Poets to give reading at LTCC

Two poets will be reading from their works at Lake Tahoe Community College on Nov. 13.

Poet and journalist Ilyse Kusnetz, and Julia Shipley, teacher, farmer, and poet, will also answer audience questions about their writing process, and sign copies of their books for sale that night.

Kusnetz is the author of “Small Hours”, winner of the 2014 T.S. Eliot prize from Truman State University Press, and “The Gravity of Falling” (2006).

Shipley is the author of a full-length poetry collection, “The Academy of Hay” that was published by Meyers-based Bona Fide Books. She was the winner of the Melissa Lanitis Gregory Poetry Prize. She is also the author of four poetry chapbooks.

The 7pm event is free. It will be in the college’s library.

Unintended consequence of Prop. 47 – more crime

By Cindy Chang, Marisa Gerber and Ben Poston, Los Angeles Times

Semisi Sina has kept sheriff’s deputies busy in the last year.

The 30-year-old has stolen bicycles from his Hacienda Heights neighborhood. He has skipped out on drug treatment and kept up his meth habit.

He has racked up 16 arrests, earning himself a place near the top of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's list of repeat offenders picked up for theft or drug use. And he says a new law has made it easier for him to commit crimes.

"Now, you can get away with it because of Proposition 47," Sina said recently in an interview at his parents' home.

One year after voters approved the landmark ballot measure, Proposition 47 has dramatically altered California's criminal justice landscape.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

· Tahoe Donner Cross Country Ski Area will debut its new building, the Alder Creek Adventure Center, on Nov. 27 from 5-7pm. This free event includes live music, appetizers, family entertainment and activities, and a no-host bar.

· Author Laura McBride will be speaking at the Douglas County Library in Minden at 10am Nov. 21. Copies of "We Are Called to Rise" are available for loan from the Minden and Zephyr Cove libraries. They will remain on the New Arrivals shelves through February.

· Bill Landon, safety and training coordinator and flight paramedic with Care Flight, has been awarded the 2015 Air and Surface Transport Nurses Association Lynn Stevens Excellence in Safety award.

· The Rev Tour and Hole Shot Tour will work together,

giving snowboardcross and skicross athletes an opportunity to train and compete at Squaw Valley on March 18.

· Mammoth Mountain, home of the award-winning Unbound terrain parks and pipes, is set to host a freestyle trifecta Jan. 26-31. Freeskiers and snowboarders will compete in Mammoth's 22-foot halfpipe, award-winning slopestyle course and the only big air on the Rev Tour.

CalFire lifting residential burn ban

Effective Nov. 9, residents in Amador, El Dorado, Alpine, and Sacramento counties will be able to pile burn.

Those possessing current and valid agriculture and residential burn permits will be able to resume burning on permissible days.

CalFire burn permits will be required until the end of peak fire season. Fire officials ask property owners and residents to use caution while conducting debris or agriculture burns. Individuals can be held civilly and/or criminally liable for allowing a fire to escape their control and/or burn onto neighboring property.

For more info, call 530.621.5842.

Pile burning requirements

· Only dry, natural vegetative material such as leaves, pine needles and tree trimmings may be burned.

· The burning of trash, painted wood or other debris is

not allowed.

· Do not burn on windy days.

· Piles should be no larger than 4 feet in diameter and in height. You can add to pile as it burns down.

· Clear a 10 foot diameter down to bare soil around your piles.

· Have a shovel and a water source nearby.

· An adult is required to be in attendance of the fire at all times.

Potential cardiac dangers with extreme exercise

By Kevin Helliker, Wall Street Journal

A study finds that exercise that is extreme in either volume or intensity may be associated with high levels of atherosclerosis in the coronary arteries.

The study, presented in August at a meeting of the European Society of Cardiology, studied 169 veteran competitive endurance athletes against a control group of 171 relatively sedentary subjects. Compared with the control group, the study found lower levels of coronary artery calcium in athletes who ran fewer than 35 miles a week or cycled fewer than 150 kilometers a week. But athletes who ran or cycled beyond that threshold were found to harbor higher levels of coronary

artery calcium than did the control group.

