Important to be fire aware on the road

By Teri Mizuhara

Are you traveling this holiday season and staying in a motel or hotel? If you or someone you know will be on the road, take our five minute quiz to find out how savvy you are about fire safety.

Hotels and motels can become our home away from home and we often take it for granted that we are completely safe because we see sprinkler heads, exits routes posted on the back of each room door and exit signs in the hallways but we need to be proactive to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe in these places.

The quiz:

· How many motels-hotels are in the United States? According to 2011 statistics, there are over 51,000 which account for 4.8 million rooms.

· How many motels-hotels report fires annually? a) 1 in 12 b) 1 in 150 or c) 1 in 1250? The answer is (a) statistically, one out of every 12 hotels-motels reports a fire every year.

· Do you know what a motel-hotel smoke alarm sounds like? If not, ask the clerk what the alarm sounds like.

· Why should you count the number of doors from your room to the nearest emergency exit? So in the event you have to escape during a fire, you will know which way to turn when leaving your room and how many doors you must pass before exiting the building. Never use the elevator as they can become inoperable during a fire.

· Where should you keep your room key? Make a habit of keeping

your room key and a flashlight on your night stand so you can grab them and go if you have exit the building.

· Why would you review the exit listed in your motel-hotel room? ometimes the closest emergency exit is not the one you are aware of.

· Why bother noting where the fire alarm pull stations are outside your room? In case you need to report a fire and are able to get to the pull station.

· How do you determine if there is fire on the other side of your room door? Touch the door with the back of your hand to test the temperature. 1) If the door is cool, get down on your hands and knees, brace your shoulder against the door and carefully open it slowly. If there are flames on the other side be prepared to close the door immediately. If there are no flames, proceed with caution, and quickly move to the nearest exit making sure to stay low under the smoke where the air is cooler and safer to breathe. 2) If the door is hot, do not open it. Call 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher what city you are in, then tell them the name and address of the hotel-motel where you are then tell them the room number. Place wet towels/blankets in the cracks of the door of your room to prevent smoke from entering. Wait at the window and use a flashlight or light colored cloth to signal where you are.

Teri Mizuhara works for the El Dorado-Amador unit of CalFire.

Online Christmas tree sales

gain in popularity

By Katarina Gustafsson and Matthew Boyle, Bloomberg

It’s snowing. The children laugh and prance through the woods. Dad fells the perfect fir and carries it home over his shoulder. The family sings carols and drinks cocoa as they happily decorate the tree.

That yuletide dream, peddled by Hallmark cards and Lifetime movies, is as believable as flying reindeer. For Christine Chen, the reality is often squabbling over the right tree, scratching the car with the branches, and leaving a trail of needles as it’s crammed through the door.

So this year, the new mom went tree shopping exactly where she goes for most purchases: the Internet, where she paid $136.74 for a seven-foot fir. As more consumers like Chen opt for convenience over fantasy, online tree sellers are seeing sales surge this year.

Read the whole story

Study: Little difference between PG-13, R movies

By Herb Scribner, Deseret News

If violence were the only concern in opting for a PG-13 movie instead of an R-rated one, it might not make much of a difference.

According to a study done by the Annenberg Public Policy

Center and University of Pennsylvania, PG-13 and R-rated films show a similar amount of violent behavior.

Using top-grossing movies over a 25-year period, the study found 90 percent of those films showed main characters using violence, and 77 percent of those films had characters engaging in sexual activity, or using alcohol or tobacco. For PG-13 films, about 50 percent of main characters acted violently or engaged in drinking, sexual behavior or smoking within a five-minute window, the study said.

“There is essentially no difference between the most popular movies rated PG-13 for younger viewers and restricted, R-rated films in showing main characters engaged in both violence and alcohol use or violence and sexual behavior,” according to the study.

Read the whole story

Dew Tour a test for Tahoe athletes wanting to be Olympians

By Jason Blevins, Denver Post

The race for Olympic glory gets supercharged this week in Breckenridge, and the brawling will be most brutal among the Americans who forged the sports of halfpipe and slopestyle.



