

Budget gifts: \$25 worth of food for \$20



Publisher's note: *Get in the spirit and share your idea for a gift valued at \$20 or less. [Click here for details.](#)*

There be no such thing as a free lunch, but the folks at South Lake Tahoe's Driftwood Cafe come pretty darn close to proving that to be false.

The Driftwood Cafe is currently offering \$25 gift certificates for \$20. They do not expire and can be used anytime.

Call (530) 544.6545.

Kiwanis fills shelves at Jack's Food Pantry

By Kathryn Reed

For 25 years Jack's Food Pantry based in Tahoe Community Church has been providing people in need with a bag of food each week.

In this economy, more people are in need and fewer people are able to give.

The Kiwanis Club of Lake Tahoe gave \$1,000 to the organization this month. Bob and Kathy Pavich, who run the pantry, were at the Dec. 8 meeting to share their appreciation for the money and tell a little bit about what they do.

Although the church is on Kingsbury Grade in Stateline, the bulk of the people walking through the pantry are from California – 75 percent. And nearly a third are children.

Feeding 50 families a week means the shelves are bare fast. Last year, 6,598 people were helped by Jack's.

The bag of food people receive is considered a three-day emergency supply. Bags are distributed each Friday at 3pm.

At Thanksgiving, organizers provide 147 turkey dinners.

Jack's Food Pantry receives its help from the Northern Nevada Food Bank, bread and dairy from Raley's and Safeway, and donations such as what Kiwanis gave.

For more information, call (775) 588.5860.

Solar can't keep lights on during power outage

By Blair Anthony Robertson and April Dembosky, Sacramento Bee

You might think the forward-thinking Matt Ericson and family would be sitting pretty right now.

For the past three days in El Dorado County, thousands of homes all around him have been without power, thanks to unusual amounts of snow coupled with persistent cold weather.

Ericson has solar panels on his roof a mile outside Placerville and, despite the plummeting mercury, there's still plenty of sunshine to generate electricity.

Not so fast. Ericson is powerless, too.

Budget gifts: garyangelica has clothes and accessories



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garyangelica (yes, it's really all lowercase and one word), men's and women's clothing and gift, located next to Nestle Toll House in the Heavenly Village says it has the perfect gift ideas and stocking stuffers to make your holiday shopping a little easier this year.

Under \$20 they have:

- fun retro sunglasses for men and women
- perfect cocktail rings for the holiday parties
- fun and edgy earrings, bracelets and hair accessories
- keep warm and cozy in scarves, beanies and leg warmers
- fun graphic print tote bags from OBEY clothing
- fashion bandannas in assorted prints and colors perfect for the ski/snowboarder to add some flare to their gear.

"We also are having an additional 40 percent off our already marked down sale items which puts many of our flirty tops and blouses, tees and accessories right around the \$20 price mark," store officials report.

Sierra employees singled out for their work

Sierra Resort awarded three stand out employees the golden, silver and bronze Eagle awards during an annual dinner each fall.

Eagle awards are given to employees who have gone above and beyond their duty in service to other departments and the resort as a whole.

This year's party had a "Godfather" theme – which explains the photo.

This year, three behind-the-scenes employees took home the coveted plaques. Rick Defressine (gold), security manager; Eric Rhodes (silver), business development sales manager; and Scotty Borrer (bronze), vehicle maintenance supervisor.



Outstanding
Sierra-at-
Tahoe
employees.
Photo/Provided

Defressine has been at Sierra for eight seasons. He started in security during the 2002-03 season, becoming manager two years

later.

“The first day I came to work at Sierra Resort, everyone was so nice and welcoming. It was actually really strange. I went home to my family and told them I thought there was something funny in the water,” Defressine said during his acceptance speech. “Now I’ve been here for a number of years and I know there is something in the water.”

Rhodes has been on the sales team for two seasons. In that short time, Eric has made huge inroads working with lodging properties and South Shore partners of Sierra. “For me, Sierra Resort offers a platform to really grow both as a person and as a professional. The level of training and support I receive being on this team is unlike anything I have experienced anywhere else. I wouldn’t be here accepting this award if it weren’t for the team around me,” he said.

Borrer joined the vehicle maintenance team at Sierra

two seasons ago and has made unprecedented progress in reducing the downtime for the fleet of snowcats, snowmobiles, road vehicles.

