

Preserving Sierra ski history on film



Ty Dayberry at the Johnsville Longboard races. Photo/Provided

By Kayla Anderson, Tahoe Weekly

John Dayberry wants to make sure that the history of early Sierra Nevada mountaineering isn't easily forgotten. He is using his experience in wood-shop instruction, environmental restoration, back-country ski-shop management in Hope Valley and a drive to share indigenous wisdom in the modern age to document that history.

"SST-X" is a home-grown documentary film project to preserve Tahoe Sierra mountaineering heritage that goes back hundreds of years.

On an archaeological quest to learn about the early mountaineers in the Eastern Sierra, the South Shore resident started reading books on Snowshoe Thompson, aka John Albert Thompson, who delivered mail in the snowy mountains of the Sierra in the 1800s, as well as the history of back-country

skiing and the indigenous Washoe who were at the forefront of a sport that has gained great popularity today. “SST-X” stands for Snowshoe Thompson Expedition.

Nevada resort revenue hits record levels in 2017

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Nongaming spending on the Strip drove resort revenue in Nevada to record levels in 2017, according to numbers released today by the Nevada Gaming Control Board.

Each January, the board release its Nevada Gaming Abstract, a review of the previous year’s financial results from resorts grossing \$1 million or more in gaming revenue.

Overall revenue – gaming, rooms, food, beverage, attractions – throughout Nevada increased 3.7 percent in 2017 compared to fiscal 2016.

Read the whole story

Report: Trump lawyer bought

porn star silence on alleged sexual encounter at Tahoe golf tourney

By Heidi M. Przybyla, USA Today

WASHINGTON — A lawyer representing President Trump arranged a \$130,000 payment to a former adult film star one month before the 2016 presidential election to prevent her from discussing an alleged sexual encounter between her and Trump some 10 years earlier at Lake Tahoe during the American Century Championship celebrity golf tournament, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.

The *Journal*, citing anonymous sources familiar with the matter, was the first to report on the agreement between Trump's longtime attorney and the woman, Stephanie Clifford, whose stage name is Stormy Daniels.

Michael Cohen, who was a lawyer for the Trump Organization at the time, did not directly address the latest report of the payment, but said "these rumors have circulated time and again since 2011."

Read the whole story

Bay Area group to buy former

KMS site

By Kathryn Reed

A group out of the Bay Area has offered to buy the former Kingsbury Middle School site for above what it was listed for.

The Douglas County School District board this week accepted the offer of \$3.75 million by Palo Alto-based Pioneer Mountain. The 22-plus-acre site in Stateline had been listed for \$3.4 million.

"We do not and have not made any absolute concrete decisions on the property. Nothing is solidified. They have a lot of ideas," Katie Foster, the real estate agent representing the buyer, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I can guarantee it won't be a housing development or hotel. It will be used for the community of Douglas County and Lake Tahoe."

A representative at the Jan. 9 meeting told the school board the plan is to make it a youth Christian facility.

Escrow opened Jan. 11. A \$50,000 deposit has been made. The buyer has a 75-day due diligence period. This means the deal could close this spring.

This Bay Area company has expressed interest in the school site at other times, but this is the first time a formal bid has been made.

Zoning and other regulatory issues involving Douglas County and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency will have to be addressed by the buyer.

DCSD has been saddled with the basic upkeep and utilities of KMS since it closed after the 2007-08 school year because of declining enrollment.

The district thought it had a buyer a year ago. That deal fell

through when the person could not come up with the money. His proposal to build affordable housing was met with opposition from those who live down the street in Lake Village.

Brown raises prospect of pension cuts in downturn

By Romy Varghese, Bloomberg

Gov. Jerry Brown said legal rulings may clear the way for making cuts to public pension benefits, which would go against long-standing assumptions and potentially provide financial relief to the state and its local governments.

Brown said he has a “hunch” the courts would “modify” the so-called California rule, which holds that benefits promised to public employees can’t be rolled back. The state’s Supreme Court is set to hear a case in which lower courts ruled that reductions to pensions are permissible if the payments remain “reasonable” for workers.

“There is more flexibility than there is currently assumed by those who discuss the California rule,” Brown said during a briefing on the budget in Sacramento. He said that in the next recession, the governor “will have the option of considering pension cutbacks for the first time.”

Read the whole story

Fresh Ketch restaurant closes its doors

By Kathryn Reed

Once one of the busiest restaurant and bars on the South Shore, the Fresh Ketch has closed.

As one of the few South Lake Tahoe eateries right on the water, its location was always one of its biggest selling points.

While the message on the voice recorder says it will reopen in mid-April, doing so in shoulder season could be problematic to be successful.

Business at the Ketch has been dwindling ever since it changed owners nearly five years ago. The food quality became inconsistent, the hours of operation cutback, a **water issue** closed it for a bit last summer.

There was a time when it was hard to get a seat – inside or out. Musicians regularly set up next to the fireplace. The pray for snow parties each fall were legendary.

