Holiday giving getting under way in Truckee

Truckee Community Christmas is working to help community members in need during the coming holiday season.

Many generous locals will be donating their time to collect and distribute food, toys, and warm coats to help neighbors in the community. This nonprofit is expected to benefit approximately 215 families, 25 teenage moms and their babies, 60 low-income seniors and 70 homebound seniors.

Truckee Community Christmas offers a range of ways that caring community members can step up to help:

- Food collection barrels will be placed in local grocery stores (Safeway, Save Mart, and New Moon) on the Saturday after Thanksgiving for donations of non-perishable food items;
- New, unwrapped toys may be placed in collection bins at banks, real estate offices, schools, homeowners' association clubhouses, and businesses around town;
- Warm, clean, gently used winter coats may be dropped off at Church of the Mountains in downtown Truckee, or at Sierra Bible Church on Brockway Road;
- Donors can also provide necessities for our area seniors, whose wishes are often easy to fulfill and whose gratitude is always abundant.

In addition to donations of goods and services, Truckee Community Christmas needs help sorting, packing, and wrapping donated items at the Sierra Mountain Community Education Center on Donner Pass Road on Dec. 17-18.

If you would prefer to simply write a check to help with the effort, tax-deductible contributions can be mailed to Truckee Community Christmas, P.O. Box 2955, Truckee, CA 96160.

Comedy film being shot in El Dorado County

By Mark Anderson, Sacramento Business Journal

A local movie production is the middle of filming in Sacramento and El Dorado counties using some Hollywood talent.

The film stars model Sean O'Donnell and young but veteran actress Allie DeBerry, who at age 20 has 24 credits in movies and television productions. Veteran actor Gary Busey plays the lead character's baseball coach.

"Mamaboy" is targeted at a teen comedy audience, said Jonathan Morken, the film's publicist.

Read the whole story

Tahoe yellow cress spared from endangered list



Tahoe yellow cress only grows in the basin. Photo/USFS

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

A tiny plant that grows only along the shoreline of Lake Tahoe does not need federal protection after years of successful efforts to prevent its extinction, officials announced Wednesday.

It appears the Tahoe yellow cress now has a promising future and does not need to be listed as an endangered or threatened species, officials from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said.

Fifteen years of work by a coalition of land managers, conservationists and private property owners has "truly exemplified" the most basic function of the Endangered Species Act – cooperation toward conservation of sensitive ecosystems and the plants and animals that depend upon them to survive, said Ted Koch, supervisor of U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Reno office.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



· Live Violence Free and Lake Tahoe Humane Society are raising awareness of the effects of domestic violence on South Lake Tahoe pets through the Purple Paw Project on Oct. 10 from 11am-3pm at Bijou Community Park in the Kiwanis Gazebo.

· Tahoe Unleashed Dog Park's grand opening is Oct. 18 from 1-3pm at the North Tahoe Regional Park in Tahoe Vista.

· Diamond Peak made Red Bull's list of the 9 Most Magical Places to Ski on Earth.

· Basecamp Hotel in South Lake Tahoe (4143 Cedar Ave.) will host its inaugural Oktoberfest at its beer garden Oct. 10 from 2-8pm. Patrons who arrive dressed in Oktoberfest costumes will receive a complimentary beer ticket.

· A video depicting Nevada highway winter snow removal on Mt. Rose Highway has been named a winner in the national Faces of Transportation competition sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

EDC explorers rack up awards in state contest

The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post 457 returned home winners last month from the Riverside Police Explorer Competition.

The group competed against more than 25 of the top explorer

teams from throughout California.

They took home the following awards:

- First – Unknown Risk Traffic Stop Scenario
- First – Officer Down Scenario
- Third – Individual female explorer physical agility-obstacle course (Explorer Deputy Rachel Dehlinger)
- Fifth – Crime Scene Investigation Scenario
- Fifth – Individual male explorer physical agility-obstacle course (Explorer Deputy Steven Ross).

The team was made up of Morgan Sears, Courtney Granade, Rachel Dehlinger, Laura Russell, Faith Mulholland, Stefanie Davidson, Alan Szarmach and Steven Ross.

Explorers demonstrated their skills and were evaluated in several reality based scenarios including active shooter, pedestrian stop, officer down, emergency negotiations, domestic violence, felony traffic stop, unknown risk traffic stop, crime scene investigation, airsoft shooting, building search, and report writing.

Rescuers find missing Bay Area man in Incline woods



A Bay Area man is carried out of the wilderness in Incline. Photo/Provided

A Bay Area man was found barefoot, dehydrated and suffering from exposure this week by Washoe County sheriff's search and rescuers in Incline Village.

At approximately 7:30am Oct. 5 deputies responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle abandoned on a dirt fire road off Allison Drive in Incline Village. Deputies found evidence that someone may have left the vehicle and wandered into the wilderness.

They determined the vehicle belonged to Ivan Cooper of San Leandro who had recently been reported missing by his daughter.

Searchers located Cooper in the forest about a half a mile from the vehicle lying in a bed of pine needles. They carried him from the woods and he was then transported to a local hospital. He is expected to make a full recovery.

"I'm told that Mr. Cooper may not have survived the night given his condition," Sheriff Chuck Allen said in a statement.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

SLT council to consider censuring Conner

By Kathryn Reed

The South Lake Tahoe City Council will consider censuring Councilmember JoAnn Conner at a special meeting on Oct. 19.

