# Douglas ready for New Year’s Eve revelers

Like years past, Douglas County sheriff’s deputies expect to close Highway 50 in the Stateline casino corridor on New Year’s Eve to handle all of the people milling about.

While there have been 60,000 revelers in the past, that number has declined even before SnowGlobe came to town two years ago. SnowGlobe is back. And there is an outdoor music festival at Horizon, too, which should disperse crowds.

If the highway is closed, traffic will be diverted onto the loop road.

Douglas deputies will be present in the Stateline casino area throughout New Year’s Eve, supplemented by officers and representatives of numerous other law enforcement agencies, including Nevada Highway Patrol, South Lake Tahoe Police Department, El Dorado County Sheriff’s Office, California Highway Patrol, and the FBI. Supporting agencies include the Douglas County Communications Center, Tahoe-Douglas Fire Department, Caltrans and Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

Glass or metal containers, regardless of contents, are prohibited in the casino core area on New Year’s Eve.

The curfew in Douglas County is midnight on Dec. 31 for people younger than 18.

# Too much cinnamon may violate the law

**By Sidsel Overgaard, NPR**

Who doesn’t love a Danish pastry?

And in Denmark, they like their pastries sprinkled with plenty of cinnamon.

But now, Denmark’s bakers are being told that their time-honored recipe for the beloved kanelsnegle –or cinnamon swirl – may be unhealthy and against the law. Recent testing by the Danish government found that a large number of Denmark’s beloved rolls had too much cinnamon – more than the recommended limits set by the European Union.

Too much cinnamon? Yes, there is such a thing. Actually, the concern here is coumarin, a naturally occurring ingredient found in Cassia cinnamon – the most common variety of the spice sold in Europe and the U.S. In high-enough doses, coumarin can cause liver damage in a small group of sensitive individuals.

**Read the whole story**

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# Olympic Valley wants to be its own town

**By Kathryn Reed**

Olympic Valley – it might be California’s next town.

More than enough signatures were gathered this month for Placer County's Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to have to look into the viability of making Olympic Valley a town. Twenty-five percent of the registered voters needed to sign the petitions; 30 percent did so in three weeks.

The town boundaries would be the same as the Squaw Valley Service District, which provides fire, water and parks to the area. If incorporated, it is possible SVSD could become the new town's public works department. The town would go from ridgeline to ridgeline, include the Truckee River corridor south almost to Alpine Meadows and then a little north of the road that leads to the valley.

"A small group started in spring 2013 with the idea we were really frightened by the large-scale proposed expansion of the village," Fred Ilfeld, chairman of Incorporate Olympic Village (IOV) board, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We realized it was possible by incorporating we could get local control of land use planning and other things."



Residents of Olympic Valley want to incorporate the town. Photo/LTN file

Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, a subsidiary of KSL Capital Partners, runs Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski resorts as well as the village at Squaw. In 2012, the company proposed a massive overhaul of the village that would include more housing, a water park and other features that residents balked

at. While those plans have since been scaled back, residents still desire having local control instead of deferring to Placer County supervisors who make most of their decisions 80 miles away in Auburn.

About 1,000 people call this area home; of those 560 are registered voters.

Next up is what is likely to be a five-month dual process to have revenue neutrality negotiations between IOV officials and the county, as well a comprehensive fiscal analysis. The latter will be done by an independent agency hired by LAFCo and paid for by IOV.

Public hearings will be scheduled after those two items are completed.

LAFCo officials will then decide whether the issue of incorporation will go before the voters. The decision is supposed to be made based on fact, not emotion. The main facts are whether the town could be fiscally viable and not a liability to the county.

Incorporation proponents would like the voters to be casting ballots in November. The first question would ask if they want Olympic Valley to be incorporated. If yes, a subsequent election would be conducted to elect the town council.

IOV already had to put up $25,000 with its application to LAFCo to become a town. To date, $56,0000 has been raised for the incorporation process. It’s estimated $155,000 will be needed to complete the process.