The study, conducted by British physicians, is certain to intensify debate over one of the most controversial questions in modern medicine: Can people exercise too much? By all accounts, exercise lowers blood pressure, helps preserve coronary-artery integrity, lengthens lifespans and otherwise promotes physical and mental health. Exercise is medicine, say public health officials.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe Hard Rock on path to stabilization

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Correct the problems and identify opportunities. Those are the oversimplified tasks the consultants for Lake Tahoe Hard Rock have agreed to tackle.

“Right now we are working to stabilize the operation,” Jim Roets told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Roets and Rick Stevens, two veterans in the Northern Nevada casino industry, have a 90-day contract that began in mid-October that calls for assembling an executive team and assessing the operation to undo the damage of Warner Hospitality. Even after a more permanent management team is in place the plan is the duo will stay on board as advisors as needed.

The Park brothers, owners of the property, **fired Las Vegas-based Warner** last month. The Parks have since sued Warner.

The dysfunction since the Jan. 28 opening was documented in an exclusive *Lake Tahoe News* **story in August**.

Roets and Corinna Osborne, director of non-gaming operations, sat down with *Lake Tahoe News* this week to discuss the future of the property.

“Hard Rock is a good brand in itself. Our goal is to deliver, if not over deliver, on those expectations,” Roets said.

Marketing the property, getting a sales team together and creating a good casino player strategy are some of the immediate goals.



Lake Tahoe Hard Rock consultants are trying to fix problems the previous management firm created. Photo/LTN

“It’s unacceptable the property opened in January and people in the community don’t know we have a steakhouse,” Roets said. Better messaging is part of the immediate plans.

He and Osborne have already noticed improved customer service, which they attribute to workers being happier.

Some employees who lost their job under the old regime are

coming back. This includes front line staff and managers like the former director of sales. (The property has 14,000-square-feet of meeting space near the Fire Break restaurant.) There are about 360 employees, with 75 front line positions available. The two big positions yet to be filled are general manager and human resources director.

“It will not be a third party big name that has cooperate offices somewhere else that is at the helm,” Roets said. “The team will have a clear understanding of the market, the work force, and flow of the seasonality; and be involved in the community.”

Last week the employees came together for what was called a town hall. It gave them an opportunity to ask the interim head honchos questions, to learn what can be expected in the coming months and feel appreciated. More of those will occur when appropriate.

Roets said he and Stevens are listening to staff suggestions and complaints, then explaining why or how things may or may not change. Just being heard is a new concept for these employees.

He said the staff is qualified and just need to be encouraged to do the job they know how to do.

Under the old guard employees were not encouraged to be engaged in the community. Just the opposite is occurring now.

As for the pool, it’s a bigger item that probably won’t fall under the purview of the consultants. Solutions are being sought for the leaks that forced the pool to be drained and closed last summer. It remains an empty vessel.

“The previous management tried things out there that didn’t sell in this market,” Roets said of the Splash pool parties that had a Vegas-esque quality to them. “We aren’t going to continue to do things that don’t work and don’t make sense.”

Osborne said the summer music festivals in the parking lot are not likely to be resurrected.

The focus is doing things at the property that make sense and are profitable.

Vinyl, the small music house, will continue to bring in entertainment. The goal is develop it into a venue with a brand people can count on.

When it was announced in July 2014 that the Horizon was being rebranded as a Hard Rock, Heavenly Mountain Resort was going to be an integral partner. In fact, the launch was at the midway station of the ski resort. When asked if that pairing was still going forward, Roets said, “Any and all partnerships are being looked at.”

Within the next year Roets expects the Hard Rock to be bringing in a sizable piece of the market.

The Stateline casinos collectively bring in about $200 million a year in gaming. Roets would not speak to what share is the Hard Rock’s or how much it should be. He only said the goal is to attract its fair share of locals and tourists.

Roets also didn’t want to talk about the debt brothers Jon and David Park have incurred. About $62 million has been spent to remodel what was the tired and dilapidated Horizon. Another $12 million is said to be needed to finish the upgrades – this includes guest rooms and the large showroom where the likes of Elvis Presley once played when the property opened as the Sahara.

