

Alan Wilkie – 1916-2016

Former South Lake Tahoe resident Alan Wilkie died Nov. 10, 2016. He was 99.

Alan grew up in the Oakland Hills. Most recently he was living in Sonoma.

He rode horseback all his life. He road in the Cavalcade in the 1939 World Fair on Treasure Island.

Starting as a child he spent summers at Camp Richardson. He helped Indian James with brushing and feeding his horses. When older, he led pack trips into Desolation Wilderness.

Alan was a building contractor in the Livermore area and helped build the horse barn with Allan Ross at Camp Rich. He also helped move the log cabin which became the history museum in South Lake Tahoe.

He and wife, Nell, were involved in many activities in South Lake Tahoe. One favorite one of his was the animal shelter. Nell Wilkie died in 2008. They did not have children.

Alan was a kind and intelligent person and will be missed. He would have been 100 on Christmas Day.

Osmosis: A sanctuary for the mind and body



Relaxation comes in many forms at Osmosis in Sonoma County.

By Susan Wood

FREESTONE – Like a child within, tears rolled down my face as I listened to the sentimental music through headphones while lying wrapped in a robe resting in a hammock enveloped by nature.

I was smitten with surprise and awe that I could be so moved by my setting – and in one single chunk of my day, the nastiness of a tumultuous world left me. It was only replaced by beauty, goodness and peace.

Indeed, there is something naturally spiritual about this Sonoma County haven called Osmosis.

The Field of Hammocks, a fairly new amenity at the Japanese-inspired day sanctuary, granted me the opportunity of something I rarely do – to just be.

It helped to immerse myself in a state of relaxation after enjoying a massage. On the 5-acre grounds, a guest may opt for one of a number of different types of massages in either the main building or in the pagodas. I chose the latter as something entirely new to me. The small, tasteful shack sits above the river nestled in the lush greenery that provides a safe haven to many songbirds.



Pagodas offer a more remote, secluded setting for massages. Photo/Susan Wood

My senses were enhanced by the prospect of receiving the 75 minutes of healing touch from therapist Cari. As for my other senses, I chose lavender for aroma therapy.

It was warm that day, so the hut remained the perfect temperature. When the mercury drops, the small heater in the room provides comfort along with a super soft face pillow.

And with the changing of the seasons, the end of drought would be especially inviting to those receiving or giving therapy in the pagodas. They have tin roofs, providing sound therapy when it rains.

Cari noted that Thursday through Saturday remains the busiest time in the week for Osmosis, with many coming from Sebastopol. The sanctuary offers memberships, with discounts for return customers, and hosts events that add even more goodwill to this tiny farm community a few miles from Occidental.

What's different in the last few years has been the steadiness of the clients through all the seasons.

"There's been no seasonal slowdown," she said.

Apparently, many are finding their way back to this innately spiritual place.

And appropriately so, according to the therapist.

"Osmosis found me," Cari said. She admitted her "workplace" of sorts is "the best job I've ever had" – especially when nature takes over.

"I love it when they go crazy," she said softly of the birds chirping outside. The hut is full of windows, so I had no trouble hearing them.

That's not the only wildlife she's encountered in the few years she has worked there. She saw a bobcat in the creek bed while having lunch on the patio. (Guests may opt for a box lunch filled with organic ingredients from a local, student-supported garden if they make a day of it between sessions.)

During my lunch, I saw a deer lying still across the creek bed. It looked as much at peace as the clientele who have walked through the bamboo, koi-pond anchored meditation garden and walking path.

Osmosis celebrated its 30 years in business last year with a fond look at its modest beginnings. Founder Michael Stusser's love of meditation took him to Kyoto, Japan, in the 1980s to apprentice in traditional landscape gardening. He developed a

passion for blending ecological sustainability with Zen meditation through healing practices.



Tranquility abounds throughout the grounds at Osmosis.
Photo/Susan Wood

Stusser turned his quest into reality in 1984 when he built a cedar enzyme bath with lumber recycled from a chicken coop on his friend's ranch in Sebastopol. A year later, he built a few more on his own property in Freestone. Today, the biomass cleansing remains popular – a surefire way to heat up the body in the cold winter months.

The spa menu has evolved through the efforts of 80 employees in this modest-looking complex. Retreats like What Truly Matters, wind and music-infused fundraisers and more services including a “forest bathing” treatment and other seasonal specials have been added over the years.

The tranquil grounds, which also include a mile-long nature

trail, are covered with plants that are intended to provide a nurturing influence.

And sometimes with healing, there's heartbreak.

Osmosis recently lost one of its founding influences – Zen priest Steve Stucky, the sanctuary's longtime landscaper.

An altar is being erected to honor and embody the work of Stucky – with walking meditation instructions to experience the full magnitude of the Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary.

