

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 3



It's another great day to be on the slopes at Lake Tahoe. Read the ski report brought to you by Curtis Fong, the Guy from Lake Tahoe. If you are on the South Shore tonight, Warren Miller's latest movie is showing at MontBleu and again on Saturday.

Cutting a tree adds magic to the holiday

By Kathryn Reed

Charlie Brown Christmas trees are more abundant in the wild. Mother Nature doesn't seem to make perfectly coiffed trees.

Those "perfect" trees are found on lots because the owners of tree farms took the time and had the patience to make them so.

Many people make the tree cutting an annual event. It's not just people in Tahoe who do this. All those trees on car roofs, and sticking out of trunks and back windows are most likely people who came to the lake to cut their tree.



Cutting a

Christmas tree
is a ritual
for many in
Lake Tahoe.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Cutting trees is not a solitary event. It usually takes two haul it back to the car “ especially if you’ve hiked in a ways.

A group of friends gathers each Thanksgiving weekend in Stateline for a hearty breakfast before trekking into the forest with saws.

This year one Tahoe Paradise couple got a permit to cut a massive tree for their high-ceiling living room, while allowing family to cut small trees off their property.

Another couple, Rene and Mark Gorevin have been cutting their tree on and off for more than 20 years, having started the tradition when they lived in the Bay Area and did so at a farm there.

“Before the (2007 Angora) fire, we were even able to cut down fairly close to our house in allowed Forest Service land,” Renee Gorevin said. “That was fun as we took turns carrying it back to the house. The last 100 yards or so would involve some complaining about who wanted such a tall tree – of course everyone blamed mom-which I admit was true – our hands full of fresh pitch, our arms and backs straining. Thank goodness Mark has the tools and skills and is able to build a stand for the tree as cutting down your own means you can’t pay the extra three bucks to have the lot crew attach the stand.”

Holidays are about traditions and making memories. The Gorevins certainly provided what should be a lasting memory

for an exchange student from Mexico.

“I remember Ilenia was cold all winter as she was used to 70 degree weather at Christmas time. Naturally that year we had to get a big tree to show off, especially in our open beam great room,” Gorevin said. “She was thrilled and amazed to be able to take a short hike to USFS Christmas tree land and offer her advice about which tree to choose. What a trooper she was, bearing the cold, the sawing and carrying that 12-foot tree back home. We needed the big ladder to decorate that year.”

If imperfection is what you are looking for this holiday season, then consider getting a permit from the U.S. Forest Service to cut a tree. The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit issued about 3,500 permits in 2008.

National Forests have allowed the public to cut trees for decades, but it wasn’t until 2003 that the local office started to do so.

“There are two main purposes. The first is to provide the opportunity for the public to participate in a traditional holiday experience. The second, this helps at least in a modest way in reducing the overcrowded densities of small diameter trees in portions of the basin,” Rex Norman, UFSF spokesman said. “The white fir is the most sought after tree, and this type coincidentally, represents the majority of our small tree overpopulation.”

Each year the Forest Service’s vegetation management staff scours the land to choose which areas to issue permits for. Maps are supplied when the permit is issued.

The Forest Service isn’t trying to compete with the lots that opened last weekend. But the self-cutting is a lot cheaper, albeit more work, too. Permits are \$10 and can be secured at the Forest Service office. All the money collected goes back to Washington into the general fund for the agency.

For more information, go to <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/ltbmu/passes-permits/holiday-tree.shtml>.

No matter where you get your tree, remember what Anna Getty, author of “I’m Dreaming of a Green Christmas” says – cutting a local Christmas tree is more green than artificial.

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 2



It’s another glorious day in Lake Tahoe. Kirkwood will open on Friday, Sierra on Saturday and a multi-day storm is expected to arrive Sunday. For the details on what’s going on today, click on the ski report brought to *Lake Tahoe News* by Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Ironwomen prove their mettle in Arizona

By Kathryn Reed

It wasn’t about setting records – though others did that. This particular Sunday was about personal achievement.

