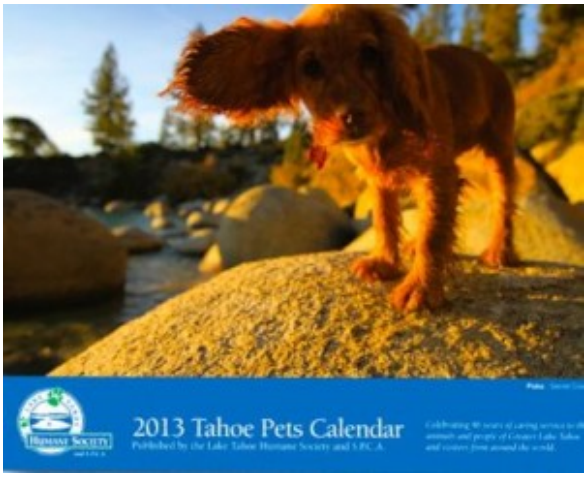
Animal lovers ensure Tahoe pets are cared for

By Kathryn Reed

Pets are often a barometer for how the economy is doing. In good times people fill their homes with four-legged family members, while in bad times shelters are what get filled up.

From 2006 to 2011 all pet ownership decreased 2.4 percent, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association. Cat ownership decreased 6.2 percent and dog ownership declined 1.9 percent in that time span.



Humane societies on both ends of Lake Tahoe are selling 2013 pet calendars as a fundraiser.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals says more than 2 million dogs enter U.S. shelters each year. While there are a variety of reasons why animals wind up in shelters, not being able to afford their care is on the list.

Sometimes there aren’t even scraps for four legged family

members.

As the economy sputters to regain stability, pet food can be the last item on the grocery list – assuming it even makes the list.

Humane societies on both ends of the lake would rather help people be able to keep their pets than have them wind up at a shelter. That is why there are food pantries for animals.

“The Lake Tahoe Humane Society has always maintained a community pet food bank for pet owners in financial difficulty (lost a job for example), seniors in financial difficulty and folks waiting for assistance, for clients of other agencies (such as Tahoe Youth & Family Services, Live Violence Free, mental health) who may be transient or in life change/crisis situations, etc.,” Dawn Armstrong, executive director of the South Lake Tahoe humane society chapter told *Lake Tahoe News*. “During and after the Angora Fire, we maintained a large cache of food and supplies available to all community members for almost a full year.”

Donations are accepted at the Emerald Bay Road office or at the shelter in Meyers, but it must be designated for the LTHS food bank if dropped off at the shelter.

The Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe’s Pet Pantry’s slogan is “Give what you can, take what you need.” This program collects pet food and distributes it to needy families and their pets in the Truckee-Tahoe area.

Through the holidays the Safeway in Truckee and Kings Beach have collection barrels for pet food. Year-round there are barrels at the Pet Station and Scraps Dog Bakery in Truckee.

The shelter in Truckee keeps all those animals on the same food.

The El Dorado County shelter in Meyers accepts a variety of

donations, with the following on its current wish list: peanut butter for kong toys, dog collars, cat and kitten food, cat beds, cat toys, dog toys, and scoopable cat litter.

Both humane societies are selling 2013 pet calendars as a way to raise money for their respective programs. Money helps pay for food when the pantry is bare. It also helps people during disasters, like the Angora Fire. The Truckee facility is also still raising money for the shelter that is under construction.

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Contact info:

• **South Lake Tahoe Humane Society**

Phone: (530) 542.2857

Address: 1221 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe

Website

• **El Dorado County Animal Shelter, Meyers**

Phone: (530) 573.7925

Address: 1120 Shakori Drive, Meyers

Website

• **Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe**

Phone: (530) 587.5948

Address: 10720 Riverview Drive, Truckee

Website

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Notes:

• Dogs With Issues will give one free dog training session for any puppy or dog rescued during this month or in January. Call (530) 577.0263 for an appointment.

• *Lake Tahoe News* is making its final holiday donation to the animal shelter in Meyers. New paid subscribers have helped *LTN* be able to give back to human food pantries, and now we are helping the animals of Tahoe. Here is a paid subscriber form if you would like to join the special NEWS team and be eligible for specials.

• Each Monday *Lake Tahoe News* publishes Tahoe Tails – an item provided by Karen Kuentz from the Meyers shelter about a dog or cat that needs adopting.

Juveniles suspected of vandalizing magnet school

The names of the suspects in the Dec. 14 doughnut-spinning, wall demolition incident at the magnet school in Meyers are not being released because they are younger than 18.