With the urging of silence to clear the mind, the card at the altar will open with:

"Take a few long, slow and deep breaths. As you exhale, let go of all tension and let your attention flow deep into your belly, legs and feet."

It will end with: *"You can feel truly at ease with yourself. If you can take one peaceful step, you can take two. If your steps are peaceful, the world will have peace."*

Some tweaks to Thanksgiving Day shopping

By Anne D'Innocenzio, AP

Thanksgiving Day shopping – a delight to some, an anathema to others – isn't going away, but some stores are rethinking their strategies on whether it makes sense to be open on the holiday itself.

Many of the nation's major mall operators and the big

retailers that anchor them, such as Toys R Us, J.C. Penney, and Macy's, are sticking with what they want to be a new tradition, kicking off the holiday shopping season on Thanksgiving Day.

Others, including the Mall of America, the nation's largest shopping mall, are closing for Thanksgiving this year after being open for the past several years. Some retailers that are closing cite respect for the holiday, but in truth the cost of being open might be more than the return.

"Once you let the genie out of the bottle, it's hard," said Stephen Lebovitz, president and CEO of CBL & Associates Properties, a mall operator that is closing 72 of its malls for the day. "More retailers are coming to their senses and realizing it is a family holiday, and from a business point of view, it's not making much business sense."

Stores being open on Thanksgiving started in earnest in 2011 and took a punch out of sales on Black Friday, which had usually launched the shopping season. Many places such as Macy's, Target and J.C. Penney have been opening earlier and earlier on Thanksgiving as they try to outdo others to get first dibs on customers who could easily buy online. But the move has been controversial, as workers have voiced complaints that stores are putting profits over workers' time to be with their families.

Some 89 of the 145 properties that Chattanooga, Tennessee-based CBL owns or has interest in opened at 6 p.m. on the holiday last year. While dozens of those will be closed this year, the department stores, movie theaters, restaurants and retailers with exterior entrances have the option to open on Thanksgiving. Other retailers including Office Depot and consumer electronics chain hhgregg Inc. plan to be closed after being open for the past several years.

Plenty of retailers, particularly high-end stores like

Nordstrom or those like T.J. Maxx that offer discounts every day, never opened on Thanksgiving and have collected good will because of that.

In reality, analysts say, it's all about stealing share in a market that isn't growing that much.

Time to think about writing letters to Santa

The U.S. Postal Service can help prove Santa is real when he replies a child's letter – complete with a North Pole postmark.

Here are the steps to get a letter back from Santa:

1. Write a letter to Santa and place it in an envelope addressed to: Santa Claus, North Pole.
2. Later, when alone, open the envelope and write a personalized response.
3. Insert the response letter into an envelope and address it to the child.
4. Add the return address: SANTA, NORTH POLE, to the envelope.
5. Affix a first-class mail stamp to the envelope.
6. Place the complete envelope into a larger envelope with appropriate postage and address it to: North Pole Postmark, Postmaster, 4141 Postmark Drive, Anchorage, AK 99530-9998.

“Letters from Santa” must be received by the Anchorage

postmaster no later than Dec. 15. Santa's helpers at the Postal Service will take care of the rest.

Go Local campaign promotes South Shore businesses

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce is launching Go Local & Win on Nov. 26.

This campaign promotes and rewards shopping and dining locally by having a chance to win gift certificates and a shot at three grand prizes. For business owners and operators, it provides an opportunity to increase customers.

To participate, pickup up a Go Local passport at **participating businesses**, then shop or eat at any those businesses through Jan. 1. Contestants will receive a passport sticker for every \$25 spent. Once the passport is completed, it can be dropped in the mail addressed to the chamber. Contestants may submit as many passports as they like.

Cannabis treats give senior dog a new lease on life

By Olivia DeGennaro, KRNV-TV

As the medical marijuana industry grows in Nevada, more people are turning to cannabis to treat their chronic pain; but now

some dog owners are following suit.

In Jaci Goodman's household, dogs aren't just pets. They're part of the family. She said, "they're our children because we didn't have kids."

As they watched Riley's quality of life degrade, Goodman's family looked for an alternative treatment. She said friends recommended Cani Bits – dog treats made with cannabis.

Read the whole story

Historical cooking demo at Genoa park

Park rangers at Mormon Station State Historic Park in Genoa will be hosting a Thanksgiving Dutch oven cooking demonstration on Nov. 19.

This is an opportunity to learn the basics of Dutch oven cooking and how the pioneers used the same cast iron techniques to cook meals in the 1850s. Park staff will serve samples until the food runs out.

The free event is from 1-3pm on the lawn in front of the museum.

For more information, call 775.782.2590.

