World-class mountaineer to share her story

World-famous ski mountaineer Kim Havell will share her tale “The Magic of Mountain Partnership” at Squaw Valley’s Olympic Village Lodge on Jan. 9.

The 7pm event is the third installment of the 2013-14 Winter Film Series put on by Alpenglow Sports in Tahoe City.

The instructor and guide for Ice Axe Expeditions, San Juan Outdoor School, and H2O Heli Guides, Havell has skied on all seven continents and adventured in more than 50 countries. Havell’s ski mountaineering curriculum vitae includes 20,000-foot-plus Himalayan peaks, expeditions in Morocco’s Atlas Mountains, and various descents in Alaska, Aconcagua, Norway, Russia, Japan, and France. Havell has also skied and climbed in the North and South Pole.

She is the premier female ski mountaineer in the world.

The show is free.

For more info, call (530) 583.6917.

Plastic in ocean contaminating seafood

By Eliza Barclay, NPR

We’ve long known that the fish we eat are exposed to toxic chemicals in the rivers, bays and oceans they inhabit. The

substance that’s gotten the most attention – because it has shown up at disturbingly high levels in some fish – is mercury.

But mercury is just one of a slew of synthetic and organic pollutants that fish can ingest and absorb into their tissue. Sometimes it’s because we’re dumping chemicals right into the ocean. But as a study published recently in Nature, Scientific Reports helps illuminate, sometimes fish get chemicals from the plastic debris they ingest.

“The ocean is basically a toilet bowl for all of our chemical pollutants and waste in general,” says Chelsea Rochman, a postdoctoral researcher at the University of California, Davis, who authored the study. “Eventually, we start to see those contaminants high up in the food chain, in seafood and wildlife.”

Read the whole story

Cook improving in super G

By USSA

ST. MORITZ, Switzerland -– Two-time Olympian Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) continued to make strides in super G Saturday as she jumped from the 37th start position to finish 16th in St. Moritz.

It’s the second straight weekend Cook has made a big move in super G after vaulting from 38th to 18th last Sunday in the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup super G in Lake Louise.

Tina Weirather of Lichtenstein, who was second in last weekends super G, won the race. Four-time World Cup overall

champion Lindsey Vonn (Vail) opted to skip St. Moritz in favor of training for the upcoming downhill in Val d'Isere, France.

Kajsa Kling of Sweden finished second from bib 44 and Anna Fenninger of Austria was third.

Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) was 20th, Leanne Smith (N. Conway, N.H.) did not finish and Laurenne Ross (Bend, Ore.) was disqualified for a binding violation.

LTCC hires winning coaches for soccer teams

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe Community College's soccer teams won't play their first games until next fall, but already enrollment is up because of the program.

Many of the players who have played for Ben Wade at Lassen Community College in Susanville are transferring to the South Lake Tahoe school. They want to be with a winning coach. Lassen won its conference this year, and the men's and women's teams have been ranked in the top 10 nationally under Wade's leadership.

The board of education this week approved the hiring of Wade as the men's coach and Chris DeLeon as women's coach. DeLeon has most recently been the coach of the girls' and boys' South Tahoe High School soccer teams.



Lake Tahoe Community College will have men's and women's soccer teams in fall 2014. Photo/Provided

Impacts on the college

"We are excited about this program. We think it's a perfect match for Tahoe," LTCC President Kindred Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I think it will bring students to Tahoe as well as serve our local students well."

Soccer is the only sports program LTCC has.

Thirteen students from Lassen have already signed up with LTCC. To be on the team it requires being a full-time student and having the grades. Many of the students transferring from Lassen are not U.S. residents. This has meant the college has had to make some changes.

"When you have one or two (international students) it's no big deal. When you go from two to 20 or more it requires developing an international student program," Tom Greene, vice president of academic affairs and student services, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

It means working with the students to find housing, ensuring they have the legal documents to be in the country, and that LTCC student ambassadors are at the ready to help. All foreign students must have a certain amount of English proficiency, and have the means to pay for college and their living

expenses.

College officials will also make sure these students are integrated into the college and community to better ensure their academic success, which could be hampered if they felt isolated.

England, Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, Brazil, Germany and Australia are some of the countries where these young men hail from.

It’s possible they won’t all play soccer.

