

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- The 29th annual Booster Club Golf Tournament is May 7-8 at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. All proceeds benefit the athletes at South Tahoe and Whittell high schools. The price is \$145 per player and includes lunch. For more information and a sign up form, contact Kevin Kjer at 775.588.6354 or kjkjer@aol.com.
 - Douglas County sheriff's Capt. Dan Coverley graduated from the FBI National Academy.
 - Here is the El Dorado-Tahoe roadwork schedule from Caltrans for the week.
 - Starbucks Carson Valley Roasting Plant & Distribution Center took home the Douglas County's top award for Business of the Year during Northern Nevada Development Authority's Pioneer Awards.
 - Authors Brian Turner and Paul Lisicky have been named 2016 Guggenheim Fellows by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Turner directs the low-residency MFA program for creative writing at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village. Lisicky is also a faculty member in the SNC Tahoe MFA program, as well as the MFA program at Rutgers University-Camden and the Juniper Summer Writing Institute.
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Birders to give talk on Tahoe's Big Year

Local birders Bob and Jenny Sweatt spent the entire year of 2015 searching the basin for as many species of birds as they could find through Tahoe Institute for Natural Science's Tahoe Big Year.

The Big Year celebrates the hundreds of bird species that make the Tahoe region their home all year, during summer or winter, or while passing through to other destinations. The Sweatts documented their hundreds of discoveries with photographs.

Join the Friends of the Library for a free a slideshow presentation April 13 at 6pm at the South Lake Tahoe Library to see the unique species that were in Tahoe. This is an opportunity to learn about the Tahoe region's diverse bird community.

Letter: Thankful for successful science expo

To the community,

On March 30, 31 and April 1, we were fortunate to have the first annual South Lake Science Expo at the Lake Tahoe Community College campus. This event is an exciting opportunity for our third- through fifth-grade students to explore the many wonders of physical science.

This amazing event would not have been possible without the help of so many. First, I would like to thank the incredible

crew from the Tahoe Environmental Research Center/UC Davis in Incline (Heather, Amy, Evan, Emily and Bree – you are amazing).

TERC has been hosting this event for the last 11 years in Incline and the TERC team graciously agreed to bring it down to South Shore this year.

The Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe is responsible for gifting us with a generous grant that covered the financial needs of this project. Our deep and sincere thanks for this and all that you do for our community. You make this a better place to live every day.

The Science Expo committee (the TERC group and Greta, Rebecca and Bonnie) made this happen in a very short period of time. Thank you so much for all your help. You are an awesome team to work with.

Lake Tahoe Community College hosted this event at their site and were such gracious hosts, helping us in so many ways!

There were over 40 hands-on stations for the students to explore. We had over 725 students from five schools and more than 290 people at the public event. Quite a success for the first year.

I also need to thank the community for stepping up and volunteering their time to help man the stations. We could not have done this without all of you. There were over 125 volunteers who gave up mornings, afternoons and evening time to make this possible. What an amazing place to live and work. Thanks also go to Starbucks, Jamba Juice and Raley's for providing nourishment and other necessities. My deep and sincere thanks for everyone involved in making this such a success!

Beth Quandt, LTUSD science outreach coordinator

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Spot

Spot is a 4 year old American Bulldog who was turned into the shelter because his family's new baby was allergic to him.

He is house trained, walks nicely on the leash and he loves car rides. He likes other dogs and has lived with children. Spot would do well in just about any household.

Spot is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

EDC eager to make improvements in Meyers



El Dorado County wants to make upgrades in Meyers. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County is on course to make improvements to Meyers in regards to aesthetics and how the highway functions.

While Caltrans is the ultimate decision maker on what goes on with Highway 50, the county has some say about what occurs. The county is using its \$61,000 federal On Our Way Grant to figure out how best to make the Meyers corridor – from Highway 89 to Pioneer Trail – look and function better.

The county isn't doing this alone. Instead of having a public meeting to gather ideas, officials are going to engage the public at various locations.

