

Millions being spent to reinvigorate Kings Beach



A new water filtration system has been installed near the obsolete pier that State Parks wants to replace in Kings Beach. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – Millions of dollars in state money has been funneled into Kings Beach to improve aesthetics, keep sediment out of Lake Tahoe and upgrade the infrastructure. Even more work is planned for the area, which in large part will be designed to upgrade the recreation opportunities.

The California Tahoe Conservancy board and others on Sept. 17 went on a tour to see sites that are done, ones that are a work in progress and what is planned.

Standing on the pier that only covers sand, Steve Muillami with State Parks in Sacramento told the group that when the general plan process starts next month for the Kings Beach State Recreation Area it begins an in depth analysis of what

should be done with the 12½ acre site. Also included in the planning will be the plaza area.

“The difference with this plan is that it goes beyond what we typically do,” Muillami said. “This plan will be much more detailed. We will be looking at how elements fit together. Environmental documents will look at the project level.”

The general plan is expected to be completed in December 2017. One of the main things to be looked at is replacing the pier. The goal is to build one that can be used more than a few months a year, if not year-round. The drought has made it useless 12 months a year.

Today the boat ramp ends at sand, not water. That too will be addressed in the general plan. With Boating and Waterways now being part of State Parks instead of a standalone agency, the ramp will seamlessly be incorporated into the general plan.



The community voted on design features of road improvements like colored pavers.

The last time this area had a general plan written was in 1980. The new document is expected to have a 20-year lifespan.

An environmental impact report and environmental impact study will be done to satisfy state and Tahoe Regional Planning

Agency mandates.

How best to incorporate special events at the property while also allowing visitors to use the area will be studied. Events like this weekend's Lake Tahoe Ironman and last weekend's Bike Big Blue bike ride use the Kings Beach State Recreation Area annually. It's the start site for the triathlon swim and a major stop for the biannual bike rides put on by Curtis Fong.

Property ownership in the area is a mishmash including State Parks, CTC, Placer County, North Tahoe Public Utility District and private entities. It makes putting together a cohesive plan difficult at times. The beaches the CTC owns are now managed by State Parks.

The goal is to make things seamless for the public so there is no obvious property boundary – at least among the public parcels.

State Parks is working with Placer County to make the gateways on either ends of its property blend, which will be a future project.

Dan LaPlante, an engineer with the county, pointed out some of the more than \$51 million worth of work that is being done in town. Some of that funding came from the CTC – so the board and staff were able to see how that money has been spent.

Near the start of the pier is a redesigned outfall that uses new technology, along with planting native plants. Rock is at the end of the pipe. Today it looks like stormwater will just run onto the beach. When the lake returns to a more normal level, that water will flow into it.

Stormwater vaults have been installed to the right of the events center. This is where filters called jellyfish have been placed to capture the fine sediment before the water flows under the paving stones of the walkway and into the lake via the new outfall.

This is one of seven treatment systems in Kings Beach.



Highway 28 went from four lanes to three through Kings Beach.

Besides water quality, the goals of the improvements throughout the core area were to improve the look of the town, and increase the walkable-bikeable options.

With Highway 28 being decreased from four lanes to three, the county also initiated traffic control plans in neighborhoods.

The current phase of the project is slated to be done by Nov. 1, with overall completion at the end of the next building season.

CTC is the agency that started the funding for this work.

Because a county snowplow driver was injured and the rig damaged last year going through one of the roundabouts, all of them have been altered this summer. The curbs were flattened two weeks ago to solve the problem.

Another component of the project is the development of six community parking lots. Two are being built now. The county accomplished this by purchasing lots in the last 10 years. The money to do so came from the former Redevelopment Agency and

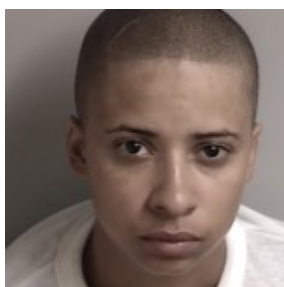
North Lake Tahoe Resort Association.

A benefits assessment district was voted into place by the property owners to pay for the maintenance of the sidewalks and other public places through town. Placer County will be responsible for doing the actual work.