“They do need to be enrolled this spring to be enrolled in the fall competition. We’ll have some students join us winter term, some spring term, and some will take online classes in the winter and then join us in the spring,” Greene said in regards to the Lassen athletes.

Greene cited studies from 2004 and 2011 that show college students who play sports are more likely to do well academically.

Students interested in playing on LTCC’s soccer teams will find more info online.

LTCC’s men’s coach

Wade has been a head coach for the past 17 years – mostly in Northern California. And he has a penchant of developing programs.

“In some ways it is a benefit because you can put your blueprint on a program and set expectations as high as possible,” Wade said of starting the program at LTCC from scratch. “I want a team that will be top 10 nationally ranked and I expect this this year.”

His success as a coach translates to universities recruiting his players. His student-athletes are being sought after by

hundreds of four-year universities – like Boston University and the University of Miami.

Wade first saw the LTCC campus and soccer field in 2010 when he was here for a tournament. He knew then he would apply for the coaching job at LTCC if there were ever such a position.

“The focus will be on local talent. It has to be,” Wade told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Yes, players from Lassen are following him, but everyone will be trying out. He anticipates having between 25 and 28 players on the team. He tried recruiting Tahoe players to Lassen but they either wanted to stay in Tahoe or went to a bigger school and stopped playing soccer. He’s excited to give them an option to play collegiate soccer in Tahoe.

“I’m a very passionate coach, but I really like discipline,” Wade said. He won’t take “bad apples”.

He expects be looking at athletes next month.

“I’m deliciously excited about that,” Wade said of the fact that Lassen is in the same Golden Valley Conference at LTCC.

Wade is also a competitor. He’s been on “Survivor” three times – 2008 he was fifth, 2010 he was ninth and he made the finals in 2012. He said he expects to be asked back for the “Legends Season” but isn’t sure he’ll accept.

“It’s hard on your body,” Wade said. He was the one called “Coach”.

But this tough guy has a softer side. Music is a passion of his. So much so that he will not give up conducting the Susanville Symphony after he moves to Tahoe.

He played trumpet for the New York Metropolitan Opera.

“It got too easy,” he said of the work. Sight-reading music

provided the only challenge.

Wade started Susanville's symphony 11 years from the ground level and would entertain doing the same in South Lake Tahoe. For starters he will be teaching a music class in the spring at LTCC.

"My specialty is brass. I like to create ensembles," Wade said.

LTCC's women's coach

"It's always been a dream of mine," DeLeon said of coaching a college team.

He's been working with Tim Johnson, LTCC's acting athletic director, for a number of years to get a soccer program. He said this administration is the first one to listen.

DeLeon knows there will be speed bumps along the way as well as a learning curve. But he also knows he will tap Wade for info about the league and how things are done at this level.

DeLeon has been part of state championship teams at South Tahoe High. He credits coaches Joe Winters and Ed McClain for helping him evolve into the coach he is today.

"I've taken a little bit from each coach and molded different things into a winning program," DeLeon told *Lake Tahoe News*.

He estimates he'll have a team of 18 to 22 players. And he hopes some will be STHS grads. Recruiting will be the first thing he starts doing after the first of the year.

"You want players that already have established fundamental skills. At high school you (don't have that). That will be one thing where can move into more tactical stuff (right away)," DeLeon said.

During the day DeLeon is a counselor for a juvenile detention

center in Douglas County. His boss understands what it takes to be a coach and is flexible with hours.

“I would love to move up to a four-year school, but Lake Tahoe has a way of keeping you here,” DeLeon said.

Letter: Watch out for a certain trio of politicians

To the community,

What goes around comes around, so here goes.

On Dec. 10, Brooke Laine was appointed mayor pro tem for the city. So what? In 1998, I was elected to the City Council, as was Brooke Laine. Without delay Ms. Laine fell under the spell of redevelopment and its advocates Tom Davis and Hal Cole. Thus, there was a ready majority to support any plan for redevelopment regardless of the merit or lack of merit.



Bill Crawford

Example: The trio supported the American Skiing Company until the bitter end. They refused to collect a $5 million letter of credit of the American Skiing Company. The ski company had breached its agreement with the city. On the issue to collect, I was in the minority.

Also, the trio didn’t exercise oversight over the redevelopment manager who was a loose cannon working for the private side of redevelopment. She was in lockstep with the private party’s attorney. It wasn’t a secret.

