Motorcyclist dies on Spooner Summit



A motorcyclist died Sept. 30 after crashing on Spooner Summit. Photo/NHP

A motorcyclist died Saturday on Spooner Summit.

The right lane of eastbound Highway 50 is closed about one mile east of the summit, with no estimated time of reopening.

The accident occurred about 12:30 pm Sept. 30.

Only the motorcyclist was involved. Authorities said speed may have been a factor.

Information on the rider was not available.

This weekend marks the annual Street Vibrations motorcycle event based in Reno, though rides are throughout the area, including the Tahoe basin.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Recycling rates soar on North Shore

Nearly two years after Placer County's recyclable sorting facility near Truckee started to receive a $1.2 million upgrade, the amount of goods being recovered has soared.

The first full operational fiscal year ended in June.

Compared to the year prior to the improvements, recovery of plastics has increased by 21 percent and recovery of aluminum has increased by 37 percent. About 600,000 more plastic bottles were diverted than before the improvements and about 1 million more aluminum cans.

The upgrades included metering equipment at the beginning of the sorting line that helps control the volume of waste loaded onto the conveyor belt, a new sorting screen that spreads the waste out for better visibility, and four new sorting stations added at the end of the line that increases the opportunity for workers to pull more recyclable materials.

Since opening in 1995 to facilitate the closure of the adjacent Eastern Regional Sanitary Landfill, which had been in operation since 1973, the materials recovery facility, or MRF, has operated as a sorting and transfer station for waste collected in the eastern portion of the county and in Truckee. Recyclables are separated at the sorting facilities.

California requires all cities and counties to divert a minimum of 50 percent of all waste from the landfill.

Caesars wins key approvals, moves close to bankruptcy exit

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Gaming regulators in Louisiana and Missouri have granted the licenses and regulatory approvals necessary for the restructuring of Caesars Entertainment and Caesars Entertainment Operating Co., company officials said Wednesday.

The approvals in those two states were the last major hurdles for Caesars to clear to exit Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The company expects to be operating under the restructured corporate governance in early October.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah’s and Harveys in Stateline.

Read the whole story

Mt. Rose making upgrades in time for Oct. opening



Mount Rose has the highest base of any Tahoe-area resort. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Mount Rose is installing North America's first dual enclosed conveyor belt lift to better serve beginners. It will be only the second one in the world.

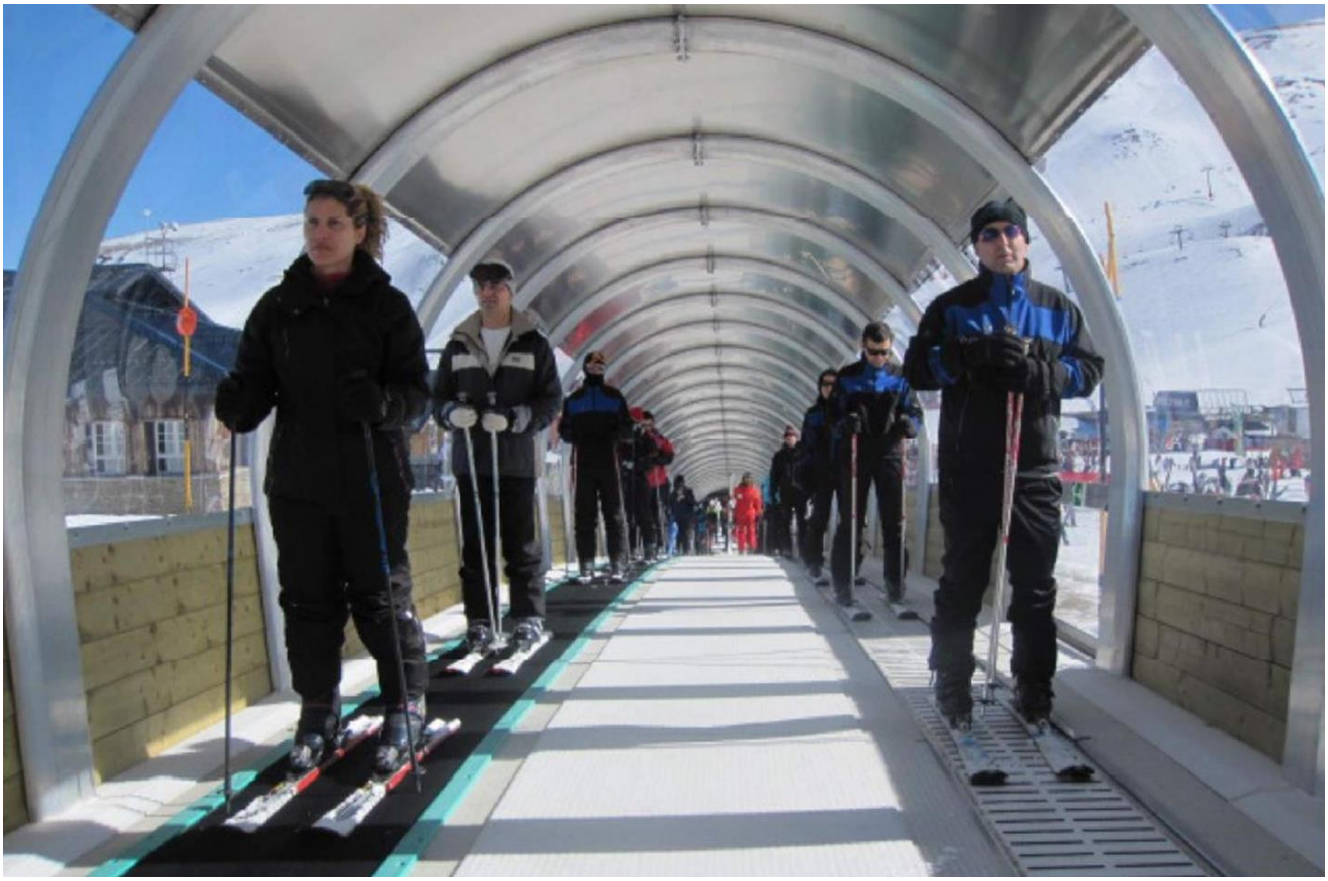
"Our learning terrain is very popular. The goal is to increase uphill capacity," Mike Pierce, the resort's spokesman, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

