David Walley's hangs on to celebrate 150 years in business

By Yun Long, Reno Gazette-Journal

David Walley's Hot Springs Resort, which dates back to when Nevada was a territory, was on the brink of fading into history.

The Carson Valley property, built in 1862, was near closure two years ago. The restaurant was closed, the property was in disrepair and time share fees weren't paid.

In 2010, Pat Joyce, founder and CEO of Branson, Mo.-based Summer Winds Resort, and his partners stepped in to buy the troubled property as a favor to their lender, Bank of America.

"They came to us and asked if we would have any interest in the property," Joyce said. "Me and my partners flew out there and looked at it. We walked through the property, and we could see some potential there."

Summer Winds officials said it was a good fit within its vacation ownership portfolio because of the variety of outdoor activities nearby.

"Right now in the resort and vacation business, people are driven more by amenities and by active lifestyle-type choices," he said. "That's why the Genoa and Lake Tahoe area is attractive to us because the type of customers that are interested in our resorts are normally people who are middle or upper-middle class folks (who are active)."

So far, the company has invested millions to renovate the restaurant into a fine dining experience and update resort amenities. More money will be spent on the famed outdoor

mineral pools and the spa to bring the resort back as a first-class health spa destination.

On Saturday, the resort will celebrate its 150th anniversary with a barbecue and free concert. In September, it will honor the history of the area with re-enactments open to schools and the public.

“(Walley’s) has had a high profile over 150 years,” said Guy Rocha, former Nevada state archivist. “It has had its ups and downs, but when you look at all (the area hot springs), I would say the hot springs resort emerges as the premier resort.”

Read the whole story

Car wash raises funds for young dancers

Lake Tahoe’s Shining Stars is having a fundraising car wash on July 22 from 10am to 3:30pm at Tahoe Quik Lube at 2513 Lake Tahoe Blvd. in South Lake Tahoe.

Donations will be accepted to help the nonprofit’s outreach program.

The outreach program provides opportunities for children in the community to participate in dance and performing arts classes and performances.

Property tax assessments decline modestly in El Dorado, Placer counties

By Loretta Kalb, Sacramento Bee

If you want to understand why local governments have laid off workers and struggled to maintain services, just look at property taxes.

In the past four years, Sacramento County real estate has lost $19 billion in assessed value, data from the Sacramento County assessor's office show.

That means that the county's secured tax roll now stands at $113.7 billion, down from $132.7 billion – the peak recorded in January 2008. And it translates to sharply reduced tax revenue for local governments, schools and special districts.

No place in the Sacramento region has been immune from the combined effects of the down economy and the loss in property values, though the story is less severe these days in El Dorado, Yolo and Placer counties.

In Sacramento County, Natomas and Rio Linda are recording a disproportionate share of the ongoing decline in property values.

However, east Sacramento, Fair Oaks and Rancho Murieta are doing better, said Sacramento County Assessor Kathleen Kelleher, who described those areas as stable.

Kelleher said she doubts broad recovery can take hold until the unemployment rate shows significant improvement – it's now at 10.4 percent in the region – and the supply of foreclosed homes diminishes.

Foreclosures and other distressed sales have been driving property values down in much of Sacramento County.

This year, the volume of homes foreclosed is averaging about 600 a month in Sacramento County, Kelleher said. “Last year, we were averaging about 1,000 foreclosures a month,” she said.

Placer, Yolo and El Dorado counties are seeing more modest declines in property values. In each of those counties, the secured tax roll fell this year by less than a half-percent.

Read the whole story

‘Death by Golf’ opens on the South Shore

In “Death by Golf” an escaped convict, an anxious bride, a scheming new husband, and a suspicious attorney all convene at grandpa’s house. It doesn’t take long for grandpa to realize he has to reschedule his golf game.

This combination of uproarious comedy and terrifying murder mystery revolves around the uncanny resemblance between the escaped convict and the recent bridegroom.

The play comes to life starting tonight at the Boathouse Theatre on the South Shore.

The play is July 19-21 at 7:30pm, July 22 at 2pm, and July 26-29 at 7:30pm. Tickets are $18 in advance. Buy them online or call (530) 541.4975. If tickets are available at the door, they are $20.

Youngsters use Truckee River to learn to swim

By Adam Rasmussen, KTVN

With temperatures hitting the triple digits, people of all ages are flocking to the Truckee River, which is exactly why teaching kids some safety lessons is so important.

With strong currents and some rocky areas, swimming in the Truckee River is challenging. It’s easy to get swept away or thrown underwater.

On Saturday, kids learned how to swim and definitely had fun along the way.

