SLTFD: Tree buying, decorating saftey tips

Select a fresh tree with good color and firm, flexible needles that do not easily pull from the branches.

Place the tree in plain water immediately after recutting the trunk at least one-half inch above the old cut.

The container you use for your tree should hold 2 to 4 quarts of water. The longer you wait to place your tree in water, the greater the chances are that it will lose the required moisture content to keep it fresh through the holiday season.

Never place your tree on a wooden stand.

Locate the tree away from sources of heat. Avoid placing the tree near heaters, wood stoves, fireplaces, large appliances, such as TVs, and direct sunlight.

Be careful not to block a door or other exit with the tree or rearranged furniture.

Use mini-lights on your tree and never place candles on or near your tree.

Never burn your Christmas tree or wrapping paper in the fireplace. The rapid burning and excessive heat can damage the firebox and chimney creating a serious fire hazard.

The SLTFD wants to wish everyone a fun and safe holiday season.

– Sallie Ross-Filgo

Nevada may require voters to show photo ID

By Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – Secretary of State Ross Miller announced last week he is seeking legislation in the 2013 session aimed at curbing the potential for voter fraud by including photographs of registered voters at polling places on election day.

Miller said his proposal is not a voter identification measure. Instead it would be an upgrade to the current antiquated paper roster system by implementing electronic voter rosters with the enhanced feature of a photograph of each registered voter.

The requirement of a photograph in the new electronic roster would prevent ineligible voters from impersonating other, eligible voters at a polling place, Miller said. The proposed law, which is currently being drafted, will seek to import existing photographs of eligible voters from the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles database of drivers' licenses and state identification cards.

The photographs would be part of a new "electronic poll book" as an adjunct to the existing poll books that currently use signatures for identifying voters. When photographs of the eligible voters are not available through the database, poll workers would be available to take photos at the polling place at the time of voting and verify their identity by way of an affidavit.

Voter ID laws have been passed in other states, but have frequently led to court challenges. Nevada does not now have

such a law.

Sen. Michael Roberson, R-Las Vegas, proposed a voter ID law in the 2011 legislative session, but the measure did not win approval from a Senate Committee and died without action.

Assemblyman Lynn Stewart, R-Henderson, has submitted a bill draft request for a voter identification law for the 2013 session.

“This provides a significant safeguard in our election process while simultaneously ensuring that we don’t disenfranchise any voters,” Miller said. “It’s really just an enhancement of the existing system, by providing an electronic poll book that could include a photo to go with the already recorded signature.”

State to fund stormwater project in South Lake Tahoe

El Dorado County is getting $4.7 million from the California Transportation Commission.

The work will be done in South Lake Tahoe on Highway 50 from Herbert Avenue to Takela Drive. Drainage systems and best management practices will be installed. This includes sediment vaults and a force main to collect and treat stormwater.

The allocation, announced Dec. 6, is part of $306 million being spent on 44 projects. Part of the money – $114 million – is from Proposition 1B, a transportation bond approved by voters in 2006. The remaining $192 million in allocations came

from assorted transportation accounts funded by state and federal dollars.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Workshop on creating environmentally friendly holidays

For those wanting to put green – as in environmentally friendly – ideas in to the holidays there will be a presentation about how to do so on Dec. 12

Rose Parker is putting on the event from 6-8pm at Lake Tahoe Community College's library.

This interactive presentation will cover a variety of topics related to how people can make a positive impact on their local communities. This event will cover definitions related to sustainability, how conventional consumerism impacts people, economies and communities, how to green holidays, travel, resourcing and more.

Must be 18 to attend. Space is limited. Cost is $25.

To RSVP or for more info, contact vrosie333@hotmail.com or (530) 314.0168.

Vail Resorts buys 2 Midwest ski resorts

By Ed Sealover, Denver Business Journal

Vail Resorts Inc. has entered into agreements to buy two Midwestern ski resorts, making the Broomfield, Colo.-based company's cache of out-of-state resorts larger than its in-state collection for the first time.

The company that owns and operates Heavenly, Northstar and Kirkwood in California, and the Vail, Keystone, Breckenridge and Beaver Creek resorts in Colorado will add Afton Alps in Minnesota and Mount Brighton in Michigan to its portfolio for the combined price of $20 million, CEO/chairman Rob Katz announced Thursday.

Vail Resorts then plans to upgrade the ski areas and to include them for the 2013-14 season in what will be a nine-resort season pass, he said.

"These acquisitions are part of a new strategy for Vail Resorts to drive season pass sales and build broader guest loyalty by looking at premier smaller ski areas located near major urban markets," Katz said in a news release. "We plan to bring state-of-the-art racing, terrain parks, coaching and technology to the guest experience."

The announcement comes two days after KSL Capital Partners LLC of Denver, which owns Squaw Valley, announced that it will buy a 24 percent stake in Whistler Blackcomb Holdings Inc., the Canadian company that owns the popular Whistler ski resort near Vancouver, British Columbia. Katz was asked during Vail's quarterly earnings call Tuesday about whether his company had looked at buying Whistler, and he responded that he was not interested in buying a minority stake in a resort company because it would not allow Vail to make changes and drive

value the way it feels is necessary.

