Letter: Unwanted drugs collected in S. Tahoe

To the community,

The South Tahoe Drug Free Coalition collaborated with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office and the South Tahoe Police Department for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Sept. 26, which saw approximately 50 pounds of unwanted prescription medication turned in to authorities.

The event gave South Lake Tahoe residents an opportunity to dispose of all unwanted, unused, or expired medications for free and no questions asked. No liquids or needles were accepted, and residents were asked to remove all personal information from bottles before dropping off medications.

The Drug Take Back events are the safest and most responsible way to dispose of unwanted and expired medication to protect your family and the environment. Every year nearly half a million kids under the age of 5 get into household prescription medications and result in poisonings. Without proper disposal, medications that are flushed can cause serious harm to the environment and leach chemicals into the water supply.

The South Tahoe Drug Free Coalition has installed a permanent drug take back bin in the South Tahoe Police Department lobby for anyone unable to attend the Take Back event on Saturday who wishes to dispose of old medications. They installed the box last year and are currently looking for new locations for additional drop off bins.

The South Tahoe Drug Free Coalition's mission is to mobilize the community to prevent and reduce youth substance use. They have had many successes in the last year including the creation of a Brief Intervention Program for the South Tahoe

Middle and High schools, which was adopted by the school district this year. The BIP program allows suspended students to participate in alcohol and drug prevention education activities during their suspension period, rather than simply being sent home from school.

The coalition meets the first Tuesday of each month in the Al Tahoe room at the South Lake Tahoe Boys and Girls Club on Lyons Avenue from 3:30 to 5pm. For more information, contact me at 530.541.2445 or kmagoon@tahoeyouth.org.

Kelsey Magoon, Drug Free Coalition coordinator

Youth arrested in deaths of 3 found in burned EDC cabin

By Associated Press

PLACERVILLE — A 16-year-old boy has been arrested in the killings of his father, the father's fiance and their 7-year-old son, whose burned bodies were found in a cabin on the West Slope.

El Dorado County Sheriff John D'Agostini said at a news conference that 16-year-old Nolan Buchanan was arrested at his high school Thursday. District Attorney Vern Pierson said at the news conference that Buchanan will be charged with murder as an adult.

Authorities found the bodies in the aftermath of the fire on Sept. 13 at the family's cabin in Greenwood.

The remains were identified as 37-year-old Benicia resident Adam Buchanan, his fiance Molly McAfee, and their son, Gavin.

It wasn’t clear whether Nolan Buchanan has an attorney yet who could comment on his case.

Customers can expect to pay more for water

By Associated Press

With all the questions surrounding the nation’s water supplies and systems, one thing seems certain: Customers will be paying more to keep their taps flowing.

Rates have been shooting up nationwide in drought-stricken states and in cities trying to upgrade their aging infrastructure. Experts say the trend is sure to accelerate as the cost of water, treatment and delivery comes into line with how essential water is to our daily lives.

The price for tap water still amounts to about a half-cent per gallon. Elected leaders have long fought to maintain cheap rates, but those prices don’t cover the full expense of finding and treating new water sources or upgrading old pumps and pipes.

“The fact of the matter is, water rates are going to have to increase to reflect the cost of having this system that delivers it to every faucet in your house,” said Greg DiLoreto, past president of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The Government Accountability Office said in a report last year that current rates were not enough to pay for the total

cost of supplying water, let alone making needed upgrades.

“The fact of the matter is, water rates are going to have to increase to reflect the cost of having this system that delivers it to every faucet in your house.”

A year ago, the average monthly household water bill was just over $34 based on an average usage of 7,480 gallons, according to a survey conducted by the American Water Works Association. That’s up more than 40 percent since 2008, or $10 per month.

“Compare that to your cellphone bill or cable television bill or power bill or gas bill,” DiLoreto said.

Rates have been rising across the country:

• Baltimore this summer saw the last of three annual rate increases that pushed bills up by about 40 percent so the city could upgrade its sewer and water systems. The city has begun shutting off service to users with long-overdue bills, which total an estimated $40 million.

• New Orleans residents will pay an average of $115 a month for water and sewer in 2020 after eight years of rate increases that will more than double their bills to reconstruct the city’s water-delivery network, which was already aging when Hurricane Katrina flooded the city. As word of the rate increase spreads, more people are asking for assistance through a municipal program that helps pay their water bills. The number of applicants has increased from about 80 per month five years ago to 250 per month this year.

• In Northern California, water rates are scheduled to double in the neighboring towns of Woodland and Davis. The towns decided to build a pipeline to draw drinking water from the Sacramento River because minerals, salts, nitrates and other contaminants have degraded the groundwater.

Water managers say it was clear the cities needed another

drinking source.

Davis resident John Munn said he worries that larger water bills on top of the need for money to improve the city's sewer system and repair its roads will make it tough to live there on a middle-class income.

"When you add them all up, I think it's going to hit people pretty hard," he said.

Many cities in drought-stricken California, including San Diego and San Francisco, also are looking at raising water rates The reason is a bit of an odd twist: Residents are conserving more water because of the governor's statewide conservation mandate, and that means less revenue is coming into the water districts.

So far, rate increases don't seem to be generating widespread outrage – or even much notice – in the communities that have enacted them.

Bill Stowe, general manager of Des Moines Water Works in Iowa, said he was surprised by the lack of pushback when the utility raised its rates by 7 percent this year. What concerns him is the impact on low-income residents.

"We've got some customers that when you talk about a 10 percent rate increase, that's maybe a decision about whether they can keep their cat or whether they turn up their air conditioning the way it should be turned up," he said. "Those are tough decisions."

