Snippets about Lake Tahoe



· The Pipe Keepers training is Nov. 12 from 2-4pm at the League to Save Lake Tahoe office, 2608 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe. RSVP **online**.

· Mount Rose Ski Resort plans to open Nov. 4; lift tickets are $10. Boreal is set to open Nov. 6.

· South Shore resident Jennifer Quashnick will read from her book "Sierra Nevada River of Lies" at Bona Fide Books in Meyers on Nov. 7 from 4-5:30pm.

· State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-El Dorado, earned an A grade for the ninth year in a row from the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association for the 2015 legislative session.

· FiftyFifty Brewing Company in Truckee has withdrawn its application to build an 18,500-square-foot brewing facility on a 7.8-acre parcel on West River Street adjacent to the Truckee River.

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7 suspected gang members arrested in SLT

Seven people were arrested Halloween night in South Lake Tahoe on felony and misdemeanor charges ranging from conspiracy to commit a crime, illegal possession of weapons, and contributing to the delinquency of minors

Extra officers were on duty to help curtail any potential gang

activity. The drive-by shootings on **Oct. 14** and **Oct. 28** have been classified as gang related.

Officers at about midnight Oct. 31 saw two carloads of suspected gang members drive to the dead end of Spruce Avenue, where a drive-by shooting took place two weeks ago. Some of the occupants in the vehicles wore blue bandanas over their faces, a clear showing of gang colors.

Officers said searches of the seven as well as the two vehicles turned up marijuana and alcohol contraband as well as several weapons, including a stun gun, a switchblade, a metal bat, brass knuckles and a loaded and concealed .22-caliber pistol with extra loaded magazines.

Arrested were:

· Oscar Arreola, 18, South Lake Tahoe

· Jorge Medrano, 18, South Lake Tahoe

· Guian-Renz Corpuz Agbigay, 20, South Lake Tahoe

· Garcia Camacho, 18, South Lake Tahoe

· Edward Christopher, 24, South Lake Tahoe

· 14-year-old, South Lake Tahoe

· 15-year-old, South Lake Tahoe.

While this arrests were in progress officers were called to investigate a stabbing on Silverwood Avenue.

Josh Boyer, 21, of South Lake Tahoe had been stabbed multiple times during a fight. He fled with at least two vehicles in pursuit. According to officers, Boyer intentionally rammed his vehicle into one of the pursuing vehicles.

He abandoned his vehicle on Lakeview Avenue, then ran until he collapsed. He was taken to Barton Memorial Hospital where he

is expected to recover from his wounds, officers said.

The suspects in the stabbing have not been identified.

Anyone with information about the crimes is asked to call 530.542.6100 or Lake Tahoe Secret Witness at 530.541.6800.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Energy firm plans Nevada's power future

By Kyle Roerink, Las Vegas Sun

Next month, regulators will decide on a proposal for how NV Energy will supply customers with power in the future.

Known as the integrated resource plan, the power company's proposal is a pitch made every three years to regulators about the company's long-term strategy. The state's energy gurus have been debating since June.

Last week, officials representing gaming, renewable energy, conservation groups, state bureaucrats and NV Energy huddled at the Public Utilities Commission office to testify on the nearly 5,000-page plan.

The commission will decide on a final plan by Dec. 28.

Read the whole story

Letter: EDC State of Jefferson clarifies its opinions

To the community,

Conversations and rumors continue, alleging that the State of Jefferson (SOJ) is behind and/or supports the recall effort of all county supervisors. This is not true.

At a local meeting of the El Dorado County SOJ Committee, this issue was debated, followed by a vote, where an overwhelming majority voted no to joining or supporting this recall or any recall of county elected officials. However, an individual who may be a Jefferson supporter, is within their rights to sign a petition for recall, but they only do so as an individual, not as a representative of the SOJ.

It should also be noted, that the Board of Supervisors never had the opportunity to vote for or against signing the declaration/petition, supporting the SOJ, as our committee voted to pull the item from the agenda, feeling that the board was not comfortable in making that decision. Instead the committee chose the direction of securing signatures of support from El Dorado County citizens, which has been rewarding. In front of stores we have averaged one signature every 80 seconds.

