

IN PROGRESS

A Quarterly Review of Economic Development Activity in Placer County

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Economist Says Placer County Will Lead Region to Economic Recovery

Placer County is well positioned to lead the Sacramento region and perhaps all of Northern California out of the recession. That was the key message Dr. J. Robert Fountain delivered to community leaders who had gathered at Sun City Lincoln Hills in March for the 19th annual Placer County Economic Development Summit Breakfast.

Fountain, an economist and professor emeritus at Sacramento State University, said the nation's recession is over in terms of gross domestic product and retail sales, but is lingering if you look at unemployment, lending and borrowing from banks, and the revenues of state and local governments. "The end of the recession does not necessarily mean recovery," he told the audience. "There is hope. There is also no guarantee." He emphasized that no one can say for sure how soon the U.S. economy will recover, and that economic data will not necessarily return to pre-recession levels when recovery does arrive.

Fountain said Placer County's economy has many strengths that will help it lead the way to recovery:

- Local governments that are strongly involved and skilled in economic development
- A high concentration of relatively small, new and agile companies in emerging industry sectors
- A highly educated and adaptable labor force
- Good business-government relationships
- Continued expansion of local infrastructure despite the recession
- Airport and rail access

Fountain added that California's state government and taxation structure are a drag on Placer County's economy. He reported that the local economy also is somewhat too dependent on housing production, has relatively weak transportation links to the rest of the region, and needs to expand its higher education infrastructure.

Placer County Supervisor Robert M. Weygandt also addressed the audience to discuss a new countywide economic development Roadmap developed by the Economic Development Board and the county's Office of Economic Development, a roadmap for promoting business growth and new jobs in Placer County. He emphasized that board members will review the economic development strategy at least every two years to make sure it remains up to date.

County Executive Officer Thomas M. Miller highlighted some of the region's infrastructure accomplishments financed jointly by the county, cities of Roseville and Rocklin, and the United Auburn Indian Community. Miller cited the opening of the new interchange at Highway 65 and Sunset Boulevard, the start of construction on a jail in South Placer, and the Rocklin Library.



Film Review



PLACER-LAKE TAHOE
FILM OFFICE

March Brings Snow & Film Crews to Placer County

Along with exceptional High Sierra snowfall this spring came an exceptional number of film productions: ten production companies called Placer County home in a three-week period during March for a total of 24 production days (not counting prep days to build sets and groom snow, down days, and tech-scouting days). These productions accounted for about 420 room nights.

Productions ran the gamut: two separate productions from MTV, a feature and a TV show, a promo for a new Discovery Channel program, a commercial, and several still and catalog shoots. These productions brought a conservative estimate of \$235,000 into the local economy, both at Tahoe and the foothills, by hiring locals to help crew and by patronizing many businesses.

Look for a promo on the Discovery Channel network later this year featuring acclaimed mountain climber and parachutist Job Gwyn as “The Adventurist” pitching his new program as he soars off the Foresthill Bridge.

Beverly Lewis, Director, Placer-Lake Tahoe Film Office
www.placer.ca.gov/films

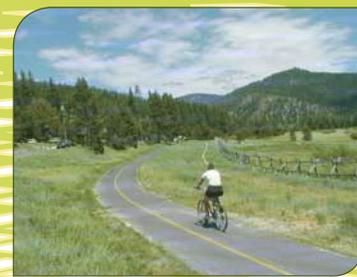
Placer Approves Plan to Finance ‘Green’ Home Improvements

Thanks to a new green home-improvement program called mPOWER, approved by county supervisors in February, property owners will now be able to tap into a loan program backed by \$33 million in county treasury reserves. Under the program, a loan on everything from more efficient cooling systems to solar power to weather-tight windows would be paid back in installments on property tax bills.

“This is a great opportunity for Placer County property owners to install energy-saving improvements...without having to pay out-of-pocket for the up-front costs,” said Mike Anderson, vice president of marketing for Solar Power Inc. in Roseville. Solar Power will offer seminars about the program.

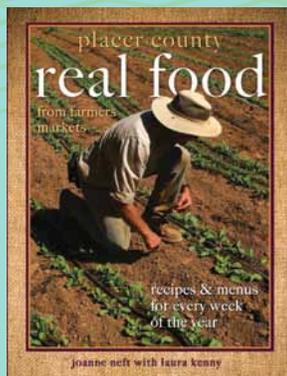
For more information, contact the Placer County Treasurer’s Office at (530) 889-4120.





