

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe is having a fall plant sale at Sierra House Elementary School on Sept. 9 from 9am-noon.
 - The Douglas County library in Minden will be closed Sept. 4.
 - According to the *Reno Gazette-Journal*, "If we took all of the snowmelt and rain that enters Lake Tahoe each year, it would take 118 years to match the amount expected to fall from Hurricane Harvey in Texas."
 - Construction on the Highway 28 bike path near Incline Village will be suspended for the Labor Day weekend. Construction will resume Sept. 5 at 7am.
 - The South Lake Tahoe Boys & Girls Club annual golf tournament is Oct. 16 at Edgewood Tahoe. For more info, email kongoy@bgclt.org.
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Applications available for FBI Teen Academy

This fall the FBI Sacramento field office will offer high school juniors who attend school within the 34 counties the office serves to gain insight into the 109-year-old law enforcement agency at its FBI Teen Academy.

The class will be Nov. 17 at the field office headquarters in Roseville.

The one-day academy offers students a unique view into the FBI and its mission, values, investigations, partnerships with local, state and federal law enforcement, eligibility requirements, many career available paths, and more. Throughout the day, participants engage in activities and discussions with FBI personnel. Discussion topics may include cyber safety, terrorism, active shooter situations, cyber investigations, and civil rights investigations. Activities may include simulated experiences with the FBI's evidence response team, special agent bomb technicians, and special weapons and tactics (SWAT) team.

Students will also engage in candid conversations about online communication and its risks as well as the lifestyle choices required to be eligible for careers at the FBI.

Applying to and attending the FBI Teen Academy class is free.

The deadline to apply is Oct. 12. The application is **online**.

Dems, enviro groups ready for battle over monuments

By Gary Martin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

WASHINGTON — Democrats are charging the Trump administration of using a politically driven process to undermine protections to public lands as environmental groups gird for a legal battle to stop the shrinking of national monuments under review — including two in Nevada.

Gold Butte National Monument and Basin and Range National Monument were on a list of 22 national monuments designated by

presidents since Jan. 1, 1996, that President Trump directed by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to review.

Trump ordered the review to determine whether designations under the 1906 Antiquities Act should be rescinded or scaled back.

Read the whole story

Slinkard Fire at 6,241 acres, no containment

Updated 4:05pm:

The Slinkard Fire is estimated to have burned 6,241 acres, with zero percent containment as of Thursday afternoon.

The fire has burned to Highway 395 and crossed Highway 89 to the north.

The power outage in the Coleville-Topaz-Walker area due to fire burning poles and wire. Approximately 30 customers had power restored along 395 south of the state line near agricultural inspection station.

“Fire continues to threaten utility structures. Crews on the scene ready to make repairs when allowed access. Positioning generator near site for possible use if outage is multi-day,” Liberty Utilities spokeswoman Kathy Carter said. An extended power outage is likely.

Wednesday night, fire crews focused on the eastern flank of the fire along Highway 395 and engine crews were dedicated to structure protection in northern Topaz. There have been no

injuries and no structures lost at this time.

Topaz has been evacuated north of Highway 89 to the Nevada state line.

North of the fire, Highway 395 is closed in both directions at Highway 208. South of the fire, 395 is closed in both directions at Highway 182 in Bridgeport. In Topaz Ranch Estates, Highway 208 is now open.

The fire is located in Slinkard Valley and the west slope of Antelope Valley, west of Topaz in Mono County.

Lightning started the fire on Aug. 29.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Ceremony in SLT to remember Sept. 11 tragedy

Members of South Lake Tahoe's American Legion Post 795 and the Ladies Auxiliary are hosting a commemorative ceremony to honor the victims and first responders of Sept. 11, 2001.

The ceremony will take place at 11am on Sept. 11 at the American Legion Hall, 2748 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe. Refreshments will be served.

This year marks the 16th anniversary of the attacks on the World Trade Center, Pentagon and airline flight takeovers.

On Sept. 11, American Legion posts across the country will honor the innocent victims who lost their lives along with American military service personnel who have died in the war

against terrorism.