Longtime owner **Bob Hassett in 2013** sold the restaurant to the majority owners of the Tahoe Keys Marina, Donna and Robert Krilich. The El Dorado County Assessor's Office at the time listed the value of the property and business at \$1,224,913.

The Krilichs bought the Tahoe Keys Marina in early 2009 for more than \$20 million.

Donna Krilich had a separate business listed with the California Secretary of State as LT Food and Spirits, which

reportedly operated the restaurant. The status is listed as suspended.

The Tahoe Keys Marina Management Inc., with Robert Krilich Sr. as the registrant, is also listed as suspended by the Franchise Tax Board.

According to the Sacramento Real Estate Lawyer Blog, “The FTB usually suspends a business either because the business failed to file one or more tax returns or the business failed to pay its balance. This balance can include the penalty incurred by not filing your Statement of Information in a timely manner.”

The restaurant has been in operation since at least the 1980s, and was popular with locals and tourists.

Mother Nature messing with Tahoe's economy



Mount Tallac is a reminder it really is winter in Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

The economy in the Lake Tahoe Basin is in the toilet from many, on par for some, and better than average for others.

The phone recording at Adventure Mountain Lake Tahoe is from Jan. 2. It says the sledding hill atop Echo Summit is "closed because of low snow conditions." This is at 7,382 feet, while lake level is 6,200 feet.

The sledding hill in the lot next to MontBleu in Stateline has been able to keep making snow with the cold nights. The lines of people wanting to play in the white stuff is remarkable. It's easy, convenient and they don't care it is manmade.

While skiing and snowboarding dominate the reason to travel to Tahoe this time of year, plenty of people come just to play in the white stuff.

"It's surprising the number of people who have never seen snow or played in snow," Jerry Bindel, who operates Lakeland Village in South Lake Tahoe, said. "We have a significant number of guests here for snow playing more than going up the mountain. Some go up the mountain because that is where the snow is. During the holidays (Heavenly) saw sightseeing passes at the gondola selling out by noon every day."

Lodging numbers for this season on the North Shore are about what they were last year when all it did was snow – or so it seemed.

"Reports are that the holidays were strong and this period, early January, is usually slower, but the numbers look strong for this weekend's occupancy," Cindy Gustafson, CEO of North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The most recent occupancy forecast numbers I have for the winter season based on reservations on the books as of Nov. 30 for the November to April period is just over 1 percent ahead as compared to the same period last year. So while not much of a total increase, the business activity based on room reservations looks pretty comparative to last year."

For the South Shore lodging community, advance bookings are saving the season.

“Due to last year’s great snows, we have seen some good advance group bookings for the winter months, and currently most properties are reporting pacing ahead of last year,” Bindel, who is on the South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association board, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Open roads are helping as well. Of course we all want some of the white stuff on the ground at lake level, just enough to allow for our guests to have some snow play while keeping the roads open and clear. The mountains can get all the big dumps of feet of snow – that would be the perfect mix.”

But not everyone is full for the weekend. Local hoteliers were on social media Thursday touting room availability.

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, which is responsible for marketing the South Shore, is not changing its message because there are heads in beds.

“We haven’t changed our winter strategy at this point. The board may want to have that discussion, but we’re hopeful that this (weather) pattern changes and we see some accumulation, like (this week) at the higher elevations,” LTVA Executive Director Carol Chaplin told *Lake Tahoe News*.

No ski resort in the greater Lake Tahoe area is fully open – and we’re heading into what is usually one of the busier three-day weekends.

This is bad news for those who’ve been laid off or were never put on the payroll. It’s not good for the resorts’ bottom lines or the secondary businesses that rely on skiers/snowboarders rolling into town.

“We are adapting to the amount of snow that Mother Nature has given us,” Thea Hardy with Sierra-at-Tahoe told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We welcome the holiday crowds and want to be clear on

our offering of limited terrain. We ask that all closure signs are obeyed in an effort of providing a safe sliding on snow experience for all.”

All of the resorts have been receiving snow while it’s been raining at the lake. Still, some of the lower slopes at some resorts were rained upon or it was wet, heavy snow – well beyond the typical Sierra cement.

Early season natural snow and snowmaking (plus grooming) have made for better conditions that one would expect from looking at lake level. At lake level it looks more like fall than winter.

However, as was mentioned in the **snow survey** last week, there is a lot of winter still to be had, with now through March when the most amount of snow usually falls.

One industry that does well when the slopes are more hardpack than powder is healthcare with so many people needing to go to the emergency room. And with more people crowded onto fewer runs, it means more opportunity to run into someone else.

Other businesses are also doing well. People are looking to do something besides play in the snow – like ride bikes, get on the lake, and eat out more.

For now, with temperatures supposed to be in the 50s through the weekend in Tahoe, winter seems more like what the calendar says and not what it’s like stepping outside. When one can play tennis in Tahoe in January, you know the weather isn’t normal.

Nevada 3rd most popular state for movers

By Jason Hidalgo, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada is moving up as a popular destination for folks looking to, well, make a move.