“It’s really rewarding to be recognized by co-workers for giving everything you have at a job you enjoy. I was totally surprised and honored. I really feel I’ve found a home here at Sierra Resort,” Borrer said.

America brings its U.K. roots to Harrah’s

One of contemporary music’s most popular and enduring bands,

returns to the South Shore of Lake Tahoe, for one show at Harrah's on Dec. 12.

The founding members of America, Gerry Beckley, Dewey Bunnell and Dan Peek, met while still in high school and all three were sons of Air Force officers stationed in the U.K.

A nameless horse began its gallop across international airwaves in 1972, introducing the poetic rock stylings of America to the world. Although hailing from England, America is best known as part of the "California Sound", a description that spoke more about where a musician in the early '70s lived or honed their sound.

America made the kind of free and easy music that appealed to all crowds. They harmonized their way to the top of British pop charts on the strength of the debut single, "A Horse With No Name."

The group followed their British success to the U.S. that spring where "A Horse With No Name" became a No. 1 single, pushing Neil Young's "Heart of Gold" off the top of the charts. That summer they released "I Need You" which also rose to the Top 10, and led to the release their second album.

"Ventura Highway," the first single released from this collaboration, became their third straight Top 10 hit and also helped them secure a Grammy Award in 1972 for "Best New Artist."

After spending some time refining their sound, America released Homecoming in 1973 and reached the Top 10 in the U.S. once again, peaking at No. 21 in the U.K. Their essential sound, mixing rock, pop and folk elements, fit perfectly with the "mellow" '70s, which sought to find peace and meaning amidst the protests, carnage and confusion of the Vietnam War era.

America's 1976 release, "Hideaway", went gold and peaked at

No. 11.

Following the release of their next LP, Harbor, Dan Peek left the group to pursue a career as a contemporary Christian recording artist. The group continued on as a duo with Bunnell and Beckley. Producer George Martin began to work with them on the album "Holiday", which brought them back to the top of the charts at No. 3.

In 1982, "You Can Do Magic" was released and pushed America back to the top of the adult contemporary charts.

The music has never stopped for America.

Now in their fourth decade of performing and touring together, America recently released the two-disc set, "Here & Now", in 2007. Last year America released a new DVD, "Live in Chicago", which captures the highlights of where their life has carried them and chronicles the changes they've gone through both artistically and personally.

Show time is 7:30pm Dec. 12. Tickets are \$55 each, plus fees. For information and reservations, call 800.427.7247. or purchase tickets online at www.SouthShoreRoom.com.

Budget gifts: Black Bear Inn cookbook or ornament



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Enjoy recipes from Lake Tahoe's most celebrated bed and breakfast. The Black Bear Inn Cookbook (\$20) features all of

the inn's best breakfast recipes " from Blueberry Streusel Coffeecake to Eggs Benedict.

Or trim your tree with a keepsake Black Bear Inn ornament (\$14.95). A festive reminder of a great Lake Tahoe vacation, the hand-painted ornament features a snow-covered inn, decorated with holly and poinsettias.

Both are available at www.tahoebblackbear.com or at 1202 Ski Run Blvd, South Lake Tahoe.



Black Bear Inn
cookbook



Black Bear
Inn
ornament

USFS looking for comments on

inter-agency pass rules

The U.S. Forest Service is inviting comments on a proposed policy for the acceptance of inter-agency passes at concession-operated campgrounds and day use recreation sites on National Forests and Grasslands. The policy would provide for coordination with concessionaires to promote sustainable operations.

Under the proposed policy, the Forest Service would offer a 10 percent discount at concession run campgrounds and standard amenity day use sites to holders of Golden Age and Golden Access Passports and Senior and Access Passes. Further, concessionaires would offer free usage of these day use sites to holders of an Annual or Volunteer Pass.

The proposal is open to a 60-day public notice and comment period. The public can review the proposed policy in the Federal Register (Vol. 229, No. 74, December 1, 2009) or at <http://www.fs.fed.us/specialuses>. Comments may be filed online at www.regulations.gov (search for Notice ID FS-2009-0001).

Mountain driving is no biggie if you take it easy

By Kathryn Reed

Driving into Lake Tahoe after a major dump isn't the nightmare newscasters off the hill make it out to be. I know. I did it Monday afternoon.

