

Thunderstorms may bring flooding to Tahoe



It will not be boating weather at Lake Tahoe for the next few afternoons.
Photo/LTN

Temperatures are cooling off in the Lake Tahoe Basin as the threat of afternoon thunderstorms escalates.

Thunderheads have been accumulating most afternoons, with the severest weather expected on Thursday. The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a flash flood watch for the basin that day.

“There’s lot of moisture hanging around the area,” NWS meteorologist Shane Snyder told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Lightning ignited a grass fire north of Reno on July 15 near the California border. Firefighters are on alert as lightning could bring more fires.

Temps will be in the 80s for much of the week, after being well above normal last weekend.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Disabled vet to challenge celebs at golf tourney

By John McMullen, Sports Network

There are quite a few stars scheduled for the 25th anniversary of the American Century Championship but only one real hero.

Chad Pfeifer lost his left leg during a deployment with the U.S. Army in Iraq but that won't stop him from appearing in beautiful Lake Tahoe with a field of 80 professional athletes and entertainers, jockeying for \$600,000 in prize money during the charity tournament's silver anniversary.

"I'm no celebrity, that's for sure," Pfeifer told the Sports Network in a phone interview, "(so) it was exciting to get the invitation and be included. It's really cool."

Cool to meet – and compete against – all-time LPGA great Annika Sorenstam and to hang with Charles Barkley, Aaron Rodgers, Jerry Rice, Ray Romano and scores of others who are part of the scene every year in Lake Tahoe.

The 32-year-old Pfeifer, a retired corporal, lost his left leg above the knee on April 12, 2007, when a roadside IED exploded while he was on patrol, the kind of horrific injury which would send most into a tailspin and take any kind of athletics completely off the table.

For Pfeifer, a former baseball player at the junior college level who also enjoyed playing pickup basketball with his friends, it certainly ended any hopes of returning to the diamond or hardwood. When one door closes, however, another can open.

"I grew up as a big baseball player, played basketball and football as well, but played a little college baseball. And golf was just a sport that allowed me to be a competitor again," he said.

Pfeifer did play golf a few times before joining the Army but only on a casual basis. He really took to the sport when tackling an extensive rehabilitation process and trying to master his prosthetic leg at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio.

A friend and fellow amputee convinced him the links could be a great outlet, both mentally and physically.

"It really gave me good practice with that prosthetic, walking around up and down hills, into bunkers, just different terrains that the golf course has," Pfeifer said. "It was great practice as far as getting used to the prosthetic leg."

Used to it may be a bit of a understatement.

These days Pfeifer is a tremendous player, a three-time George W. Bush Presidential Center's Warrior Open champion, the National Amputee Golf Association Tournament kingpin in 2011, and a PGA club professional at Goodyear's Golf Club of Estrella in Phoenix.

"I guess I'm pretty good," Pfeifer joked.

Good enough to be installed as a 15-to-1 shot to win the American Century Championship, far better than most of the sports stars and celebrities who will be playing alongside him, an eclectic bunch which also includes football legend John Elway and comedian Larry the Cable Guy.

One competitor Pfeifer isn't expected to hold up against is Sorenstam, who won 72 LPGA tournaments, including ten majors, before stepping away from the game at the end of 2008.

"I don't compete any more, as you know," Sorenstam said. "It's

been six years since I stepped away. It will be interesting to see how my game stacks up to these world-renowned athletes and actors.”

For Pfeifer, though, the tournament is about far more than winning or even testing himself alongside legends like Sorenstam. He hopes his story will resonate with others struggling with disabilities, combat-related or not.

“I hope I can be an inspiration to anyone with disabilities,” he said. “It’s very important to understand there are so many things you can accomplish and if I can give anyone struggling some hope. That’s more important than anything else.”

That doesn’t mean Pfeifer isn’t excited about playing with some of the big names scheduled, however.

