

Barton Memorial Hospital welcomes New Year's Day baby

By Kathryn Reed



South Lake Tahoe's first baby of the new year is actually a Gardnerville baby.

Yoni Lopez was born at 12:54pm New Year's Day at Barton Memorial Hospital.

Mom, Cindy, was resting comfortably when *Lake Tahoe News* tried to reach her a few hours later. Dad, Guilmer, sounded proud as he talked about his third child. But he also admitted that by the time No. 3 three comes along, it's all rather routine.

Guilmer Lopez said his newborn son, with all of his hair, looks like his 7-year-old sister at this early stage. Yoni also has a 12-year-old brother.

Yoni didn't have any competition to be the New Year's baby because his mom was the only one in labor Jan. 1.

In 2009, the first Barton baby didn't arrive until Jan. 4. It was Jan. 2 the year before.

The custom is to take the New Year's baby's footprint for the hospital's wall.

A gift basket is also usually part of the tradition, though hospital officials said the basket is still being assembled.

12 arrests in Stateline on New Year's Eve

Douglas County sheriff's authorities report no major incidents at the New Year's Eve celebration at Stateline.

Eight people were arrested in the casino core area of during the evening. Charges included disorderly conduct, trespassing, provoking a breach of peace, battery and public nudity.

Four people were arrested outside of the casino core area for crimes of DUI, disorderly conduct, domestic battery and destruction of property.

The celebratory crowd seemed no larger than in past years, deputies said. Highway 50 was closed to vehicle traffic from about 10:15pm to 1am.

Vehicle registration fee may fund Calif. state parks

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

California motorists would get free year-round admission to all 278 state-owned beaches and parks under a proposed new ballot initiative, but here's the catch: It would cost them.

The contradiction stems from a carrot and stick approach â€" motorists' annual vehicle registration fees would rise by \$18

but they no longer would be charged for day use of parks.



Cross country
skiing is a
favorite
winter
activity in
Tahoe area
state parks.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Much of the \$500 million expected to be generated each year would be used to bolster park funding and maintenance.

Read the whole story

Alphabet soup of new California laws

By Steve Wiegand, Sacramento Bee

Here's an alphabet soup look at some bills that become law on Jan. 1, whether we like them or not:

A is for alligator. SB 609 will extend from 2010 until 2015 a law that allows the importation of products made with

alligator and crocodile parts.

B is for bicycles. SB 527 allows the operation of bikes without seats on state roads, as long as the bike was built that way on purpose.

Read the whole story

Nevada's population shrinks for first time in 70 years

By Steve Timko, Reno Gazette-Journal

For the first time in more than 70 years, Nevada has lost population, according to Nevada state demographer estimates.

Between July 2008 and July 2009, Nevada's population dipped by 27,677 people, about 1 percent, to 2,711,056, state demographer Jeff Hardcastle said Wednesday.

In the previous 12 months, Nevada added about 20,396 people and from July 2006 to July 2007 gained 95,287 people, according to Hardcastle's estimates.

Read the whole story

Kirkwood may turn employee

housing into guest lodging

By Roger Phelps, Ledger Dispatch

Kirkwood Mountain Resort is seeking to amend its Amador County use permit so it can convert employee housing on its property to lodge some guests at low cost.

Kirkwood finds that its employees are tending to find off-resort housing in nearby urban areas at Lake Tahoe and in the Carson Valley.

Read the whole story

Water content 75 percent of normal in Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

PHILLIPS – Predicting whether California reservoirs will be full in the spring isn't something Department of Water Resources officials were about to do Dec. 30 as they took the season's first reading of the water content near Sierra-at-Tahoe.

The numbers are about what they were a year ago – 75 percent of normal. Statewide, the content is 85 percent of normal. More than 140 locations are surveyed.



Frank Gehrke,
right, reads
the
measurement
for John Deam
to record on
Dec. 30.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Frank Gehrke, chief of the California Cooperative Snow Surveys Program, said the trend so far this season is totals are lower in the north part of the state and progressively better heading south.

He wasn't too concerned about the readings along Highway 50.

"Right now things look adequate," Gehrke said as snow gently fell on those standing in the meadow. "This is a typical California start to winter."

"Absolutely" was his response when asked if the state is still in a drought. Gehrke added, "We would need a humongous year or several above average years" to get out of a drought.

By the time April rolls around, water officials will have the task of declaring if this is the fourth year of drought.

With California receiving about 20 percent of its precipitation in January, the numbers could steadily improve or sour dramatically.