California Highway Patrol Officer Jeff Gartner told *Lake Tahoe News* his office believes they know who is responsible for the vandalism, but will not make arrests because there are no known witnesses. He added that the names of the offenders – ages and genders were not released – have been forwarded to the probation department.

An El Dorado County Probation Department employee said Greg

Sly, who runs the department, is the one to talk to. Sly did not return a call so it is not known what will happen to the accused if anything. It's also not known how many people may have been involved and why they are on probation to begin with.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Brown wants to overhaul education funding in California

By Kevin Yamamura, Sacramento Bee

After California schools eliminated art programs and increased class sizes to survive budget cuts, they are finally on the verge of getting more money thanks to voter-approved taxes and economic recovery.

But K-12 districts may not share equally in the expanding budget pie.

Gov. Jerry Brown is pushing hard to overhaul California's convoluted school funding system. His plan has two major objectives: Give K-12 districts greater control over how they spend money, and send more dollars to impoverished students and English learners.

Studies show that such children require more public help to reach the same level of achievement as their well-off peers. But as rich and poor communities alike clamor for money in the

wake of funding cuts, Brown's plan could leave wealthy suburbs with fewer new dollars than poorer urban and rural districts.

That makes perfect sense, said Michael W. Kirst, president of the state Board of Education and a Stanford University professor who co-wrote a 2008 paper that became the model for Brown's proposal.

"Low-income people have less resources to invest in their children," Kirst said. "A lot of investment comes from parental ability to buy external things for their kids that provide a better education. In the case of low-income groups, they can't buy tutors, after-school programs or summer experiences."

The Democratic governor wanted to install his plan as part of the last budget, but changes were so dramatic that education interests balked. Brown is reworking his proposal for his January budget, hoping that passage of his tax hike has given school officials confidence they will all receive sufficient money.

Brown officials had three workshops this fall to solicit input, as well as build good will with education groups.

One example from the Sacramento region shows how Brown's proposal would shift dollars to students in need.

In Brown's last proposal, Buckeye Union School District in affluent El Dorado Hills and neighboring communities would receive $7,757 per student in 2018-19, according to analysis by the Public Policy Institute of California. Robla Elementary School District in working-class North Sacramento would get $10,554 per student.

Nine in 10 Robla students in 2010-11 qualified for subsidized school meals. At Buckeye, only one in eight students qualified.

Robla Superintendent Ruben Reyes is cautiously optimistic the governor's plan will result in more funding, but he isn't counting on the money. Students speak 26 languages at Robla's five campuses, and a significant number have to share homes with other families.

"This could be a very positive thing for Robla," Reyes said of Brown's proposal. "We work very hard to meet the needs of both of these (English-learner and low-income) groups of students. They come to school less prepared, and often times the school has to make those things up."

He said the district tries to provide field trips and activities that families may not be able to afford. Robla has translators to help English learners communicate. More money could buy training, new materials or extend learning time, he suggested.

Buckeye Superintendent David Roth agrees that districts serving low-income students need more funds. But he notes that all districts have suffered cuts, and even the best-performing California schools such as his remain at a competitive disadvantage against those beyond California.

"We have some of the most poorly funded schools in the country, and the state needs to redesign our funding model in a way that brings all districts up to the national average," Roth said.

One of the most controversial parts of Brown's proposal last year gave districts an additional boost if more than half of students qualify as low-income or English learners. The idea was that a concentration of at-risk students dramatically increases need.

"There's a greater totality of needs if you have a school with 95 percent of students that need intervention than if you have 2 percent of students," said Brooks Allen, director of education advocacy for ACLU of Southern California, which has

been fighting to ensure low-income schools receive additional aid. “We thought that was a strength of the proposal.”

But suburban districts think the “concentration grant” goes too far. In Ventura County, Conejo Valley Unified School District Superintendent Jeffrey L. Baarstad said an initial version of the plan would have given one low-income area as much as $5,000 more per student than his district.

“The concern out there is that there’s a problem with winners and losers,” Baarstad said. “Everyone has been a loser the last five years. Even though someone like me absolutely agrees with putting money behind (low-income) kids, at the same time I want to rebuild my district, too.”

As Brown found last spring, the challenge with overhauling any decades-old finance system is that losing Capitol interests will resist change. The rich-poor divide is not the only one.

Brown’s proposal would eliminate most earmarks called “categoricals.” For years, the state has provided schools with general-purpose money as well as earmarks that must be spent on specific programs.