New Book Serves Up 'Real Food'

A new book proves that produce grown in Placer County can provide delicious in-season meals throughout the year. Joanne Neft and Laura Kenny spent each Monday in 2009 creating and serving dinner for eight in Neft's Auburn home. Neft, a longtime agriculture advocate, and Kenny, a professional chef, shopped at the Auburn Farmer's Market each week and crafted recipes using locally produced fruit, vegetables and meat, working with what was in season to create family-style dinners.



The end result of those 52 dinner parties, and feeding more than 300 guests, is "Placer County Real Food," a 300-page cookbook showcasing each week's menu and featuring more than 350 recipes and 280 photos. The book retails for \$28.

Neft said it took an entire community to make the book possible, starting with Kenny. "Laura was an amazing partner," Neft said. "The farmers were amazing because when they had something new, they called us out the first week and said, 'This is what we have.' Everybody got excited about it – 'We have peaches,' or next week we're going to have cherries.' The growers became part of the process."



PlacerGROWN hosted the "Placer County Real Food" cookbook release party on April 18, the first of several Auburn-area events scheduled to celebrate the book.

The book is available in Auburn at Auburn Drug Company, Tsuda's Old Town Eatery, Eisley Nursery, East West Quantum Wellness, and Carpe Vino. It is also available at Newcastle Produce, Blue Goose Produce in Loomis, and at The Placer Gallery in Lincoln.

Auburn Journal

Bike Shop Helps Kids

Steve Gibson is factory trained and has 35 years of experience in maintaining and repairing dirt bikes. Gibson moved his business, GP Racing, from Placerville to Auburn three years ago, and since then has been helping out kids ages 10 to 16 who are involved in dirt bike racing. He helps by doing free motor care or providing parts at reduced prices.



"We have three kids right now – age 12 is the youngest – and one of them has already been to nationals," Gibson said. "It's all off-road riding on designated race tracks."

Gibson has one employee besides himself. Even during the downturn business has been "pretty good," he says. "People are still having things fixed."

About his business philosophy, Gibson is modest. "I just like to help people," he allows. GP Racing is located at 857 Nevada St., Auburn. (530) 889-1400.

Calendar of Events

This calendar is a small sampling of the many events taking place throughout Placer County. Check with our office or a local newspaper for additional listings. We make every effort to insure that information is correct, but last-minute changes can occur. PLEASE CALL AHEAD TO VERIFY TIMES, DATES, AND LOCATIONS. To receive our next quarterly Calendar of Events, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to California Welcome Center, 13411 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603

Foothills Farmers Markets

At 16 locations around the county. For addresses and times, call (530) 823-6183 or visit www.foothillfarmersmarket.com.

June

- **June 5: Downtown Lincoln Classic Car Show.** Live entertainment and an extensive classic car cruise. Registration starts at 7 a.m. Downtown Lincoln. (916) 434-9665.
- **June 5: Sierra Century Bicycle Ride.** Celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the Sierra Century. Three beautiful and challenging routes allow you to explore the rolling hills of Placer County. Roll through picturesque communities of Camp Far West, Meadow Vista, and climb the tree-lined back roads winding up to breathtaking vistas of the Sierra foothill towns of Colfax, Applegate, Newcastle and back to Rocklin. Limited to 2000 riders. Raffle to benefit Acres of Hope. Visit www.sacwheelmen.org for more information.
- **June 13: Protect American River Canyons American River Festival.** Nature, art activities, hikes, entertainment, and food. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. American River Overlook Park, Auburn. (530) 887-9314.
- **June 16 - 20: Heart & Solstice Festival.** Classic car show, wine walk and shopping, youth art show, paddle festival, and great food. Tahoe City. (530) 583-3348.
- **June 19: Tahoe City Wine Walk.** Thirty tasting locations, live outdoor music performances, kids' activity center. Noon - 4 p.m. Tahoe City. (530) 583-3348.
- **June 18-20: Lake Tahoe Concours d'Elegance.** More than 100 classic wooden boats on display at Sierra Boat Company, Carnelian Bay. (530) 581-4700 See website for hours www.laketahoekoncours.com.
- **June 24-27: Placer County Fair "Wild & Free."** Animals, rides, activities for all ages. Placer County Fairgrounds, Roseville. Call (916) 786-2023 or visit their website at www.placercountyfair.org for more information.

July

- **July 9: Jazz At 808,** Auburn. Placer County's only world class jazz series with percussionist Jimmy Robinson. The Arts Building, 808 Lincoln Way. Please call 530-885-5670 or visit us at www.placerarts.org.

