

Not all Tahoe area schools open Monday

All schools in the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District are closed today.

Whittell High and Zephyr Cove Elementary schools will be starting an hour later than usual Oct. 22.

About a half inch of snow fell overnight on the South Shore.

The National Weather Service in Reno is calling for the brunt of the storm to arrive Monday morning, with Tuesday morning being stormy as well.

Chains or snow tires are required over most of the Sierra mountain passes.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Resort executives: Market Lake Tahoe as one region

By Katherine E. Hill

KINGS BEACH – Working together to promote Tahoe as a region was the message at the annual North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce member lunch.

“We need to have one message for the entire region,” said Julie Maurer, vice president of marketing for Squaw Valley and

Alpine Meadows ski resorts.

Maurer was one of the speakers at last week's lunch attended by business owners in the North Tahoe region about efforts to market the area to regional, national and international winter tourists.



Squaw Valley is putting \$24 million into the resort for this season. Photo/Provided

Maurer called on everyone to work together to market Tahoe's big mountain snow to tourists.

"We need to do this as an entire community," she said.

The recent snow atop Heavenly Ski Resort, (before this latest storm) which was heavily publicized, was a boon to the entire Tahoe region, she said.

"It really helped, in terms of our phones ringing to book lodging," Maurer shared.

Maurer outlined a three-point plan to recover from the 2011-12 season and to build on Tahoe's reputation for big mountain snow – remind visitors of the region's snow, which averages more than 400 inches annually; diversify the market to

international customers; and offer past guests incentives for booking lodging and tickets early. She also said the capital investments in local resorts, despite the recession, is another marketing strategy.

“In North Tahoe, we have one of the most power messages,” Maurer said. “There is more capital being spent despite a poor winter.”

Maurer cited the \$70 million, five-year Renaissance at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows that started during the winter of 2011-12, which saw dismal snowfall throughout the region. Despite the winter, KSL, which operates Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, invested \$14 million in improvements at Squaw Valley on and off the mountain, and is spending another \$24 million this year. Improvements for the 2012-13 season, which begins Nov. 21, include two new lifts at High Camp, expanded snowmaking, new learn-to-ski areas, remodeling the Olympic Plaza Bar, and improved terrain parks at Squaw Valley.

Maurer also said KSL would continue to offer access to Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows on a single ticket or pass for the upcoming season with a free shuttle operating between the resorts.

That message in capital investment and regional marketing has echoed by Davy Ratchford, director of marketing for Northstar, which is operated by Vail Resorts.

Vail invested \$30 million in improvements at Northstar during summer 2012, with Ratchford noting that about \$1 billion has been invested at Northstar in the last 10 years from the development of the village at the base of the resort to the mid-mountain Ritz-Carlton to expanded terrain and new lifts.

During the 2011-12 season, Northstar unveiled the Zephyr Lodge at mid-mountain, expanded terrain at Sawtooth Ridge (with cat tours coming this season), to the new Promised Land Express. For 2012-13 season, which starts Nov. 16, Ratchford says the

resort will open a new concept restaurant in the village along with a location of the popular Truckee eatery Taco's Jalisco. As well, there will be a Ripperoo's Riglet Park for ages 3 and older and the resort is expanding its popular EpicMix Photo program with an EpicMix Racing component at all Vail Resorts. Guests may post their best times on runs and compare it to times set by Lindsey Vonn. Those with the best times at the end of the season will have the chance to race Vonn.

The resort also will celebrate its 40th anniversary with a Birthday Bash on Dec. 22 with Shawn White at Northstar for the festivities.

North Shore news:

- The TNT-TMA will unveil a pilot ski shuttle program later this season offering a one-stop shuttle access to every ski resort in the North Tahoe-Truckee region.
 - Iron Man will debut its highest altitude race in North Tahoe in 2013 as part of a five-year commitment to hold the race in the region.
 - A bid to host the Amgen Tour in 2013 is being considered, with a decision expected in November.
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North Shore transit center set to open

The Placer County's Transit Center in Tahoe City will open for business and be fully operational on Oct. 29.

The center is a modern "park and ride" facility located for Tahoe Area Regional Transit passengers at 165 West Lake Blvd. in Tahoe City just off Highway 89 south of the Y.

With the opening of the center, some of the schedules and routing for TART buses will change. Riders are encouraged to check bus schedules by going online.

The new center is a state-of-the-art facility. It features six bus bays, a 1,100-square-foot terminal with an indoor, heated waiting area with restrooms and a covered outdoor waiting area with bench seating to provide comfort for passengers as they transfer to or await arriving buses. On-site parking is available.

In all, 130 parking spaces plus several enclosed bike lockers with an electronic pay-per-use system and more traditional bike racks have been installed. The center covers about 2.5 acres adjacent to hiking and bike paths for easier mobility around the North and West shores of Lake Tahoe.