Sisters Rene Brejc, 45, of Christmas Valley and Martine Milton, 46, of Reno completed the Ford Ironman Arizona in Tempe.



Martine Milton
and Rene Brejc
with finisher
medals from
their first
Ironman.

Photo/Provided

“Because it was my first Ironman my goal was to finish,” Brejc said. The course is closed after 17 hours.

Brejc finished the mega triathlon in 14 hours, 27 minutes. Her sister, who had to stop for two hours because of dehydration, crossed the finish line after a little more than 16 hours.

They didn’t care that the finishers had broken course records and were probably at home showered and relaxing while they still swam, cycled and ran. Neither of the winners had to contend with a broken bone.

Brejc broke one of her little toes 10 days before the Nov. 22 race so she didn’t run during that time. Her doctor told her she wouldn’t make it any worse by participating in the tri; it would just test her pain tolerance.

“I cut a hole in the shoe where the pinky toe is so I was able to run,” Brejc said.

Training began a year ago. An uncle who was 50 when he did his first Ironman inspired her to begin her quest.

“I would say the other big thing for me is I have a 9 and 12 year old. For my kids I wanted to show them if you put your

mind to something that seems really hard, you can make it happen," Brejc said.

They were on-hand to watch their mom compete, as were Brejc's husband and parents. Brejc said the Tempe Ironman is great for spectators because the cycling and running events are multiple loops.

Last summer she participated in the Donner triathlon as part of her training.

"I had never swam with a bunch of people in wetsuits. I kind of freaked out," Brejc said of the North Shore event. "I knew I had to overcome being able to swim in green mucky water with 2,400 people."

She said that was the biggest obstacle she had to overcome "feeling a bit claustrophobic in the water."

In the winter months training involved skate skiing and back country skiing. Much of her swimming was done at the South Lake Tahoe recreation complex. In the summer she was in Lake Tahoe off Baldwin Beach.

After the Arizona event she said that one Ironman was enough. Ten days later and she is talking about doing an Ironman in Idaho in 2011.

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Heavenly aiming to add lodge, runs, lift in 2010



The U.S. Forest Service is seeking comment on a proposal for capital improvements at Heavenly Mountain Resort, including a lodge at the top of the gondola, new runs and a new lift.

If approved, the resort would implement these projects next summer.

The projects are consistent with the improvements identified in Heavenly's accepted Master Plan Amendment and would be constructed in accordance with the applicable portions of the Construction Erosion Reduction Program outlined in the master plan and the 2007 Environmental Impact Statement, according to the Forest Service.

Heavenly is proposing to build a lodge with approximately 500 indoor seats near the top of the gondola. This would be a single-story building with a simple shed roof providing self-service dining, a small bar, open seating and restrooms. The building would cover 14,750 square feet and have a maximum height of 39 feet. The lodge would also feature a 4,320-foot poured-in-place concrete patio for outdoor dining. Other than

a 300-foot delivery spur from the existence maintenance road, no new roads would be needed.

Heavenly plans to situate the lodge in an already disturbed site, minimizing the need to remove trees for construction. To accommodate the new lodge, Heavenly would relocate the Magic Carpet ski school conveyor lift and move the Umbrella Bar from the top of the gondola to Snow Beach on the California side, requiring the pouring of new concrete footings and running utilities to the site.

The resort is also proposing to replace the Galaxy fix-grip double chairlift with a high-speed detachable lift. The alignment and terminal locations would be the same. Replacing the lift would require widening the lift corridor to a maximum of 33 feet, which would necessitate removing trees.

Four new runs would increase the skiable terrain served by the new lift. The proposal includes installing below-ground snowmaking infrastructure for these new runs, as well as the two existing runs. Temporary ground disturbance would result from installation of snowmaking lines, but these areas would be promptly restabilized and revegetated. The Galaxy runs are located outside the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's boundary.