“This is something we should have done years ago,” Ilfeld said. “We don’t want more of the valley to change at the whim of private developers with the support of county supervisors who have a base of representation 80 miles away and 500 feet lower who are not in the same universe.”

That doesn’t mean IOV supporters don’t want the ski resort or others to be able to grow and do new things. What they want is a more direct say in the process.

Proponents also want more of a say as to how the hotel taxes are spent as well what goes on with public transportation. The people of Olympic Valley say they want to govern themselves, to preserve their history, culture and future.

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# Editorial: NSA vs. U.S. Constitution

**Publisher’s note:** ***This editorial is from the Dec. 18, 2013, Los Angeles Times.***

Six months after Edward Snowden revealed that the National Security Agency was indiscriminately collecting the phone records of Americans and holding on to them for years for possible use in terrorism investigations, a federal judge has rightly ruled that the program probably violates the 4th Amendment’s ban on unreasonable searches and seizures.

In a powerful opinion released last week in Washington, U.S. District Judge Richard J. Leon castigated what he called an “almost-Orwellian technology that enables the government to store and analyze the phone metadata of every telephone user in the United States.” Yet Leon also noted that the government had not cited “a single instance” in which the data had stopped an imminent attack.

**Read the whole story**

# ‘Made in USA’ may be redefined

**By Dan Nakaso, San Jose Mercury News**

It seems simple enough: To be labeled as “Made in America,” a product sold in California must include only components manufactured and assembled in this nation.

But that’s a tougher standard than elsewhere in the country, where small amounts of foreign parts don’t invalidate the label. And now it’s touched off a debate among business interests and consumer rights groups, as state lawmakers consider lowering the threshold included in the state’s 52-year-old labeling law.

Richard Russell, chairman of the board of Russell’s Furniture, is opening a new store in San Mateo on Feb. 1 that he originally planned to call “Made in America.”

But he changed the name to “Russell’s Furniture American Pride/Bringing Jobs Back Home” after his suppliers – including Amish craftspeople from Ohio – could not guarantee that every single component originated in America, which would meet the California standard for labeling a product Made in America.

The idea of watering down California’s standard bothers Richard Holober, executive director of the Consumer Federation of California, which opposed an earlier draft of the bill that would have allowed products to carry a “Made in America” label if 90 percent of the parts were made and assembled in the United States.

**Read the whole story**

# K’s Kitchen: Substantive vegetarian cuisine

**By Kathryn Reed**

There are so many things to love about San Francisco. Food is one one them.

It would be so easy to eat at a different restaurant each day for every meal. But there is one that I always like to return to – Greens.

My mom first took me there years ago. It’s at Fort Mason. The views of the Golden Gate Bridge are outstanding, especially on an evening when the fog is rolling in.



It’s a restaurant I have since introduced Sue to. She liked it so much that when we had a belated birthday celebration for her in August she opted to go to Greens. This is a true testament to the restaurant – a meat eater chose a vegetarian restaurant.

The food at Greens is off the charts outstanding. The dishes are creative, the flavors incredible.

Fortunately, Executive Chef Annie Somerville has written a few cookbooks so people can feel like they are at Greens – at least with the cooking. It’s impossible to duplicate that view.

Below is one of my all-time favorite recipes from her “Fields of Greens” cookbooks. Depending on what you are serving with it and for how many, you may want to increase the ingredients. It’s a good hearty meal for fall or winter.

The comments in the recipe are all from Somerville in the cookbook.

**Spinach Fettuccine with Shiitake Mushrooms, Spinach, and Sun-Dried Tomatoes**

Spinach fettuccine is a good pasta choice for this boldly flavored dish. The deep, earthy taste of the shiitake mushrooms is heightened by the sun-dried tomatoes; the toasted pine nuts add nutty sweetness, and the quickly wilted spinach lightens all the flavors.

