

‘Jarhead’ coyote released into wild in EDC

By Benjy Egel, Sacramento Bee

Gold Country Wildlife Rescue released a healthy, antsy female coyote into El Dorado County on Sunday evening, one month after rescuing it from the brink of fatal dehydration.

The coyote had originally been spotted with a thick plastic jar firmly secured atop of its head, which inhibited its ability to eat and drink over nearly two weeks. When a search party finally corralled it Feb. 5 near Cool, the coyote had dwindled down to 15 pounds, sprayed by a skunk and suffered tick and flea infestations as well as a related blood disease.

Read the whole story

Tahoe resorts adjusting to wild swings in snowfall

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

Despite last week’s heavy snowfall, Tahoe ski resorts know they can’t predict how strong each winter will be.

They suffered through drought years earlier this decade. Out of nowhere last year, Tahoe was deluged with so much precipitation that avalanches were a regular concern.

This season has been subpar, save for the occasional big storm system, including one last week that forced Squaw Valley to close due to an afternoon avalanche that seriously injured one

person.

Read the whole story

LTBMU wants input on OHV grant

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is seeking public comments for the annual California Department of Parks and Recreation, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division grant application.

The OHMVR application requests funding for trail maintenance, and operation of facilities for off-highway vehicle access in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The comment period begins March 6 and ends April 2.

When finalized, the grants will be available for public review and comment on the **state's website**.

Questions, comments or letters may be directed to Jacob Quinn, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150.

For more information on the application, grant process or how to comment, contact Quinn at 530.543.2609 or jmquinn@fs.fed.us.

Vail Resorts a contender in any U.S. 2030 Olympic bid

By Jay Hamburger, Park Record

Vail Resorts could medal in any U.S. bid for a Winter Olympics.

The Colorado-based ski behemoth has properties in three of the places that are seen as contenders to become the bid city once the United States Olympic Committee mounts an effort to secure another Winter Olympics, perhaps as early as the event in 2030.

Reno-Lake Tahoe, Salt Lake City and Denver are three of the places that are considering a bid. Vail Resorts has properties in each of the three locations.

A Vail Resorts representative said the firm would be “proud to be a part of hosting a Winter Olympic Games in any one of the three regions of Colorado, Utah or Tahoe.” Kelly Ladyga, the vice president of corporate communications, said Vail Resorts will work with Olympic efforts in any of the areas.

[Read the whole story](#)

Truckee's Engel posts personal best slalom finish

By U.S. Ski Team

Mark Engel (Truckee) scored a career-best World Cup slalom

result, finishing 19th in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, on Sunday.

Austria's Marcel Hirscher once again crushed the field, winning by 1.22 seconds over Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen in second and Switzerland's Ramon Zenhaeusern in third.

With the victory, Hirscher won the overall World Cup slalom title, and leads Kristoffersen by 289 points in the overall standings.

Up next, the men head to Kvitfjell, Norway, for downhill and super-G races March 10-11.

Ski industry gurus share decades of experience

By Kathryn Reed

For those who are schussing down the slopes, it's all about having fun. And while it can be fun for those responsible for the operation of the ski resort, the bottom line is it's a business – and with that reality comes some not so fun aspects of the job.

In a wide-ranging conversation last week, two ski industry titans shared what their experience during past 40 or so years has been like.

Locally, Tim Cohee is known for having run Kirkwood Mountain Resort for years. He is director of the ski business and management program at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village. He also owns China Peak Ski Resort near Fresno.

John Rice is at the helm of Sierra-at-Tahoe.

Both are well regarded in the industry and are fixtures in the Tahoe community.

Their professional lives have been intertwined for decades, starting when they both worked for a Southern California ski resort. While they were competitors in Tahoe, the respect they have for one another was evident during the Feb. 28 talk.

Outdoor photographer Corey Rich, whose business is in the Ski Run area, was the moderator for the evening. The event at Blue Angel Café was part of the Ski Run Presents series, which is designed to bring the community together over relevant topics.

Cohee and Rice acknowledged the industry isn't the same as when they started out. It's more serious. Employees aren't as apt to want to work long hours.



Corey Rich, left, moderates a talk Feb. 28 between ski industry mavericks Tim Cohee and John Rice. Photo/LTN

The terrain park as we know it might not have ever been born under today's workplace constraints.

Rice is credited with taking snowcats for “joy rides” when he worked at Sierra Summit, which is now known as China Peak. He was bending frames and breaking tillers to build jumps on the side of the mountain.

He moved to Bear Mountain and continued to build features through trial and error. It was in 1993 that he moved to Tahoe.

“Today it’s way more complicated. There are so many regulatory things,” Rice said. “The competition is more fierce and cutthroat.”

Now 70 percent of the ski resorts in the United States are owned by two companies – Vail Resorts and Alterra. Both have a presence in the Tahoe area – Heavenly, Kirkwood, Northstar (Vail), Squaw and Alpine (Alterra).