A final element of the proposal would implement the Easy Street Run Hazard Reduction prescription on a section of the California Trail. This prescription, named for the trail on which it was initially implemented, would be used to carefully and selectively reduce the height of natural obstacles such as boulders and felled trees, minimizing the amount of snow required to cover the trail. The prescription is designed to remove large obstacles while keeping ground cover intact to avoid additional runoff, sedimentation and erosion. A buffer zone would protect Tahoe draba (a sensitive plant species). This prescription would also apply to the new runs served by the Galaxy lift.

The full proposal is available on the LTBMU website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/ltbmu/projects/local/heavenly-capital-projects-2010.shtml>.

For more information, contact Matt Dickinson, (530) 543.2769.

Comments should be received by Jan. 15.

Tahoe-Reno runners qualify for National Junior Olympics

Reno Gazette Journal

Several local cross country athletes qualified for nationals after placing in the top 20 of their divisions at the Pacific Association Regional Qualifier on Sunday.

Kelsey Smith from South Tahoe took second in the 17-18-year-old girl's 5-kilometer run at Rancho San Rafael. She finished in 19 minutes, 33.86 seconds. Reno's Demerey Kirsch was third in 19:34.62. Carson's Katherine McFarren was fifth in 19:51.80 and North Valleys' Rebecca Fisher was eighth in 20:05.43.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 1



Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, says today will be a repeat of yesterday on the slopes of Lake Tahoe. It's all about fun and sun. Check out Fong's ski report for all the details.

Lake Tahoe ski report, Nov. 30



It's a gorgeous morning in Lake Tahoe. Bring the sunscreen and sunglasses if you are headed for the slopes. Click on the ski report to know what's going on today. The report is courtesy of Curtis Fong, the Guy from Lake Tahoe.

Sports Connection – getting kids involved in something positive



By Amy Jackson

Sports Connection is a successful link to at-risk kids.

This grassroots prevention program was created in response to the many kids in South Lake Tahoe who are not participating in sports due to lack of finances, transportation and language barriers.

Sports Connection's very reason for being is to help reduce teen pregnancies and gang involvement. How? By giving these at-risk kids a new sense of belonging, positive role models and a new found sense of confidence.

We're proud that Sports Connection has become successful, yet its work is never done.

Local kids are identified by school officials, neighbors and friends. Sponsors include community members and service organizations. Kids and sponsors are then "connected" and signed up for activities. We then determine if there are equipment or transportation needs. Often, coaches or other team parents become the true support and mentor for the child.

Once "connected" with a child, you will remain this child's sponsor through their middle school years. By keeping their academics high, Sports Connection kids will be able to participate in these programs free of charge in high school.

Experience in their early years will give them the ability and confidence to attempt this. This will also help them define themselves in a positive way in their critical teen years.

Sports Connection currently has over 100 kids participating in AYSO Soccer, club soccer, Pop Warner Football, basketball, dance, baseball, snowboarding, theater and art.

Sports Connection is completely funded by sponsors and 100 percent of the donations are invested in these kids. Since we continue to receive more referrals, we're always looking for new sponsors. A child can participate in most seasonal sports for a just \$50.

To sponsor a child for a year, the investment is closer to \$150, depending on how many sports they play and at what level. The idea is to keep kids busy and involved all year, lessening the chances for any negative outside influences to take hold.

Want to invest in a child today?

Please mail your check to:

Sports Connection

557 Koru Street

South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

It's an investment that pays dividends daily.

Amy Jackson is the coordinator for Sports Connection.

Snowshoe races at the Beacon

Snowshoe Cocktail Races are back at the Beacon Bar & Grill at Camp Richardson on the South Shore.

The dates are: Dec. 2, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, and March 10. Race starts at 7pm.

The races are free to participate in.

The winter pursuit will include food and drink specials, prizes for winners and losers and happy hour extended until close.

No snow? No problem – snowshoes work great on the sand.