- **July 11: Old West Trio Performance,** Auburn. The Old West Trio delivers uplifting cowboy and folk music, Auburn Library Garden Amphitheatre. Please call (530) 823-6683 or visit us at www.auburnsymphony.com.
- **July 13 - 18: Celebrity Golf At Lake Tahoe.** The American Century Championship tees off with views of Lake Tahoe, celebrity figures and golf action. Please call (530) 544-5050 or visit us at www.tahoecelibritygolf.com.

August

- **August 19: The Classic Film Casablanca,** Cinema at the State Theatre. Auburn Placer Performing Arts Center, 985 Lincoln Way, 7pm. Call (530) 885-0156 or visit www.livefromauburn.com.
- **August 20 - 22: High-Hand Tomato Gathering,** Loomis. Celebrate Placer County's beautiful tomato harvest. High-Hand Nursery Café and Conservatory. Please call (530) 889-7398 or visit us at www.placergrown.org.
- **August 21 - Sept 18: Children's Open Exhibit,** Roseville Blue Line Gallery, 405 Vernon St. Please call (916) 783-4117 or visit us at www.rosevillearts.org.

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Economic Development Awards Presented

William Jessup University, Sierra College, the college's grant development director and a local wine-industry association were honored with awards at the 19th annual Placer County Economic Development Summit Wednesday, March 17th, 2010.

Also recognized with awards were the chief executive officer of a Roseville company that recovers parts from old servers, printers and other electronic devices for reuse, and three allied businesses in Colfax: Fox Barrel Cider Co., Basement Wines and Main Street Pizza.

The summit is an annual breakfast meeting sponsored by the Placer County Economic Development Board. About 220 people attended the summit in the Orchard Creek Ballroom at Sun City Lincoln Hills.

At the annual summit, the board honors outstanding public-sector and private-sector contributions to the county's economic well-being.

This year, the board also bestowed a new Education Award upon William Jessup University. The university's rapid expansion since it moved from San Jose to Rocklin in 2004 has been a major contributor to economic growth in Placer County.

Private-sector awards were handed out to:

- The three Colfax businesses for contributing to the local tax base, creating jobs, supporting downtown revitalization, helping promote tourism and aiding historic preservation efforts; and
- Steve Fassler and his fast-growing company Tech-Ed Networks, for their contributions to the economic growth of Placer County and for a track record of community involvement that includes donating refurbished computers to emancipated foster youths attending Sierra College.



Photo from left to right: Bruce Nissen, FoxBarrel Cider, Lee Shahin, Mainstreet Pizza & Basement Wines, District Five Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery

Public-sector awards were given to:

- The Placer County Vintner's Association for the commitment and dedication its members have displayed to promoting the county's burgeoning wine industry;
- Sierra College's new Solar Energy Technician Program for helping fill the need to have a skilled workforce in the rapidly growing energy field.
- Sandra Scott, the director of grant development and career technical education at Sierra College, for her effectiveness serving as a liaison between the college and both the business community and local government agencies.

Photos below from left to right: John Allard, City of Roseville & Steve Fassler, Tech-Ed Networks; Phil Maddux, Lone Buffalo Winery, Jan C. Decker, Placer County Visitor's Bureau & Stewart Perry, Fawnridge Winery; Steve Nichols, PG&E & Dr. Bryce Jessup, William Jessup University; John Allard, City of Roseville & Sandra Scott, Sierra College





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New Tax Credits Available for Businesses

Many small businesses and tax-exempt organizations that provide health insurance coverage to their employees now qualify for a special tax credit, according to the Internal Revenue Service. The credit is designed to encourage small employers to offer health insurance coverage for the first time or maintain coverage they already have. In general the credit is available to small employers that pay at least half the cost of single coverage for their employees. The maximum credit is 35 percent of premiums paid in 2010 by eligible small business employers and 25 percent of premiums paid by eligible employers that are tax-exempt organizations. For details, visit www.IRS.gov and look for issue number IR-2010-38.

Two new tax benefits are now available to employers hiring workers who were previously unemployed or only working part time. Employers who hire unemployed workers this year may qualify for a 6.2 percent payroll

tax incentive, in effect exempting them from their share of Social Security taxes on wages paid to these workers after the date of enactment. In addition, for each worker retained for at least a year, businesses may claim an additional general business tax credit up to \$1,000 per worker when they file their 2011 income tax returns. For details, visit www.IRS.gov and look for issue number IR-2010-033.

The Internal Revenue Service has released a new form that will help employers claim the special payroll tax exemption that applies to many newly hired workers during 2010, created by the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act signed by President Obama on March 18. New Form W-11, issue number IR-2010-043, is now posted on www.IRS.gov along with answers to frequently-asked questions about the payroll tax exemption and the related new hire retention credit.