Afton Alps and Mount Brighton host a combined 468,000 active skiers each year and are near the Minneapolis-St. Paul and Detroit markets. Both currently are family-owned.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Between now and Dec. 16 is Unity at the Lake's annual Bear-A-Thon. Bring a new bear or other stuffed animal to Sunday service (1195 Rufus Allen Blvd. South Lake Tahoe, 10-11:30am) to hug, cuddle and fill with special blessings and healing light. All the bears are donated to Live Violence, fire departments and sheriff's departments to be given to children who may be in need of some loving energy. For more info, call (530) 544.2266.

• Dirk Yuricich Photography is having an open house Dec. 15-16 from noon-5pm at the Ski Run Marina gallery in South Lake Tahoe.

• Cindy Hartzell of Truckee who runs HeartSoul Natural Animal Communication has been named one of the Top Women in the Pet Industry in the "Holiday Biz Book," an 80-page digital magazine-style resource guide.

• State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, is chairman of the Senate Republican Caucus.

• New York based Northlight Financial LLC, a manager of private equity debt investments and real estate assets, has acquired from East West Partners the remaining real estate

assets at Old Greenwood in Truckee. East West will continue to own the golf course by the same name.

Indictment: South Tahoe man skiing and collecting workers' comp benefits

A federal grand jury returned an 11-count indictment today against South Lake Tahoe resident Mark E. Leung. The 58-year-old is accused of wire fraud, mail fraud, and making a false statement to obtain federal workers' compensation.

Leung worked for the U.S. Postal Service until 1987. At that time he claimed he sustained a work-related injury. He never returned to full-time employment with the Postal Service and began receiving workers' compensation benefits.

From September 2007 through November 2012, Leung received approximately $160,000 from the Department of Labor. To obtain the benefits, Leung submitted an annual certification form and also had his medical providers attest that he could not perform any work due to the pain he suffered that limited his mobility and range of movement.

But he was mobile enough to ski.

According to U.S. Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner, Leung has a season pass at Heavenly Mountain Resort and regularly skis 40 days a season.

"Moreover, Leung was as also observed performing arduous

physical labor on numerous days," according to a press release from the U.S. Attorneys Office.

If convicted of the 11 counts, Leung faces a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison and a $250,000 fine.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Brubeck – a frequent Tahoe performer dies at age 91

By AP

HARTFORD, Conn. – Jazz composer and pianist Dave Brubeck, whose pioneering style in pieces such as "Take Five" caught listeners' ears with exotic, challenging rhythms, has died. He was 91.

Brubeck died Wednesday morning of heart failure after being stricken while on his way to a cardiology appointment with his son Darius, said his manager Russell Gloyd. Brubeck would have turned 92 on Thursday.

Brubeck, who grew up for a time near Honey Lake in northeast Lassen County on land worked by his rancher father, had a career that spanned almost all American jazz since World War II. He formed The Dave Brubeck Quartet in 1951 and was the first modern jazz musician to be pictured on the cover of Time magazine – on Nov. 8, 1954 – and he helped define the swinging, smoky rhythms of 1950s and '60s club jazz.

He and his groups also appeared regularly at venues at Lake Tahoe and in Reno.

The seminal album “Time Out,” released by the quartet in 1959, was the first ever million-selling jazz LP, and is still among the best-selling jazz albums of all time. It opens with “Blue Rondo a la Turk” in 9/8 time – nine beats to the measure instead of the customary two, three or four beats.

A piano-and-saxophone whirlwind based loosely on a Mozart piece, “Blue Rondo” eventually intercuts between Brubeck’s piano and a more traditional 4/4 jazz rhythm.

The album also features “Take Five” – in 5/4 time – which became the Quartet’s signature theme and even made the Billboard singles chart in 1961. It was composed by Brubeck’s longtime saxophonist, Paul Desmond.

“When you start out with goals – mine were to play polytonally and polyrhythmically – you never exhaust that,” Brubeck told The Associated Press in 1995. “I started doing that in the 1940s. It’s still a challenge to discover what can be done with just those two elements.”

After service in World War II and study at Mills College in Oakland, Brubeck formed an octet including Desmond on alto sax and Dave van Kreidt on tenor, Cal Tjader on drums and Bill Smith on clarinet. The group played Brubeck originals and standards by other composers, including some early experimentation in unusual time signatures. Their groundbreaking album “Dave Brubeck Octet” was recorded in 1946.

The group evolved into the Quartet, which played colleges and universities. The Quartet’s first album, “Jazz at Oberlin,” was recorded live at Oberlin College in Ohio in 1953.

Ten years later, Joe Morello on drums and Eugene Wright on bass joined with Brubeck and Desmond to produce “Time Out.”

In later years Brubeck composed music for operas, ballet, even a contemporary Mass.

