Truckee seeks cycling enthusiasts

Truckee is looking for people who want to be on the Trails & Bikeways Master Plan Update Stakeholder Committee.

The committee is an advisory group helping to develop the master plan update. It will be a six to eight month process that includes six to 10 meetings.

The first meeting is set of Dec. 11 at 6pm at town hall.

The deadline to apply for the committee is Dec. 6 at 5pm. For info, contact Jenna Endres at (530) 582.2922 or jendres@townoftruckee.com.

Bears, trash, people a growing problem in Incline

By Jim Carlton, Wall Street Journal

INCLINE VILLAGE – When Brent and Benét Terry moved into their new home in this upscale Lake Tahoe community recently, they were surprised to meet one of the neighbors: a black bear that had taken up residence in a culvert across the street.

“He’s a pretty good-sized boy,” said Brent Terry, a 61-year-old retired airline pilot. “I’m surprised he can even get in there.”

Incline Village is crawling with bears. As of early this

month, there were 66 reported sightings this year in the town of some 9,000 people – up 38 percent from all of last year–and the animals are wreaking havoc. Homes and cars have been broken into and innumerable garbage bins and dumpsters pawed through.

The bears' attraction to garbage appears to be the crux of the problem, most residents agree. But they are divided over both the proposed long-term solution – a mandate to use more-expensive bear-proof garbage containers – and whether to handle their burly neighbors with tough love or lethal force.

Nevada wildlife officials and private bear-removal services advocate trapping and relocating the animals, frightening them with aversion techniques and, as a last resort, killing them. Bear-friendly activists endorse scaring off bears by yelling and rattling cans of rocks, but not killing them.

"The bears are dying for the transgressions of people," said Ann Bryant, executive director of BEAR League, a bear-friendly group whose mission is "helping bears and people live peacefully in this world together."

Read the whole story

American families don't fit one definition

By Natalie Angier, New York Times

CHELSEA, Mich. – Kristi and Michael Burns have a lot in common. They love crossword puzzles, football, going to museums and reading five or six books at a time. They describe

themselves as mild-mannered introverts who suffer from an array of chronic medical problems. The two share similar marital résumés, too. On their wedding day in 2011, the groom was 43 years old and the bride 39, yet it was marriage No. 3 for both.

Today, their blended family is a sprawling, sometimes uneasy ensemble of two sharp-eyed sons from her two previous husbands, a daughter and son from his second marriage, ex-spouses of varying degrees of involvement, the partners of ex-spouses, the bemused in-laws and a kitten named Agnes that likes to sleep on computer keyboards.

If the Burnses seem atypical as an American nuclear family, how about the Schulte-Waysers, a merry band of two married dads, six kids and two dogs? Or the Indrakrishnans, a successful immigrant couple in Atlanta whose teenage daughter divides her time between prosaic homework and the precision footwork of ancient Hindu dance; the Glusacs of Los Angeles, with their two nearly grown children and their litany of middle-class challenges that seem like minor sagas; Ana Perez and Julian Hill of Harlem, unmarried and just getting by, but with Warren Buffett-size dreams for their three young children; and the alarming number families with incarcerated parents, a sorry byproduct of America's status as the world's leading jailer.

The typical American family, if it ever lived anywhere but on Norman Rockwell's Thanksgiving canvas, has become as multilayered and full of surprises as a holiday turducken — the all-American seasonal portmanteau of deboned turkey, duck and chicken.

Researchers who study the structure and evolution of the American family express unsullied astonishment at how rapidly the family has changed in recent years, the transformations often exceeding or capsizing those same experts' predictions of just a few journal articles ago.

Read the whole story

Gaming revenue drops dramatically in Stateline

While the statewide gaming win was slightly down in October, revenue fell dramatically in Stateline.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board on Wednesday said casinos across the state collected $954 million, which is down 2.6 percent from October 2012.

On the South Shore gaming revenue fell 23 percent to $12 million from the previous year.

Reno casino revenue dropped 1 percent to $43 million.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Nevada bear hunt total at 14

By AP

Hunters have killed 14 black bears in Nevada so far this year.

The Nevada Department of Wildlife says six have been killed west of Highway 395 since the season began Sept. 15.

The agency this year excluded the Lake Tahoe Basin and along popular hiking trails on Mount Rose Summit from the hunt area after complaints from residents.

Wildlife commissioners set a quota of 20 bears for 2013. The season ends Dec. 31 unless 20 bears are killed before then.

Ten bears have been male, with the largest weighing about 500 pounds.

Five have been killed in the Pine Nut Mountains.

This is the third year Nevada has allowed the hunting of black bears. Wildlife commissioners have said they will review the bear hunt after this season.

Forest Plan attempts to bring balance to basin

By Kathryn Reed

People have plenty of ideas how the 150,000 acres in the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit of the U.S. Forest Service should be managed. The agency received about 18,500 comments on the environmental document for the Forest Plan.

While wilderness areas and snowmobiling were some of the more contentious issues during public hearings, they did not dominate the comments. No new wilderness areas have been added. The Forest Service wants to find a way for snowmobilers and non-motorized recreationists to play outdoors without annoying each other.



Rabe Meadow in Stateline is a small part of what the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit oversees. Photo/LTN

Jeff Marsolais, deputy forest supervisor, said the key with the plan is to bring balance to the various needs of the people using the forest, as well as the animals and plants that call it home.

“One thing holds true, there are folks on both sides of pretty much all of the issues. It gets back to balance,” Marsolais said. Some want more aggressive management for wildfire protection, others want less intrusive approaches; some want less recreation, others want more.