Categoricals emerged over decades after lawmakers and special interests identified one problem or another and wanted to encourage school districts to correct them. The California Teachers Association, for instance, has backed incentives for districts to reduce class sizes – and hire more teachers.

In the wake of recent budget cuts, the state temporarily relaxed most earmarks, telling districts they could still receive funds without spending on state-driven priorities.

That riled advocates for specific programs, particularly adult education. Since the state relaxed earmarks, 82 percent of districts have cut some or all adult education, according to the Legislative Analyst’s Office.

Supporters say their programs help adults find jobs and learn English, and they want to restore protections they had before budget cuts.

“It’s a tenuous situation when you pit adult learners against K-12,” said Dawn Koepke, a lobbyist for the California Council for Adult Education.

The state has earmarks for items as small as notifying parents of kindergartners and first-graders that their children must obtain a dental examination before they start school. That requirement came from a 2006 bill by then-Assemblyman Bill Emmerson, an orthodontist. It, too, might disappear under Brown’s proposal.

In workshops, the CTA has asked that Brown preserve money for class-size reduction. The more Brown maintains funding protections for any group, however, the further he strays from his original goal.

Without describing specifics, Brown’s Department of Finance spokesman, H.D. Palmer, said the governor’s desire is “to move decision-making responsibility and accountability to the local level.”

40,000 expected to attend 3-day SnowGlobe Music Festival in South Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

While SnowGlobe should still be a bass-driven event, the music lineup for the three-day South Lake Tahoe festival has been altered to help appease the neighbors who last year made as much of a ruckus as the musicians.

Plus, when the first act takes the stage at 3pm Dec. 29, the direction of the sound won't be the same as in 2011. The stage and speakers will be set up in such a way to lessen the reverberation into neighborhoods.

The Dec. 29-31 SnowGlobe Music Festival in South Lake Tahoe is expected to bring thousands of people to town. Photo/LTN 2011

Still, it's a lot of techno acts that fill the main stage and two tent performance areas.

Headliners include deadmau5, Wiz Khalifa, Chromeo Live, Beats Antique, Big Gigantic, Laidback Luke and MiMOSA.

But it's not just music and a smattering of vendors who will fill the community ball field adjacent to Lake Tahoe Community College.

"We've added so much, from décor to heating to action sports elements," Chad Donnelly, SnowGlobe creator and general manager, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "There are so many new touches the fans will get to experience firsthand."

The local non-food vendors include Tahoe Made Attire, Enlightened Jewelry, Luna Lobo Creations and UKY The Spot. Nonprofits that will be there are the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe and Sierra Avalanche Center.

LTCC involvement

Lake Tahoe Community College will have two booths on the field to be able reach out to music fans about what the institution is all about. LTCC is hoping this won't be the only time some of the concertgoers are on campus.

"We are partnering with SnowGlobe this year to gain benefit from their marketing campaign worldwide. Basically, instead of renting the facilities we get marketing, booths, and some other perks for the use of our facilities," LTCC President Kindred Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We are very optimistic that this will be a benefit for our community by having a structured event for young people on New Year's, and by the marketing to the SnowGlobe target audience 18-34 age group, which is where we want to reach out in developing our destination market."

Organizers have to pay for snow removal costs, which with the forecast could be an issue this year. But snow on the ground could be a good thing because it will help absorb the sound. Plus, it means the field should not be trashed as much as it was a year ago.

City's concerns

South Lake Tahoe makes money off the event primarily through more people being in town – as in hotel and sales taxes.

Will SnowGlobe return in 2013? That remains to be seen. City officials say they won't start talking about that until they see how this year's event goes. Promoters have said they would like a multiyear contract and would entertain the possibility of moving the date. But dates would have to be coordinated

with the college to ensure school is not in session.

“The police plan is essentially unchanged from last year as it went very well,” Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We will have amnesty bins and we will have undercover presence.”

Both of those were in place in 2011, too. The amnesty bins are where people can deposit (no refund) any drugs without question. The theory is officers would rather dispose of unused drugs than have people using during the concert.

In addition to local law enforcement, event organizers also provide security staff.

They have also increased the list of items not allowed at the festival; specifically glass containers. A complete list of items is online.

“SnowGlobe event promoters have been very supportive of community concerns from last year’s event and are taking extensive measures regarding a sound management plan, increase in the number of shuttle stops, waste management, and local business integration,” Tracy Franklin, spokeswoman for the city, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Bus service

At the Dec. 14 Tahoe Transportation District meeting, the board agreed to enter an agreement with SnowGlobe organizers to increase bus service.

