

LTWC bursting with critters; ready to move

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – In the nearly 37 years that Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care has been nursing wild animals back to health, about 24,000 have come through the doors, with approximately 15,000 being able to return to the wild.

The South Shore facility is the only one in California certified to handle first-year bear cubs. They set a record for caring for 13 this year.

“One of the major problems we had this year is we had a lot of different species we couldn’t put together,” Tom Millham, who with his wife, Cheryl, runs LTWC.

It meant being creative with cages and having to release some animals sooner than they liked. But soon these issues will be a thing of the past.

Last week LTWC submitted an application to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency for a special use permit to move to 27 acres on the corner of Al Tahoe Boulevard and Pioneer Trail. Marjorie Springmeyer owns the land. A lease with an option to buy agreement is in the works.

The cost of the first phase will be about \$5.5 million, with the entire center being close to \$15 million. Some of the money is from Barbara Hartoonian, which she left in her will. The rest is from donations – which are always welcomed.



Tom and Cheryl Millham talk Nov. 11 about caring for wildlife and their future plans. Photo/LTN

The Millhams founded the renowned rehabilitation center in 1978. Last week they spoke at the Lake Tahoe Historical Society meeting at Camp Richardson Lodge about their experiences with the various animals as well as their plans to break ground in May on the center in South Lake Tahoe that would be open to the public.

Today LTWC is in the Millhams' back yard. It's too small to let people in other than those working to care for the animals. Plus, the whole goal is to make sure the animals don't get too familiar with people.

It's not easy work to care for wildlife. Baby birds eat 14 hours a day. It's important to keep them fed because by day 25 they are ready to leave the nest.

While there are plenty of people who find coyotes to be a nuisance at best, Cheryl Millham said, "They do have a place."

She added, "We have predators that keep our area clean. It cuts down on disease."

Millham told the story of how a few years ago a dog from out of town came to the basin with distemper. This spread to the raccoon population, which resulted in the death of hundreds of the animals. She said just now the raccoon population is coming back.

Millham said the Mexican freetail bats are misunderstood animals.

“They eat mosquitoes, which are the most disease-carrying insect,” Millham said.

While mountain lions are not common in the Lake Tahoe Basin, LTWC was instrumental a few years ago in capturing one that was wandering around the Tahoe Keys. Once it was tranquilized, veterinarian Kevin Willitts found multiple porcupine quills in her. Some were so deep surgery was necessary. She was released in Hope Valley.

It was Li'l Smokey who was rescued in 2008 from a fire near Redding that led LTWC to get webcams in the various cages. The demand was so great to see pictures of the cub who made national headlines that the Millhams put in the technology.

It wasn't a given the little guy would survive. Millham said his paws were like “burned steak.”

“You could see the fascia. He lost his toenails. You could see the bone,” she said.

Someone asked about the plethora of rabbits that have been seen on the South Shore in the last few years. Mostly it's the mountain cottontail that is here. Cheryl Millham said the mild winters would allow the breed to populate and thrive.

LTWC offers training each May for people to be volunteers. More info is online.

Opinion: EDC's misplaced trust

By Larry Weitzman

After at least a dozen columns describing the mismanagement of El Dorado County business by county Chief Administrative Officer Terri Daly, the CAO resigned under pressure from the Board of Supervisors, who finally recognized that an immediate change was necessary.

The light bulbs finally went off when the BOS recognized that because of the actions of the CAO, EDC was facing perhaps a \$100 million deficit over the next five years, among other issues. It was beyond time for Daly's departure.



Larry Weitzman

But Daly still had friends on the BOS in the likes of Norma Santiago and Ron Briggs. On the day of Daly's resignation (I wasn't present in the closed session, but it must have been "resign or get fired") Santiago said after saying the BOS accepted her resignation, "Terri Daly was a loyal champion of El Dorado County employees." Santiago still doesn't get it.

First, according to the VanDermyden Maddux report, departments under the CAO, such as the Community Development Agency had some of the worst employee ratings. According to the report's data, if there were a climate of fear, it was located there. Perhaps Santiago thought she was a loyal champion of the

employees because she hired lots of them and gave them big raises. But the CAO's job is not to be the loyal champion of the employees; the CAO is supposed to be the loyal champion of the taxpayers and residents of EDC. Daly didn't work for the employees, she worked for us; we are the ones who paid her salary and benefits of a quarter million dollars annually.

Daly in the last two years of her wasteful, spending tenure hired about 170 employees, most of them given jobs that did nothing for the citizens, with the plurality of them in her departments. Yes, Santiago was actually telling the truth; that is how you buy loyalty. If that wasn't enough, it was Daly who gave most county employees a 15 percent raise during a time when most wages and incomes across America were stagnant or declining. They are less than they were six years ago. That's how you buy loyalty. Hopefully, the new BOS will understand their No. 1 priority is the taxpayers and residents of EDC.