“Wow, there are just so many (people) I’m looking forward to seeing,” he said. “So many big names I grew up with it. John Elway, Greg Maddux and certainly Charles Barkley, who I have heard some great things about. And Kenny Lofton for me. I grew up a (Cleveland) Indians fan and he was such a big deal.”

The 25th American Century Championship takes place from July 18-20 at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course.

“My expectations are just to have fun,” Pfeifer said. “I mean, this is an incredible opportunity for me, not only to test my golf game, just to be on the golf course with legendary athletes. There’s so many names in the field that have been huge for their sports.”

Heller, Amodei on opposite sides of extending unemployment benefits

By Amber Phillips, Las Vegas Sun

WASHINGTON — Sen. Dean Heller has invested months lobbying his colleagues to extend benefits for unemployed Americans.

In a rare feat of bipartisanship, Republicans and Democrats from Nevada's six-person delegation have backed Heller's effort to renew benefits for the long-term unemployed after Congress let the program expire in December.

The bill has become personal for Heller because Nevada's unemployment rate remains stubbornly high at 7.9 percent, the second highest in the country. "This year has been extremely difficult for Nevadans who still do not know how they are going to pay their bills or feed their families," Heller said in a recent press conference.

But there has been one noticeable holdout from Nevada's delegation: Republican Rep. Mark Amodei.

Amodei, who represents Reno and Carson City, didn't support extending the benefits when it passed the Senate and died in the House this spring, and he isn't sure he'll join in this time, either.

Amodei's opposition falls in line with House Speaker John Boehner. Despite Heller's repeated calls on Boehner for support, the Ohio Republican hasn't brought the bill to a House vote.

Read the whole story

How to escape unemployment or under-employment

By Richard B. Alman

There's good news for jobs in the United States.

- In June, the private sector added 288,000 jobs, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- The unemployment rate has shrunk to 6.1 percent, the lowest since September 2008, when the Great Recession was just starting. The rate has dropped nearly 2 percent since the beginning of 2013.
- The U.S. Payroll to Population employment rate (P2P), as tracked by Gallup, now stands at one of its highest points since tracking began in January 2010.
- More companies, states and cities are either raising their minimum wage or considering it.

Does this mean that we can put our minds to rest regarding jobs and prosperity? Not exactly.

It's great that reports show improvement, but the good news comes with an asterisk; we need to keep in mind the term that has become so common since 2009 – the “new normal,” which, in part, refers to a lower expectation for prosperity.

Raising the minimum wage, for example, is a step in the right direction for many, but it's certainly not happening everywhere and it doesn't guarantee a living wage. California raised its minimum to \$9 per hour, but that's a state with a very high cost of living.

What is the quality of these new jobs, and how many hours do they offer? What about the Catch 22 ensnaring the long-term unemployed, who can't get work because they don't have jobs? And where's the hope for the recent college graduates who are deeply in debt and can't find the jobs they've prepared for?

Here is a blueprint that can help would-be employees in these tough positions.

- One word: volunteer. This is, by far, the best advice I can offer if you feel like you've tried everything and it hasn't worked. Volunteering can pay very high dividends for anyone who is unemployed, under-employed or simply looking for a new career trajectory. It helps current and future employees of any age.

You may not see the payoff right away, but volunteering has many long-term benefits.

- Volunteer in positions that will build your resume. When you volunteer, you can update your skills and resume, which shows potential employers that you're not lazy. Ask for jobs that use the career skills you have. For instance, if you have a background or degree in marketing, look for opportunities to volunteer in marketing for a nonprofit.

For those with stretches of long-term unemployment on their resume, volunteering is the best way to show future employers that you value staying active and building new skills. And, if you're a low-wage worker at a fast-food restaurant, for example, you can have a whole new headspace in which to consider your future.

- Work on developing leads. You can be just like everyone else who's desperate for a decent job or you can be proactive and build professional relationships, which do more than resumes to earn interviews and employment.