Maddie Bowman of South Lake Tahoe wants 2014 to be her first Olympics.

The Breckenridge Dew Tour is the first step this season for U.S. freeskiers and snowboarders hoping to reach the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, in February.

With only two, three or four spots for both men and women in four disciplines – ski and snowboard halfipe and slopestyle – and at least two times that many athletes who could likely medal in the Winter Olympics, the battle to represent the U.S. in Sochi will be cutthroat.

Read the whole story

Pet food donations being sought

Coldwell Banker Select in Zephyr Cove believes that pets should have a joyous holiday season. From now until Dec. 28, the company is hosting a food drive for animals at Douglas County Animal Care and Services.

Bring a donation of dry or canned wet dog or cat food to the office in Zephyr Cove, 188 Highway 50.

Brands such as Kirkland, Pedigree, Iams, Science Diet and Fancy Feast are preferred, but not required. Douglas County Animal Care will also accept tax deductible check donations.

For more info, call (775) 586.5200.

Cove East, Keys Marina to get more free parking

By Kathryn Reed

Increasing the allowable coverage by 33 percent for parking at Tahoe Keys Marina will require shifting the entrance of Cove East about 20 feet closer to the Upper Truckee River.

The California Tahoe Conservancy board on Dec. 12 agreed to allow the marina to cover up to 60,000-square-feet of the nearly 1.5-acre parcel. In January 2011, the coverage allocation was 45,000-square-feet. And at that time the entrance to the popular Cove East walking path that leads to Lake Tahoe was not going to have to be altered.



The land behind the fence is destined to become parking at Tahoe Keys Marina-Cove

East. Photo/LTN

The marina plans to build the parking lot this summer. It is designed to be free parking, though there is a caveat in the lease agreement that allows for the marina to charge if it wants to. The Conservancy would receive 20 percent of any revenue generated from paid parking.

“This doesn’t affect what the city is doing and that seems to be changing year-to-year,” Bruce Eisner, with the Conservancy, told the board.

South Lake Tahoe implemented paid parking on Venice Drive, the road to Cove East and the marina, this summer. Now the meters are gone, which the city said was always the plan so they would not be damaged by snowplows.

Councilman Tom Davis, the city’s rep to the CTC board, could not make the meeting for personal reasons so he could not enlighten everyone what the city might do with Venice in the future, especially considering a new free lot is going to be built.

Additional parking by the marina owners is allowed in the master plan that has been approved by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. The plan allows for 303 total parking spaces. The new lot will add 120. The spots are designed for marina and Cove East users, not Fresh Ketch patrons.

Eisner said the parking situation would be reviewed annually to ensure people using CTC land have adequate access to the parking spots.

Marina owners must build the lot and bathrooms, a lane for watercraft inspections and then maintain the area per the 30-year lease. Two unisex bathrooms on the north end of the lot, which is closer to the marina, will be constructed.

The parcel is between the current parking area for the marina

and the trail. It’s vacant land. The dirt is fill from when the Tahoe Keys was developed in the 1960s.

Laurel Ames with the Tahoe Area Sierra Club was the lone member of the public to talk to the issue.

“It’s the wrong kind of public access in the wrong place,” Ames told the board. “It’s the wrong time to be adding pavement at the lakeshore.”

She believes it would have been more prudent to wait to see what comes of studies on the nearshore that might say what is contributing to the decline in clarity, and questions the increase in vehicle miles traveled. That then becomes an air quality issue.

And the Conservancy anticipates more people will come because parking will be less of an issue and the lot will put people that much closer to the trail.

From the lot there will be links to the Cove East trail so people won’t have to walk back to the entrance on Venice Drive.

Letter: Weidinger PR gives back to Bread & Broth

To the community,

The staff of Weidinger Public Relations provided both a warm, cheerful greeting and a hot salmon meal to over 90 dinner guests who had braved the frigid weather to attend Bread &

Broth’s Monday evening meal on Dec. 9.