Truckee nonprofit collecting goods for holiday season

The Truckee Community Christmas nonprofit organization has provided help in the form of a large box of food items, grocery store gift cards, toys and coats for more than 25 years to individuals and families identified as the most in need during the holiday season.

This program, which vets recipients and depends on the generosity of locals, will benefit several hundred Truckee families, teenage moms and their babies and low-income or homebound seniors again this year.

There are a number of ways to help:

- Look for food collection barrels placed at Save Mart beginning the Saturday after Thanksgiving and donate non-perishable food items;
- Collection bins for toys can be found at banks, real estate offices, schools, homeowners' association clubhouses, and businesses around town;
- Warm, clean, gently used winter coats may be dropped off at Church of the Mountains in downtown Truckee and Tahoe Forest Church on Hirschdale Road;
- Donors may also provide necessities for seniors, whose wishes are often easy to fulfill and whose gratitude is always abundant. Gratitude in downtown Truckee is coordinating senior gift donations.

In addition to goods and services, help is needed to sort, pack and wrap donated items at the SELS school gym on Donner Pass Road on Dec. 15-16. The food drive needs assistance from volunteers too.

For those who prefer to give a tax-deductible contribution, checks may be mailed to Truckee Community Christmas, PO Box

2955, Truckee, CA 96160 or go **online**.

For more info, call 530.587.2757.

Money Matters: Be smart at the holidays

By Rick Gross

For many of us, the holiday season is a time of joy and rest. However, planning for the season's festivities can feel hectic and create financial stress. According to the Consumer Reports National Research Center, top holiday stressors for Americans include gift shopping, crowds and long lines, traveling and taking on some level of debt.



Rick Gross

So how can you give generously but not go overboard on your budget? Here are five ways to keep your cash outlays in check while still having a fun and memorable holiday season:

1. Set a budget

One way to keep tabs on what you spend during the season is to set a limit and try to stick with it. Start by looking at what you spent last year and use that as a baseline for this

season. Did you spend more or stay on budget? While gifts and travel may be the first items that come to mind, also consider what you'll spend on food, decorations, charitable giving and traditions, such as sending holiday cards.

2. Use your credit card wisely

Gifts, travel and festive meals can add up. If you are going to charge expenses over the holidays, try to spend at a level that enables you to pay the bill when it arrives. Otherwise you're "borrowing" the money by using your credit card and slowly paying down the debt you've accumulated with high interest costs. If you have multiple credit cards, think about using one for holiday purchases that will give you cash back for savings or airline miles for an additional perk.

3. Focus on more than the price tag

Most of us would appreciate a smaller but more meaningful gift over something expensive that we will likely regift. One way to do this is to give experiences that create memories. For example, consider bringing your family to a holiday play or making reservations for a special dinner you can enjoy together. If you have a large family that tends to give gifts to each other, you could suggest drawing names to make the process a bit less demanding on everyone.

4. Shop carefully

Getting a head start on gift buying usually results in savings. It gives you time to explore options and compare prices from different retailers. Planning ahead can also help you avoid expensive costs for rush shipping. If you're an online shopper, consider sending gifts directly to the recipient's home so you won't have to ship the gift a second time. If you prefer to shop at the mall, look up each item online while waiting in line to checkout. Many stores have a price-match policy, so it's worth your time to do your research.

5. Consider an alternative to a pricey party

If you typically host a seasonal bash for a bunch of friends, consider another option – inviting that group to volunteer together instead. Contact your favorite charity or search volunteer sites such as All For Good (allforgood.org) to find opportunities that would allow your group to spend time together without the big cost. If festive parties help you get in the spirit, put a spin on tradition by asking guests to bring their favorite holiday dish or suggesting a round-robin dinner. With either option you'll enjoy the party without the big price tag.

If you feel like you've overspent in the past, look at this holiday season as an opportunity to be creative as you find ways to have fun while keeping your spending in line.

Rick Gross is a financial advisor and private wealth advisor with Ameriprise Financial Services in South Lake Tahoe. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 20 years.

STHS providing basic needs for students

South Tahoe High School has opened a teen resource room.

Students use the room to get needed clothing including hats and coats, school supplies and food, as well as bicycles. Counseling services are also offered.

The community may check out the center (Room C-1) on Nov. 16 from 5-8pm.

More items are needed to fill the room, such as:

- Non-perishable snack items such as nuts, granola bars, bagged fruit, cup-of-noodles and jerky.
- New socks
- Shoes and boots
- Hygiene supplies
- Backpacks
- Fabric bags
- Bike locks of the U-Lock variety
- Clean bikes and helmets.

Clothing may be taken to First Baptist Church (1053 Wildwood Ave. in South Lake Tahoe), Tuesday-Thursday from 10am-3pm.

For more info, email ahammond@ltusd.org.