

Supervisors removing Knorr from CAO job



Pamela Knorr

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors in closed session today voted 5-0 to remove Pamela Knorr from the interim CAO position after having placed her there in November to fill the vacancy left when the board ousted Terri Daly as CAO.

On June 29, Larry Combs becomes the acting chief administrative officer. He has been the CAO in Sutter and Merced counties. He worked for two years in Merced County, retiring in 2011 after having a heart attack and wanting to be in a less stressful environment.

Before his stint in Merced, Combs spent 26 years in Sutter County starting in 1983; he was in Kings County starting in 1978; he started his career in San Diego in 1978.

Combs in retirement is making \$185,167.92 a year – his taxpayer funded pension.

The board on June 16 said Knorr will keep her job as chief of the Human Resources Department. She has been doing both jobs for the past few months.

Knorr's ability as interim CAO has been under scrutiny since the get-go based on budget and other decisions that have not always been seen as being on the up-and-up as has been

reported on *Lake Tahoe News* multiple times.

– *Lake Tahoe News* staff report

South Shore economy bouncing back

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

Tourism on the south end of Lake Tahoe has taken hits in recent times, from ski season-sapping drought to tribal casinos in the California foothills.

Now the region is fighting back. More than a dozen businesses, from high-rise hotel-casinos at Stateline to the small retailers in South Lake Tahoe, have finished or are proceeding with a collective \$150 million in renovations, according to industry figures.

And the timing couldn't be better, officials say, with the summer season unfolding and broad economic recovery underway.

"It's all kind of coming together at a time when people feel better about traveling and spending more money," said Carol Chaplin, executive director of the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority. "We're kind of threading the needle."

She also cites the timing of JetBlue Airways' new nonstop flights from New York City to Reno-Tahoe International Airport, the main gateway to Tahoe.

Read the whole story

Brown pushes to consolidate water agencies

By Jim Miller, Sacramento Bee

The Brown administration is pushing late-emerging budget legislation to let state officials force the consolidation of troubled water systems with larger, better-funded agencies, with the goal of improving Californians' access to safe drinking water after four years of drought.

Proponents say the measure would help people around the state, many of them poor, who depend on small agencies that have little wherewithal to deal with water shortages and quality problems. The measure could go before the Legislature as early as this week.

"Critical times require innovative measures," said Omar Carrillo, senior water analyst for the Community Water Center, an environmental justice group that supports the proposal. "Communities deserve more tools to secure their safe drinking water needs." He estimated that there are a few dozen small agencies in the Central Valley alone that should be consolidated with larger neighbors.

The proposal, though, has generated intense opposition from water agencies and local government groups. Larger water agencies fear absorbing the expenses and liability of other systems, even as their existing customers face tough state-

imposed conservation measures. Smaller agencies, some of which have their own governing boards, criticize the loss of local control.

Read the whole story

Music festivals a boon for cities, musicians



Small touches like a wine barrel as a table add local flair at BottleRock in Napa. Photo/Susan Wood

By Susan Wood

As South Lake Tahoe ponders showing off its own outdoor

concert venue near the Lake Tahoe Airport, the city will have plenty of examples of communities to look to that have set the stage for the growing industry – the latest being the three-day extravaganza at BottleRock Napa.

The South Shore is no newcomer to outdoor concerts. Consider the highly successful version at the Harveys Stateline parking lot bringing big, one-night acts such as Elton John, Kenny Chesney and Imagine Dragons this summer. Then in winter, resilient crowds of more than 40,000 techno music lovers flock to SnowGlobe's multi-stage grounds near Lake Tahoe Community College over three nights on New Year's week.

In addition, the North Shore contributes with Wanderlust at Squaw Valley. Beyond in the Sierra Nevada, the Strawberry Music Festival in Grass Valley hosts many acts, along with other, numerous, pop-up, smaller venues.