A high-tech display system, known as Nextbus, has been implemented on the TART bus system and is available now to the public. A display system will be installed inside the building to inform passengers on the arrival time of their buses. The system provides online real-time locations of on-route buses and predicted arrival times of TART buses at all stops on all routes. The information can be accessed via text messaging or smartphone web access.

In a warming Arctic, U.S. faces new security and safety concerns

By Kim Murphy, Los Angeles Times

BARROW, Alaska — In past years, these remote gray waters of the Alaskan Arctic saw little more than the occasional cargo barge and Eskimo whaling boat. No more.

This summer, when the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Bertholf was monitoring shipping traffic along the desolate tundra coast, its radar displays were often brightly lighted with mysterious targets.

There were oil drilling rigs, research vessels, fuel barges, small cruise ships. A few were sailboats that had ventured through the Northwest Passage above Canada. On a single day in August, 95 ships were detected between Prudhoe Bay and Wainwright off America's least defended coastline, and for some of them, Coast Guard officials had no idea what the vessels were carrying or who was on them.

"There's probably 1,500 people out there," Rear Adm. Thomas P. Ostebo, commander of the Coast Guard's 17th District in Alaska, said at a recent conference of Arctic policymakers near Anchorage. "It's kind of spinning a little bit out of control."

The rapid melting of the polar ice cap is turning the once ice-clogged waters off northern Alaska into a navigable ocean, and the rush to grab the region's abundant oil and mineral resources by way of new shipping lanes is posing safety and

security concerns for Coast Guard patrols.

What happens if a cruise ship gets stranded in stray ice? Or if a sailing vessel capsizes off an uninhabited coast?

"Yesterday, we saw three sailing vessels in 24 hours," said the Bertholf's commander, Capt. Thomas E. Crabbs.

The Coast Guard this summer ran Arctic Shield, the most extensive patrol operation it has ever mounted in the Arctic. It set up a temporary operating base and remote communications station at Barrow.

A fleet of cutters, buoy tenders, helicopters and boarding vessels deployed across the Beaufort, Chukchi and Bering seas to oversee new offshore oil drilling operations offers search-and-rescue if needed and provides notice to burgeoning ship traffic that the U.S. is monitoring its northernmost border.

The rush for riches as Russia, Norway and Canada vie with the U.S. for the Arctic's mineral resources, and the possibility that drug dealers, arms merchants and terrorists could begin to explore transport routes near America's largest oil fields have prompted the U.S. military to begin planning for a future in the Arctic much more substantial than it had envisioned.

The U.S. Naval War College last year conducted war games simulating the sinking of a ship carrying weapons of mass destruction from North Africa to Asia across the top of Canada and Alaska.

The Air Force has been practicing how to make food and survival gear drops to survivors of a large plane crash in the unbelievably remote Brooks Range, north of Fairbanks.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command, known as NORAD, already has gone beyond drills: F-15 fighters have been launched on interceptions at least 50 times during the last five years in response to Russian long-range bombers – not

previously seen here since the Cold War – which have been provocatively skirting the edges of U.S. airspace.

Through it all, U.S. security forces are battling historically sketchy radio communications, vicious storms, shifting ice floes and huge distances from base: Coast Guard cutters must sail 1,200 miles south just to take on food and refuel.

“All of the uniqueness of operating up in the Arctic represents huge challenges for us,” said Royal Canadian Air Force Col. Dan Constable, deputy commander of NORAD’s Alaska region.

The Naval War College games in September 2011 were an early test, and not an encouraging one. Many of the scenarios rehearsed, former Navy Cmdr. Christopher Gray said, ran into problems with poor communications and trouble maintaining supplies of food, fuel and supplies.

“Does the Navy have the ability to go up and operate a number of ships, a number of aircraft, for a sustained period of time in this environment, where it’s cold, it’s got bad weather, it’s got a lot of ice, and it’s really far away from everything that supports you? What we found is that the answer is, not really,” Gray said.

The Bertholf is especially suited to summertime operations in the Far North. Though not capable of operating in ice, it is equipped with high-efficiency engines and stability systems that allow the vessel and its crew of 146 to remain in the Arctic for a month at a time – heretofore unheard of in the U.S. fleet.

“Because we’re present here and because we have the endurance to remain here throughout the season, we’re going to be able to understand who is in the maritime domain,” Crabbs said as a small vessel carrying boarding troops was launched off the Bertholf’s stern for a closer look at nearby shipping traffic.

U.S. officials say they are still several decades away from needing a full-scale military presence in the region, and with luck, there will be no need to resort to arms: The real source of conflict is the battle everyone faces – with the elements.

“If somebody were to invade the Canadian High North,” Canadian Forces chief of staff Gen. Walter Natynczyk said at the Arctic Imperative Summit, “my first problem would be to rescue them.”