The hope is that this lift will give newbies more time on the hill. The thinking it that will speed up their learning curve so they will be able to graduate to terrain serviced by actual chairlifts.

It will be located in the Show-Off beginner area near the main lodge. The single, exposed conveyor known as Flying Jenny has been removed.

The first time packages and beginner lessons keep growing, Pierce said.

In all, Mount Rose is infusing more than $2 million into the resort for the 2017-18 season.



The dual conveyor coming to Mount Rose will be the second in the world. Photo/Provided

The Reno-area ski resort had been on market, but is staying family owned. Fritz Buser, 96, was ready to sell in January 2016. He has been a majority owner since 1968. Two of his sons and a grandson have taken over the resort. One son, Curt Buser, lives in the area, is president of the company and has been involved with the resort for more than a dozen years.

“The organic, local feel won’t change,” Price said.

Owners have been investing millions of dollars in the resort in the last several years – from lifts to lodges. Plans are still on the books to expand the resort across the highway.

Lately Mt. Rose has been battling with Boreal to be the first Tahoe-area resort to open each season. This year Rose is hoping to have terrain open by Halloween. With a base of 8,260 feet, mixed with cold nights (which are in the forecast) to make snow, this makes it possible to create just enough skiable terrain in the early season. Oct. 27 is the tentative opening day.

“The goal is to open early and have a six-month season. We’ve proven that is possible the last couple of seasons,” Pierce said.

Mother Nature will need to come through to open the remaining nearly 1,200 acres of skiable terrain. Much of this is on private property, though the resort also is on U.S. Forest Service land. Rose has increased its snowmaking capacity for this winter, realizing that record snowfall can’t be counted on every winter. A mix of stationary and mobile devices have been added.

With the record 762 inches that fell at Rose last season, it made building the new lift challenging because construction crews had to wait until the snow melted. It’s possible not all of last year’s snow will melt before winter truly arrives this season. A stash is tucked in the Slide bowl area, plus the September storm added to what was left over.

Economic enigma: Why the pain persists, even as incomes

rise

By Patricia Cohen, New York Times

Incomes are up. Poverty is down. And job openings have hit a record high. But if the economy is so wonderful, why are so many Americans still feeling left behind?

The disconnect between positive statistics and people's day-to-day lives is one of the great economic and social puzzles of recent years. It helped fuel President Donald Trump's political rise and underpins the frustrations that played out in calls to build a Mexican border wall, reopen trade agreements and bring back well-paid work in coal mines and factories.

When the U.S. Census Bureau released its annual report on the country's economic well-being recently, it showed unmistakable progress: For the second year in a row, household incomes – clobbered by the 2007-09 recession – had grown. More Americans were working, and more had health insurance, in 2016 than the year before.