BottleRock founder Dave Graham believes locals can put on a better festival. Photo/Susan Wood

Bands need festivals for revenue

Fun and frolic aside, these festivals and concerts represent a serious business trend for concert promoters and musicians, according to Pollstar. The trade publication covering the global concert scene has seen a growing business model for artists. While the public's consumption of music has never been greater, the ability of artists to financially monopolize on that demand has declined, Pollstar says. Digital sales and streaming revenues have lagged in replacing the reduced income from recording and publishing. So artists must hit the road to make money.

The North American concert industry mushroomed to \$6.2 billion last year, with the explosion attributable to one single, large factor – the increasing proliferation of large multi-day music festivals. This year's global calendar confirmed 1,500 events in 70 countries, according to Pollstar.

Moreover, the growth is led by average ticket prices jumping 2.8 percent to a record \$71.44.

"The only way touring artists can make money is touring. They need to if they want to make a living now. A lot of the old revenue streams have dried up," Pollstar music media representative Gary Bongiovanni told *Lake Tahoe News*.

So, here's more power to the cities that provide a place to perform, he indicated.

"Whether it's public or private money financing it, we're seeing growth from the 20,000-seaters to the much smaller jazz- and family-oriented places for 5,000 (people)," said Bongiovanni, who has covered the music scene for 33 years.



CamelBak's hydration station is as busy as the alcohol booths at BottleRock. Photo/Susan Wood

A sense of place

Bongiovanni believes if South Lake Tahoe can pull off hosting such an event tucked in the trees on a now deemed 30-acre site proposed at Melba Road and Kyburz Avenue below Highway 50, it would be a win-win for artists and the community.

"Lake Tahoe is ideal for these concerts. It's picturesque; an idyllic place to see outdoor music shows. My first question is whether the population of South Lake Tahoe is large enough to support the facilities for an event like that," he said, further stressing how the event needs locals and tourists to turn out to make it successful year after year.

Some infrastructure is already there on the property. There's a concrete slab where one stage could go. Evidence of a sewer hookup is also there. The airport tower would make an ideal landmark.

For the natural environment, leaving most of the trees should provide a sound buffer and perhaps even a mystique to this proposed concert venue.



SnowGlobe in South Lake Tahoe is more like a rave catering to the techno crowd. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

South Lake Tahoe ready to expand festival experience

South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry is batting around the idea, with the help of a strategic team. A cost-benefit study will be conducted.

“The idea is for the property to remain as it is,” she said, listing the planned thinning of trees and space for a proposed bike path as means to an end.

Kerry realizes events have been mounting in town, and they’re popular. Supporters believe each event has its own special

market, venue and vibe.

“SnowGlobe demonstrated 15- to 40,000 people would come to a concert in the forest if we have it,” she said. The city has also tapped into the Electric Forest website that illustrates a laid-back vibe where those who appreciate good music expand their own creativity in attendance. Picture hula hoops, and peace, love and harmony without Woodstockish drugs as the focus. It’s a good-to-be-alive feeling.

Imagine. This is all from Tahoe’s own natural beauty.

“A lot of these event venues capture the natural surroundings,” Kerry said.



Artificial turf was laid at the Napa County Fairgrounds just for BottleRock. Photo/Susan Wood

Learning from others

The key to making it a success is maintaining Lake Tahoe’s

unique charm and character.

This theory was even expressed by a Napa resident attending last month's three-day BottleRock giant outdoor concert in her hometown.

"Tahoe can do this, but it needs to keep its own identity. The Nevada side has money. The California side is where the people really appreciate recreation. Don't lose yourselves trying to be some place like Napa," Erin Crain said, while standing in BottleRock's concessionaire square on the Friday night of the festival.

Crain stood in front of the wine bar serving varietals like a Rombauer Merlot. Other wineries such as Butter, Napa Cellars and Del Dotto had their own tents, some like the latter, with extravagant seating areas to provide an elegant wine experience.

"We wanted to create a staging area to reflect the elegance of Del Dotto," winery worker Kristina Ambra told *Lake Tahoe News* while buffing the chandelier the day before the concert weekend began during a media tour.