If Daly were the loyal champion of EDC employees, why did she fire three good employees or otherwise force them out of the county. Greg Sly, Randy Rafoth and Larry Roth were all competent employees serving the residents of EDC, but as soon as they crossed Daly or the ACAO Kim Kerr, they were gone. Maybe Daly realized that their loyalty was to the people EDC and not to the CAO. Big mistake. Perhaps Daly was afraid of their competence.

Then there was a column in *Lake Tahoe News* on July 4 signed by the four members of the BOS. According to CAO records, this column praising Daly's performance as CAO, was ghost written by Stephanie McCorkle. Who hired McCorkle? That's right, Daly on a one-year \$25,000 contract. Who is McCorkle? According to the contract executed by Daly and McCorkle, she was "to provide expert communication consulting service for the Chief Administrative Officer." In other word, McCorkle was a PR person. One of her first jobs was to write the aforementioned column.

Billing statements obtained pursuant to the California Public Records Act showed an eight hour billing on June 23, 2014, that said, "CAO communication priority meeting. Met with Norma, Brian and CAO. Drafted op/ed for Mountain Democrat to clarify support for CAO from board."

Three other subsequent items also reflected significant work (almost two dozen hours) on this column. The column was a huge puff piece as it was mostly filled with half-truths at best.

If things were so good, why did Daly become such a pariah and had to be effectively terminated by the BOS only four months later? That's because CAO Daly wasn't a loyal champion of the residents and taxpayers of EDC. Her power trip included excessive hiring, huge pay raises and an inability to administer county business such as purchasing motor graders. Daly was also in charge of a department that violated the California Public Contract Law at least 48 times (it appears ACAO Kerr who was head of the CDA is equally responsible as she signed most of the change orders) and in the forcing of good employees to leave.

As a result of Daly's spending she has left EDC in an untenable fiscal position with at least five years of projected budget deficits (especially since claiming that she was responsible in the July 4 column for four balanced budgets in a row) does not make up for being a loyal champion of EDC employees. That is supposed to be the job of county labor representative Local No. 1, Jere Copeland.

How soon will Santiago and Ron Briggs, who supported Daly and more than likely the July 4 column, publish a column retracting what they said in that column? Hopefully the new BOS will do a better job of vetting prospective employees. A simple Google search could have prevented the problems that have been created over the last four years.

News flash: It was reported by a high ranking respected public

official that Kim Kerr has resigned her position as ACA0 on Nov. 12 effective Dec. 26.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Douglas libraries to close for Thanksgiving

he Douglas County Public Library in Minden and Zephyr Cove will be closed Nov. 27-28.

Both libraries will close at 5pm Nov. 26.

The Minden library will resume its regular schedule on Nov. 29 at 10am. The Zephyr Cove library will reopen Nov. 29 at 9am.

Holiday bazaar benefits Zawadisha Fund

Tahoe-based nonprofit Zawadisha Fund is teaming up again with Bona Fide Books to offer an opportunity to shop locally while having global impact this holiday season.

Connect with contemporary local artists, crafters and entrepreneurs at the 4th annual Zawadisha Holiday Bazaar on Small Business Saturday: Nov. 29 from 10am-3pm at Bona Fide Books, 1069 Magua St., Meyers. Entrance is free.

There will be modern African jewelry and housewares from

Zawadisha; soaps, sponges and skincare from Tahoe Mountain Soap Co.; hand-crafted jewelry using Swarovski Crystals, pearls, genuine leather, stones and shells from BellaDrops; ceramics by Francis Rider; velvet pumpkins and acorns from Wildwood DIY Boutique; nourishing wellness and beauty products from LiveStock; mixed media jewelry and gifts from Squirrelsnest Boutique; eclectic items from Rear View Miracles; locally published books from Bona Fide Books; tea and health-centered ceramics from Wellness Arts by Erin Crow; bullet crystal necklaces and 14k filled delicate geometric pieces by Cat Makes Things; handmade glass bead, leather and sterling silver jewelry by Range of Light Designs; and driftwood art-chimes from Tahoe Schnorkelwood.

More information about vendors and the event may be found .

Zawadisha is a nonprofit social enterprise whose missions to empower, entrust, and expanded opportunities for women.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Devin Middlebrook has been hired by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency as an environmental education specialist. He replaces Kristi Boosman. Lucia Maloney has been hired as an associate planner, replacing Shay Navarro who took another position within TRPA. Bruce Barr has been hired as the forester to replace Megan Scheeline.

- Mammoth Mountain is open.
- Truckee Donner Public Utility District customers may track real-time water usage data online.