The ceremony will also recognize local emergency service personnel.

3-day food extravaganza at Northstar

The 32nd Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival will be at Northstar on Sept. 8-10.

There will be more than 19 unique festival events, from yoga and wine tasting to outdoor movies to hands-on cooking demonstrations with celebrity chefs.

Sessions can be experienced in a la carte fashion or go all three days.

For details and to purchase tickets, go **online**.

No easy answers to Tahoe's homeless issue



Cheyenne Lane with Tahoe Youth & Family Services talks about homelessness on Aug. 30. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

No one ever said they wanted to grow up to be a homeless person. And, yet, today a growing number of people are finding themselves without a traditional roof over their heads.

Twenty-six percent of the people who stayed in South Lake Tahoe's warm room last winter were employed. Eighty-seven percent of the warm room users were locals. There are 25 million housing units in California to accommodate 40 million people. Every 5 percent increase in rent in Los Angeles equates to another 2,000 homeless people. Eighty-five percent of the homeless in the United States are not the street people the public sees. In El Dorado County, on average, \$35,000 a year is spent on each homeless person when it comes to law enforcement, hospitalization and social services. California has about 25 percent of the country's homeless population.

These were just some of the statistics presented Aug. 30 by six panelists talking about the growing homeless problem here and elsewhere. The 90-minute presentation at Tahoe Beach Retreat in South Lake Tahoe was hosted by Tahoe Regional Young Professionals.

Speakers were: Marissa Muscat, a physician with Barton Health who runs the local warm room; Cheyanne Lane with Tahoe Youth & Family Services; South Lake Tahoe police Lt. Dave Stevenson; rabbi Evon Yakar; Benjamin Henwood, a licensed clinical social worker who is a faculty member at USC; and Daniel Del Monte, El Dorado County deputy director of Community Services.

"Homeless at its core is a housing issue," Del Monte said.

In other words, there isn't enough housing for everyone.

Del Monte said that for every 100 people California has added to its population in the last 40 years, there have been 32 housing units built.

Affordable housing is one thing, lack of housing is another. The Lake Tahoe Basin is contending with both.

Mental health issues and addiction are not uncommon in the homeless world. But in many ways those are the more visible and certainly stereotypical members of this group.

One of the nearly 50 people in attendance asked whether the warm room, which opened in 2015, is bringing these people to Tahoe. The overwhelming answer was no.

As Henwood put it, "People don't identify as homeless and then look for the best place to be homeless."

Most people want to stay in the town they know.

Lane would like the South Shore to have a permanent shelter, but doesn't foresee people moving her to live in it.

Historically, the powers that be would try to get a homeless person off drugs and treated for whatever health issues they had. Housing came next. Henwood said the conventional approach is to secure housing for a person and then address the issues that led them to become homeless.

That approach, though, requires a vacancy sign somewhere, and those are hard to come by here and throughout much of California as well as Northern Nevada.

Knowing why they became homeless could provide the answers to help keep them from returning to that state.

None of the six had definitive solutions for the homeless problem. Muscat would like local regulations changed so it would be easier to build housing. Henwood said if the money saved from the mortgage write off on taxes were transferred to homeless causes, this would be a good redistribution of wealth.

Continuing to talk about homelessness, recognizing that people are on the brink of becoming homeless, erasing the stigma associated with it and working as a community were some of the baby steps suggested in order to move forward.

Opinion: Securing event center's future success

By Duane Whitelaw

The North Tahoe Public Utility District (NTPUD) has owned and operated the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach since the early 1980s. In the late '80s the facility was renovated with

Placer County transient occupancy tax (TOT) funds emphasizing conference groups coming to the region and putting “heads on beds.”

Over the years, the event center has welcomed local events, recreation programs, public meetings, weddings, conference events, wakes and other community gatherings.