By sponsoring an Adopt A Day of Nourishment Weidinger Public Relations’ volunteer crew members experienced firsthand the many “thank yous” and appreciative words from the grateful guests.

The goal of Bread & Broth is to feed the needy of our community of both South Lake Tahoe and Stateline. Through generous donors and sponsors like Weidinger Public Relations, B&B has been providing Monday evening full course meals at St. Theresa Church’s Grace Hall and Friday evening soup and pasta servings at Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian Church to all who come to our doors.

B&B appreciates the monetary donation of $250 made by Weidinger Public Relations and thoroughly enjoyed the enthusiasm of its team members Jenn Boyd, Christina Proctor, Tiara Wasner and owner Phil Weidinger. Speaking for his crew, Weidinger said, “Thank you for the opportunity to help out. What a great group in the kitchen. Congrats on what you do every week for the community.”

B&B congratulates the evening’s sponsor for their outstanding achievement in their field of communications and their supportive involvement in the south shore community.

Bread & Broth would like to also thank Barton Memorial Hospital for their donation of Christmas cookies as part of the evening’s give-away bags.

To help B&B as a donor or sponsor, contact me at (530) 542-2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

9-part webinar to focus on reforestation

The U.C. Cooperative Extension is hosting a nine-part weekly webinar series on reforestation in California starting in January.

The goal is to explore issues related to reforestation in California, including the current needs and the ecological, social and environmental benefits.

Issues in California reforestation to be addressed include the effectiveness of various practices used to re-establish trees, the large backlog of land requiring planting, wide variability in costs and limited availability of planting stock. Speakers will address techniques and case studies for replanting conifers, oaks, and riparian tree species; describe reforestation of burned areas in different regulatory and institutional situations including private land, state parks and federal land, and give information on financial and other incentives available to land owners and managers contemplating reforestation.

This program is aimed at foresters, land managers, land owners and others involved in planning and executing reforestation, afforestation and restoration projects. It will also be of interest to those working for agencies that regulate and/or fund these projects.

Registration is required ,though there is no fee to participate. Register online.

For more information, contact Susie Kocher at sdkocher@ucanr.edu.

Free backcountry demo day at Alpine

Alpenglow Sports has again partnered with Alpine Meadows Ski Resort for the 8th annual Backcountry Demo Event on Jan. 11 from 9am to 3pm.

The Tahoe City shop has worked hard to foster the largest, and most well-known backcountry demo event in North America.

The free event is for all ages and abilities.

Participating vendors will include DPS, Dynafit, G3, Scarpa, NTN from Rottefella, Salomon, K2, Scott, Marker, Volkl, La Sportiva, Voile, Moment, Fly Low, Smith Optics, Jones Snowboards and more.

In addition to the opportunity to try more than 100 styles of skis, Alpenglow and guide Rich Meyer will also provide a free, informal avalanche companion rescue class. This companion rescue clinic will include beacon searches, strategic shoveling, and probing and will begin at 1pm at the Alpenglow registration tent. Participants are encouraged to come out and try the latest beacon technology and refresh avalanche safety skills after skiing.

Participants must have a valid lift ticket or season pass purchased from Alpine Meadows or Squaw Valley USA, along with a driver’s license and credit card for deposit. Registration for the event will occur onsite at the Alpenglow Sports tent.

For more info, call (530) 583.6917.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Douglas County Library in Zephyr Cove will be closed Dec. 25. The library will resume its regular schedule on Dec. 26 at 9am.

• Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival (July 11-Aug. 24, 2014) will feature the romantic comedy “As You Like It” Tuesdays-Sundays.

• Jorge Perez, hematologist-oncologist and owner of Sierra Nevada Cancer Center, is expanding his services in South Lake Tahoe to include chemotherapy at 1154 Emerald Bay Road (Emerald Bay Center for Women’s Health).

• Tahoe Donner Downhill opens Dec. 14.