It took longer, sure, but it wasn't scary. I wasn't some place I shouldn't have been. The only thing that was upsetting was not being able to fill up on gas in Placerville before heading into the mountains. I like to do that just in case I get stuck and need to leave the engine running to stay warm.



Snow covers
the foothills
Dec. 7.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Placerville was without electricity – so gas pumps couldn't work.

It was a magical sight to see snow as I crested a hill before El Dorado Hills. I don't remember seeing snow that low before. Mixed with the golden grasses of the foothills, it was almost surreal.

The white stuff kept accumulating as I headed east. Trees not used to snow were weighted down, some literally on the ground. Limbs looked like they were about to split.

Chains were required on the east side of Placerville. The pavement was dry there, but not much farther up the road was slick and white.

A few vehicle drove by way too fast – seeming to be exceeding the speed limit. Most of us kept a moderate pace up the mountain.

The American River is dotted with what looks like large snowballs, but in reality are boulders covered with snow.

Occasionally the sun peaked out. Flurries were in pockets along the way. Visibility decreased severely at one point.

Driving in the mountains just takes patience – which gives one plenty of time to enjoy the scenery. But it was also reassuring to know I had a shovel, blanket, food, water and clothing in the Jeep just in case it wasn't an uneventful excursion back home.

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Young vocalists unite for holiday extravaganza

An ensemble of voices will come together Dec. 15-16 for the 15th annual MontBleu Holiday Extravaganza.

The show consists of third-fifth, sixth-eighth, and ninthth-12th grade choirs, as well as a Faculty/Parent choir.

Included is the award winning Blue Ribbon Classical Choir and the new STMS Advanced Choir called “The Belles of Christmas.” The finale includes more than 270 singers. Special guests include selected performers from Marcia Sarosik Shining Stars dance troupe.

Pre-show entertainment includes music as performed by local student groups, and the Faculty Parent Choir will welcome guests by singing as patrons enter the showroom.

Some of the highlighted songs include:

â€¢ Elementary kids: â€œRun, Run Reindeerâ€ and â€œSeven Feet of Snowâ€

â€¢ Middle school: â€œItâ€™s Almost Time for Christmasâ€ and â€œChristmas Gloriaâ€

â€¢ Blue Ribbon Choir: â€œBorn Today is the Holy Childâ€ and â€œA Soft Wind Blewâ€

â€¢ Finale: â€œYule Be Rockinâ€™â€ and â€œLights of Hannukahâ€ featuring all nine local choirs.

Music begins in the MontBleu Showroom at 7pm each night. Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors, free for those under 5. Tickets are available at the door.

Blue Ribbon Classical Choir

The award winning Blue Ribbon Classical Choir is the most advanced choir in the entire choir program. It is an all â€œtrebleâ€ (female) choir featuring the best trained singers with the most singing experience.

The choir was founded by Paul Kushner in 1997. This choir has performed all over Northern California and Nevada for more 12 years. It has performed the national anthem for the San Francisco Giants two years in a row.

They have won top honors in music competitions in past few years. This choir also performs all over the Tahoe area: at schools, churches, for charitable and community organizations.

For booking information, contact Paul Kushner at: (530) 541.4111, ext. 267 (8:00-9:30am) or email: pkushner@ltusd.org.

South Tahoe High School Chorus

The South Tahoe High School Chorus is an open choir class led by Bob Grant.

South Tahoe Middle School Honor Choir

The South Tahoe Middle School Honor Choir was started in the year 2000. The choir consists of auditioned middle school aged singers from South Tahoe Middle School, Whittell High School, St. Theresa School, and home schoolers.

Belles of Christmas

The Belles of Christmas is a new group, having formed in November 2009. It consists of most of the top middle school singers in South Lake Tahoe. They have a robust Christmas schedule as they are booked for nearly 10 concerts this holiday season.

Tahoe Elementary Honor Choir

Led by Paul Kushner, the Tahoe Elementary Honor Choir was founded in the fall 1995 and continues to shine every year as the Holiday season nears. The TEHC consists of auditioned singers from third, fourth and fifth grades drawn from all elementary schools in the South Tahoe area.

A dream of Kushner's came together back in 1991 starting with "The 12 Kids of Christmas." This group eventually grew to more than 240 choir members. The kids are taught proper singing techniques, choreography, and stage presence. Each year the schools all come together to perform a "Holiday Extravaganza" at the MontBleu Showroom in Stateline.