Safety in terms of access to the magnet elementary school and

crossing the highway are the county's main concerns. Officials also want to make the section into more of a complete streets concept, which includes landscaping.

"We've been working with Caltrans really closely with all of this. They seem to be open to concepts, at least what we are talking about," Brendan Ferry, county transportation guru, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The county is focusing on how it might be able to improve the intersection at either Apache Avenue or Pioneer Trail. Caltrans is already planning to build a **roundabout** at highways 50 and 89.

The problem at Apache is that this is where so many kids cross to get to the elementary school. It's unsafe, with people often going faster than the 45 mph posted speed limit. Pioneer Trail and the highway intersection have multiple issues – from being a bottleneck on busy days, to not being functional for those on foot or two wheels.

While Meyers is working under a community plan from 1993, much of what is in it and what has been proposed for the update involves creating more of a main street feel through town, improved accessibility and logical connectivity.

"These concepts exist whether the area plan moves forward or not," Ferry said. That is why it is not a conflict for the county to proceed with plans even though it is working to update the area plan.

The county wants to identify a project soon so it can apply for a grant this summer. The grant, which is due in June, would be funded by the feds and funneled through Caltrans. If El Dorado were to get full funding for a project, it's possible work could begin in 2017.

"We are just really excited to try to help improve Meyers, especially from safety and access issues," Ferry said.

Notes:

People will be soliciting comments about the county's plans for Meyers on April 22 from 11:30am-1:30pm at Century 21; 3-4pm at the magnet school; 4:15-6:15pm at Lira's.

There will be a booth at the Earth Day festival at Bijou Community Park from 10am-3pm where more comments will be solicited.

For more info, contact Brendan Ferry at brendan.ferry@edcgov.us.

Letter: Action of South Tahoe council questioned

To the community,

At the April 5 [South Lake Tahoe City] council meeting, Mayor Wendy David declared that comments by the citizens during the non-agenda portion of the council meeting will no longer be televised. It has been suggested that this was done to "prevent staff and others from begin slandered".



Bruce Grego

Except for Councilmember [JoAnn] Conner's request that this matter be placed on the agenda, the rest of the council was silent. No motion, no vote, no agenda item, just a bare statement by the mayor that the policy was changed.

I understand that the city is surveying other cities as to their policy. When I was on the council, I voted to support Councilmember [Angela] Swanson's motion to have this portion of the council meeting televised. Transparency should be the objective of government at all levels. I was surprised that the remaining council was silent when the mayor declared the change of policy; they should have been outraged. Who told the mayor to change the policy? Does the council need to take a survey before they know what to do?

I demand that Mayor Wendy David explain her actions. We have council that can't resolve their petty differences, fail to understand democratic principles, and seek to reduce transparency. Are these "leaders" of our community competent to vote on the merits of major issues, such as the loop road? Or are their votes going to be based upon personal animosities, hidden agendas, and surveys? We should be worried.

Bruce Grego, South Lake Tahoe

Is algebra an unnecessary stumbling block?

By Karen Matthews, AP

Who needs algebra?

That question muttered by many a frustrated student over the years has become a vigorous debate among American educators, sparked by a provocative new book that argues required algebra has become an unnecessary stumbling block that forces millions to drop out of high school or college.

“One out of 5 young Americans does not graduate from high school. This is one of the worst records in the developed world. Why? The chief academic reason is they failed ninth-grade algebra,” said political scientist Andrew Hacker, author of “The Math Myth and Other STEM Delusions.”

Hacker, a professor emeritus at Queens College, argues that, at most, only 5 percent of jobs make use of algebra and other advanced math courses. He favors a curriculum that focuses more on statistics and basic numbers sense and less on $(y - 3)^2 = 4y - 12$.

“Will algebra help you understand the federal budget?” he asked.

