Nevada promoting local agriculture

The Nevada Department of Agriculture has created a Buy Nevada brand program to promote Nevada food and agriculture.

Buy Nevada promotes food and agriculture businesses such as food processors, small farmers, large growing operations, restaurants, retailers and distributors.

The recent study on the economic impact of the agriculture industry to the state – estimated at $5.3 billion – helped drive the program.

Buy Nevada has tiered memberships ranging from free to higher-level sponsorships. Money raised will further promote Nevada food and agriculture businesses. Businesses may sign up online.

Hotel minibars may become extinct

By Hugo Martin, Los Angeles Times

Is it time to say goodbye to the hotel minibar?

A recent survey by the travel website TripAdvisor.com found that the hotel minibar was the least important amenity for U.S. travelers. Only 21 percent of travelers ranked the mini-bar as an important amenity, compared to 89 percent who called

free in-room wireless Internet the most important.

There is little financial reason to keep minibars. Hotel consulting firms estimate that minibars generate no more than 0.24 percent of total hotel revenue, with much of that eaten up by the cost to check and restock the bars.

Read the whole story

Economists forecast bright 2014

By Marilyn Geewax, NPR

As the new year begins, most economists' annual forecasts are brimming with good cheer.

"The economic news remains broadly encouraging," the Goldman Sachs forecasters write in their 2014 outlook.

And the brighter prospects are not limited to this country. "The global economy is likely to emerge in 2014 with modest growth of 3.3 percent compared with 2.5 percent this year," according to Nariman Behravesh, chief economist at the forecasting firm IHS Global Insight.

Most stock analysts also see more gains coming on Wall Street. JPMorgan chief U.S. equity strategist Tom Lee, who accurately predicted stock advances for 2013, says Americans are now in the midst of "a classic bull market," driven by good earnings.

So, why all the upbeat forecasts? What has changed?

Read the whole story

Study: Skiers happier than snowboarders

By Stephen Wayne Kasica, Outside

Researchers from South Korea inadvertently supplied skiers with more ammunition in the ideological war between which is better: skiing or snowboarding.

According to the study published in the journal Applied Research in Quality of Life, skiers find more pleasure from a day on the slopes than snowboarders. Among the 279 participant study, skiers showed higher levels of pleasure and involvement in their sport than snowboarders did.

Read the whole story

3-day audio workshop in South Lake Tahoe

Audio 101 is a three-day workshop with six-hour sessions at Tahoe Production House in South Lake Tahoe.

Topics include how the ear perceives sound, acoustics and sound travel. There will be hands-on learning of setting up a

sound system with speakers, basic connections, equalization, mixing and routing of signals, as well as power management.

The workshop is Jan. 26-28 from 10am-5pm; it inlcudes lunch at TPY – 2291 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Cost is $315 and preregistration is required.

Email info@tahoeproductionhouse.com for more information.

Family tries to find good after ’12 SnowGlobe tragedy

By Janelle Wetzstein, Argus-Courier

No parent wants to admit their child is using drugs. No parent wants to accept that drugs contributed to their child’s death. And no parent wants to think that if only their child stuck with a friend, they might still be alive.

But in the past year, Petaluma’s Kevin and Kim Byrne endured all three tragic scenarios.



There was a candlelight vigil in South Lake Tahoe for Alyssa Byrne last

January. Photo/LTN file

“Sometimes I think we’re still dealing with it as if it happened yesterday,” Kevin Byrne said Monday afternoon. “We’re getting by, one day at a time, but it’s difficult.”

It’s been a year since Kevin Byrne said goodbye to his 19-year-old daughter Alyssa as she headed off to the annual SnowGlobe music festival in South Lake Tahoe. Hours after ringing in the New Year and the end of the concert, Alyssa was nowhere to be found.

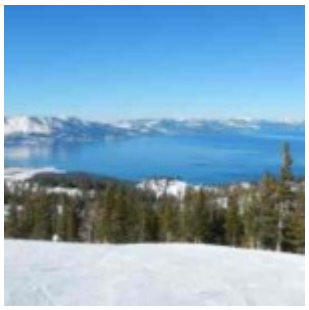
Her body was discovered days later in a nearby snow bank. An autopsy found she likely died of hypothermia, and a toxicology report revealed she had large amounts of methamphetamine and psychoactive drugs in her system. Her drug use, coupled with the location of her body, caused authorities to speculate that Alyssa Byrne tried to walk to her hotel to avoid the long lines at the shuttle bus after the concert concluded, and then became disoriented in the freezing temperatures.