The move to secure the Arctic goes well beyond domestic security. With easier access to the more than 90 billion barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of natural gas in the Arctic, nations are rushing to gain international recognition of territorial claims, mineral contracts and shipping routes.

On Aug. 2, the Chinese icebreaker Snow Dragon completed an unprecedented voyage across the top of the world through the Northwest Passage.

Icelandic President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson was paid a visit by a delegation of senior Chinese officials who wanted to discuss Beijing’s bid for permanent observer status in the Arctic Council, the suddenly powerful organization of eight nations with territory in the Arctic Circle.

“And China is not the only Asian country interested in the Arctic,” Grimsson said at the Arctic summit. Singapore and South Korea, he said, also want in.

The U.S. has been slow to stake out its own territory. While Russia has submitted a claim for thousands of miles of seabed, and Canada is asserting title to mineral-rich areas along the U.S. border, the United States is the only Arctic nation that has not ratified the 1982 treaty known as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – the international mechanism for brokering such claims.

The U.S. has also fallen behind on what the Coast Guard needs

to patrol the new mineral development zones. The only working icebreaker is the cutter Healy, with a second being refurbished that is due to return soon. Russia, by contrast, has 25 icebreakers, according to the U.S. Congressional Research Service. Finland and Sweden have seven each, Canada six.

“I think it’s a real-time imperative for our nation to get its arms around these things,” Rear Adm. Ostebo said. “It’s critically important to understand that we do not control it. The rest of the world has a boat here, and we are late to the table.”

Carson City sheriff’s deputy hurt in motorcycle accident

By Fox-Reno

CARSON CITY – A Carson City deputy was injured in an accident Thursday on Highway 50.

On Oct. 18 at about 4pm, troopers from the Nevada Highway Patrol were dispatched to Lake Tahoe Club Drive and Old Clear Creek Road just south of Highway 50 for a single vehicle motorcycle accident involving a Carson City deputy.

The preliminary investigation indicates that a 2006 black and white, Harley Davidson motorcycle ridden by Deputy McDonald (first name not provided) was traveling southbound on Lake Tahoe Club Drive. For an unknown reason the motorcycle failed to negotiate the curve in the roadway and crossed the double yellow line, struck the northeast curb deflected off the curb, and continued traveled southbound in the northbound travel

lane. The motorcycle traveled approximately 104 feet before coming to rest on its left side in the northbound travel lane. The deputy was ejected from the motorcycle and sustained minor injuries.

McDonald was transported to Renown Regional Medical Center via Care Flight where he was treated for his injuries. Speed is believed to be a factor in this accident.

The Carson City Sheriff's Office was conducting a training exercise at Lake Tahoe Club Drive and Old Clear Creek Road.

Lake Tahoe Airport temporarily closed

A single-engine plane landed this evening at Lake Tahoe Airport without its landing gear down.

For now the Piper Comanche is sitting in the middle of the runway and the airport is closed. A truck or some other means will be used to push the plane out of the way.

South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News* the airport should reopen sometime Saturday evening.

She also relayed through Airport Manager Sherry Miller that landing gear issues are "not uncommon".

No one was injured in the Oct. 20 incident.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

KGID board to vote on whether to alter water rates

By Kathryn Reed

The nearly 3,000 water customers of Kingsbury General Improvement District are likely to have their water rates increased.



The board members, some of who are up for re-election Nov. 6, are expected to vote Oct. 23 on the rate adjustment.

As of summer 2011, all 2,850 customers have meters. What KGID now wants to implement is charging customers based on the amount of usage – so, to actually use the meters.

KGID boundaries cover the entire Kingsbury Grade area and then to Lake Village.

According to KGID General Manager Cameron McKay, \$2.9 million is needed in revenues to cover the agency's costs. Of that, \$2.1 million is the base rate. The rest is variable costs.

"We are trying to structure it so everyone pays a base rate to pay our fixed costs. After the base rate, a commodity fee per 1,000 gallons will be developed," McKay told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We are the last utility ... every other pays what they use. The water industry is lagging well behind in that."

But the new price structure is not sitting well with all KGID customers.

About 60 people filled a room earlier this month in Stateline

to hear with officials had to say as well as ask questions and voice their opinions.

Many of the customers are in apartments, so their landlord will decide the fee.

Jack Riley owns Lake Vista Apartments, which is 94 units in three complexes.

“We are hoping the board will craft a rate that is workable and affordable for the tenants who live in our complexes,” Riley said.

He said several are “affordable housing tenants” and he’s concerned about their ability to sustain a rent increase to accommodate him having to pay a higher water bill.

It was initially proposed that people in studios would have to pay the same base rate as single-family residences.

McKay said staff would present the board with several scenarios at the next meeting. He added that it’s possible the rate for an apartment dweller could double.