In 1988, he played for Mikhail Gorbachev, at a dinner in Moscow that then-President Ronald Reagan hosted for the Soviet leader.

“I can’t understand Russian, but I can understand body language,” said Brubeck, after seeing the general secretary tapping his foot.

In the late 1980s, Brubeck contributed music for one episode of an eight-part series of television specials, “This Is America, Charlie Brown.”

His music was for an episode involving NASA and the space station. He worked with three of his sons — Chris on bass trombone and electric bass, Dan on drums and Matthew on cello — and included excerpts from his Mass “To Hope! A Celebration,” his oratorio “A Light in the Wilderness,” and a piece he had composed but never recorded, “Quiet As the Moon.”

“That’s the beauty of music,” he told the AP in 1992. “You can take a theme from a Bach sacred chorale and improvise. It doesn’t make any difference where the theme comes from; the treatment of it can be jazz.”

In 2006, the University of Notre Dame gave Brubeck its Laetare Medal, awarded each year to a Roman Catholic “whose genius has ennobled the arts and sciences, illustrated the ideals of the church and enriched the heritage of humanity.”

At the age of 88, in 2009, Brubeck was still touring, in spite of a viral infection that threatened his heart and made him miss an April show at his alma mater, the University of the Pacific.

By June, though, he was playing in Chicago, where the Tribune critic wrote that “Brubeck was coaxing from the piano a high lyricism more typically encountered in the music of Chopin.”

More acclaim came his way when it was announced that he would

be a recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors at a ceremony in late 2009.

Brubeck told the AP the announcement would have delighted his late mother, Elizabeth Ivey Brubeck, a classical pianist who was initially disappointed by her youngest son's interest in jazz. (He added that she had lived long enough to come to appreciate his music.)

Born in Concord, Calif., on Dec. 6, 1920, Brubeck actually had planned to become a rancher like his father. He attended the College of the Pacific (now the University of the Pacific) in 1938, intending to major in veterinary medicine and return to the family's 45,000-acre spread.

But within a year Brubeck was drawn to music. He graduated in 1942 and was drafted by the Army, where he served – mostly as a musician – under Gen. George S. Patton in Europe. At the time, his Wolfpack Band was the only racially integrated unit in the military.

In an interview for Ken Burns' PBS miniseries "Jazz," Brubeck talked about playing for troops with his integrated band, only to return to the U.S. to see his black bandmates refused service in a restaurant in Texas.

Brubeck and his wife, Iola, had five sons and a daughter. Four of his sons – Chris on trombone and electric bass, Dan on drums, Darius on keyboards and Matthew on cello – played with the London Symphony Orchestra in a birthday tribute to Brubeck in December 2000.

"We never had a rift," Chris Brubeck once said of living and playing with his father. "I think music has always been a good communication tool, so we didn't have a rift. We've always had music in common."

Ski report: Sun and firm terrain



It’s shaping up to be a great day to make some turns.

Surface conditions could be a little firm this morning in some areas.

Enjoy the sunshine.

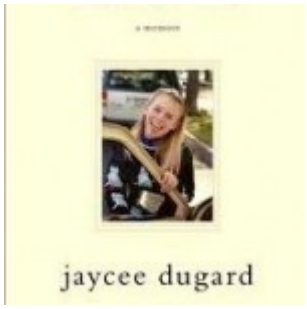
Here is the Dec. 6 ski report.

– Curtis Fong

Dugard memoir captures a life of captivity

By Kathryn Reed

Some books I don’t want to read, but I know should. Such was the case with “A Stolen Life” – Jaycee Lee Dugard’s memoir.



It was also one of those books that I wanted to be done with fast. Selfishly, I just didn't want Dugard's 18-year ordeal to linger long on my nightstand. Though, truth be told, I have had it for more than a year. I just needed to be ready to read it. And when I was, I read it fast.

I wasn't living in South Lake Tahoe when Dugard, who was 11 at the time, was snatched from a school bus stop in Meyers. But I was here in 2009 when word came she had been found – alive – living in Antioch (just three hours away) and had given birth to children who were fathered by her kidnapper-rapist.

The book is worth reading no matter how many news accounts you've read.

It would make for an interesting high school or college level project – perhaps in an English, psychology, or criminal justice class. It is definitely not a book to be read by all ages.

I was surprised that the emotion I was left with at the end of the 273 pages was disbelief. Still, I cannot believe Dugard's will to live. I don't know how she endured the endless sexual, emotional and verbal abuse.

She writes about how she got through it all. Her thoughts. Her mindset. Her emotions.

It's a gritty book. It's an honest book. It will make you angry and sad. But in the end I was just amazed by this woman's journey from innocent child to bruised woman. Battered, yes, but nowhere near broken.

That is what is so remarkable – that at least when the book came out in 2011 – is that Dugard was well on the road to recovery.

In some ways I would like to read the next chapter, so to speak, of her life. And another side of me hopes she goes on to live a life without a spotlight on her or any member of her family.