This may not be a Tahoe experience, but the South Shore may embrace brewmasters, climbing walls or stand up paddleboarding as symbols of this unique area. Ideas abound relating to tents and stations that capture Tahoe's outdoor nature and pristine environment. One of BottleRock's nice touches Tahoe lovers could relate to – CamelBak's watering hole, a station where a line of the Petaluma-based workers consistently dispense water in concert goers bottles.

Concert-goers were using turned-up wine barrels as waist-high tabletops. (In Tahoe, picture sawed off tree trunks serving as tabletops.) Off to the side, tents camouflaged trash and recycling cans.

Besides drinking, foodies also relished the BottleRock

experience with a variety of Napa tents designed to tempt the taste buds. It seemed the Whole Foods Market food truck was one of the busiest, situated next to Kara's Cupcakes. That Napa dessert mainstay served a steady line until it ran out of cupcakes about 9pm, an hour before concert-goers cleared out Friday night.

There was even a culinary stage where concert attendees watched renowned Chef Masaharu Morimoto teach rapper Snoop Dog how to roll sushi. The crowd gathered for that event had people backed up 50 feet away.

But above all, it was BottleRock's music that was a hit and plentiful – with bands appealing to all age groups with the variety of genres. The contemporary hit band, Imagine Dragons – which will appear at the Harveys Summer Outdoor Concert series next month, cranked out its assortment of chart toppers such as "I Bet My Life," "It's Time" and "Demons." (The bass player is from Forestville in neighboring Sonoma County.)

The crowd – about a football field long took it all in – some swaying and dancing, while others played corn hole and chatted in the back. Laura Palmer enjoyed standing way back in the open space by the winery tents to watch the youngsters play in the grass. Even though the band members on stage looked like figurines, the acoustics were off-the-charts precise.

"People would go crazy in Tahoe for something like this. This is something all ages can do. Make it inclusive," the Alameda resident said. Palmer added she liked BottleRock's set up because of the open space where she feels she can breathe and watch the entertainment and be entertained by the kids.

Laurie Smith, a 20-year resident of Napa, admitted she attended BottleRock two years ago to watch her son for a different reason.

"I came to make sure my son didn't get high," she said, laughing next to the Whole Foods food truck. "I like it this

year. I would call it a success. Good wine, good food, the best weather.”

Concert promoters take note: these parents may be onto something – appeal to varying members of the household.

Sunday’s BottleRock performances catered to Snoop Dog’s rap crowd, new band American Authors with the “Best Day of My Life” anthem, a noticeably pregnant Tristan Prettyman’s soulful, sentimental baby boomers and EchoSmith’s “Cool Kids” Billboard soundtrack enthusiasts. (Note: the band consisted of all teenagers, with a stage presence of seasoned performers.)

In its third year, BottleRock has been deemed a massive success – especially compared to the first two years when vendors were late getting paid and crowds clogged the 26-acre site. Easy traffic flow was critical for the three local men putting on the event – Jason Scoggins, Justin Dragoo and Dave Graham.

Graham’s advice to South Lake Tahoe wanting to put on a successful multi-day concert was simple – have a local organizer do it.

“It’s difficult to be an outside entity and putting this on. There are a lot of things you have to weigh, constituents to deal with,” he told *Lake Tahoe News* in a flurry of busy work the day before the concert started. “You definitely have to have a thick skin.”

And above all: “Start early,” he added, reporting a two-year runway for putting on BottleRock. He laughed at the thought others told him he was “crazy” for trying to conduct such a feat attracting more than 100,000 people over three days. “But it’s as good and better as it was planned.”

Many commented about the planning and design of BottleRock.

“There’s only a five-minute walk between stages,” longtime

Napa public relations guru Tom Fuller said during a media tour.

And even though BottleRock's quest was to attract varying concert-goers with different musical tastes, it helps if some of them have money to splurge. While single-day tickets went for \$109 and three-day passes sold for \$275, the VIP passes cost \$595 for the weekender. This means special service, a more pleasurable lounge place and an elevated seating area.

"If you're going to spend money on a VIP ticket, you're going to have a VIP experience," Fuller said.