The committee has been successful in acquiring thousands of signatures and will continue to do so. The main objective continues, seeking representation for rural Northern California counties.

Remember, it was a Southern California lawmaker who authored the fire fee “tax”, passed by urban legislators whose constituents are not required to pay the fee. Did you know

that the Board of Equalization has stated that the fee does not pay for fighting fire? Where do you think our fire tax money is going?

The Jefferson movement is spreading. Last month, the El Dorado County committee coordinated a town hall for Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne counties, who have now formed committees. Of the 23 counties, 11 have now qualified to file declarations with the state of California, again seeking more representation and/or to form the 51st state. El Dorado County and other remaining counties are nearing their goals, and we plan to introduce legislation in January 2016.

It is clear, that people are tired of California's unbalanced, big government, with over 570 agencies, who overregulate. Did you know our state legislators pass an average of 900 new laws every year? Will paying for the bullet train or delta tunnels benefit us? Get ready, there are more taxes on the way, with the potential for five new tax laws on the 2016 ballot.

Finally, many feel that the 51st state, with its part-time legislature, offerings of more local control and two U.S. Senators, that represent rural citizens' concerns and needs, will resolve much of what is wrong at all levels of government. It is time for appropriate representation, smaller government, less regulations and less taxes. Join us and sign a support statement. You can sign **online**.

Mike Thomas, Placerville

Grant to allow SLTPD to beef

up patrols

South Lake Tahoe Police Department has been awarded a $35,500 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety for a yearlong program of special enforcements and public awareness efforts to prevent traffic related deaths and injuries.

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department will use the money as part of the city’s ongoing commitment to keep roads safe.

After falling dramatically between 2006 and 2010, the number of people killed and injured in traffic collisions has been slowly rising. Particularly alarming, according to law enforcement, are recent increases in pedestrian and bicycle fatalities, the growing dangers of distracting technologies, and the emergence of drug-impaired driving as a major problem. This grant funding will provide opportunities to combat these and other problems such as drunken driving, speeding and crashes at intersections.

Activities that the grant will fund include:

· Educational presentations

· DUI checkpoints

· DUI saturation patrols

· Motorcycle safety enforcement

· Distracted driving enforcement

· Seat belt and child safety seat enforcement

· Bicycle and pedestrian safety enforcement

· Speed, red light, and stop sign enforcement

· Specialized DUI and drugged driving training.

8-legged boogeyman isn’t that scary

By Rick Vetter

About a decade ago, a pest control manager emailed me saying he had a big problem. At six military facilities he oversaw, strange wounds were popping up on people’s skin. The facilities’ doctors diagnosed them as spider bites. But the manager had searched the barracks, and couldn’t find any spiders.

I’m an arachnologist, and my specialty is the brown recluse spider—a creature that hides in cracks and crevices. So I told him: Forget the spiders, and have the doctors check those afflicted for a bacterial infection instead. It turned out they had methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (commonly known as “MRSA”).

People are terrified of brown recluse spiders when they shouldn’t be. In the almost 25 years I’ve been studying the creatures, the recluse, whose scientific name is Loxosceles reclusa, is a medium-sized spider, about three-eighths of an inch in body length, found throughout the central American Midwest, between Nebraska, Ohio, Georgia, and Texas. It is not impossible, but still very rare, to find them elsewhere.

But harmless brown spiders are frequently misidentified as brown recluses around the country.

In the regions of America where brown recluse spiders do exist, people have every right to be cautious. Brown recluse bites can cause significant damage to skin. If the venom causes a reaction throughout the body, a bite can be fatal,

especially in small children. But these are extreme cases. Only about 10 percent of bites have moderate effects on their victims. Fewer than one in 100 becomes systemic.

I've known Midwesterners who successfully raised kids in recluse-infested homes without incident. One family in Kansas collected more than 2,000 brown recluse spiders in their 19th century house in six months, yet lived there for 11 years before someone received a bite. The wound only caused a finger to turn red and swell a little.

