Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• *TransWorld Snowboarding* magazine's 2014 Resort Poll ranked Sierra as the fourth best overall mountain in North America.

• The Veterans Day Musical Tribute is Nov. 7 at 7pm at South Tahoe Middle School. The concert is free.

• Most offices at Lake Tahoe Community College will be closed Oct. 18 to allow employees to attend training classes. The Child Development Center will be open.

• South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County's parks and rec commissions will meet Oct. 17 at 11am at Lake Tahoe Airport to discuss the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan.

Canines poisoned by pot becoming common

By Lydia O'Connor, Huffington Post

Veterinarians have have seen an increase in animals with pot poisoning, a KTVU report says.

According to veterinarians at the Berkeley Dog and Cat Hospital, the majority of incidents are accidental and the result of pets sneaking snacks from their owners' medical

marijuana products, most notably baked goods.

The veterinarians also cited the increasingly strength of pot-laced goods.

The increase is not unique to the Bay Area. A five-year study in Colorado found that pot-poisoning in dogs quadrupled after the state legalized medical marijuana in 2000.

Read the whole story

Decaying roads add to economic woes in U.S.

By Bob Tita, Barron's

America's road to recovery may face a costly detour due to a fraying transportation network.

One in nine of the country's 607,380 bridges are structurally deficient and 42% of the country's major urban highways are congested, according to an American Society of Civil Engineers estimate, the result of years of inadequate funding and deferred maintenance.

Trucks ship the bulk of the country's goods. But trucking companies and their customers complain those shipments are being rerouted—sometimes by hundreds of miles—or traveling at lower speeds over deteriorating or traffic-clogged highways. That causes higher costs for fuel, maintenance and other expenses, including drivers.

In some cases, the higher transportation costs end up on consumers. "We try to price our products to what our costs

are," said Donald Maier, senior vice president of global operations for Lancaster, Pa.-based Armstrong World Industries Inc., which makes floor and ceiling tiles.

He said fully loaded truck trailers traveling to or from its Marietta, Pa., ceiling tile plant will have to use a 25-mile detour, mostly to avoid a two-lane state highway bridge over a tributary of the Susquehanna River that will no longer be rated to accommodate fully-loaded heavy-duty trucks. Armstrong projects the additional miles will add about $200,000 to $300,000 a year to the Marietta plant's transportation costs "These costs will get passed on to our distributors and it's a cost that will get passed on to the consumers too," Maier said.

The burden is greatest in industries and regions where heavy loads are the norm, such as steel, energy, construction and automotive. But the impact percolates through the broader economy as well. Inadequate surface transportation is projected to cost U.S. businesses $430 billion more in operating expenses by 2020 and cause $1.7 trillion in lost sales opportunities, according to the ASCE.

Read the whole story

Soroptimist has money to give away

Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe has money to give to nonprofits for community service projects and programs.

Each year the service club awards grants that provide services

to the South Lake Tahoe area. SISLT's goal is to fund quality projects that serve clearly identified needs of women and children on the South Shore.

SISLT is accepting applications in three categories; programs or projects from $1,000-$2,500, between $2,500 and $7,500, and more than $7,500. A maximum of $25,000 will be distributed.

Applications, which are available online, are due Dec. 15. For more information, email the sisltfoundation@gmail.com.

All of SISLT's grant funding comes directly from the the annual wine tasting, which is Nov. 15 at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

Opinion: Tahoe inspires planning professionals

By Joanne Marchetta

As planning professionals from 13 states converge on Lake Tahoe this week for the annual Western States American Planning Association Conference, Tahoe's record of environmental protection and land use planning are taking the regional stage. A few of the attendees on Monday shared with me their excitement over having the conference in Lake Tahoe this year. Besides the spectacular fall weather and incredible surroundings, Tahoe is full of hidden interest about what makes this a special and challenging place for what planners call "place-making".