To ensure community accessibility and affordability, the NTPUD board of directors has funded the center’s operating deficits for most years. The last 10 years this deficit has averaged approximately \$90,000 in operating losses with subsidies from the district flexing that number to about \$135,000 annually. In addition, no dollars have been set aside to fund depreciation to address aging infrastructure. Selling or trading the facility isn’t an option. A grant came from a state bond to acquire the property with a condition it be used for “park purposes.”

The only funding sources for the recreation department at NTPUD comes from parking fees, rental charges, concessionaire revenue, and a 1994 voter-approved Mello Roos which generates about \$600,000 in 2017. As is the experience in most communities, public recreation doesn’t pay for itself without subsidies. Between the event center, North Tahoe Regional Park, Tahoe Vista Recreation Area, and annual support to the Boys and Girls Club, the department has fallen short of being able to pay for today’s cost of recreation with existing dollars.

In late 2015, the NTPUD was approached by a private developer to consider a public-private partnership to operate and manage the North Tahoe Event Center. They proposed to fully renovate the facility, operate and maintain it to a high level and guarantee “affordability and accessibility” in exchange for a long-term commitment sufficient for a fair return on investment. Being consistent with the district’s desire to avoid asking local voters for additional funding, the board

embarked on a series of public workshops to vet the proposal. More than a dozen public meetings were held for this purpose.

As part of these workshops, the board decided to give any interested company an opportunity to respond to a request for proposals to provide operation and management services for the North Tahoe Event Center. After an exhaustive public process with hundreds of hours of staff and volunteer time, a selection by the board of directors of the top proposal (out of three) was made to negotiate with Laulima, the original proposer. This is the developer that also plans to create a 100-plus room hotel, including mixed-use development of the Ferrari family properties purchased earlier in 2017.

As of today, the board has moved from confidential “real estate negotiations” with Laulima to a release of a draft final lease that calls for the developer to fully fund a \$5.6 million renovation, secured by a performance bond, fully funding the operation and management costs of the entire facility for up to 30 years, plus two possible 20-year extensions if the terms of the initial partnership are being met. During this time the citizens of the district would have continued access and affordability at reduced rates, free use for community programs and guaranteed space for recreation classes including Jazzercise, yoga and others. In addition, the developer will pay the district a guaranteed annual sum, escalating in the first 10 years to \$165,000 per year, then to an escalating amount adjusted by inflation for the remaining term. A citizen advisory committee would report annually on adherence by the partner to the terms of the lease. A complete review of the lease, exhibits, current FAQs and various attachments can be found **online**.

The elimination of the operating losses at the event center, plus the guaranteed annual revenue could defer plans to seek additional tax dollars to cover operations and capital asset replacement from the property owners in our district. A series of facilitated public workshops on the proposal are scheduled

and can be found at the above website. A decision on the proposed public-private partnership could occur as soon as mid-September, culminating the nearly two-year effort to help secure recreation solvency at the NTPUD.

Duane Whitelaw is general manager/CEO of North Tahoe Public Utility District.

S. Tahoe man faces child porn allegations



Robert Huckaby

A South Lake Tahoe attorney was arrested Aug. 30 on child porn charges.

Robert Huckaby, 65, faces one felony count of child pornography and a misdemeanor of molesting or annoying a child under the age of 18.

According to the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, on July 28 a search warrant was served and images of child pornography were located.

Huckaby has posted the \$60,000 bail.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Bodie State Park worker contracts hantavirus

By Cathie Anderson, Sacramento Bee

Citrus Heights resident Curtis Fry, whose son contracted hantavirus at Bodie State Historic Park, said the California Department of Parks and Recreation is putting employees at risk by failing to provide adequate training or housing at the popular Mono County ghost town.

“It’s just the Wild West out there,” Fry said. “This is the 21st century. They’re just letting these people risk their lives.”

His son Spencer was living and working at Bodie as a park aide in July when he came down with the rare and often-fatal lung infection. Spencer Fry spent 13 days in intensive care at Kaiser Permanente Roseville Medical Center. He permanently lost hearing in his left ear and cannot walk normally because of partial paralysis in his legs and feet, his father said.

Read the whole story