½ pound fresh shiitake mushrooms

3 T extra virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper

3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

¼ C dry white wine

½ pound spinach fettuccine

1 small bunch of spinach, stems removed and leaves washed, 4 cups packed

3 oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and thinly sliced

1 T pine nuts, toasted

2 T chopped fresh herbs: marjoram, chives, and thyme

Grated Parmesan cheese

Set a large pot on the stove to boil. Remove the mushroom stems and cut the caps into ½-inch slices.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large sauté pan; add the mushrooms; ½ teaspoon salt, and a few pinches of pepper. Sauté over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes, then add the garlic and wine. Cook for a minute or two to reduce the wine, but not

completely; leave a little liquid in the pan to keep the mushrooms from sticking.

When the water boils, add 1 teaspoon salt. Add the pasta to the boiling water, and while it's cooking add the spinach to the mushrooms along with ¼ teaspoon salt and a few pinches of pepper. Sauté over medium heat for 1 minute, until the spinach is just wilted, then reduce the heat and add the sun-dried tomatoes, then remaining tablespoon of olive oil, and ¼ cup of the pasta cooking water to loosen the pan juices.

The pasta should be just tender at this point; drain it in a colander and add it to the sauté pan along with the pine nuts and herbs. Toss everything together and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with freshly grated Parmesan.

Serves two to four.

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# Map leads to El Dorado County film shoots

**By Gus Thomson, Auburn Journal**

Living so close to Tinseltown does have its advantages on occasion, including having a troupe of thespians filming literally in your backyard.

Placer County has had its share of movie shoots – think "Phenomenon," "The Godfather II" and even Charlie Chaplin's "The Gold Rush" – but El Dorado County has been no slouch over the years.

With that in mind, the El Dorado Lake Tahoe Film & Media Office has compiled an impressive lineup of films and

locations into a map, guide and smart phone link promising a fact-filled film-oriented road odyssey that includes trivia and directions to exact locations.

Thirty locations are on the map and Kathleen Dodge, executive director of the El Dorado County film effort, pointed out that they're all either on publicly accessible land or in private locations where owners have agreed to be part of the tour and all that entails.

**Read the whole story**

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# California schools in better financial shape

**By Theresa Harrington, Contra Costa Times**

SACRAMENTO – California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson declared a fiscal state of emergency in K-12 education 3½ years ago.

But much has changed since then. Now, Torlakson says, schools are in better financial shape and ready to take on the challenges of new education standards and computerized testing, which are expected to better prepare students for college and careers.

Below is an excerpt of an end-of-the-year phone interview with Torlakson that also touched on parent involvement in schools, controversy over new Common Core standards, and the federal government's threat to withhold funding due to the state's elimination of most STAR tests.

**Read the whole story**

# Snippets about Lake Tahoe




• South Tahoe Alliance of Resorts gave $5,000 each to Christmas Cheer, Live Violence Free and Tahoe Youth & Family Services.

• The Douglas County Public Library in Zephyr Cove will be closed Jan. 1. It will reopen Jan. 2 at 9am.

• The *Las Vegas Sun* reports: “A Nevada law allowing medical marijuana dispensaries takes effect April 1, but licenses to sell and grow the drug probably won’t be issued until months later, a state official said.”

• First class stamps will be 49 cents starting Jan. 26.

• Here is a video of the Trout in the classroom project that features Tahoe Truckee Unified students and staff on PBS’s “This American Land” show:

# Burning restrictions imposed in Carson Valley

Strong temperature inversions and stagnant weather conditions are causing air pollution levels to increase rapidly in the valleys of Carson City and Douglas County.

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection is asking people in the Eagle and Carson valleys to refrain from burning wood this week. Where wood is the only option, people should burn as cleanly as possible.

When haze is visible over the valleys, residents are urged to refrain from using fireplaces, wood and pellet stoves and to use an alternate heat source until a weather system moves in to clear out the trapped air pollution. Reducing burning now can help prevent air pollution from reaching unhealthy levels.

Existing weather conditions are forecasted to last through the New Year.

Air pollution can pose a serious health threat to children with asthma, the elderly and those with respiratory issues.