The long-range plans – those are not for Roets and Stevens to figure out, but instead for the Parks to worry about. The consultants are striving to make the Hard Rock employees deliver a product locals and tourists want to experience over and over again.

Opinion: Lake Tahoe’s death by a thousand cuts

To the community,

First of all, what is death by a thousand cuts? It’s an ancient form of torture from Imperial China, where a subject was given one cut after another until over an extended period of time he bled to death: The first few hundred cuts wouldn’t kill him, but the last few hundred most certainly would.

In modern usage, it’s defined (by Wikipedia) as “the way a major negative change which happens slowly in many unnoticed increments is not perceived as objectionable.” That’s just what’s happening at Tahoe right now.

First, it’s the Tahoe Keys milfoil disaster (current solution – herbicide? Really?). Then TRPA’s Regional Plan update – more height and density in “town centers” to fix our economy and sub-par development.

Now, the first big proposal since the Regional Plan update: urban sprawl on an undeveloped ridgeline above Lake Tahoe and Martis Valley, essentially creating a new town the size of Kings Beach in the middle of the forest.

This is the nightmare proposed by Mountainside Partners (formerly East-West Partners; the developer) and Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI; the land-owner).

I’m glad that SPI, which owns almost 2 million acres in California, and Mountainside Partners, which is planning a $1 billion expansion at the Mountainside at Northstar, have revealed their true, destructive intent for our area now

rather than later.

Sierra Watch and Mountain Area Preservation entered into a complicated agreement with East-West (now Mountainside Partners), a seasoned developer out of Colorado.

East-West is currently partnering with KSL (Squaw Valley) on a project at the bottom of Snowmass. In the opinion piece written by SW and MAP (Oct. 28, "Setting the Record Straight Regarding Martis Valley") they argue that they only agreed to a new land-use designation on the forested ridge. However, this is semantics.

The result of that land use designation (whatever you may want to call it) is Martis Valley West and the Brockway Campground — and now we know how outrageous the consequences of a new land-use designation can be.

We agree with MAP and Sierra Watch that Truckee shouldn't approve more sprawl, but neither should Tahoe — and why doesn't that reasoning apply to Martis Valley West? Except for this deal, MAP and Sierra Watch have a history of great conservation work, and we're hopeful they will continue that legacy by negotiating a conservation agreement for SPI lands without involving development on our iconic and irreplaceable ridgelines.

Stop Tahoe's bleeding now — or watch her die slowly, one new development at a time.

Ann Nichols, North Tahoe Preservation Alliance

Safety or danger of e-cigs as cloudy as their vapor

By Lois M. Collins, Deseret News

The small clouds are more noticeable than the people enveloped in the white smoke, visible on city streets and college campuses across America. They are caused by “vaping,” the use of liquid nicotine from one of various types of so-called electronic cigarettes.

The users – or “vapers” – include the roughly 13 percent of high school students who admitted using e-cigarettes last year, a threefold increase to close to 2 million adolescents, according to the 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that’s the first survey to show more e-cigarette use than any tobacco product in that age group.

That trend has caught the attention of pediatricians and apparently the general public. The American Academy of Pediatrics this week called for a minimum age of 21 to buy products containing nicotine, including e-cigarettes. A recently released NPR-Truven Health Analytics Health Poll found 57 percent of American adults think e-cigarettes should be regulated like cigarettes by the Food and Drug Administration.

Health experts say parents should discourage use of vaping products because the safety or danger of e-cigarettes is as cloudy as the vapor they produce.

Read the whole story

County ed board to discuss supe’s arrest

By Kathryn Reed

The El Dorado County board of education has called for a special closed session meeting on Saturday to discuss the second driving under the influence arrest of Superintendent Jeremy Meyers.

While the agenda for the Nov. 7 10am meeting does not specifically say that, it is what will be discussed. The agenda item is listed as “anticipated litigation”.



Jeremy Meyers

Because Meyers is an elected official the board does not have the legal right to suspend or fire him just because he was arrested. However, state law does allow the board some leeway if it is deemed Meyers is mentally or physically unable to do his job.