Some of the comments pointed out science the Forest Service was not using. Marsolais said his team listened and more science is part of the document.

The Forest Plan is the guiding document for the local Forest Service office for the next 15 years. Comments are being accepted on the final environmental impact statement until Jan. 21.

The previous Forest Plan had 21 management areas; this one has four. This will make things more efficient with less needless redundancy.

The Stanford Rock Backcountry Area, which is approximately 3,800 acres between Blackwood and Ward canyons, has been

added.

“People who go to those special places want a little bit more solitude and not necessarily have it be wilderness,” Marsolais told *Lake Tahoe News*.

One thing the public will notice is an increase of 5 percent of the land being designated for recreation. This could mean various things – a few more parking spaces or developed campsites.

“Just because the plan authorizes it doesn’t mean we will do it,” Marsolais said.

This plan is not about projects. It’s more of a big-picture planning document that outlines allowable uses.

This Forest Plan is long overdue. Work on in started in the early 2000s. Twice the Forest Service was sued – in 2005 and 2008. This meant starting over to come up with a planning tool that would not be litigated. That happened in 2012.

New to this document compared to others is how climate change could affect the forest lands.

“This Forest Plan considers the effect of changing climate and establishes standards and guides for species management and vegetation management,” Marsolais said. “This plan creates a space for us to be more adaptable to use new science or assessments for how to do projects on the ground.”

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Notes:

• The Forest Service will have two webinars to explain the final plan, highlight changes from the draft and outline the remainder of the plan revision process. The first will be Dec. 9 from 5-6pm. The second will be Jan. 14 from 2-3pm. The webinars will feature a brief presentation, followed by a

question and answer period, and they will be archived on the LTBMU website for later viewing.

• The plan, final EIS, draft record of decision and webinar info is online.

• CDs or print copies are available at 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe or by calling (530) 543.2694.

• A record of decision could be signed in the spring, at which time the document takes effect.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• South Lake Tahoe is moving forward with the Harrison Avenue project. Bid documents have been released. The deadline to submit a bid is Jan. 6.

• Placer County has selected Jeffrey Brown, the head of Nevada County's health agency, to take over as director of the Placer County Health and Human Services Department.

• On Dec. 12 at 10am registration will open for the 2014 Tour of the California Alps Death Ride online.

• South Tahoe Refuse will be collecting non-perishable food items on its regular garbage days Dec. 9-13. Food will be given to local charities.

• Squaw Valley opens Nov. 27 with six lifts.

Tahoe Douglas recycling oil from turkey frying

Cooking fires continue to be the most common type of fires experienced by U.S. households. This is even more apparent during the holidays – especially on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District officials say these fires are preventable by simply being more attentive to the use of cooking materials and equipment.

New this year, Tahoe Douglas is recycling that cooking oil. Throughout the holiday season it may be dropped for free at Station 23, 193 Elks Point Road, Round Hill.

“A lot of attention has been focused on deep fryers for turkeys. They need to be used with extreme caution. Please be aware because of the fire danger associated with turkey deep fryers they are not given an UL safety rating,” the department said in a news release.

It is recommended that cookers never be left unattended, that they be used on a stable surface away and outside of any structures. Thaw the turkey because ice and water can cause a violent reaction with grease and cause a flash fire. Pre-measure the oil before placing the bird in the cooker, as overflowing oil will also cause a violent flame. Have an all-purpose ABC type fire extinguisher at hand. Never use water to fight a grease fire.

Vehicle accident injures driver; cuts power in Bijou

Power is out in the Bijou area of South Lake Tahoe because a vehicle rammed a pole on Fairway Avenue this evening.

Sgt. Jeff Regan told *Lake Tahoe News* the pole was splintered and will have to be replaced.

Liberty Utilities did not have an estimated time of when the electricity will be back on Nov. 26.

The name of the South Lake Tahoe resident who had to be transported to Barton Memorial Hospital has not been released.

Regan said the accident is under investigate and that alcohol could be a contributing factor.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

SLT city attorney says no to paid parking foes

By Kathryn Reed

The group of South Lake Tahoe residents who want paid parking to go before the voters was handed a setback when the city attorney said he could not write a ballot title and summary.

“At this time the Tahoe4Tahoe committee is exploring their

options for a legal challenge to the city's rejection of our petition request and continue to believe that the voters of South Lake Tahoe deserve the opportunity to decide if they want paid parking on their city streets and public parks," Peggy Bourland, spokeswoman for the group, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Paid parking has been a contentious issue since the city started talking about putting up kiosks a few years ago. The bulk of the meters was installed this past summer. While the city shows a financial profit, the naysayers are not going away.

Earlier this month Tahoe4Tahoe filed a notice of intent to circulate a petition that would ultimately result in the voters deciding June 3 whether the city's paid parking program stays or goes.

One of the hurdles to get it on the ballot is for the city attorney to write the summary and title.

City Attorney Tom Watson wrote Bourland saying, "The text as drafted impairs essential government functions, including, but not limited to: the power of taxation, the police power to control public streets and highways, fiscal management abilities, franchising authority and the legislative power to provide for the health and safety of the community. Additionally, because the initiative is multipart, it potentially violates the single subject rule."

Bourland requested a meeting with the city attorney. He said no, saying he could not be an advocate for their group and instead recommended hiring private legal counsel.

Time is ticking for the group to meet the deadlines for the June ballot, however there will also be an election in November. But by November the parking program the group doesn't like will in all likelihood have had another summer to be in place.

The City Council after the first of the year is expected to revisit the parking program to potentially make changes and/or solidify what is in place.