Professional and citizen planners from around the nation and the globe look to our mountain home as a leader in environmental management and trendsetting policies, and Tahoe

offers lessons to those who want to carry away its wisdom. The Lake Tahoe Regional Plan, Transportation Plan, and Environmental Improvement Program are headliner topics this week for the three-day conference in which attendees study innovations in the topics of growth, redevelopment, and environmental improvement.



Joanne Marchetta

So, what makes Tahoe the place that it is? The 11th deepest lake on the planet? The second largest at this elevation? The 39 trillion gallons of water it holds? Yes, but Tahoe was also one of the first places in the nation that started looking at planning at a regional, landscape scale. There are over 200 multi-state compact agencies nationwide, but TRPA is unique by being the only regional agency with the authority to implement land use and environmental regulations. We also started earlier here, more than 40 years ago, to protect the lake first against nutrient pollution, banning septic systems and requiring that all treated sewage be exported outside the watershed. We've continued that epic charge with water quality best management practices, pollutant reduction targets, and stream restoration among other measures.

Our small, permanent population of 55,000 contrasts with a huge influx of between 3 million and 5 million visitors each year. On Tahoe's mostly small, two-lane roadway system, we have to manage spikes of 300,000 people or more on peak holiday weekends. Of particular interest to planners coming from other areas is the fact that we have one of the strongest

growth control systems in the nation that prohibits new subdivisions and stopped new development on sensitive lands. These are the characteristics that generate so much interest from planners around the nation who are facing the dual challenges of dwindling natural resources and population growth.

The award-winning updates to the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan are taking center stage in many of the conference's 30 workshop sessions. The new Regional Plan for Tahoe embodies a growing trend in planning: to collaborate more broadly across sectors and across jurisdictions and move more toward regional-scale work. Many new alliances and partnerships are being spawned across the country recognizing the need to scale up planning to this landscape, ecosystem level in order to become more effective at addressing emerging land use, transportation, and conservation problems.

TRPA recognizes that regulation alone is not enough to restore Lake Tahoe and the restoration effort called the Environmental Improvement Program is an equally important part of the conference events. The EIP is one of the most comprehensive, large-scale investments in environmental restoration in the nation, on the scale of the conservation work at other great water bodies like Chesapeake Bay, Everglades, Puget Sound, and Great Lakes.

The conference this week highlights the role that Lake Tahoe has on the national and international stage of environmental conservation and development planning, but what we can all be proud of is the positive results that are beginning to show from our combined efforts. The loss of lake clarity has flattened and more than 60 percent of TRPA's environmental standards are in attainment or improving. Tahoe's land and water is special to us, but the knowledge and experience we have to offer others may be more meaningful than we imagine.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional

Planning Agency.

Tips for having fun outdoors with dogs

By Peter Dickson

You and your dog want to get out in the woods and go camping. You've decided you want to bypass the boring campsites offered at the usual places and head off the beaten path. The backcountry, the hinterlands – call it what you want, but you'll need a few tips to make sure that you and your dog will have a memorable outdoors experience so far from home.

Leash or not?

Leashing your dog depends on his or her temperament and training. If your dog will stick close to you and come when you call, it might be all right to go without. But if your dog has a tendency to take off on its own, then obviously you'd better have it on a leash – one that's heavy duty enough to handle the rigors of navigating the terrain. Alternatively, you could try one of the newer models of electronic dog training collars. They're not intended to train a dog to perform a command that they don't already know, but rather to enforce ones already learned, enabling you to keep your dog close and under control.

Water: Do you have enough?

Water is heavy, weighing in at a little over eight pounds per gallon. You're going to need a lot of it yourself, and your

dog – after running around the whole forest chasing chipmunks – is going to be thirsty. You might be leery about letting your dog drink out of the creek or that stagnant puddle, but really, they were made to do that kind of stuff. If you don't like the idea of letting your dog do that, haul in a few gallons. Bring some iodine tablets or a filter to purify the water.