Meyers was arrested the afternoon of Nov. 5 after crashing his personal truck into a utility box on Green Valley Road in Placerville.

He faces four misdemeanor charges: driving under the influence of alcohol, driving with a blood alcohol content of at least 0.08 percent, diving with a blood alcohol content of at least 0.15 percent, and violation of probation. Had even one of the

charges been a felony the school board would have recourse to remove Meyers.

The California Highway Patrol has not released Meyers' exact blood alcohol level, but said it was close to double the legal limit.

He has posted the $17,500 bail after being booked into the El Dorado County Jail in Placerville.

Meyers' other recent DUI was in June to which he pleaded no contest and was sentenced to five days of house arrest. That, too, was a midday, workday arrest where he had a 0.15 blood alcohol level.

The office of education's official response was this, "The El Dorado County Office of Education has learned that county Superintendent Jeremy M. Meyers was arrested (Thursday) afternoon for driving under the influence. While unfortunate, we will continue to work together and deliver high-quality support to our countywide programs, school districts and community."

Women's fund designed to benefit South Shore

By Kathryn Reed

In two weeks the Tahoe Women's Community Fund has raised $20,000 to be invested on the South Shore and has signed up 125 members.

This nonprofit entity was launched last month with the goal of securing money from members that will then be doled out to

entities roughly from Glenbrook to Meyers to Camp Richardson. While the members may come from anywhere, the money is staying on the South Shore.

Kathy Haven took the reins to start the fund after hearing a talk last spring by the leader of the El Dorado Community Fund. Bill Roby spoke about the different funds that come under his foundation's umbrella, and told Haven for some time he has wanted to develop a fund specific to this side of the county that would be similar to the women's found in El Dorado Hills.



Women's funds have existed for decades. They were born at a time when women didn't have as much of a voice as they do today. It was a bonding, a way to help one another.

While these types of funds in many ways have the same purpose, today members are also men and boys or men may be the beneficiaries. Businesses may also join, but would still have just one vote.

A big difference from a fund like this compared to a service organization is there aren't regular meetings, no lunches one has to attend and really no work. It's about raising money, deciding where to allocate it and then writing the checks.

The Tahoe Women's Community Fund has three annual membership levels – $100, $250 and $1,000. A percentage of each of these will go into an endowment fund to help sustain the organization. A portion – probably 5 percent – of the endowment will go toward the overall pot that is available each year to be distributed.

The Tahoe Women's Community Fund will have the El Dorado Community Fund be its fiscal agent so it doesn't have to go through the whole process of becoming a 501(c)3, but still has

the benefits of such a nonprofit. There is a 1.5 percent annual fee to El Dorado Community Fund for this agreement.

In addition to Haven, the founding members of the local fund are Wendy David, Anita Eades Castles, Greta Hambsch, Jamie Orr, Sara Pierce, Cynthea Preston, Delicia Spees, Jennifer Stafford and Tere Tibbetts. They are the initial leadership team. The intent was to bring together a diverse group who would represent varied interests.

Everyone who joins has been asked where they think the money should go. There have been 75 responses ranging from focusing on homeless, to children, to poverty. In the next few weeks the founding members will whittle the ideas down to about 10 areas. (Ultimately a grants committee will be formed.) Anyone who is a member by Nov. 15 will have a vote in the first allocation that will be distributed in late spring or early summer.

After the first of the year the community fund will put out a request to nonprofits, including schools, for them to apply for the grants. It will be up to the leadership council to decide how many grants and of what value will be distributed each year. The members get the final vote.

The plan is for the members to gather twice a year – for a dinner like what was convened last month as a celebration and opportunity to build community, and when the money is distributed. Organizers envision people who will benefit from the donation telling their story and not just the leader of the nonprofit. While it's not written in stone yet, there is talk of limiting beneficiaries to every other year.

"It's a collective giving unit. We hope to make a big impact in this community," Haven told *Lake Tahoe News.*

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Notes:

· Tahoe Women’s Community Fund has a **website**.

· Here is the membership form. It is possible to pay in monthly installments.

· The email address is: TWCF@eldoradocf.org.