Mayor Hal Cole called for the meeting to address the behavior and language of Conner toward multiple city employees as well as her interactions with colleagues. He said she is creating a hostile work environment.

Cole told *Lake Tahoe News* the exact wording of the agenda is being worked out, but that two items will likely be on it:

1. A vote to support City Manager Nancy Kerry's decision to ban Conner from having one-on-one access with any staff member.

   "We don't have to do this. I'm concerned with what I'm hearing and reading that JoAnn is making this personal between her and Nancy. It is not personal. It is about protecting the city. It sends a message that it is not just Nancy doing this, that we concur," Cole said.

2. There will be a resolution brought forward to censure Conner.

If the majority of the council votes to censure Conner, she will still be able to do her job. It is essentially a vote to say they object to her behavior. At the local level impeachment is not an option by the council.

"When I feel my employees have been threatened, I need to protect them and the city coffers," Cole told *LTN*.

Last month Kerry told the council she would no longer allow

Conner to interact with staff and vice versa.

Conner's abusive behavior has been the norm for the nearly three years she has been on the council, according to city staff. Non-city staff has told *Lake Tahoe News* many stories about Conner's vulgarity and hostility. Those interactions, though, point to a pattern of behavior, but are not anything the council can address.

In February the council had an open meeting during the weekend strategic planning session in which the five aired concerns about Conner's behavior. Tears were shed and an honest dialog was had. Later that weekend Conner called it healing. The other four believed Conner when she said change would be forthcoming.

Cole said Conner took some responsibility in February for her behavior, but since then she has reverted to her old tactics of bullying.

Those tactics reportedly include abusive, threatening, repulsive and belittling comments. This, by definition, is harassment.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission says harassment is when "the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive."

The EEOC goes on to say, "The victim does not have to be the person harassed, but can be anyone affected by the offensive conduct."

Conner – as are all the council members – is the boss of the city manager and city attorney. They in turn have an obligation to protect their respective employees or they could be held individually liable. Stopping the interaction between Conner and staff is a form of protection.

Conner was not available for comment late Wednesday. However, she has been active on social media in pleading her case. On Facebook she posted, “I still have no information on the specific charges, just lots of innuendo and hearsay, therefore I cannot explain it, defend it, or change it.” She claims her challenge of the sign permit fee has something to do with what is going on. Cole said the sign permit is irrelevant to what is going on.

She sent a letter to a number of people on Oct. 7, which was forwarded to *LTN*. In it she begs for support.

The email said, “I believe this is a power play to silence the voice of the people. I have always been different from the other Council Members, and am the most active advocate for the ‘little people,’ veterans, seniors, and small business owners.

“I believe they do not like that I do not automatically defer to Nancy Kerry or go along with their agenda. They cannot attack me on my work, as I have accomplished too many good things for the people, so I believe they are attempting to attack me on innuendo and hearsay, to tarnish my reputation, so I will either quit or not run again in 2016.”

At no point does she address the allegations made against her about her conduct. She will have an opportunity in 11 days to do so at the special meeting.

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Notes:

· The meeting is Oct. 19 at 3pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

Opinion: Does pre-K make any difference?

By David L. Kirp, New York Times

Dose preschool work? Although early education has been widely praised as the magic bullet that can transport poor kids into the education mainstream, a major new study raises serious doubts.

Since 2004, Tennessee has offered state-subsidized prekindergarten, enrolling more than 18,000 of the state's neediest 4-year-olds. An early evaluation showed that, as you'd expect, youngsters who attended pre-K made substantial gains in math, language and reading. But, startlingly, the gains had evaporated by the end of kindergarten.

Those first results were alarming, and worse was yet to come.

A just-released study tracks the same kids to third grade. There's still no evidence that the children benefited cognitively from preschool. They may be better socialized to school life – a skill, emphasized in preschool, that may well bring long-term benefits – but many of them haven't mastered the three Rs. That's terrible news, since being a proficient reader by third grade is widely regarded as the best predictor of high school graduation.



Read the whole story

Douglas County electeds OK 2 tax hikes

Douglas County commissioners this week voted for two of the three tax measures that were before them.

The sales tax and gasoline taxes were approved, while the utility operator fee was not. This means sales tax will go from 7.1 percent to 7.35 percent.

The fuel tax is 5 cents, which is in addition to the 4 cents per gallon excise tax on fuel that was implemented by commissioners in 2001.

The second reading for the two ordinances is tentatively scheduled for Dec. 3 at 1pm in Minden. For them to be approved the gas tax requires a simple majority, while a two-thirds or four commissioners must say yes to the sales tax.

There will be a public hearing about them at the Nov. 19, 1:30pm meeting in Stateline. Also at that meeting a business impact statement will also be reviewed to determine whether the gas tax will impose a direct and significant economic burden upon a business or will directly restrict the formation, operation or expansion of a business.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

West Slope day care provider arrested

A West Slope day care provider was arrested Oct. 6 on suspicion of child endangerment and being under the influence of a controlled substance.

Country Baby Daycare, a private business located at a residence in Shingle Springs, is owned by Brigitte McAdams, 63.

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies said, "McAdams displayed the objective signs and symptoms of being under the influence of a central nervous stimulant. McAdams was unable to account for the number of children that were in her care originally stating that there were seven children inside the residence. Deputies determined that there were only five children inside the residence.

Deputies said they found alcohol and other items considered dangerous to children that the youngsters could have accessed.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report