Read the whole story

Opioid deaths in Nev. decline, hospitalizations rise

By Jessie Bekker, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Opioid-related deaths dropped in Nevada in 2016 from a year

earlier, but hospitalizations and prescription rates rose, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services data presented this week show.

At the Opioid State Action Accountability Meeting in Carson City, convened by Gov. Brian Sandoval, state agencies said access to reliable, unlimited data remains a hindrance in fighting opioid problems.

Presenters at the meeting said data from hospitals, emergency medical services and law enforcement are limited, lacking information that could be used to better illustrate the opioid problem. Less complete data can hamper researchers' analyses and make devising solutions harder.

Read the whole story

Sporting events good for casinos' bottom line

Sports books are being credited with the double-digit increase in revenues at Nevada casinos in August.

In particular, the Floyd Mayweather-Conor McGregor fight and the return of NFL are being touted for the $989.5 million win, an increase of 14.9 percent from 2016.

Stateline casinos were up 7.02 percent at $25.576 million, while North Shore casinos posted gains of 10.39 percent at nearly $3.2 million.

Statewide, the sports gaming win hit a record at $19.8 million. Baseball helped with that figure as well.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Motorcycle crash closes Hwy. 50 at Twin Bridges



Traffic is moving as of 3:30pm at Twin Bridges following a motorcycle accident. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

Highway 50 was closed in both directions at Twin Bridges because a motorcycle went over the embankment.

Both people on the bike were down an embankment about 30 feet, according to the California Highway Patrol. A rescue helicopter arrived on scene about 2:50pm Sept. 29. The extent of their injuries was not immediately know.

The accident occurred about 2:15pm just east of Twin Bridges.

This was the second accident in two days involving a motorcycle.

On Thursday a motorcyclist lost consciousness before crashing on Highway 88 just west of Carson Pass. While it's not definitive, early indication is the rider suffered a medical episode before the crash, according to CHP. He was transported with non-life threatening injuries.

More motorcyclists are on the highways in the greater Lake Tahoe area because of the annual Street Vibrations event based out of Reno.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. Realtors want to change tax laws

By Jim Miller, Sacramento Bee

California homeowners looking to move up would get a major financial break under a possible 2018 ballot measure to change a key provision of the state's landmark tax law.

Proposition 13, the 1978 ballot measure, has discouraged homeowners from moving to pricier homes because a property's assessed value is based on its most recent sales price.

Any of the three proposals crafted by the California Association of Realtors would be a significant change to Proposition 13, which caps property taxes at 1 percent of assessed value.

Read the whole story

SLT to chip away at affordable housing quagmire

Publisher's note: ***This is one in a series of stories about affordable housing in the Lake Tahoe-Truckee region. All articles may be accessed via the home page under Special Projects, 2017 Affordable Housing.***

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe intends to acquire three vacant parcels on Riverside Avenue with the intent to turn them into housing.

The city's Successor Agency owns them. This came about when the state dissolved redevelopment agencies. Per the state, the agency must get rid of what it owns.



The parcels have been on the market at different times in the last few years. Part of the difficulty in selling them is that there are no development rights associated with the lots. One escrow fell through and other offers have not been accepted.

The City Council last month gave direction to staff to come up with a contract to make the deal work between the city and Successor Agency. (The council acts as the directors for the Successor Agency.) The deal is expected to be consummated in October. The city will have to pay fair market value. Collectively, the parcels were appraised at $250,000.

The city could use one-time funds, possibly from excess reserves, for this purchase knowing that it will likely recover those dollars when it sells the property to a developer.

The council at its February strategic planning session talked about how businesses in the area would like the land to be converted into a parking lot. However, current zoning would not allow that use. The plan area statement would have to be amended for parking to come to fruition.

Affordable housing is an allowable use.

Kevin Fabino, who heads the city's planning department, in August told the council it would be reasonable to merge the three parcels into one to allow for more density. Five or six units might be able to be built on that site.

While it was acknowledged this was not going to make a huge dent in the ongoing affordable housing issue plaguing the area, it would do more for the community than parking.

Councilmember Brooke Laine threw out the possibility of using some of the sewer unit allocations from the former Knights Inn motel for Riverside Avenue. Right now South Tahoe Public Utility District doesn't allow the transfer of sewer allocations, but that board could change that rule if it so desired.

One thing the council will have to define is affordable housing. To the lay person it is often interchanged with work force or even fair market housing. However, legally, affordable housing has specific requirements based on income and can come with deed restrictions.

The exact type of housing will be decided at future council meetings.

The city has some commodities it could tie to the parcels as

well to entice developers. Or it could leave it up to the next buyer to secure those rights.