So, 13 years after Ms. Laine was elected to the City Council, she’s back by appointment united with Tom Davis and Hal Cole. There will be serious blowback because they are unrestrained boosters of commerce; any commerce and they will gamble with the city’s welfare to seal a deal. On Dec. 10, Hal Cole said, grants are drying up and the city needs more and more private money to be pumped into the city’s economy. Mr. Cole was the main player in the Hole in the Ground. So go figure. People only change in novels.

The trio isn’t the three stooges. They are the three moneys who see no evil, hear no evil, who speak no evil. They ignore the past and their role in harming the city’s welfare. I think of the city’s parking garage that they voted for.

So what comes around has come around. After 13 years, the city is back to square one governed by the same worn and tried trio. We know where they have taken the city from the parking garage to the Hole in the Ground in the past. So what can we look forward to? Place your bets.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

PS: Dec. 16 is the anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

Luther Pass controlled burn to continue

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews will continue prescribed fire operations off of Highway 89 near Luther Pass Dec. 16.

Crews will continue to burn piles in the Luther Pass overflow campground and will burn as much as weather and conditions allow through the week.

Smoke from this prescribed fire project area can be expected, is normal, and may continue for several days after the initial ignition. Smoke may be visible on Highway 89.

All prescribed fires are monitored regularly for burning and smoke dispersal and action is taken to mitigate concerns as they arise.

The Forest Service makes every effort to conduct prescribed fire operations during weather patterns that carry smoke away from communities.

Talks ongoing regarding Van Sickle ownership

One day California will have its 209th state park. Until then, the California Tahoe Conservancy will have its name on Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

“We want to transfer it to state parks,” CTC Executive Director Patrick Wright told his board Dec. 12.

The CTC runs the country's only bi-state park. When the 725-acre park opened in 2011 California was in no position to financially to be part of the deal. The Conservancy stepped in and made sure the park that borders South Lake Tahoe and Stateline would be a reality.

Wright said both state parks agencies are talking. The likely outcome is California will take ownership from the CTC and Nevada Division of State Parks will manage it for both sides. But the Silver State is not in a position to make that happen now.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Anderson, Bowman win at Dew Tour

Lake Tahoe athletes showed their prowess Friday in Breckenridge at the Dew Tour.

South Lake Tahoe's Jamie Anderson won in snowboard slopestyle, while Maddie Bowman won the freeskiing halfpipe final.

This is the first of five events that will determine the U.S. Olympic team in halfpipe and slopestyle. The Sochi Games are the first for slopestyle.

Shaun White, who trains at Northstar, finished first in the preliminaries in slopestyle. He is also competing in half pipe. Half pipe finals are Saturday and slopestyle finals on Sunday.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Californians' happiness depends on age, politics, location

By Tracy Seipel, San Jose Mercury News

If you're a Medicare-age Democrat lucky enough to live near the coast, life in the Golden State looks pretty good.



Californians who live near the coast are happier living in the state. Photo/LTN file

But if you're younger, among California's dwindling number of registered Republicans or hail from an inland county, not so much.

Those are the results of a Field Poll that tracked how Californians view their state as a place to live. Forty-three percent of registered voters surveyed said it's one of the best places to live; 26 percent rated it "nice but not outstanding." Twenty-one percent said it's about average, with 8 percent calling it a poor place to live.

Driving those numbers, said Field Poll director Mark

DiCamillo, is where the voter lives, their age and political bent.

Read the whole story

Sochi relying on fake snow for Winter Games

By Tamara Keith, NPR

In Russia, organizers of the 2014 Winter Olympics have called on dozens of shamans to pray for snow. But the centerpiece of the Olympic snow strategy is man-made: a massive system that features more than 550 snow-making machines.

Sochi, Russia, which is hosting the Olympics, is a resort town on the relatively warm Black Sea. There are beaches and palm trees. The Alpine events will be on a mountain just 30 minutes away, where last February it was raining, not snowing.

But while snow is necessary for skiing and snowboarding, it doesn't necessarily have to fall from the sky, says Rick Kahl, editor of Ski Area Management magazine, a trade publication for resorts.

"The whole technology of snow-making has reached a point where it's possible to hold an event like this at Sochi and not have to really worry too much about whether or not there's a lot of natural snow," Kahl says.

Read the whole story