While many parents would break down after such loss, the Byrnes instead spent the past year helping young adults fight substance abuse and reminding young people of how important a buddy can be when partying.

“At least a dozen kids have reached out to me since Alyssa died,” said Kevin Byrne. “They’ve asked for help with serious substance abuse problems. I’ve sat through many Narcotics Anonymous meetings with them. It’s incredible that this tragic circumstance has helped other people.”

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• *USA Today* readers voted the South Shore as the best ski destination. Too bad in the write up they confused Sierra and Northstar. The North Shore came in at No. 3.

• Frank Mosbacher is retiring Jan. 2 after 34 years at the Eldorado National Forest public affairs officer.

• Nancy Clarke's national park oil paintings and Eleanor Rasmussen's ceramic pieces inspired by nature are on display at the library at Lake Tahoe Community College through mid-February.

• As of April 1, tobacco-use of any kind will not be permitted throughout Barton Memorial Hospital buildings, Barton Health facilities and on the parking lots or grounds.

Pedestrian killed in South Lake Tahoe

Law enforcement officers are trying to identify the pedestrian who was killed on Highway 50 at 8pm News Year's Day.

The man, who is estimated to be in his 40s, was found face down in the driveway of the Town and Country Shopping Center in South Lake Tahoe. He had no identification on him and no one as of Thursday morning had reported him missing. The El

Dorado County coroner will be doing an autopsy.

It is not known what direction the pedestrian was walking. The vehicle that hit him was going east on the highway. South Tahoe police officers said the driver, 19-year-old Uriel Ortiz of South Lake Tahoe, was driving less than 40 mph – the posted speed limit. Officers said Ortiz was not under the influence of drugs.

The accident is still under investigation.

Anyone who saw the accident is asked to call Detective Doug Sentell at (530) 542.6100.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Learn how music affects memory

Petr Janata will talk about his research on the neurological connections between music, memories, and emotions on Feb. 6 in Incline Village.

This research has implications for potential breakthroughs in music-based therapies for patients with Alzheimer's disease.

The Music, Memory and the Brain talk is from 5:30-7pm at the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline.

Cost is $5.

Gloves are not an accessory to overlook

By Kathryn Reed

Every element of outdoor wear is important. Hours can be spent researching the best skis and boots. But seldom is the same amount of time and effort given to finding the best accessories.

Gloves often fall into the category – they fit, I'll buy them. And while fit is a huge component, there are more things to consider when choosing the fabric to protect your digits.

"When a glove fits you are going to want to be able to pinch in front of the fingers. You don't want it so tight because blood flow won't reach the end of the finger," Lindsay Thayer, marketing manager at Tahoe Dave's in Kings Beach, said.



Gloves are an important accessory for skiers.

Then there is the question whether gloves or mittens are better. Mittens were the overwhelming response for kids. It's easier to get them on and often they are warmer.

The warmth factor is also why adults like mittens. They are recommended for people with poor circulation or those who always are complaining about cold hands.

“All the fingers get to snuggle together,” is how Thayer explained it to *Lake Tahoe News*.

A hybrid of a glove and mitten is the lobster claw. The index finger and thumb are separate from the other three fingers. This allows for more dexterity.

“What you want is balance between warmth, dexterity and water-proofness,” explained Matt Gibely, glove guru at Alpenglow Sports in Tahoe City.

He said it’s important to have gloves for each sport – downhill, Nordic and backcountry.

Dexterity is not critical for most people skiing the slopes of Lake Tahoe. A glove with waterproofing material, along the lines of Gore-Tex, is recommended. The waterproof layer is usually not the outer shell, but instead goes in between the shell and the warming layer.

Synthetic insulation will not be affected by moisture as much as down.

“Nordic gloves are a whole different animal. Those tend to breath very well because Nordic skiers are exerting energy the whole time,” Gibely told *Lake Tahoe News*.

As with most gear, the price for a pair of gloves is all over the board. *Ski* magazine in September came out with its top six picks. They ranged in price from $40 to $375.

Dave Salazar, salesman at Sports Ltd. in South Lake Tahoe, said heated gloves are the most expensive – topping out at about $400. A battery makes the gloves warm; then there are settings to adjust the amount of heat.

Salazar and Thayer are proponents of the one-time use hand warmers. But don’t put them in your palm because the blood does not circulate there. Use the compartment on top of your glove – that’s what it’s there for – not your money or a key. The top of your hand is where the blood is circulating and what you want heated so the warmth reaches your fingertips.