“I got to swim with my BFFs and have fun with them,” says 9-year-old Chris LaDay.

The Truckee River Foundation was thrilled with Saturday’s turnout, with 200 kids filling up the classes.

“We have kids come back here every single year, because they love it so much,” says Debbie Leonard with the Truckee River Foundation.

Organizers say it’s vital to teach them safety tips early-on.

Read the whole story

USFS faces lawsuit over access to Tahoe National Forest

By Amber Marra, Auburn Journal

Multiple groups of motor sports enthusiasts and individual riders are suing the US Forest Service and Department of Agriculture over preparations to close more than 800 miles of trails to off-road vehicles in the Tahoe National Forest.

The lawsuit was filed on Tuesday by Brandon Middleton, an attorney with Pacific Legal Foundation, for six local motor sports organizations and two individual enthusiasts.

The six organizations are Friends of Greenhorn, of Auburn; Friends of Tahoe Forest Access, Webilt Four Wheel Drive Club, Nevada County Woods Riders, Grass Valley 4-Wheel Drive Club and High Sierra Motorcycle Club. The two individual plaintiffs are David Wood, of Nevada County, and another Nevada County woman only identified as “Kyra” in a complaint.

“Off-road vehicle enthusiasts have been undeservedly attacked by environmental groups who paint a picture to their members that simply doesn’t exist on the scale they assert,” said Jacquelyne Theisen, of Auburn, with Friends of Greenhorn.

The U.S. Forest Service declined to comment on the lawsuit Tuesday morning. It is listed as a defendant along with the US Department of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, US Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell, Regional Forester for the Forest Service’s Pacific Southwest Region Randy Moore, and Forest Supervisor at the Tahoe National Forest Tom Quinn.

Pacific Legal Foundation gathered members of the represented

organizations and concerned riders together at the American River Canyon Overlook Park in Auburn on Tuesday.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Live at Lakeview is the place to be Thursdays

To the community,

I went to the first Live at Lakeview free concert series. I had to leave early to get back home to cook my son and I dinner, but just want to say that from what I witnessed, this event was a total success.

My guess is that there was at least 500-plus people there, all seeming to enjoy themselves and emanating a wonderful vibe.

The venue worked perfectly for this event and I look forward to making Thursdays at Lakeview Commons a regular stop on Ian’s (my youngest) and my summer fun tour!

Toogee Sielsch, South Lake Tahoe

Truckee woman representing Czech Republic in Olympics

By Lauren Gustus, Reno Gazette-Journal

Blame her chosen sport, the country she’s riding for or the town she’s decided to make her home.

Katerina Nash is flying into the London Olympics about as far under the radar as is possible.

And that’s precisely how the Truckee mountain biker prefers it.

“I think being a Czech citizen, she kind of falls through the cracks,” her husband, Marcus Nash, said. “If you read the media race reports, people say she’s kind of overlooked because she’s not from the U.S.”

The 34-year-old has called Truckee home for more than a decade. But the native of Prachatice, Czech Republic, will compete for her birth country in women’s mountain biking on Aug. 11 at Hadleigh Farm in Essex, just outside of London.

She will skip the opening festivities in London for a World Cup race nearby and then head to a hotel closer to her venue to allow for easier access to the course.

“To be an Olympic athlete, it kind of sounds really cool, and it is cool. But I am going to be racing in France the day of the Opening Ceremony,” Nash said. “We are staying in Essex. We don’t get to stay in the Olympic Village. You’re already taking away all of the elements of people’s perception of you’re going to do this really cool stuff. Really, you’re going to do this really important stuff.

“All the fun stuff kind of gets pretty much eliminated.”

Well, not all of it. With a little luck, the UNR graduate could find herself on the podium.

Since its inception in 2002, Nash has been on Luna Chix Pro Team, a women’s outfit sponsored by Clif Bar, among others. She is the No. 12-ranked racer in the International Cycling Union’s World Cup cross country standings.

Read the whole story

LTN travels to UK for Olympic preview, other worldly stories



Lake Tahoe News Publisher Kathryn Reed and reporter Susan Wood, left, have been on assignment for two weeks in England.

Their reports from the old country will begin appearing on *Lake Tahoe News* a week from today.

Pet blessing in South Lake Tahoe

Unity at the Lake’s Pet Blessing and Ice Cream Social is July 21 from noon-3pm at 1195 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Celebrate your pets by bringing them for a special blessing. A photo and certificate will help you remember the occasion.

Love offerings gratefully accepted.

For more info and a current schedule of events, call (530) 544.2266.