Hanging tree hike explores ‘Nevada justice’

How “Nevada justice” was carried out in Genoa on the early morning of Nov. 25, 1897, at the notorious hanging tree will be told on Nov. 22.

This is an opportunity to learn about “the blackest episode in the history of Nevada.”

The hike will start in front of the museum at Mormon Station State Historic Park in Genoa at 2:30pm and go to the hanging tree and back, stopping by historic buildings on the way. The walk is about a mile roundtrip, with the majority of the hike taking place on the side of Genoa Lane.

Bring water, warm clothes and appropriate shoes.

The event is free, but reservations are necessary by calling 775.782.2590.

Drive a boat? You will need a license

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

A new era is at hand for boating in California. Most call it the “Boater Driver’s License.” Its official name is the California Vessel Operator Card (CVOC).

The Division of Boating and Waterways sent out its annual two-year registration certificates this month to the state’s

820,000 registered boat owners. It included a flyer on how the CVOC will be implemented.

Anybody who takes the wheel of a powerboat will be required to pass a safety course and written test, somewhat similar to how a special license certification is required to drive a motorcycle or a commercial truck.

Those with non-motorized boats, such as kayaks, canoes, rafts or drift boats, are not required to go through the program. But if you're on a friend's boat and you're asked to take the wheel for a moment, you then would need the boater's card.

Read the whole story

Tahoe skiers a familiar sight in Warren Miller movie

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Anyone who saw Amie Engerbretson, Lexi Dupont and McKenna Peterson bombing across Alaska in an RV loaded with ski gear could be forgiven for thinking the three women were on a dream vacation.



Warren Miller has been

making ski movies for decades. Photo/LTN file

No doubt heading to Valdez to ski the snowiest range in Alaska is tons of fun.

But this crew of professional skiers on their way to the Thompson Pass area also had serious business to which they were attending.

They were heading out to shoot a segment for “Chasing Shadows,” the 66th installment of an annual ski and snowboard film from Warren Miller Entertainment.

Read the whole story

Tears, tequila and an attempt at mountaineering history

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

When Adrian Ballinger of Squaw Valley and crew reached high camp at Makalu the weather was more like a pleasant, bluebird day in the Sierra Nevada than what he expected to find on the fifth-highest peak on the planet.

Ballinger, 39, was leader of a crew of five ski mountaineers from the Lake Tahoe area, Colorado and Wyoming who were seeking to make the first-ever ski descent off the Himalayan peak.

Also at camp were Emily Harrington, 29, of Squaw Valley, a

professional climber since her teenage years who made her name in the sport as the first female on numerous difficult routes; Hilaree O'Neill, 42, of Telluride, Colo., the first female climber to climb two 8,000 meter, or 26,000-foot, peaks within 24 hours; Jim Morrison, 40, of Truckee, an accomplished adventurer and professional skier who was making his first attempt on an 8,000-meter peak, and four Sherpa guides, a cook and his assistant. Kit DesLauriers, a professional ski mountaineer from Wyoming and the first person to have skied from the highest peak on each continent, the so-called "Seven Summits," started with the crew but bowed out at base camp due to severe altitude sickness.

On Makalu the team was enjoying conditions that are nearly unheard late in the fall climbing season at that altitude. The ideal weather and good health of the climbers made for an almost perfect setup to their pending summit attempt.

"It was the best day I had ever seen for climbing a mountain," said Ballinger, who was making his second attempt to ski from the Makalu peak. In 2012 Ballinger and a client abandoned an attempt due to bad weather. "With those factors in mind certainly I felt a strong desire this had to be the year. We had to go for it."

Read the whole story

Many California lakes are shockingly low



El Dorado Beach in South Lake Tahoe on Nov. 9. Photo/LTN

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

In 35 years, nobody’s seen numbers like these.

In a personal survey last week of 125 recreation lakes, 33 are under 25 percent full, and that includes 19 that are less than 10 percent full and four that are empty.

The big picture is this: On the eve of what’s forecast to be an El Niño-driven winter, it appears most of California has gone to the bank of chances and is going all-in on the hopes of a big winter of rain and snow to bail it out.

The Tahoe region provides a bleak scene, though a fast start to winter also provides hope.

Read the whole story

Snowboard manufacturer carving out a future

By Paul Nelson, KTVN-TV

Jay Quintin has been hitting the slopes for most of his life. As a kid, he became a pro snowboarder, known as “Smokin Jay.” Six years ago, Quintin got into the business of manufacturing snowboards, naming his business “Smokin Snowboards”.

What started in his Lake Tahoe basement has grown into an international business, based in Sparks. Each snowboard takes about 3.5 hours to build, made from a handful of materials like wood, fiberglass, plastic and epoxy.

“It’s all made here at our factory from start to finish,” Quintin said. “We do everything. We print the graphics here, we make the wood cores, we do the finishing and we do all the marketing here as well.”

Read the whole story

Heavenly, Northstar conditions wow skiers



Snowmaking along with Mother Nature allowed Northstar to open earlier than normal. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – Smiles and praise for the conditions dominated the conversations about opening day at Northstar and Heavenly on Saturday.

Jim Lamore, director of mountain operations at Northstar, was giddy and proud when talking about the coverage – bark-to-bark – meaning the whole run has snow, it's not just a strip of white.