Make sure shots are up to date

During the camping trip, your dog will be exposed to wild animals and animal feces which can carry parasites. It could be a squirrel, raccoon, possum or just a tick. Talk to your vet and make sure your pup is protected.

Make him carry his load

Hey, the dog can carry stuff too. They actually make load-carrying outfits for dogs. And why not? Some breeds haul sleds through the frozen north, so you can at least make them carry their own food and water. They'll understand.

Pack out poop

Some environmentally minded outdoors enthusiasts advocate carrying a pooper-scooper to pick up your dog's waste, so as not to contaminate the environment. This makes good sense if you're in an area frequented by other people, but if you're roughing it off the beaten path, isn't dog poop kind of environmentally friendly?

Above all, you know what's best for your dog. Use some common sense, and have fun.

Peter Dickson is a hunter and outdoorsman who travels as a consultant for sustainable game reserves. When he is not working, he enjoys writing about nature and the outdoors.

Alternative energy program in Calif. scrutinized

By Ralph Vartabedian and Evan Halper, Los Angeles Times

California is spending nearly $15 million to build 10 hydrogen fueling stations, even though just 227 hydrogen-powered vehicles exist in the state today.

It’s a hefty bet on the future, given that government officials have been trying for nine years, with little success, to get automakers to build more hydrogen cars.

The project is part of a sprawling but little-known state program that packs a powerful financial punch: It spent $1.6 billion last year on a myriad of energy-efficiency and alternative-energy projects.

Even as California has scaled back education, law enforcement and assistance to the disabled in this era of financial stress, the energy program has continued unrestrained and is expected to grow significantly in coming years.

Read the whole story

No need for ski lodging with

tricked out van

By Kade Krichko, Outside

Lars Chickering-Ayers, the runner-up of the 2011 Subaru Freeskiing World Tour and winner of 2013's Kirkwood stop of the Freeride World Tour is a van life vet.

For years he and his brother, Silas, have traveled around North America to FWT stops in a souped-up 1993 Ford E350 dubbed "The General."

"We designed [the General] to travel around the World Tour because we wanted to get ourselves and our gear pretty much anywhere," he says. "Basically it's fun and it's convenient."

Chickering-Ayers represents a growing number of skiers and snowboarders using vans to carve out prime slope access. What their vehicles lack in indoor plumbing and kitchen convenience, they make up for mobility, making them an ideal option for those that live life one winter storm at a time.

Some resorts like Squaw Valley offer free overnight parking for 72 hours (except on storm days).

Read the whole story

Full college classes keep students from graduating

By Josh Dulaney, Pasadena Star-News

A shortage of veteran professors and crushing enrollment

demands in the California State University system are creating headaches for students who find themselves shut out of the classes they need to graduate in four to six years.

Known as bottleneck courses, there were 1,294 identified throughout CSU's 23-campus system during the 2012-2013 academic year, according to a survey of 791 department chairs between June 14 and Sept. 6.

CSU officials point to a lack of tenured professors as the biggest cause for the logjam of courses. But other issues – the lack of lab space, students failing and retaking courses and a crush of students taking whatever courses are available in order to maintain the minimum workload needed to keep their financial aid – are driving increasingly harried CSU faculty and staff into semiannual rounds of class-switching, seat-shuffling and other measures to press as many students as possible into a classroom.

Read the whole story

Halloween stories to be told at library

Tilly the Witch (aka Carol Nageotte) will be telling scary stories at the Douglas County Public Library in Zephyr Cove on Oct. 30 at 6pm.

Dress in a Halloween costume for this special storytime. Children will receive a Halloween treat to take home.

Children ages 4 and up will to listen to Halloween stories from the library's collection including a flashlight story.

Tilly the Witch will end the program with her favorite poem, “Spider on the Floor.”

The Douglas County Public Library is located at 233 Warrior Way in Zephyr Cove.