The city of Napa had no immediate report on tax revenue figures from the festival, but the Napa Downtown Association appeared initially happy about the outcome.

"It brings a different cache to Napa and builds our brand. It's positive from that standpoint," association member Craig Smith told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Although retailers show little sign of any burst in business because concert-goers "don't come to shop," Smith referenced the restaurants, which get "slammed" through lunch and up to the evening.

But there is a bit of a catch.

"If it's held on a normal weekend, it's a boon for business. But if it's held on a strong weekend, it's not a plus," he said, mentioning July 4.

This may be a topic of conversation next year. BottleRock organizers have already announced the 2016 dates. They fall on Memorial Day weekend.

Calif. Legislature approves \$117.5 bil. budget

By Chris Megerian, Los Angeles Times

California lawmakers passed a new budget Monday, but the debate over state spending is far from over in the Capitol.

Shortly after the approval of a \$117.5-billion general fund, legislative leaders returned to negotiations with Gov. Jerry Brown in an attempt to reach a final deal.

"We're close," said Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, D-San Diego.

Lawmakers' pay would have been docked had they not passed a budget by midnight. But the plan they approved is \$2.2 billion larger than what Brown proposed, and the governor has repeatedly expressed concern that the Legislature's ruling Democrats want to spend too much.

Read the whole story

CalFire quickly on top of small fire in Strawberry

CalFire crews made quick work of a fire in Strawberry off Highway 50 on Monday.

The tenth of an acre fire burned on state land. It was reported in the early evening of June 15.

The cause is under investigation. It was not a burn day and no lightning was occurring.

“We want to make sure people do defensible space and do the right thing the right way, using the right power tools when doing clearances,” Brice Bennett with CalFire told *Lake Tahoe News*.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Eyeing Tesla, college offers 4-year degree in logistics

By Associated Press

RENO – A community college in Reno is becoming the first in Nevada to establish a new four-year degree in logistics to help meet anticipated demand for skilled workers at Tesla Motors and other high-tech companies moving distribution hubs to the region.

The state Board of Regents on Friday approved the Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Logistics Operations Management as well as a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Emergency Management Homeland Security – Public Safety.

The new programs will be offered for the first time at Truckee Meadows Community College in the fall semester of 2016.

Truckee Meadows President Maria Sheehan said it's the responsibility of community colleges to respond to changing economic climates as quickly as possible. “And that's the exciting part – when you can do something that is responsive that's going to address certainly jobs for the future and economic revitalization,” she said.

The bachelor's degree in logistics will train students for operations planning, warehousing, sustainability, safety and operations.

"Logistics students have not had an option to continue to bachelor's studies in Nevada, and we want to keep these talented students in the state," said Mari Murgolo-Poore, dean of the college's Business Division.

The importance of such a program grew last fall when Tesla announced it's building a \$5 billion gigafactory at the Tahoe Reno Industrial Center along Interstate 80 east of Reno to manufacture lithium batteries to power its electric cars.

The community college said the Tesla gigafactory will bring 3,600 construction jobs and 6,500 factory jobs to northern Nevada in the next three to four years. The majority of those jobs will require more than a high school diploma, school officials said.

"There's an absolute tsunami coming of opportunities," said Michael Pender, the managing director of Porous Power Technologies who works with companies that are moving into the area. The vast majority are looking for a trained, experienced workforce, he said.

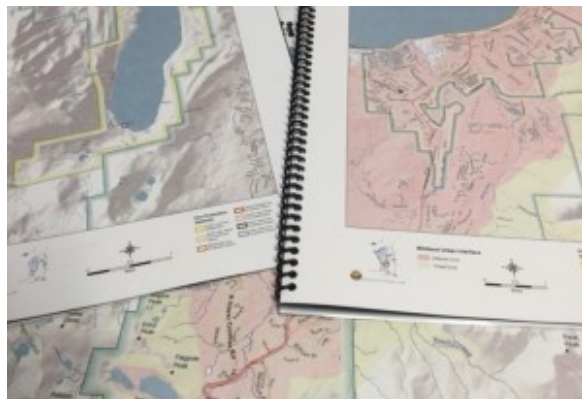
Applied logistics is an integral part of all distribution hubs, Pender said, and that's why his original company decided to locate in the area in the late 1990s. "Distribution and logistics are key to so many industries that are here now and industries that are coming," he said.