The nonprofit sector attracts people who are passionate about

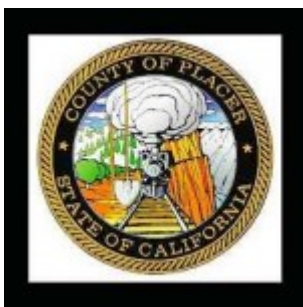
a cause, a wide range of associated professionals and, frequently, people who are in high income brackets.

- Where can folks go to volunteer? A half-hour of research online can yield viable options for legit non-profit organizations. Other great sources are hospitals, which tend to work closely with nonprofit organizations. Hospitals also involve a wide variety of professionals.

Once again, if you work well and develop great working relationships with others, you open yourself up to a whole network of possibilities. Who you know can make the difference.

Richard B. Alman is the principal and chief career/employment strategist of Recruiter Media Inc., the world's largest owner/operator of career websites, which offers recruiters, employers and job seekers a smarter alternative to the impersonal, less-specific "universal" employment websites.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Placer County had the best agricultural presentation among all counties at the California Fair.

- Measure E will be on the November ballot for Tahoe-Truckee Unified School District voters. E being for education, though the money is for facilities.

- Carson Tennis Club's second annual Compass Tournament is

July 19-20. Click on for the registration form.

- Vested Interest in K9's Inc. recently gave Washoe County sheriff's K9 Astor and his handler Deputy Dennis Allen a K9 ballistic vest valued at \$950.
 - The Truckee Donner Historical Society's 34th annual Old Timers' Picnic & History Expo is July 19 from 10am-4pm at Truckee River Regional Park on Brockway Road. For more info, go online.
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Placer County district selling water to Central Valley

By Seth Nidever, Hanford Sentinel

HANFORD – The struggle to find additional irrigation water for Kings County's parched Westside was on full display Monday as the comment period closed on a proposed 35,000 acre-feet water transfer from Placer County Water Agency to thirsty Westlands Water District, 80,000 acres of which are in Kings County.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which operates the Central Valley Project that is contracted to supply Sacramento River water to Westlands, is brokering the deal.

The Bureau has given Westlands a 0 percent allocation this year due to drought and regulatory demands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River delta.

That means that Westlands, like other districts with permanent crops that face an imminent threat from drought, is out on the open market trying to find more of the precious wet stuff.

The water will make its way down the American River into Folsom Lake, then through the delta and a series of canals to Westlands. It could be used immediately on crops, or it might be stored in San Luis Reservoir.

Westlands is paying Placer County \$325 an acre-foot for the transfer, according to Einar Maisch, director of strategic affairs for Placer County Water Agency. That comes out to \$11.4 million.

Read the whole story

Plan to break up Calif. closer to being on ballot

By Jennifer Chaussee, Reuters

A long-shot effort to break California into six separate states got a boost on Monday, when the billionaire venture capitalist behind the proposal said he had gathered enough signatures to place it on the ballot in two years.

Timothy Draper, a founder of a Silicon Valley-based venture capital firm that has invested in Twitter, Skype and Tesla, among other companies, has been agitating for months for a ballot initiative to chop the most populous U.S. state into smaller entities.

“It’s important because it will help us create a more responsive, more innovative and more local government, and

that ultimately will end up being better for all of Californians,” said Roger Salazar, a spokesman for the campaign. “The idea ... is to create six states with responsive local governments – states that are more representative and accountable to their constituents.”

Salazar said Monday that the campaign had gathered more than the roughly 808,000 signatures needed to place the measure on the November 2016 ballot. Draper and other supporters plan to file the signatures with California Secretary of State Debra Bowen on Tuesday.

[Read the whole story](#)

EDC supervisor candidates’ forum changed

The candidates forum for Sue Novasel and Kenny Curtzwiler, who will face each other in a November runoff for District 5 El Dorado County supervisor, has been moved to July 29.

