16-week science institute open to students

High school students interested in science have until Jan. 10 to apply for the Youth Science Institute.

This after school program is offered on Wednesday evenings from 4-6 at the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences in Incline Village from Jan. 22-through May.

UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center (TERC) will be hosting the eighth annual Youth Science Institute. This 16-week program is for students in grades 9-11 who have an interest in exploring different scientific disciplines. Students will conduct experiments and activities including stream monitoring, fish dissection, earth science geology hikes, astrobiology, biochemistry, green building demonstrations, lake science on the UC Davis Research Vessel John Le Conte and more.

Not only will participants gain knowledge and skills in various scientific fields and work with scientists, but will also receive opportunities for paid internships, fulfill community service hours, and receive letters of recommendation.

All applicants will go through an interview process and accepted students will need to pay tuition of $250. Full and partial scholarships are available..

Send applications or any questions to Kylee Wilkins at knwilkins@ucdavis.edu or (775) 881.7560, ext. 7474.

Additional details and the application are available online.

Tap into holiday beers

By John Verive, Los Angeles Times

There is no one single style of Christmas beer, but brewers have long loved creating special brews for the yule season. Spices are common, dark malts are often used, and many Christmas beers have enough alcoholic punch to help settle your brain for a long winter's nap.

Here's a look at a few varieties of festive holiday beers.

Read the whole story

Study: Christmas, New Year's top the list for days to die

By Jen Christensen, CNN

There are many well-known risk factors for death – high cholesterol, smoking, obesity, and Christmas.

Yes, Christmas.

Several studies show you have a greater chance of dying on Christmas, the day after Christmas or New Year's Day than any other single day of the year.

This is true for people who die of natural causes, which account for 93 percent of all deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

It’s also true, researchers say, for people who die of the five most common diseases: circulatory problems, respiratory diseases, endocrine/nutritional/metabolic problems, digestive diseases and cancer.

There’s a spike in deaths for all age groups on those days with one exception – children.

Read the whole story

Incline man found dead on front porch

Washoe County sheriff’s deputies are investigating a suspicious death in Incline Village.

Christopher Elliott, 46, was found dead on his front porch on Northwood Boulevard at 4am Dec. 22.

The cause of death is pending an autopsy.

“It does not appear as if a firearm or cutting device was involved in this incident,” investigators said in a press release.

No suspects are in custody.

Anyone with information should call (775) 328.3320 or Secret Witness at (775) 322.4900.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

It’s possible to survive eating airline food

By Maria Godoy, NPR

When you think about a scrumptious meal, airline food does not come to mind.

There are plenty of challenges to tasty airline meals, like the fact that many airlines now charge you for anything more than a tiny bag of chips and a plastic cup of non-alcoholic drink, at least on domestic flights. Plus, you can’t cook on an airplane, so anything you’re served has probably been chilled, then reheated. And flight delays certainly don’t help with the freshness factor.

But the bigger obstacles to palatable fare in the air are biological: Our senses are scrambled at high altitudes.

Read the whole story

Free snowshoe at Spooner Lake on New Year’s Day

Nevada Division of State Parks is starting the New Year with a free guided snowshoe at Spooner Lake State Park.

This will be a snowshoe hike if there is adequate snow. The outing will follow the Spooner Lake loop trail, which is a

little more than two miles, will little change in elevation.

Park entrance fees are waived for hike participants.

The event is Jan. 1 from 10am-noon.

Children are welcome, but dogs are not permitted.

Unplugging can bring families together

By Dennis Canfield

Wouldn’t it be great if we could somehow bottle some of the Christmas magic that helps to bring our families together during the holidays, so we could enjoy that same feeling of togetherness year round? Of course, we can’t do that; that would be too easy.

But it doesn’t have to be difficult either. With that in mind, here are a few simple ideas to help the family togetherness of Christmas last throughout the year:

Unplug – Every now and again, maybe once a week, you and your spouse and your kids turn off your phones and TVs and log off the Internet and just be with your loved ones. Have an uninterrupted meal, play a board game, clean a room together, whatever. You may have to take several deep breaths after you put your phone down; that’s OK. But it’s a sign that you really do need to unplug.

Read to your children at bedtime – even as they get older. Let them pick out the books and make sure that nothing that happened earlier in the day intrudes on your time with your

child. If you had an argument with your spouse, or a bad day at work, or if your child broke something or made a mess, let it go when you sit down to read. A few years from now you won't remember it anyway.

Listen to audiobooks when you're in the car together – Instead of everyone putting in their earbuds and listening to music or watching videos on their phones, listen to a good audio book together. You don't have to finish it all in one car ride; it may take a few weeks of car trips to get through. No matter how anxious you are to find out how the story ends, you can't listen to it unless you're all listening together.

Family movie night – Let the kids pick out the movie (subject to parental approval), put away your cell phones, pop some popcorn, and have some fun.

Family video diary – Get the whole family on the sofa in front of a video camera and let the tape roll while everyone talks about anything and everything. It's especially fun to do this after holidays and vacations and family gatherings. Nothing is off limits, but there is one rule that everyone has to agree to: it's a private video that no one outside the family will ever see.

One reason we all like the holidays so much is that it's the time of year when we make a conscious effort to spend time with our loved ones. It's just as fun to spend time with love ones the rest of the year too; we just have to find time to interrupt the busyness.

Dennis Canfield is a graduate of the University of Illinois College of Commerce, and the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University.

Regional wines earn recognition

By Chris Macias, Sacramento Bee

The wine mags of the world continue to release their best of 2013 lists, and once again, the foothills area has landed some recognition. The latest instances come via *Wine Enthusiast* magazine, which published three year-end lists, and all include some local flavor.

Bogle Winery of Clarksburg nabbed spot No. 47 in Wine Enthusiast's "Top 100 best buys" for the Bogle 2010 Old Vine Zinfandel.

As for "The Enthusiast 100," which lists the magazine's top wine picks of the year, Easton Wines of Amador County landed at No. 42 for its 2010 Estate Bottled Zinfandel ($32).

Though based in Berkeley, Donkey & Goat received two mentions for wines which used grapes from El Dorado County.

Read the whole story

Entrepreneurship in Truckee subject of meeting

Empowering the Next Economy: Advancing Entrepreneurship in Truckee is the topic of a Jan. 14 meeting.

The Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce it putting on the 7-8:30am event at the Truckee Tahoe Airport.

Eric Brown with Castle Peak Ventures and Megan Michelson with Tahoe Mill Collective are the speakers. Steve Frisch with Sierra Business Council will moderate.

Cost is $8 for chamber members, $10 for the public.

For more info, call (530) 587.2757.

Free snow removal for active military families

For the third winter, Alpine Smith of South Lake Tahoe is providing free snow removal services for military families with a spouse or family member currently deployed in the Armed Forces.

SnowCare for Troops is a national program underwritten by The Boss Snowplow.

Register for the SnowCare for Troops program by calling (530) 541.0250 or emailing info@alpinesmith.com.

The community may get involved by loaning snow removal equipment to volunteers or groups, and donating money, transportation or gas cards to offset snow removal and maintenance costs.