food is something of an overlooked commodity. At some point along the chain of production, from when it's grown to when it's left on a consumer's dinner plate, 40 percent of the food produced in the U.S. each year is wasted, and $165 billion goes in the trash.

Read the whole story

Holland takes gold at X Games in snowboardcross

By USSA

ASPEN -– Olympians Nate Holland (Squaw Valley) and Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton Mountan, Vt.) took snowboardcross gold at X Games Aspen Friday, less than two weeks before heading to Sochi, Russia, for the 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

It was Holland's seventh X Games gold medal, and came after a serious shoulder injury earlier this season. Jacobellis also reeled in her eighth X Games gold, making her the winningest woman in X Games history after spending two seasons recovering from knee injuries.

U.S. Snowboarding teammate Alex Tuttle (Stratton, Maine) took silver with German Konstantin Schad bronze in the men's big

final. The USA’s Jonathan Cheever (Saugus, Mass.) finished eighth with Hagen Kearney (Telluride, Colo.) ninth.

Czech rider Eva Samkova took silver with Helene Olafsen taking bronze.

Northstar hosting ice sculpture competition

The second annual Carve Tahoe international snow sculpture event returns to Northstar Jan. 28-Feb. 2.

Three-member teams from Canada, Finland/Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, California/Netherlands, Tahoe/Truckee and Wisconsin will participate in the competition, creating sculptures from 20-ton blocks of snow using only hand tools, snow and water.

Snow sculpture events celebrate the science of working with an ever-changing medium to create intricate art with massive scale.

Free to all attendees, Carve Tahoe sculptures will be on display at and around the Village at Northstar. The best nights to view the sculptures are when they are nearing completion, Jan. 30-Feb. 2.

The sculptures will be illuminated with multicolored lights. Judging is Feb. 1.

Cook, Mancuso in top 10 at Cortina downhill

By USSA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy – With just two weeks to the 2014 Olympic Winter Games, two-time Olympian Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) posted her best Audi FIS Alpine World Cup finish of the season with fifth in the first of two downhills slated for Cortina.

Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) also showed her speed with ninth and young gun Jackie Wiles (Aurora, Ore) stormed from bib 41 to finish 15th for the first World Cup points of her career.

German Maria Hoefl-Riesch won for her third victory of the season to boost her World Cup downhill and overall points lead.

Laurenne Ross (Bend, Ore.) was also a season best with 17th and Leanne Smith (N. Conway, N.H.) finished inside the downhill points with 25th.

No sure bet when it comes to

Super Bowl

By Case Keefer, Las Vegas Sun

Odds are Las Vegas will never play host to a Super Bowl.

That’s fine, because our city stages the game within the game on an annual basis. The NFL can try to deny the role gambling has played in making it the country’s most popular sports league all it wants, but it’s a futile exercise this time of year.

Prognosticating the Super Bowl through the lens of the betting line is as much of a tradition as debating quarterbacks and judging commercials. And the topic is most enveloping locally, where everyone seems to have an opinion.

Read the whole story

Villalobos in poor health; trial delayed

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

Alfred Villalobos, a key figure in the CalPERS bribery scandal, has had his criminal trial postponed because of poor health.

The Lake Tahoe businessman and his co-defendant, former CalPERS Chief Executive Fred Buenrostro, will now go on trial April 28 in U.S. District Court in San Francisco, a judge ruled Wednesday. Trial was originally set for March 3.

Villalobos' lawyer, Bruce Funk, said in a court filing this week that Villalobos was hospitalized much of last fall in the Reno area and spent some time in hospice care. "Apparently, Mr. Villalobos suffered from acute ammonia poisoning due to the various medications he was taking for his neurological illnesses," Funk wrote in his court filing. "Around that time period in November, he was completely unresponsive in the hospital for days."

Read the whole story

STHS student honored by Boys and Girls Club

Josh Kornbeck, youth of the year for Lake Tahoe Boys and Girls Club, will vie for the California Youth of the Year title and a $1,000 college scholarship from Tupperware Brands Corporation.



Josh Kornbeck

The 16-year-old was selected for his sound character, leadership skills and willingness to give back to the community.

Being named youth of the year is the highest honor a Boys and

Girls Club member may receive.

Kornbeck is often volunteering and raising money for the club. He has been a member of the club for nine years.