- Gary Bell of Sierra Cycle Works is featured in the November issue of *Bike* magazine.
 - A series of brown bag lunches this fall will focus on innovations in transportation, the environment, and community investment. The first event is a Nov. 19 noon-1pm webinar on electric assist bikes and transportation policy. All lunches are at the Lake Tahoe Community College, Room D108. For more details, go online.
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Study: Regular pot smokers have shrunken brains

By Melissa Healy, Los Angeles Times

Experimental mice have been telling us this for years, but pot-smoking humans didn't want to believe it could happen to them: Compared with a person who never smoked marijuana, someone who uses marijuana regularly has, on average, less gray matter in his orbital frontal cortex, a region that is a key node in the brain's reward, motivation, decision-making and addictive behaviors network.

More ambiguously, in regular pot smokers, that region is better connected than it is in non-users: the flow of signal traffic is speedier to other parts of that motivation and decision-making network, including across the superhighway of "white matter" that connects the brain's hemispheres.

The researchers who conducted the study speculate that the orbital frontal cortex's greater level of "connectedness" –

which is especially pronounced in people who started smoking pot early in life – may be the brain's way of compensating for the region's under-performing gray matter.

Read the whole story

'Peanutcracker' in Carson City

Sierra Nevada Ballet will be performing "Peanutcracker – The Story in a Nut Shell" on Dec. 6 in the Bob Boldrick Theater in the Carson City Community Center at 2 and 7pm.

Based on Lev Ivanov's original ballet "The Nutcracker," "Peanutcracker" is a shorter, 45-minute narrated version that is designed for families with younger children to introduce them to ballet.

This year's performances will feature Malik Berry from the Dance Theatre of Harlem and Chloe Felesina from Ballet X and the Sierra Nevada Ballet professional company. More than 50 local children will perform.

The Youth Theater Carson City Showstoppers will present classic Christmas songs before the 2pm event and the Carson City Symphony's Strings In The Schools group will perform holiday music prior to the 7pm performance. The pre-show entertainment starts 45 minutes before each event.

Ticket prices start at \$6 for youth (15 and under); all other tickets are \$11 and can be reserved by calling Gina Nelson at 775.220.4452 or emailing gina704@msn.com. Tickets are also on sale on-site before each

show.

Rethinking John Muir's relevancy

By Lousi Sahagun, Los Angeles Times

John Muir is the patron saint of environmentalism, an epic figure whose writings of mystical enlightenment attained during lone treks in California's wilderness glorified individualism, saved Yosemite and helped establish the national park system.

As the first president of the Sierra Club, Muir shaped enduring perceptions about how the wild world should be prioritized, protected and managed.

But now some critics are arguing that the world has changed so much in the century since his death that Muir has gone the way of wheelwrights.

He is no longer relevant.

Read the whole story

Desire to eat 'clean' food

can become an obsession

By Sumathi Reddy, Wall Street Journal

The growing interest in eating healthy can at times have unhealthy consequences.

Some doctors and registered dietitians say they are increasingly seeing people whose desire to eat pure or “clean” food—from raw vegans to those who cut out multiple major food sources such as gluten, dairy and sugar—becomes an all-consuming obsession and leads to ill health. In extreme cases, people will end up becoming malnourished.

Some experts refer to the condition as orthorexia nervosa, a little-researched disorder that doesn’t have an official diagnosis in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or DSM, considered the bible of psychiatric illnesses. Often, individuals with orthorexia will exhibit symptoms of recognized conditions such as obsessive-compulsive disorder or end up losing unhealthy amounts of weight, similar to someone with anorexia.

Read the whole story

Heavenly, Kirkwood give back to community

Forty-nine local organizations and projects got a monetary boost from Heavenly and Kirkwood mountain resorts.

The checks were given out under Vail Resorts EpicPromise. The dollar amounts that entities received was not disclosed.

Recipients for the 2014-15 grants cycle include:

Amador Community College Foundation, American Youth Soccer Organization Region 282, Austin's House, Barton Hospital Foundation, Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe, Bread & Broth, CASA El Dorado, Christmas Cheer, Clean Tahoe, Diamond Valley Elementary, Discovery Blind Sports, Douglas County School District – Adapted Physical Education Program, Douglas County Education Foundation, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Folsom High School PTA, Heavenly Valley Ski Foundation, Kids & Horses, Kirkwood Ski Education Foundation, Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department, Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition, Lake Tahoe Community College Foundation, Lake Tahoe Education Foundation, Lake Tahoe Environmental Magnet School, Lake Tahoe Humane Society, Lake Tahoe's Shining Stars, League to Save Lake Tahoe, Live Violence Free, Mefiyi Foundation, Minden Rotary Club Foundation, Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Foundation, Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School, Rite of Passage, Sierra Avalanche Center, Sierra House Elementary, Ski Duck, SOS Outreach, South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center, South Tahoe Amateur Hockey Association, South Tahoe High School Nordic Ski Team, South Tahoe High School Sober Grad Task Force, South Tahoe Middle School, South Tahoe Middle School Nordic Ski Team, Sugar Pine Foundation, Tahoe Arts Project, Tahoe Fund, Tahoe Institute for Natural Science, Tahoe Magic, Tahoe Rim Trail Association, and Tahoe Youth & Family Services.