21-year-old woman accused of stealing car

A 21-year-old transient was arrested Wednesday night on auto theft charges.

South Lake Tahoe police officers on Sept. 16 stopped Tarra Sheffield driving a 1991 Honda Accord that had been reported missing last weekend.



Tarra
Sheffield

This was one of four vehicles that had been reported stolen between Sept. 11 and Sept. 12. In every case, the ignition keys had been left in the vehicle. The other three vehicles have been recovered with no identified suspect.

Officers said when they searched the Honda they found methamphetamine, heroin and drug paraphernalia. Scheffield also faces methamphetamine, possession of heroin, and possession of drug paraphernalia charges.

“Until November of last year, each of the offenses for which Sheffield was arrested last night constituted a felony offense, punishable in state prison for four years in the case of auto theft,” Lt. Brian Williams said in a press release.

Local officers are blaming Proposition 47 for the 12 percent spike in property crimes this year.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Drought changing fire behavior



Tinder dry terrain in
California is causing
explosive fires.
Photo/CalFire

By Julia Prodis Sulek, San Jose Mercury News

LAKE PORT – CalFire Capt. Scott Rohrs and his three crewmen were racing to the scene of the Valley fire when the foreboding news crackled over radio dispatch: four elite firefighters had been overrun by flames, suffering serious second-degree burns.

The fire was barely an hour old, but driven by fierce winds and the most intense, dry conditions of California's four-year drought, those men had been forced to deploy their zip-up shelter bags, survival gear of last resort.

"This is what we're getting into," Rohrs told his men from the Cloverdale Station on Saturday afternoon as they headed toward the darkening plume of smoke. "This is going to be a career fire, one of the worst ones we ever encounter."

Firefighters throughout California are encountering the unforgettable in 2015 – an epic fire season fueled by a record drought that has turned much of the Golden State's forests into a matchbox of more than 12 million dead trees. And with global temperatures rising and the Sierra Nevada snowpack at its lowest level in five centuries, concern is growing that the unpredictable ferocity of the Valley Fire could become a new reality for the men and women who battle the blazes.

What's been so stunning to firefighters this year is the swiftness of the flames. July's Rocky Fire, about 10 miles east of the Valley fire, devoured 20,000 acres in just five hours. The Valley Fire grew to 40,000 acres in 10 hours last weekend, cracking the list of the top 10 most destructive fires in California history.

Read the whole story

Nev. won't reopen health care enrollment stores

By Jackie Valley, Las Vegas Sun

The Silver State Health Insurance Exchange will not operate brick-and-mortar enrollment stores during this year's sign-up period for government-subsidized health insurance.

"It wasn't fiscally prudent to walk in that direction," Bruce Gilbert, executive director of the exchange, told board members at a meeting last week.

Last year, the exchange opened two enrollment stores – one in northern Nevada and another at the Boulevard Mall in Las Vegas – where consumers could enroll through Nevada Health Link with the help of insurance brokers and navigators.

Read the whole story

SLTPD uses new technology to thwart property crimes

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department is starting to use a new technology – essentially DNA for property – to assist in combating property theft.

The technology is called Anti-Theft Dots. Applications of this technology include a special substance that can withstand extreme elements including salt water and temperatures in excess of 2,000 degrees. Suspended inside this special substance are thousands of microscopic dots which are smaller

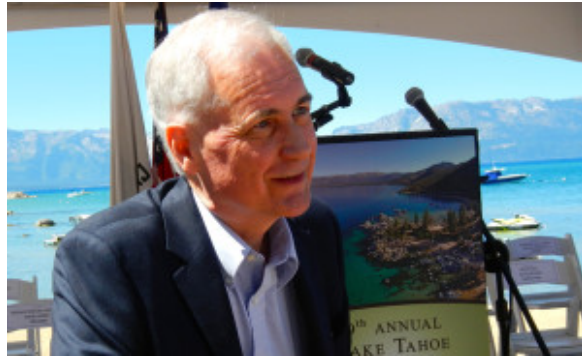
than a grain of sand. Each dot has a unique PIN, identifying the property owner.

The substance may be applied to all types of property, from bikes, electronics, tools, equipment, metals, copper and more. The user applies the substance to her valuables and registers the PIN in the Law Enforcement National Recovery Database.