What water officials like is when the snow sticks around for a

while instead of seeping into the ground right away because better for the groundwater supply for water to be absorbed slow.

The average depth of the snow at the corner of Highway 50 and the road leading to Sierra ski resort was 38.5 inches. The water content was 9 inches. The water content is what's important, not the depth of the snow.

The importance of the water content is that it runs downstream to fill the reservoirs. These reservoirs are storage sheds of sorts for farmers and municipalities for much of the state. These reservoirs are also huge recreation facilities and without water, there's nothing for a boat to float on.

Even though 2009-10 is being called an El Nino year, Gehrke explained there are wet and dry El Nino years. He also said wet years tend to start much sooner than late December.

"There's a whole lot of winter left to go," Gehrke said, cautioning this first survey of the season should not be used to predict how the year will go.

Keep the snow shovel close at hand

A winter storm advisory remains in affect until 10am today. But expect snow to be falling much of the day in the Lake Tahoe region. White stuff is likely to taper off as the afternoon progresses.

Slopes in the Sierra and at lake level have seen wind gusts between 35-55mph.

The warm temps mean snow totals will not be as high as first forecast.

Snow was sticking on the eastern side of Spooner Summit at about 9:30pm Tuesday. The snow seemed to stop after travelers went through Cave Rock. By morning a few inches had fallen at the lake overnight on the South Shore.

Sierra-at-Tahoe at 6am reported 6 inches of new snow. Squaw Valley says it has a couple inches at the base and up to 6 on the top of the mountain.

Expect slow going over mountain roads today. A rollover accident on Kingsbury Grade was reported this morning.

Snow is in the forecast for the rest of the week, with the sun returning on Saturday. Expect snow to heavier later in the day New Year's Eve.

Storm rolling into Lake Tahoe

Updated 3:04pm Dec. 29.

By Kathryn Reed

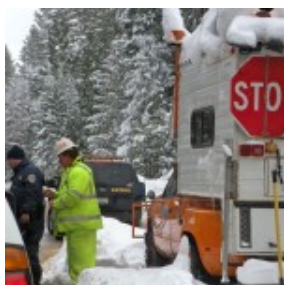
A winter weather advisory has been issued for Lake Tahoe from 7pm Tuesday to 10am Wednesday.

Four to 8 inches could fall at the lake, while elevations about 7,000 feet could receive a foot of snow overnight.

The wind will be picking up as the storm moves in. Ridge tops could have gusts of 100mph.

About an inch of dry, fluffy snow greeted people on the South Shore of Lake Tahoe this morning.

Interstate 80 reopened early this morning after a wrong-way driver caused a double fatal accident near the Newcastle exit, according to the California Highway Patrol.



Expect chain controls on most Sierra roads for the next few days.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

All roads into and out of the Lake Tahoe Basin are open. Chain restrictions are in affect on some roads. Check the Home page of *Lake Tahoe News* for road condition information for California and Nevada.

The avalanche warning for the back country is moderate.

Ski resorts in and around the basin are reporting several inches of fresh snow. Sierra-at-Tahoe has opened Gate 1 into Huckleberry Canyon.

If flying out of Reno-Tahoe International Airport, call to make sure your flight in on time. For those using Sacramento International, the Sac Valley is supposed to be socked in with dense fog this morning so flights mayÂ be delayed.

In Lake Tahoe, snow could still be coming down on New Year's Eve – which may make outdoor festivities to ring in the New Year even more exciting. It may mean the blue moon will be obscured. A blue moon occurs when there are two full moons in

the same month.

Zephyr Cove is offering a full moon snowmobile tonight. Call for reservations – 800-23-Tahoe.

Expect the temps to be in the high 30s-low 40s around the lake for the next few days, with overnight lows in the 20s – though probably colder on a snowmobile.

Pharmaceuticals stolen from South Tahoe CVS

Two men robbed the CVS drug store pharmacy on Emerald Bay Road in South Lake Tahoe on Dec. 27 at about 5pm.

Police officers are not releasing the type of drugs the suspects stole, their value, or the quantity.

The suspect passed a note to a pharmacy worker requesting specific prescription medications. It is not known if a weapon was used. The pharmacy is located in the back of the store, but still the two were able to escape.



South Lake
Tahoe CVS
robbery
suspects.

Both suspects are described as white males in their mid-20s. One is about 5-foot-11, heavy set with brown hair, light facial hair. A description of the second suspect was not given.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Detective Jeff Roberson at the South Lake Tahoe Police Department at (530) 542.6100.