"Even if we get a warm spell, we are in great shape," Lamore told *Lake Tahoe News.*

The depth on Nov. 15 ranged from 18 inches to 4 feet. That's plenty for the groomers to move around to make sure no obstacles are showing.

Northstar skiers were treated to an extra early opening on Saturday when Beth Howard, general manager of the resort, said get the gondola running. This was 20 minutes before what was

supposed to be the official 8:30am opening. The 100 or so people in line didn't mind.



Jim Lamore, mountain operations director at Northstar, is ecstatic with how much terrain is open.

Howard had tested the slopes the day before so she knew what the guests were about to experience.

"I'm pleasantly surprised," Matt Hunstock of Santa Rosa said of the conditions. Even though he didn't ski a single day last season, he likes coming back to Northstar – noting the guest services are better here than other places.

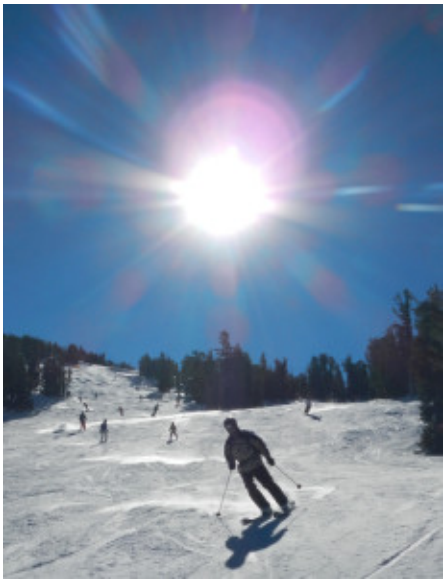
Ian Balmer of Australia was lucky the resort opened a week earlier than originally planned because he was flying home that night. For mid-November he was impressed with the amount of snow.

The Truckee resort is open top-to-bottom with seven lifts and 14 features in the Pinball terrain park.

"We have the biggest footprint in Lake Tahoe by far," Lamore boasted.

Changing where the snow guns are working has made a difference.

Heavenly on Saturday had the gondola, Tamarack Express, Dipper Express, Comet and Big Easy running. This is quite a contrast to a year ago when the resort opened a week later with just the terrain off Tamarack skiable with manmade snow.



Blue skies and 50-degree weather for opening day will be replaced with snowy 30-degree temps on Day 2.

Jerry Klosterboer has been buying season passes at Heavenly since the 1978-79 season. This is the first time he remembers skiing two weeks before Thanksgiving. Passes then were $425 and day passes were $23, so it took a lot more ski days to have the pass paid for compared to today. He paid $459 for his pass this year; a single-day ticket for today is $94.

Yohei Takami of Concord was excited to be skiing on some natural snow so early.

“The snow is good. This is typical Heavenly snow. I’m pretty happy with the conditions,” Adam Oliff of San Jose said.

While the coverage is good at both resorts, a clear sign it is

early season conditions is the lack of tree skiing. Northstar kept a few areas ungroomed so riders could get a taste of powder next to the groomers.

With another storm expected to drop a foot of white stuff today at the higher elevations, it is only going help all of the Tahoe resorts.

The fight over the world's biggest ski resort

By Megan Michelson, Outside

In 1991, a development company set out to build a high-elevation, year-round ski resort on a remote glacier in British Columbia's Purcell Mountains. The company's plans promised over 5,600 vertical feet and 20-plus lifts accessing four mega glaciers at what they called Jumbo Glacier Resort.

Many have been fighting the development for decades. Local residents want to see their backyard kept wild, the Ktunaxa First Nation believes the land is sacred and shouldn't be built upon, and scientists and environmentalists say the region is a major wildlife corridor and a development could jeopardize habitat for grizzly bears and other animals. Although the opposition had a major triumph this summer when the local government denied the project's environmental assessment certificate, the developers say the resort is still a go, albeit with an altered construction plan that won't require an environmental assessment. They hope to resume construction within the next couple of years.

A Patagonia-funded film called "Jumbo Wild", premiered in

October, aiming to give voice to people on both sides of the debate.

Read the whole story

Fire operations to continue in Tahoe basin

North Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Douglas fire protection districts, the Nevada Division of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service will continue widespread prescribed fire operations around the Lake Tahoe Basin over the next several weeks as conditions allow.

Operations may take place in Ward Canyon near Sunnyside, off Fairway Drive near Tahoe City, Carnelian Woods Avenue in Carnelian Bay, Anaho Road in Crystal Bay, Crosby Court, Jennifer Street and Tyner Way in Incline Village, Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park near Spooner Lake, Edgewood Drive on Kingsbury Grade, near Van Sickle Bi-State Park, Ski Run Boulevard near Pioneer Trail and off South Upper Truckee Road.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size and environmental conditions.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, agencies post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2816.

Snow nearly a sure bet on Sunday in Tahoe

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a winter weather advisory for the Lake Tahoe Basin from 4am-10pm Sunday.

A cold front is expected to dump 6 to 12 inches of snow above 7,000 feet, with up to 14 inches along the Sierra Crest. Three to 8 inches is expected at lake level.

The temps will continue to be cool, with Sunday’s high forecasted to be 37 degrees and the low 11 degrees.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report