The Silver State ranked among the top places in the nation that posted a higher rate of people moving in versus people moving out last year, according to separate reports from two moving companies.

In one of the studies, Washoe County posted a higher rate of inbound relocations than the state as a whole. Reno-Sparks is also outpacing the nation for its influx of younger people moving into the area in the last decade, according to an analysis from UNR.

Read the whole story

Brown's final budget stashes billions in reserve

By Adam Ashton, Sacramento Bee

In his 16th and final year as governor, Jerry Brown is using a surplus to stash away billions of dollars in reserves that would help his successor weather a recession while boosting some of his signature programs.

He's proposed a \$190.3 billion spending plan on Wednesday that

accelerates funding for his 2013 education law and uses new gas tax revenue to fund \$4.6 billion in new transportation projects.

The centerpiece of his plan, though, is a \$5 billion jolt to the state's so-called rainy day fund, which he championed with a 2014 ballot initiative to steady California's boom and bust finances.

Read the whole story

El Dorado County VHR issue getting political

By Kathryn Reed

A bit of political gamesmanship appears to be overshadowing the vacation home rental debate in El Dorado County.

Jan. 9 was the last agenda Supervisor Shiva Frentzen got to set as chair of the board because the annual reorganization occurred that day. (Supervisor Mike Ranalli is now chair and Supervisor Sue Novasel is vice chair.)

Frentzen put an urgency ordinance calling for a moratorium on VHRs in the unincorporated area of the Lake Tahoe Basin on the agenda.

Novasel said until she read her packet prior to Tuesday's meeting she had no knowledge the item was going to be on the Jan. 9 agenda.

This is significant because Novasel is the rep from the basin, and she along with Ranalli are the subcommittee dealing with VHRs.

"We didn't see it coming," Novasel said of the agenda item.

Frentzen told *Lake Tahoe News*, "The residents of South Lake Tahoe have been reaching out to my office to share their overwhelming concerns about VHRs in their neighborhoods. The BOS had a **meeting in South Lake Tahoe in October** and has formed a sub-committee to address this issue. The residents continue to voice their concerns with safety and quality of life in their communities that is caused by VHRs in the established residential neighborhoods."

What Novasel doesn't understand is why the subcommittee was not allowed to do its job before a vote was taken by the board.

Frentzen's item, which required a super majority to pass, failed 3-1. She was the only yes vote.

Supervisor Brian Veerkamp proposed a motion to not adopt the urgency ordinance. That passed 3-1, again with Frentzen in the minority.

The reason all five members weren't voting is that Novasel had to recuse herself. That is because an anonymous complaint was filed with the Fair Political Practices Commission against her. The person alleged a conflict of interest with Novasel's husband potentially issuing loans to VHR owners and therefore the supervisor would financially benefit from keeping the short-term rentals.

A letter dated Jan. 3 from the FPPC to Novasel states, "After review of the complaint and additional information obtained, staff found that the complaint contained insufficient evidence of a conflict of interest violation of the Act; therefore, the Enforcement Division will not open an investigation into this

matter.”

However, the division suggested she get a ruling from the FPPC’s Legal Division. She is awaiting their answer, which should be forthcoming this month.

It is because of the lingering uncertainty with the FPPC that Novasel opted to recuse herself Tuesday from the VHR discussion and vote.

It also means her status on the subcommittee is tenuous. And that is why instead of the subcommittee having a gathering in Tahoe on Feb. 1 to discuss VHRs, it will be the entire board. (That meeting is at 6pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.)

“I don’t believe I have a conflict of interest. We don’t own a VHR. We don’t do direct service (with them),” Novasel said of her husband’s business, which she is not involved in. She equated it to a bank employee having a conflict if their institution gave a loan to the VHR owner – and that has never been deemed a conflict.

She pointed out that in a tourism-based economy many people have secondary ties to VHRs (snow removal, cleaners, etc.), which would make it difficult for anyone from this area to be elected without that potential dilemma.

With this being an election year, at the county level Novasel and Ranalli’s seats are up. Both intend to run again. Painting one or both of them in a bad light regarding VHRs could taint people before the entire board even votes. Ranalli’s district covers Apple Hill, which has its own rental issues.

“Because it was anonymous I have no idea who filed the complaint. It is political season and issues will come up that perhaps would not be an issue until it is political season,” Novasel told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Filing the complaint could be an attempt to discredit

Novasel's ability to represent the Meyers area in particular. She was disqualified from voting on the Meyers Area Plan because of owning property in the plan area.

Novasel wants the subcommittee process to have a chance to work; which means gathering more input from the public and working with staff. It's likely the tax collector will no longer have oversight of the issue and instead it will be code enforcement dealing with violations. There is also talk of bringing in a company like **Host Compliance**, which South Lake Tahoe recently did, to go after unpermitted properties and help with other issues.

The county only has VHR regulations in the basin. That is another task of the subcommittee – to make recommendations for the rest of the county.