California water conservation slows slightly

By Matt Stevens, Los Angeles Times

Californians cut back their urban water use in August by 27 percent compared with the same month in 2013, state regulators announced Thursday.

The reduction was slightly less than the 31 percent decline recorded in July, but on par with a 27 percent effort in June.

It was also enough to remain in compliance with Gov. Jerry Brown’s restrictions for the third consecutive month. Earlier this year, Brown ordered cities and towns across California to slash their water consumption by 25 percent to help combat the effects of a four-year drought.

Read the whole story

S. Tahoe man indicted in Vallejo kidnapping

A South Lake Tahoe man was indicted today by a federal grand jury in the Vallejo kidnapping case that police officers there once called a hoax.

Matthew D. Muller, 38, faces one count of kidnapping.



Matthew Muller

Last month Muller pleaded no contest to charges stemming from an unrelated Dublin home invasion. He faces 11 years in prison for that crime.

According to court documents, Muller on March 23 broke into a residence in Vallejo, restrained the male occupant and kidnapped the female occupant. He allegedly demanded $15,000 in ransom, and kept the woman for two days before releasing her in Huntington Beach.

“The bizarre circumstances of the events in Vallejo in March complicated the investigation of this matter,” U.S. Attorney Benjamin Wagner said Oct. 1 in a statement. “But the Vallejo Police Department, the FBI, and our law enforcement allies in Alameda County have done excellent work in recent months to bring this investigation to a conclusion.”

Muller is being held in the Sacramento County Jail. He is scheduled to be arraigned Oct. 5.

If convicted, Muller could face life in prison and a $250,000 fine.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

WCSO putting on community picnic in Incline

The Washoe County Sheriff’s Office will host its annual Community Picnic at Incline Village on Oct. 4 from 10am-2pm.

The picnic is free and all residents of Washoe County are invited. It will be at the Aspen Grove/Village Center picnic area on Lakeshore Boulevard.

Highlights will include:

- Washoe County Sheriff’s Office RAVEN helicopter and Marine 9 patrol boat.
- Static displays from all areas of the sheriff’s office including the Forensic Science Division, SWAT, Consolidated Bomb Squad, K-9, Search and Rescue, Motors Unit, Detention Response Team, C.E.R.T. and Washoe County Reserve Deputies.
- Child identification kits.
- Classic cars.
- Displays from partner agencies including the Incline Village General Improvement District, North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, Bear League, Incline Village Community Hospital, Washoe County Animal Services and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.
- Nevada Highway Patrol’s bicycle safety program.
- Plenty of hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, cookies and ice cream.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



· The South Lake Tahoe chapter of Girl Scouts is having an informational meeting for perspective members on Oct. 8 from 6-7pm at St. Theresa's Globin Hall, 1041 Lyons Ave. For more info, call 800.222.5406.

· Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships' film festival is Oct. 23-24 at the Tahoe Art Haus & Cinema and Moe's Original BBQ in Tahoe City. For more info, go **online**.

· Sierra Nevada College faculty members Suzanne Roberts, Steven Church, and Peter Mountford and MFA students Brandon Lingle and Wyl Villacres have essays selected for the Notable Mentions section of this year's "Best American Essays", an anthology of nonfiction essays selected each year by a guest editor and published by Houghton Miffflin.

· Mammoth ski resort expects to open Nov. 11.

· Facts about tourism in Nevada: 1) Tourism employs approximately 474,000 Nevadans, making up 29 percent of the workforce; 2) 53.4 million travelers visited Nevada last year (up 2.6 over previous year); 3) In 2014, tourism spending exceeded $62 billion, up from $59.4 billion in 2014.

Caesars' CEO shocked with lack of casino innovation

By Associated Press

New Caesars Entertainment Corp. CEO Mark Frissora says he is shocked at the casino industry's lack of innovation in appealing to younger would-be gamblers.

Frissora joined Caesars in February after leading car-rental company Hertz and assumed the CEO role in July.

Speaking at the Global Gaming Expo in Las Vegas on Wednesday, Frissora says Caesars is testing a new environment – a casino within a casino – on the Las Vegas Strip to watch how millennials react.

He says the company is also experimenting with changing traditional slot machine playing by involving social game features such as leaderboards that track high-point players.

Frissora says the industry has room to grow particularly in oversaturated casino markets in parts of the country where gambling has exploded by appealing more to millenials.

Hwy. 89 project eliminates recreation parking

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Skiers, boarders and snowshoers are hopeful a looming El Nino could give the Sierra Nevada its biggest winter snowpack in years.

But on the West Shore they're also fretting about how they're going to access all that powder once it lands on popular backcountry peaks in and around places such as Desolation Wilderness.

That’s because a Highway 89 improvement project aimed at reducing sediment runoff into the lake gobbled up an untold number of unpaved, roadside parking spots.

The project by Caltrans included landscaping touches that narrowed areas along the road that in previous years served as parking for skiers and others who use the backcountry for winter sports.

“What is happening is some of the pullouts people use to park for backcountry skiing are being eliminated,” said Bob Rowen, chairman of the Snowlands Network, which advocates on behalf human powered, winter recreation. “It is the same as if somebody’s favorite beach were closed or somebody’s favorite hiking trail.”

Read the whole story

Big rig crashes close eastbound I-80

A major crash involving five big rigs has closed eastbound Interstate 80 in the Castle Peak area.

Caltrans is advising motorists to expect major travel delays while emergency crews work to clear the area. There is no estimated time of reopening the highway.

Authorities are turning back all big rigs at Kingvale. Cars and small trucks are being detoured to old Highway 40 in the Soda Springs area.