The goal, according to McKay, is to make the rates equitable because for years commercial properties have been subsidizing residential customers. The highest water users are residential customers because of landscaping.

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Note: The KGID board meeting is Oct. 23 at 6pm at the Tahoe Transportation Center, 169 Highway 50, Stateline. This is the same building as Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority.

Holiday hires could be good news for N. Nevada

By Northern Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – Nevada retailers are expected to add more than 4,000 seasonal positions through December, the Retail Association of Nevada said Thursday.

The estimate is based on an assumption that hiring in 2012 will be comparable to last year, when the state added 4,100 retail positions between September and December for a 3.2 percent increase in total employment in the sector.

During the past five years, the Nevada retail sector grew by an average of 3.9 percent during the same time frame. Should conditions prevail that are more in line with the longer-run historical average, the state will see a gain in retail positions closer to 5,000. Based on company announcements and news accounts thus far, it is likely that 2012 hiring levels will fall somewhere between the two, RAN said in a news release.

Competition for available positions is expected to be as tough as it was during the last several holiday seasons, the association reported. Currently, there are 164,100 unemployed Nevadans, down only slightly from levels reported around this time in 2011. Seasonal hiring will provide modest and short-term relief.

Thus far, several national retailers with locations in Nevada have publicly announced major seasonal hiring plans. Actual hiring activity may vary from estimates depending on individual store needs:

- Amazon – 1,250 estimated seasonal hires at the fulfillment center in Fernley;
- Macy's/Bloomingdales – 900 estimated seasonal hires statewide;
- Target – 900 estimated seasonal hires statewide;
- Wal-Mart – 500 estimated seasonal hires statewide;
- Kohl's Department Stores – 490 estimated seasonal hires statewide;
- Toys 'R' Us – 250 estimated seasonal hires at the McCarran Distribution Center for store distribution, e-commerce in Reno and seasonal store positions statewide;
- Best Buy – 150 estimated seasonal hires statewide.

Nationally, holiday hiring is expected to reach 700,000 in 2012, an increase of 6 percent compared to the 660,000 reported in 2011.

Federal loan enables Kirkwood to have reliable power source

A \$50 million guaranteed loan from the federal government to Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District will help ensure the mountain community and ski resort have more reliable power.



KMPUD in 2011 acquired Mountain Utilities, which had supplied the power to this resort area. KMPUD is separate from the ski resort, but supplies the electricity and water.

“Funds will be used to build or improve 40 miles of distribution and transmission line and make other system improvements. The loan guarantee includes \$200,000 in smart grid projects,” U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in a statement.

Kirkwood residents and businesses have long had trouble with keeping the lights on and paying reasonable rates because the enclave has been off the grid. Diesel generators power the community now.

What the loan will do is allow KMPUD to build and operate a 34.5-kilovolt power line that ties into PG&E lines.

Neither Michael Sharp, general manager of KMPUD, nor Casey Blann, general manager of the ski resort, returned calls.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Victim in South Tahoe fight dies; no arrests ever made

By Kathryn Reed

The man involved in a South Lake Tahoe bar fight in May has died and still there has never been a single arrest stemming from the now fatal incident.

"Zippy passed away last night. His gramma Rose, my wife Debbie and myself were with him," Wayne Penaranda told *Lake Tahoe News*. He died Oct. 17, about four hours after the trach was removed.

Derek Penaranda, better known to his family and friends as Zippy, was in town to celebrate his 30th birthday.



Derek
"Zippy"
Penaranda
and Katie
Musselwhite
had hoped
to one day
marry.
Photo/Provided

That celebration took a tragic turn when a phone call came in the early hours of May 20 telling Debbie and Wayne Penaranda to get to Barton Memorial Hospital.

Penaranda didn't leave Mo's Place on his own. From Barton he went to Renown Medical Center in Reno. He then was moved to two specialty rehabilitation facilities in the Bay Area. But his insurance stopped covering him because he was not making progress, according to his dad.

Besides all the normal strife that comes with a loved one in such a serious medical state, Penaranda said it was hard on the family, who lives in Ripon in the Central family, to be more than 100 miles from Zippy. Eventually the younger

Penaranda was at Rossmoor Care Facility in Walnut Creek – still 100 miles away.

On Aug. 20 he was “neurologically classified as permanently vegetative state,” Pernaranda said of his son.

Pernaranda said he spoke with El Dorado County Assistant District Attorney Joe Alexander on Sept. 28 “to cover some issues, including the possibility of this case turning into a homicide.”

South Lake Tahoe police when questioned Thursday morning about why no arrests have been made, issued a press that says, “The circumstances surrounding Penaranda’s death are still under investigation by the South Lake Tahoe Police Department. There is no information being released at this time concerning the possibility of criminal charges being filed, what those charges would be, or when they would be filed.”