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, sponsor of the 6:30-8pm event at the CCC building in Meyers, had not asked the candidates their schedule before scheduling the event so it had to be changed.

Opinion: Boat inspections prove to be beneficial

By Joanne Marchetta

I often speak about the importance of partnerships in this column and once again circumstances have proven the value of our collective teamwork and collaboration. Last week, the multi-sector partnership of the aquatic invasive species program prevented a boat from entering the lake that had quagga mussels and snail shells hidden within mud on the anchor.

Despite the fact that the boat was otherwise clean, drained, and dry, invasive quagga and snail shells were found by inspectors in the anchor locker of the boat from Lake Mead, a known-infected water body. Without the rigorous watercraft inspection program that TRPA leads in partnership with the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, this boat could have put the lake at risk.



Joanne
Marchetta

We continue to get the message out to boaters that they are on the front line in our fight against invasive species. The majority of all watercraft arrive at Tahoe clean, drained, and dry. However, one simple act of carelessness could devastate the lake's ecosystem along with our recreation-based economy. Research has shown that even in Lake Tahoe's cold, high

altitude waters, new invasive species could wreak havoc.

That's why TRPA is leading a public-private partnership of more than 40 organizations to secure funds to keep the watercraft inspection program going next year. Boater fees cover half of the \$1.5 million cost of the annual invasive species prevention program and federal funds historically have covered the balance. This federal funding is drying up and the program is in urgent need of new revenue sources to continue boat inspections in 2015.

We are tasked with a seemingly insurmountable challenge: how to continue to share this special place while also protecting it from the threat of infestation from aquatic invasive species. We've kept new destructive invaders out of Lake Tahoe over the last five years – the program has resulted in 36,000 watercraft inspections, 14,000 decontaminations of suspect or fouled vessels, nearly 30 acres of invasive weed removal, and unprecedented public awareness of the threat of invasive species. However, our work is far from done. The stakes are high. To fail could mean unimaginable environmental and economic consequences. To be successful, we must continue to work cooperatively.

Each of us has a role to play, and by that I mean residents and visitors alike. Even non-motorized watercraft should be mindful of the "clean, drain, and dry" message. The Tahoe Keepers program has successfully registered nearly 2,000 paddlers who have pledged to keep a watchful eye out for invasive species and self-inspect their watercraft.

The Tahoe watercraft inspection program has been recognized nationally for its high standards while still allowing recreational boating access to Lake Tahoe. Many water bodies have been closed to boating entirely because of quagga mussel threats or infestations. TRPA staff members have spoken at congressional briefings in Washington DC to raise awareness of what is now a national issue while at the same time sharing

our successes and challenges here at Lake Tahoe.

So, our focus must remain on preventing the introduction of quagga and zebra mussels and other invasive species, while working to successfully manage those aquatic invaders already in Lake Tahoe, such as the Asian clam. Our efforts will require the continued participation of the boating community, scientists and researchers, volunteers, well-trained inspectors, managers of private and public launch facilities, the conservation community, and all else with a stake in Lake Tahoe. Moving forward, we will continue improving the inspection program and remain open to constructive feedback and suggestions.

All who have contributed to this effort thus far – in particular those who have given up money, time, and convenience – will have a mussel-free Lake Tahoe in the future to show for it. For up-to-date information about the inspection program, go to TRPA's website.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Author to talk about book on early Tahoe residents

Author Mary Jo Sonntag will share "Write, If You Live to Get There Tracing Westward Expansion Through 120 Years of Family Letters" on Aug. 13 at 6pm.

It tells the story of the Phillips family's westward migration from Vermont to Northern California told through a collection of letters. They talk of the family's entrepreneurial spirit

and how they combined their business and hospitable instincts to build prominent resorts in the Lake Tahoe region at Phillips Station, Rubicon Springs and Meeks Bay.

The free talk is at the South Lake Tahoe Library, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.