So why do so many people break into a sweat at the thought of the coin-sized creature when they're far more likely to get killed by a bolt of lightning? Undoubtedly there's an element of fear of the unknown—the monster that could be hidden in any hole or crevice. And then there's the media. In the news, only extremely nasty bites are ever reported—and typically they aren't even actual bites.

Physicians have contributed to the misperception too. Misdiagnosis of skin lesions as brown recluse bites has been a chronic, widespread problem in North America since 1957, when the first article was published definitively proving that brown recluses cause them.

The myth of the brown recluse's ubiquity poses a real danger. Unlike most recluse bites, some conditions with similar symptoms are fatal—or, result in permanent damage. Conditions that are confused with recluse bites include Lyme disease, leukemia, bacterial infections like MRSA, diabetic ulcers, and cancer. When a lesion is misdiagnosed as a recluse bite, it allows a person's actual condition to continue unrestricted.

Thankfully, after decades of crusading for better awareness of just how rare brown recluses are found outside of the central Midwest, I'm finally starting to see my work have an effect. Now medical guides caution doctors to consider many possibilities before declaring a skin lesion as a bite. While

there are still questionable local reports of bites around the country, publications including Wired and Slate have cited my research to help dispel fears of recluses.

Knowing that people are starting to get the message is very satisfying to me. And it should allow you to sleep well at night, too. If you don't live in areas of the country with proven brown recluse spider populations, calm down. If you live in indigenous recluse areas, take precautions to minimize spider bite possibilities, but don't let it consume you.

Now, at least you have one less thing to dread about the world.

Rick Vetter is a retired research associate from the entomology department at UC Riverside. He has been working on brown recluse spider issues for nearly 25 years and has recently published a book, "The Brown Recluse Spider". This essay is part of The Things That Haunt Us, a project of Zócalo Public Square.

LTUSD superintendent backs out of recreation deal with LTCC, SLT; board never voted on it

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe Unified School District's board has never had the opportunity to vote on whether it wants to be part of a consortium with Lake Tahoe Community College and the city of

South Lake Tahoe that would manage and maintain ball fields.

Instead, Superintendent Jim Tarwater made the decision to back out of the deal that has been talked about since at least last spring.

“I don’t know that it is really a policy decision,” LTUSD board President Barbara Bannar told *Lake Tahoe News*. “It doesn’t involve the education of our children. When you look at what benefit the children in the school district get from being part of the JPA it was minimal at that point if any.” Plus, she cited the growing attorney costs for a reason to put an end to the discussions.

The college board and City Council both voted on and for the creation of the JPA – believing the decision to enter the joint powers agreement is a matter for electeds to decide, not the hired leaders of the organizations.

The college and city are going forward with the JPA without LTUSD. They were the original creators of the JPA, with LTUSD being a late addition – and now a recent subtraction. Separate agreements will need to be written to incorporate the K-12 district into the equation, though, because it is still a player without being JPA member.

The reason all three entities were initially creating the JPA was to consolidate the management and operation of ball fields. The recreation master plan calls for a blended approach instead of individual entities; ultimately making it easier on the user.

Less than two months ago LTUSD Superintendent Jim Tarwater was set to take the JPA to the board. He told *Lake Tahoe News* this week that the reason to forego the JPA is that the district could not afford all the maintenance that was proposed.

“They need more maintenance than what I can do,” Tarwater said.

“The board doesn’t need to vote on it,” he said of the JPA.

An agreement from earlier this year has LTUSD being required to maintain the fields on its property instead of the city doing so. In turn, the city is subsidizing this operation by $100,000 to be a community partner and recognizing adult leagues also use these fields.

Had LTUSD joined the JPA, it would have gotten the $50,000 for maintenance that comes from Measures S/R for the community play field at the college. That full amount has never been used and is carried over each year. It’s anticipated the new fields to be built adjacent to that field will use up the balance of the $50,000. This is allowable based on the original recreation measure calling for multiple fields at that location.

LTCC will now be responsible for the maintenance of the current and future fields in that area.