Many U.S. educators, including the architects of the Common Core standards, disagree, saying math just needs to be taught more effectively. It’s fine for students to have quantitative skills, they say, but algebra is important, too.

“Every study I’ve ever seen of workers in whole bunches of fields shows that you have to understand formulas, you have to understand relationships,” said Philip Uri Treisman, a professor of mathematics and of public affairs at the University of Texas. “Algebra is the tool for consolidating your knowledge of arithmetic.”

Bill McCallum, a professor at the University of Arizona who played a lead role in developing the Common Core standards for math, said he would oppose any division of K-12 students into an algebra track and a non-algebra track.

“You might say only a certain percentage of kids will go on to

use algebra, but we don't know which kids those are," he said.

In New York City, home to the nation's largest public school system with 1.1 million pupils, just 52 percent of the students who took last year's statewide Regents test in Algebra I passed, mirroring statistics elsewhere in the country.

Rather than scaling back on algebra, New York City educators have announced an "Algebra for All" initiative that aims to keep students on track by providing specialized math teachers in fifth grade, before algebra is introduced.

"We believe in high standards," said Carol Mosesson-Teig, director of mathematics for the city Department of Education. "And we believe that the best way to serve the students is to strengthen the instruction."

Eighteen-year-old Isaiah Aristy took the algebra Regents test twice and failed it both times.

Aristy, now a freshman at the Borough of Manhattan Community College who is hoping for a career in law enforcement, said he was good at math until he hit algebra.

"When it came to x and y and graphing, that's when I started dropping, and it made me feel low," he said. "But we don't need to learn what x and y is. When in life are we going to write on paper, ' X and y needs to be this?'"

Like millions of community college students across the U.S., Aristy must pass a remedial math class with no college credit, and then pass at least one college-level math class, if he wants to get an associate's degree.

But Aristy isn't just repeating Algebra I again. BMCC is one of about 50 community colleges in 14 states that offer an alternative track called Quantway, developed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, that seeks to

develop quantitative literacy.

“It includes some basic algebra concepts, but you don’t learn how to factor polynomials or solve complex equations,” said math department Chairman Fred Peskoff.

Project director Karon Klipple said the foundation devised Quantway and a statistics track called Statway in 2011 because of the sheer numbers of students dropping out of community college due to algebra. Sixty to 80 percent of community college students nationwide test into remedial math, and most don’t pass it, she said.

“This is where their hopes and aspirations go to die,” Klipple said. “They’re in college to try to make a better life for themselves, and they’re stopped by mathematics.”

Time running out to get free tax help

The last two days of free tax return preparation will be April 14-15 at the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

Taxpayers should bring last year’s tax return, all 2015 tax documents, a photo ID, and Social Security card.

Hours on Thursday are 1-6pm and Friday from 9am-2pm. The last client is taken a half-hour before closing.

The AARP Tax Aide Foundation sponsors the program.

Call 530.573.3130 for more information.

Scholarships available for earth science majors

The El Dorado County Mineral and Gem Society provides scholarships to qualified El Dorado County high school graduates who are pursuing a degree in earth sciences or the lapidary arts fields at an accredited college or university.

Scholarships up to \$2,000 are available. Deadline for application is May 1.

Interested students must write an essay about what has motivated them to pursue this career goal, what they hope to achieve, and who their role models are.

Applications are available **online**.

Threats cast shadow over global travel industry

By Justin Bachman, Bloomberg

Travel executives should be a happy lot. A growing Chinese middle class is eager to see the world. Oil prices are stunningly low, leaving consumers more income to spend. A global economy demands we be on the move.

But more immediate threats overshadow the industry.

“The combination of global terrorism and a refugee crisis is creating an unprecedented crisis,” David Scowsill, chief executive of the World Travel & Tourism Council, said in a speech opening the group’s annual summit Wednesday. The council represents the largest travel companies and advocates for greater partnerships with government.

Europe is struggling to balance security and immigration amid a refugee disaster born of the Syrian civil war.

Read the whole story