The music festival will pay for more buses to be on Route 53 Dec. 29-31.

TTD staff anticipates between 60 and 80 hours of additional service will be required to accommodate the festival demand.

Like last year, the festival will also provide chartered bus service for people to get to the Lake Tahoe Community College

campus.

According to TTD, the plan is to add one to three Route 53 buses before and during the festival times, with an additional seven buses operating for 90 minutes when the festival ends each night.

Donnelly expects more people to attend this year – with about 40,000 people throughout the three-day festival. This compares to the approximately 10,000 who attended each day in 2011.

He expects to sell out on Friday or Saturday.

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Things to know:

• Dec. 29-30 3-10pm

• Dec. 31 3pm to Jan. 1 12:30am

• Fireworks will be shot off New Year's Eve

• Jan. 3 field will be cleared

• South Lake Tahoe has a webpage dedicated to SnowGlobe

• Dedicated SnowGlobe phone line – (530) 542.7429.

Here is a video from 2011:

Alpine Meadows ski patroller caught in avalanche dies

By KCRA-TV

One day after he was caught in an avalanche at Alpine Meadows, a member of the resort's ski patrol team has died.

Bill Foster passed away Dec. 25 at Renown Medical Center in Reno, according to a statement from resort officials.

"Bill was one of Alpine Meadows' very best and most experienced professional ski patrollers," the statement reads. "Our deepest sympathies, thoughts and prayers continue to be with Bill's wife and all of their family and friends."

Foster was skiing in the Sherwood Bowl about 10:45am Monday when the ski patrollers set off the avalanche. They were performing routine snow safety at the time, in an area closed to the public, the resort said.

A senior member of the team threw an explosive, triggering the avalanche.

However, it broke much higher and wider on the slope than it had in the past, burying Foster.

He was found in one minute and uncovered within eight minutes, officials said.

Foster spent 28 years on the Alpine ski patrol.

Placerville man dies in Christmas morning house fire

By Laurel Rosenhall, Sacramento Bee

A Placerville man died early Christmas morning when his house went up in flames, according to authorities with the El Dorado County Fire District.

Firefighters arrived about 5am at the home in the 2800 block of Bryan Way in Placerville and found a fire well under way, said Battilion Chief Mike Pott. They were told one person remained trapped inside the house.

“They made entry into the house and the roof started caving in on them after being in there for a couple minutes and they had to pull out,” Pott said.

An hour later, a 67-year-old man was found dead inside the house, Pott said.

He said the home did not have a working smoke alarm.

“If they had had one there is potential that we would have had earlier notification and we would have had a better outcome from this fire,” Pott said.

Investigators believe the fire originated in the living room but have not determined the exact cause. Pott said the Christmas tree was not to blame.

“It’s unfortunate that it’s Christmas Day,” Pott said. “We are saddened anytime somebody passes away but right around the holidays is tough.”

Snowboarder who died at Donner identified

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

TRUCKEE – The snowboarder show died at Donner Ski Ranch on Monday has been identified as Steven Mark Anderson, 49, of Hirschdale near Truckee.

He was found dead in 2 to 3 feet of snow in a debris field at the base of the mountain resort hours after he was reported missing Monday morning.

Authorities said the snowboarder was apparently swept away as a moderate avalanche hit between lifts 1 and 6.

Search and rescue teams from the Placer County Sheriff's Office and ski patrols from Donner Ski Ranch and neighboring Sugar Bowl Resort combed the area and found the body at 1:30pm after being alerted by a search dog.

Nevada County sheriff's Sgt. Bob Jakobs said none of the several other people skiing or snowboarding in the area was affected by the avalanche. The area of the slide was closed down after the incident.

Most of California's water

footprint tied to food production

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

These days, there's a lot of discussion of carbon footprints. A new study by the Pacific Institute focuses on another footprint, that of water.

The report, released this month by the Oakland-based think tank, takes a look at the amount of water required to produce the goods Californians consume, whether it's the food we eat or the things we buy; whether they are produced in state or imported from other states or foreign countries.

California's total water footprint is about 64 million acre-feet, or 20 trillion gallons of water, per year, according to the study. More than half of that is used to produce goods that are imported and consumed here.

On a per capita basis, the average Californian's water footprint is 1,500 gallons a day – slightly less than the average American's but significantly more than the average in other developed countries.

Only about 4 percent of the total footprint is tied to direct household use, much of it for watering lawns and gardens. Industrial products, such as clothing and electronics, account for another 3 percent.