The current field and **proposed fields** are in part owned by all three public agencies. The JPA was to have managed all of them. Now easement agreements with LTUSD must be devised.

The JPA was a discussion item at last week’s LTUSD board meeting. The board at the time seemed open to the JPA idea. But it wasn’t an action item.

A day later Tarwater sent an email to City Manager Nancy Kerry and LTCC President Kindred Murillo saying the district would not be part of the JPA. This came after the three had a conference call that morning that Tarwater referenced. The email cites the lack of a guarantee of the baseball field immediately being built as the reason to not enter the JPA.

“There is no guarantee that a new baseball field will be built. For these and other reasons, the LTUSD has decided, after careful thought and consideration, to decline the offer to be a member of the JPA,” Tarwater wrote. While he makes it

seem like this was a district decision, it was in fact his decision alone. “One [stet] behalf of LTUSD Board of Education, I hope that the Community Play Consortium is successful.”

There is no guarantee which field will be built when because this is something the City Council must vote on. That will take place in January when it is better known what the coffers look like. The city has about $1.2 million – it may turn out to be more – to build the fields. Cost estimates are being worked on now. The goal is at a minimum one field will break ground next year.

The college is investing $1.6 million to renovate the current field, with Measure R contributing $300,000 to that cause. That, too, will occur in 2016.

LTUSD, even without being a party to the JPA, will continue to do all the scheduling for the community ball fields. It is possible the district and other entities would become JPA board members down the road.

Opinion: A place that restores my spirit

By Torie Osborn

Escape. I have come to realize that only regular and solitary immersion in a gorgeous, inspiring place keeps me sane and energized for my life’s work. I need to be gobsmacked by beauty, the kind found only in nature or art: That “thing outside ourselves that brings us to ourselves,” as poet Adrienne Rich put it. For me, it must be a place that leaves

me so filled with awe, or what some call God, that I can't even talk right for an hour.

I first discovered this hunger for wonder and beauty at Barnard College, in the heady spring of 1970. After agonizing through endless meetings on whether and how to shut down the entire university in the wake of the Kent State shootings, I was walking on Amsterdam Avenue in Morningside Heights, not too far from campus, and passed the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. I was a recovering Catholic, yet I found myself drawn inside, almost magnetically. After sitting fully still for a candle-lit hour, I felt my faith in the human capacity to change the world restored, and I felt fully charged to continue with the battles I was fighting. Over the coming months, I would return to St. John the Divine whenever I felt overflowing with frustrations or questions raised by an unsure young woman navigating a men's world of too-sure activism.

I've been fortunate to lead and to work in social movements and grassroots activism for over 50 years, from fighting the Vietnam War and leading HIV and LGBT organizations to pursuing anti-poverty work.

At 65, I've developed a number of spiritual practices that help balance my life, such as meditation and occasional quiet retreats, but I still need a regular go-to place that restores my spirit in a deeper way, in an efficient hour or two. Every few years, I feel the need to change venues; it's not a rational thing, but, rather, I just feel pulled to return over and over again to someplace different.

For a long time, I hiked the Backbone Trail in the Santa Monica Mountains, at the Tapia turnoff on Malibu Canyon road every month. A 50-or-so-minute steep initial incline discourages most hikers, so mostly it would be just me and the dipping hawks once I got up to the top, the misted ocean filling the western horizon, green canyon upon green canyon on the east. Profound silence leading out to infinity. Give me an

hour at the top of the world, and I'm ready to return to the crazy work below trying to make it better.

After visiting the then-new Getty Museum in the late 1990s, my pilgrimage route began to bring me there. For me, it doesn't matter what the exhibits are: It's the sense of place that calls to me. Whether sunny or clouded over, after that winding drive and tram ride, usually crowded, I love just wandering the gardens and the white stone and marble plaza for a weekend morning hour or so. Although much more crowded than the Santa Monica Mountains, that glorious place is the closest I've felt in this country to the magnificence of Athens' Acropolis: a restorative place of beauty and learning soaring high above daily life.

