

Harrah's Lake Tahoe eliminates free skier parking



Harrah's expects people to read all of these signs. Photo/LTN

Updated Dec. 15, 3:35pm:

By Kathryn Reed

A day of skiing at Heavenly Mountain Resort could end on a bad note from now on for those parking at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

The Stateline casino as of Dec. 14 is no longer allowing anyone – not just skiers – to park in the lot unless they are customers of their property.

"We've been getting a lot of complaints from guests and players that there is no parking," Harrah's spokesman John Packer told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Regular gamblers are given surveys by parent company Caesars Entertainment. Customer service is a huge area of importance. The local casino is regularly dinged on parking, which falls under customer service.

That in large part is why Harrah's after 17 years is finally saying no more freebies for those taking the Heavenly gondola.

While Heavenly acknowledged it has a parking agreement with MontBleu for their employees, even they often want to be closer and use the Harrah's lot.

Harrah's-Harveys instituted **paid parking during the summer** at peak times and during events. There is no plan to initiate paid parking for skiers. There's just a ban.

The signs say people will be cited or towed. Packer said they'll be towed.

However, to start with there is a bit of an education campaign with Sierra Patrol in the lots talking to people and information left on windshields.

There were plenty of skiers and snowboarders at the end of the day Thursday getting in their vehicles at Harrah's despite the signs.



Skiers are taking a risk by continuing to park at Harrah's. The vehicle may not be there when they return. Photo/LTN

While there are a lot of signs, they are rather high on posts. And in some cases there are three signs about various dos and don'ts. That's a lot of reading. Sandwich board signs at the entrances like the old Crescent V shopping center often uses might be a better warning so those pulling in aren't in for a rude surprise when they come off the slopes.

Harrah's said sandwich boards are in place, though that was not the case Thursday at the entrance near the loop road.

Paid parking is available at the city-owned garage at Heavenly Village as well as behind Raley's.

Otherwise, at least with early season access to Heavenly, it means going to Stagecoach to park for free.

FCC votes along party lines

to end net neutrality

By Tali Arbel and Barbara Ortutay, Associated Press

In a vote along party lines, the federal government has ended sweeping net-neutrality rules that guaranteed equal access to the internet.

The Thursday vote at the Federal Communications Commission will likely usher in big changes in how Americans use the internet, a radical departure from more than a decade of federal oversight. The move not only rolls back restrictions that keep broadband providers like Comcast, Verizon and AT&T from blocking or collecting tolls from services they don't like, but bars states from imposing their own rules.

Read the whole story

Proper fire funding continues to elude Congress

By Rebecca Worby, High Country News

On Sept. 14, Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue officially declared that the 2017 fire season was the Forest Service's most expensive ever, with costs topping \$2 billion. Perdue noted that fire suppression, which accounted for just 16 percent of the agency's budget in 1995, now takes up over 55 percent.

"We end up having to hoard all of the money that is intended for fire prevention," he wrote in a press release, "because we're afraid we're going to need it to actually fight fires."

The Forest Service's fire funding is subject to a budget cap based on the average cost of wildfire suppression over the last 10 years. But even as that average increases, the agency's overall budget remains relatively flat.

So when costs go higher, the agency, in a practice known as "fire borrowing," must pull from funds intended for other programs – including those that help reduce fire danger, like prescribed burns, thinning and insect control. This vicious cycle has continued for years.

Read the whole story

Heat tape, pine needles responsible for small fire

A South Lake Tahoe homeowner averted disaster after pine needles started smoldering from heat tape that had been left on.

Firefighters responded Dec. 14 to a report of a fire in the eaves of a house.

The occupant used a extinguisher to put out flames.

Officials said the roof and gutter were full of pine needles and debris.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Water damages Alpine County offices



Alpine County administrative offices dry out. Photo/Provided

Alpine County offices were closed two days last week because of water damage from a frozen pipe.

Authorities said a fire sprinkler line broke. This surprised everyone because it was believed to have been dry.

It took 30 minutes to turn the water off. In that time, carpets in the lobby, corridor, assessor's office, clerk's office and board room were soaked.

Everything was operational again by Dec. 7.

Home buyers figuring out how to game GOP tax plan

By Rob Urban and Prashant Gopal, Bloomberg

Out in the Hamptons, Wall Street's favored beach resort on Long Island, brokers and buyers already have a workaround for a tax-plan provision under consideration in Congress that would take away the mortgage-interest deduction for second homes.

A client of Brown Harris Stevens broker Jessica von Hagn who works at a hedge fund decided to turn the vacation home he's buying into an investment property by setting up a limited liability company. That will allow him to deduct the interest and earn rental income at the height of the season from the modern home on Bridgehampton's Lumber Lane, with four bedrooms, three baths and a swimming pool on an acre of land.

For the buyer: problem solved. For the Hamptons market: more high-end vacation properties getting listed as rentals, more competition and, most likely, falling rents.

In second-home markets across the U.S., from Cape Cod in Massachusetts to Lake Tahoe, brokers are bracing for a hit.