Tahoe fire officials coordinating plans

Creating a strategy for how best to fight a wildfire, knowing the resources available, and making plans to reduce potentially catastrophic blazes are some the particulars of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

While such a plan has existed, this is the first time every fire agency in the Lake Tahoe Basin has participated.

“It’s a living document. It’s more about how we do our planning,” South Lake Tahoe Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Maps help fire officials identify at-risk areas.
Photo/LTN

The document is expected to be finalized this summer. The basin has been broken into quadrants, with each area focusing on issues specific to that geographic area.

The information will be updated as needed.

This document that fire officials are preparing delves into what agencies have done to thin the forest to make it healthier and less susceptible to a devastating wildfire as well as how well prepared residents are. This then allows for

other agencies to know what others are doing and the resources available. It also is an opportunity for the respective departments to assess where they could make improvements.

Prevention is a better tool than suppression for dealing with fires, officials sat.

“There’s a pretty good level of public apathy,” Meston said. This is a concern, especially as fuels are so dry because of the fourth year of drought.

In nine days it will be the eighth anniversary of the start of the Angora Fire that swept through the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe and took down 254 houses. And while those affected by that blaze won’t forget that particular Sunday, it’s not in the forefront of most people’s minds. One of the bigger hurdles, fire officials say, is to get absentee homeowners engaged in defensible space measures to reduce the threat of fire reducing their house to ash. Fire adaptive communities make the entire neighborhood safer.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Bay Area motorcyclist dies on Hwy. 50



A motorcyclist died June 13 in Zephyr Cove. Photo/Nevada Highway Patrol

A Bay Area woman died Saturday night when the motorcycle she was riding was struck by a vehicle going in the opposite direction on Highway 50 in Zephyr Cove near Martin Drive.

A 2015 silver Nissan Versa driven by Alma J. Jaramillo-Garcia, 31, of Moxee, Wash., was headed east in the left lane. For unknown reasons Jaramillo-Garcia drifted into the westbound lanes about 8pm June 13. Amber R. Hallmark, 53, of Antioch, was on a Harley-Davidson in that travel lane.

Hallmark was ejected from her motorcycle. She and the bike landed about 75 feet from the point of impact. She died at the scene. She was wearing a helmet.

Jaramillo-Garcia was transported to Barton Memorial Hospital with minor injuries.

Inattention and impairment are being investigated as a contributing factor in this fatal crash, according to the Nevada Highway Patrol. No charges have been filed.

Anyone who may have witnessed this incident or who may have information is asked to call 775.684.4661 or email ckelly@dps.state.nv.us.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

S. Tahoe officer fatally shoots suspect at hotel



A South Lake Tahoe police officer fatally shot a man June 15. Photo/LTN

A South Lake Tahoe police officer this morning fatally shot a man at the Tahoe Hacienda Inn.

Officers were called to the hotel on Lake Tahoe Boulevard at 2:40am June 15 because of reports of a woman who was screaming and crying.

Ten minutes later an officer fired a single shot at a man in his early 20s who was trying to escape out of a hotel window. The man died a few hours later at Barton Memorial Hospital.

The victim's name is not being released until next of kin is notified.

The officer's name has also not been released. The officer has been put on paid administrative leave.

This is the first officer-involved shooting for the department since November 2004.

"This afternoon we are securing a search warrant so we can investigate the interior of the hotel room where the incident took place," Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News*.

El Dorado County sheriff's and district attorney's detectives will be investigating the shooting aspect of the case.

A hotel employee about 8:30 Monday morning told *Lake Tahoe News* that officers had not told her what was going on. Yellow crime tape surrounded the entire hotel this morning, with part of the driveway open by the afternoon.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*