Last year, after a lifetime of social-change activism on the outside of government, I became "The Man": top policy deputy for LA County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl. It's a career-capper for me, and it's unexpectedly thrilling to tackle from this perch what I consider the big issues of the day: economic inequality, environmental sanity, civic engagement, racial justice, criminal justice reform.

Still, I need my regular escape, and it had been some time since my last venue change. But a couple of Fridays ago, I found my new place. The Broad Museum is a profusion of beauty, if you like contemporary art as I do. I love that little-known artists are featured along with those who have become household names. From the outside, the building itself is strange to one not sophisticated in architectural review – that lone stone eye peering out from a ruffled bunker seems solemn and off-putting. But enter the bunker, and climb the stairs or escalator, and suddenly the innards of the edifice open up to reveal views of the storage rooms filled with art on the middle floors – an unexpected glimpse inside that fascinates. And the top floor destination with most of the art is light and bright like the Musée D'Orsay in Paris. You get lost wandering its huge expanse, roaming a room full of

Ellsworth Kelly and then Andy Warhol and on and on and on. Usually one sees a collection of mixed modern art: a Rauschenberg next to a Keith Herring, maybe next to a Cindy Sherman. But, here, each artist gets a whole room, or much of one: The sheer magnitude of the collection astonishes. LA has received a great, great gift in this collection, free to the public.

But I found that pure magic restored my very being in a room created by the Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, an immersive work titled “The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away.” For 45 seconds, you stand alone in infinity-mirrored darkness, black water below and myriad lights all around – or stars, or souls. I emerged dazzled and speechless, and somehow filled with wonder and hope for the world.

Torie Osborn is senior policy deputy for Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl.

Study: Big animals’ extinction forever alters environment

By Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle

Extinctions of large animals – a fate that could soon befall elephants and rhinoceroses – have a cascade effect on local ecosystems, including Northern California, where many smaller animals and plants died off after mammoths were wiped out, a team of scientists has discovered.

The size of elephants, wildebeests and other big plant-eaters

makes them not only impressive and fascinating but also vital to the many species that live with and depend on them, according to a joint report by UC Berkeley, Stanford University, CSU Sacramento and the University of Chile.

“Ecological studies have shown that if you pull out a top predator or a key herbivore today, you get dramatic change in the ecosystem,” said Anthony Barnosky, a UC Berkeley professor of integrative biology and the study leader. “Our study makes it clear that in the past, such changes have lasted for thousands of years. These extinctions really do permanently change the dynamics. You can’t go back.”

Read the whole story

Letter: Overdeveloped Lake Tahoe in the works

To the community,

There are currently numerous large projects being planned that would forever change the Lake Tahoe Basin, destroying the natural beauty for future generations. The Lake Tahoe Basin is a national treasure, and we should band together to protect it from overdevelopment.

It is imperative that we preserve the wilderness areas so that generations to come can enjoy the natural scenery. In just one small area, Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, the following projects are in the planning stages:

· Approximately 94 acres in Squaw Valley to include 1,500 bedrooms and over 200,000 square feet of commercial

development, including an indoor amusement park, all constructed over a 25-year building period – The Village at Squaw Valley project is planned by KSL Capitol Partners LLC.

· A gondola from Squaw to Alpine, cutting across the Five Lakes Trail and the Granite Chief Wilderness – a project planned by KSL Capital Partners LLC, in cooperation with Troy Caldwell.

· White Wolf development – 38 homes and supporting structures in Alpine Meadows – a project planned by Troy Caldwell.

· Alpine Sierra Subdivision – a 38 home project planned by Chris Nelson of Capstone Partners LLC.

Can you imagine roads, houses and the grinding of an overhead gondola as you hike the Five Lakes Trail? Do we want future generations attending an indoor amusement park instead of enjoying the peaceful great outdoors? We must work to stop this development by private interests, motivated only by profits. This overdevelopment will destroy the very thing that has attracted people to Lake Tahoe. Let's work together to keep natural areas for the enjoyment of future generations and for the wild animals whose habitats are rapidly diminishing.

If you are interested in helping, please contact **Sierra Watch** and **Protect Granite Chief**.

Judy Bruner, Tahoe resident