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department has been equipped with scanning tools to determine if the property has been marked with this substance. If it is determined the property is marked, a special digital reader is applied to the substance so law enforcement can read the PIN on the microscopic dots. That PIN is entered into the Law Enforcement National Recovery Database, allowing law enforcement agencies to retrieve ownership in real time.

Officers will be supplying the dots to cyclists at the Bijou Bike Park opening on Sept. 19. After that date the department plans to initiate a campaign to reduce property theft in the city by working with businesses, public works, utilities, and the school district.

McClintock fed up with talk of shutdown



Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay, represents the California side of Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Mike DeBonis, Washington Post

A challenge from hard-line conservatives in the House Republican caucus has Speaker John A. Boehner, R-Ohio, wondering how he might pass a bill to fund the government ahead of the Sept. 30 deadline.

But one of those conservatives said Wednesday that he's had enough of the shutdown talk and resigned his membership in a prominent hard-liner group, calling their tactics "counterproductive."

Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay, told the leader of the House Freedom Caucus, which formed in January as a home for about three dozen of the most conservative Republican members, that he had "ferverently hoped that it would provide responsible and effective leadership to advance conservative principles in the House of Representatives."

McClintock cited several points of frustration over instances where Freedom Caucus members broke with GOP leadership on tactics, if not ideology: a late February standoff over funding the Department of Homeland Security, May votes on advancing fast-track trade authority, and last week's handling of a resolution disapproving of the nuclear deal with Iran.

Read the whole story

2 deceased people discovered at Truckee hotel

Two people were found dead Sept. 16 in a Truckee hotel room.

Officers are calling the deaths suspicious, but are not saying why.

“There is no reason to believe anyone else is involved and there is no threat to public safety,” officers said in a statement.

The two people were found about 2:45pm in a room at Richard’s Motel on Donner Pass Road near Donner Lake.

Detectives are working to identify the subjects. The cause of death is pending an autopsy.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Dreaded fees come to vacation rentals

By Christopher Elliott, USA Today

First, there was a \$25 “check-in” fee when she arrived, which, though disclosed in the fine print of her contract, was

unexpected. And then there was a mandatory \$200 “cleaning” fee for her unit after she checked out. Neither was part of the original price. Rhonda Moret’s vacation rental in Park City, Utah, came with a few surprises.

To add insult to injury, a construction crew in a nearby unit woke her at 7am, on her first morning at the mountain resort.

Don’t look now, but vacation rental companies are piling on the fees, many of them pure junk. Among the most common: booking fees, change fees, cleaning fees, hot tub fees, parking fees, reservation fees and – everyone’s favorite – amorphous “convenience” fees.

Read the whole story

3 deaths in 2 wildfires; more possible

Two people have died in the Butte Fire burning in Calaveras County.

Coroner Kevin Raggio said Mark McCloud, 66, who refused to evacuate, died outside his home.

Cadaver dogs located another adult male in the burn area. His name has not been released pending notification of family.

This is the third civilian fire related death this month. Barbara McWilliams, 72, died in the Valley Fire in Lake County.

The Associated Press is reporting that 69-year-old Leonard Neft, who works for the *San Jose Mercury News* and lives in

Middletown, has been reported missing by his family. His burned-out car was discovered on a route he would have used to escape, AP said. He lived near where McWilliams did.

“We have reports of several others that may have perished in the fire,” Lake County Sheriff Brian Martin told the Associated Press during a tour of the disaster zone with state emergency officials.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Bear forces Incline school to be on lockdown

By Associated Press

A black bear that wandered onto a Lake Tahoe high school campus and prompted a precautionary lockdown for two hours today is the same one that was captured with her cub in Carson City three days ago and released in the mountains 30 miles away.

The lockdown at Incline High School was lifted shortly after 11am Sept. 16 when state wildlife officials shot the mother bear with a tranquilizer dart after she climbed a tree outside the school on the lake’s north shore.

Nevada Department of Wildlife spokesman Chris Healy says they intend to place the bear in a two-chamber trap baited with food in hopes of luring the cub back to its mother.

Healy says the bears won’t be killed because they’ve not posed any threat to anyone. He says wildlife biologists hope to release both of them to the wild again in the next day or so.