Rice is one of those industry leaders who believes in giving athletes what they need.

“They need a playground to do their thing. It takes a lot of resources. The mountain has to commit to that,” Rice said. Sierra-at-Tahoe has a long history of Olympians, with two (Jamie Anderson and Maddie Bowman) competing in South Korea last month and two others (Hannah Teter and Kyle Smaine) each missing the team by one spot.

Cohee and Rice know it’s an expensive sport, admitting it can cost a family of four \$1,000 a day.

“At the end of the day, they will only do it if the value is there,” Cohee said.

Demographics are changing. Rice said five years ago 78 percent of Sierra’s guests were Caucasian, today that percentage is 53 percent.

“There is an opportunity with the ethnic market to bring in new skiers,” Rice said.

It's millennials who have been a disappointment. They aren't skiing. That's why resorts are now focused on the younger generation.

Cohee believes skiing is affordable for those who do it regularly – they buy passes and seldom eat at the resort.

Rice admits Tahoe needs to raise its game when it comes to service as well as food and beverage.

Resorts make about 40 percent of their revenue from day tickets, 20 percent from season passes, 13 percent food and beverage, 13 percent ski school, 13 percent retail, and 1 percent miscellaneous.

And while millions of dollars may be collected each season, it's not a highly profitable business because of the expense and need to reinvest in the product. China Peak recently installed a new lift. It has sat idle most of this winter because of the lack of snow. The resort reopened this weekend.

Climate change is something very real to these men. They see the swing in snow years, which isn't what it was say, 20 years ago.

They recognize it's expensive for young people to get started in the industry, especially with housing an issue in most every ski town. Sierra is working on ways to improve that situation.

As Rice said, "It's more than a job, it's a lifestyle."

Weekend of events for Olympian Engel

Tahoe Donner and the North Lake Tahoe community on March 10 will celebrate the return of local Alpine Ski Team member Mark Engel from the 2018 Winter Games.

Engel, 26, grew up in Truckee and made his Olympic debut competing in men's slalom in PyeongChang.

The party begins at 3p, on the Sun Deck at the Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Resort. Festivities include an Olympic Q&A by Daron Rahlves, a meet-and-greet autograph session with Engel, barbecue and beer, and live music by Matt Reardon and the Red River Revival. The event is free and open to the public.

In addition to the party, a limited number of tickets are on sale now for the following events taking place March 9-10:

- VIP Farm-to-Table Olympian Dinner on March 9 at Alder Creek Adventure Center. The deadline to purchase tickets is March 5; 530.587.9400.
- First Tracks with Mark on March 10 from 8-9am at Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Resort. Sign-up for early mountain access, fresh tracks and chairlift conversations with Mark before the ski resort opens to the public. Buy tickets in advance. Space is limited.
- Ski Clinic with Mark on March 10 at Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Resort.

More info about the weekend's activities is available **online**.

Athlete celebration at Sierra-at-Tahoe postponed

Jamie Anderson's media schedule is preventing her from returning to Lake Tahoe this weekend.

This means the athlete celebration party at Sierra-at-Tahoe originally scheduled for March 3 has been postponed. The resort is looking at rescheduling for later this month or in April.

This week the Meyers resident has been showing off her gold and silver medals from the just completed Winter Olympic Games in South Korea on "Ellen" and "Conan." She may be on "Saturday Night Live" on March 3.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Basinwide prescribed fires this week

Members of the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, which includes local, state and federal agencies, will continue prescribed fire operations this week in multiple locations around the Tahoe basin, weather permitting.

North Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Douglas fire protection districts, California Tahoe Conservancy and U.S. Forest Service operations will take place near General Creek west of Tahoma, Brockway Summit above Kings Beach, West 1st Creek in Incline Village, from Logan Shoals to Spooner Summit, on Kingsbury Grade near Edgewood Creek, the south end of Fallen Leaf Lake

and off Fountain Place Road in South Lake Tahoe. Smoke may be present.

Whenever weather and conditions allow, prescribed fire operations are conducted by the TFFT to reduce overgrown vegetation, which decreases the severity of future wildland fires and protects communities.

Winter typically brings cooler temperatures and precipitation, which favor prescribed burning.

Anderson, Wise nominated for athlete of the Games

The U.S. Olympic Committee is recognizing Lake Tahoe/Reno natives Jamie Anderson and David Wise's success in PyeongChang, South Korea, by naming them as finalists for the female and male Olympic athlete of the Games.

People may cast their vote **online**.

The full roster of Olympic finalists is included below.

Female Olympic athlete of the Games:

Anderson, snowboarding

Brittany Bowe, long track speedskating

Chloe Kim, snowboarding

Elana Meyers Taylor, bobsled

Mikaela Shiffrin, alpine skiing

Male Olympic athlete of the Games:

Wise, freestyle skiing

Red Gerard, snowboarding

John-Henry Krueger, short track speedskating

Chris Mazdzer, luge

Shaun White, snowboarding.