The biggest piece by far – 93 percent – is tied to agricultural production, both food that is imported from out of state or grown, produced and consumed in state. (California's agricultural exports are not counted.) Thanks to the large amounts of water required to grow animal feed, meat and dairy products have an especially big footprint.

Overall, about 70 percent of the state's water footprint is associated with goods produced elsewhere in the U.S. or in foreign countries.

"These findings suggest that California's economic and social well-being is intimately connected with water resources beyond our borders and is vulnerable to water-supply constraints in those regions," note authors Julian Fulton, Heather Cooley and Peter Gleick.

Nevada tightens rules governing ads involving attorneys

By Geoff Dornan, Northern Nevada Business Weekly

Broadcasters in Nevada, who found a lifeline with advertising by attorneys during the recession, aren't worried about new rules that tighten the standards on commercials from law firms.

"I don't think there is much angst," said Bob Fisher, president of the Nevada Association of Broadcasters, who said broadcasters believe the new rules ultimately will help the viewing public make good decisions.

The Nevada Supreme Court last month signed off on revisions to the rules governing lawyer advertising.

State Bar President Frank Flaherty said the revisions come after what he termed "an extended shake-down cruise" testing the rules originally put in place in 2007.

“There were major revisions to the rules in 2007,” he said. “The rules at that time were attempting to regulate taste. That becomes subjective and you can have First Amendment issues.”

The rules were originally written because of numerous complaints by the public as well as other lawyers.

The 2007 rules, he said, “got rid of the taste requirements.”

“That allowed us to focus on false and deceptive ads and not get bogged down in 1st Amendment battles with lawyers with big checkbooks,” he said. “Now it’s whether it’s false, deceptive or misleading.”

One place where the rules were tightened, he said, is the use of actors. Now actors have to be clearly identified as such. In the past, disclosure was only required when it could be confusing to the public.

The ad must also give the name of the lawyer or partners who will actually provide the services touted by the ad.

He said a number of ads say such things as the client only has to pay the lawyer if they win.

“Sometimes when you lose, you have to pay the other guy’s costs,” he said. The new rules require that be disclosed.

He said lawyers can continue to cite their record and results.

“But you can only cite the results if you were lead counsel in the matter or key in the result,” he said.

And from now on, the dollar amount must be the amount actually received by the client. If a gross amount received is stated, attorney’s fees, litigation expenses and other amounts withheld from what the client received must be stated as well.

Ads listing a specific fee or range of fees must list how long

those fees are in effect and any other limiting conditions on the fees.

On disclaimers, he said if the ad is run in Spanish or any other language, any disclaimers must also be in that language.

“And for print ads, disclaimers must be big enough to see,” Flaherty said pointing out that some current disclaimers are in print so small it’s nearly impossible to read.

Likewise, the rules say any disclaimers in a TV ad must not only be readable but remain on screen long enough to be read.

For the past five years, all lawyer advertising has been required to be submitted to review committees. Because of First Amendment issues – prior restraint – Flaherty said the bar can’t require they be submitted before publication. Instead, they must be submitted within 15 days of publication or broadcast. If a review committee of volunteers finds any ad deceptive or misleading, it must be taken down or stopped.

“But lawyers have to submit all their ads,” he said.

Fisher said the state’s broadcasters followed the proposed changes in advertising rules carefully because commercials placed by law firms were a critically important source of revenue until election ads this year soaked up large amounts of available air time.

“Attorney advertising is good, especially if it delivers a positive message,” Fisher said.

Avalanche at Squaw injuries 2 on KT-22

By Kathy Escobar, News-10

An avalanche was triggered Sunday morning at Squaw Valley.

Amelia Richmond a spokesperson for Squaw Valley said an inbounds, post-control avalanche was triggered by three snowboarders on a portion of the KT-22 peak at 9:50am.

Several witnesses, including a ski patroller riding the lift line reported the avalanche.

Richmond said ski patrollers were on the scene of the avalanche within a minute, responding to two skiers, neither of whom were burried in snow.

One skier, a 39-year-old woman, was transported and released from a medical clinic. A second skier, a 16-year-old boy, was treated for a shoulder injury and transported to Tahoe Forest Hospital in Truckee for further observation, Richmond said.

Although witnesses reported not seeing anyone else caught in the slide, the resort initiated a full search to confirm no other people were involved.

The search was concluded at 11:50am after all guests and staff who had ridden the KT-22 ski lift were accounted for.

Richmond said the KT-22 chairlift closed after the incident and remained closed Dec. 23.