Read the whole story

Tech giant revives deal for Sinatra's old Tahoe casino

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

When it comes to splashy real estate deals, Silicon Valley icon Larry Ellison usually gets what he wants. Frank Sinatra's old Lake Tahoe casino, the Cal Neva, is no exception.

After threatening to back out because of delays, Ellison is ready to move forward with his \$35.8 million purchase of the bankrupt Cal Neva Resort & Casino on Tahoe's north shore. Lawyers for Ellison and others connected to the Cal Neva bankruptcy filed court papers Tuesday revealing that Ellison is ready to buy the faded resort as long as he can wrap up the deal by Jan. 10.

The Cal Neva has been closed since 2013.

[Read the whole story](#)

EDSO looking for man last seen in Meyers

Nearly a month after a man went missing the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office is finally asking for the public's help in finding him.

Eric Zentner, 38, was last seen leaving his uncle's house in Meyers on Nov. 11. He was reported missing four days later.



Eric Zentner

Zentner's vehicle was located at the Lake Tahoe Airport on Nov. 18. Search teams scoured the area, but to no avail.

He is described as an avid outdoorsman, pilot and diver.

Zentner is about 5-feet-10-inches, 190 pounds, short brown hair, brown eyes and has a full beard.

He has family in Ashland, Ore., and previously resided in Alaska.

Anyone with information is asked to call Detective Damian Frisby 530.573.3022.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

USFS hosting meeting about Incline land

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will host an open house Dec. 21 to discuss the proposed management of 1,138 acres above Incline Village.

The meeting will be from 3-6pm at The Chateau, 955 Fairway Blvd., Incline.

The Forest Service is seeking comments on the proposed Incline Management Plan, which proposes project-specific activities to establish National Forest System standards for streams and habitat, recreation, road and trail management under the LTBMU Land Management Plan. The planning effort also proposes a Forest Plan amendment to modify a portion of the project area from a general conservation management area to a backcountry management area.

For more information on the project and how to comment, contact Ashley Sibr at 530.543.2615 or asibr@fs.fed.us.

EDC supes approve Meyers Area Plan

By Susan Wood

The recreational hamlet west of South Lake Tahoe took another step toward flexing its individual muscle and identity Tuesday, when the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors approved the recreation-oriented concept of the new Meyers Area Plan.

It was approved 4-0, with Tahoe Supervisor Sue Novasel recusing herself. She later told Lake Tahoe News she was pleased with the stepping-stone outcome.

The proposed plan will head over to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency as one of four more meetings before it returns to the county board for final adoption early next year.

Following a marathon of community meetings, environmental improvement reports and agency hearings, county planner

Brendan Ferry took his show on the road to Placerville to tout the concept that initially began with turmoil years ago and continues with massive nods of approval.

The EIR comment period ended in early October, resulting in only five comments. The plan, which was debated at length, once packed meeting rooms with a multitude of expressed opinions ranging from the types of businesses zoned to the height of structures.

Dec. 12 was no exception with respect to recent heightened agreement. The only commenter was Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Steve Teshara, who commended the revamp proposal of the village as “enhancing the definition” of Meyers.

“I think balance has been achieved,” Teshara said, adding chamber members in the community support the plan.



Meyers Area Plan had not been updated since 1993. Photo/LTN

As it stands, the proposal consolidates three existing commercial and community services zoning districts along Highway 50. It loosely covers a 669-acre area between Pioneer Trail and Highway 89.

Ferry explained to the supervisors the plan retained “the

values” of Meyers, including recreation being its “key priority.” This means many bike and pedestrian trails are due to go in, with landscaping, benches and planter boxes enhancing the aesthetics. Another value focuses on Meyers as a historic gateway to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Its roots are deeply planted in keeping it a walkable community with a north-to-south, east-to-west view of “world class amenities.”

Of course, there are bugs to work out such as relocating the U.S. Agricultural Station. There are also considerations to be made like beefing up broadband in the area, which can be spotty at best.

Another key priority is elevating the level of safety for pedestrians. That’s why the community is up for a complete street format designed to slow down traffic so walkers may safely cross busy Highway 50.

Take Apache Avenue. “We’d like to improve that intersection,” Ferry said.

Also keeping Meyers’ unique profile, the county planner told the board the proposal calls for a building-height threshold of 42 feet, even though TRPA would allow 56 feet. Currently, no structure stands over 36 feet. When coming up with this number, the planners offered a rendering of a 45-foot building that didn’t impede visibility.

“I feel we’ve landed in a middle ground as we met with the stakeholders a number of times,” Ferry said.

A middle ground can be an ideal place to be – especially in an area debating the finer and not-so-fine points of vacation home rentals. Supervisor John Hidahl asked Ferry if the home-sharing phenomenon was considered in the concept. Currently, Meyers has no hotel, with other aspects up in the air such as Tahoe Paradise Golf Course being for sale.

Ferry replied in no uncertain terms that all life in Meyers

was covered.

So with that, the county formally adopted the Meyers Area Plan, approved the California Environmental Quality Act and TRPA environmental documentation, amended the General Plan, revised county zoning and directed staff to analyze costs.