

Letter: Knights of Columbus at Bread & Broth

To the community,

Being a member of the Knights of Columbus means that you are there to help those in need. On May 15, members of St. Theresa Church's Knights of Columbus were doing just that as they volunteered their time to serve at B&B's Monday meal.

They were a helpful and jovial group that welcomed and fed the hungry diners that came to Grace Hall for a full course, nutritious meal.

"The Knights of Columbus appreciative of the opportunity to assist in the serving of Monday evening's dinner, truly thanks Bread & Broth for the opportunity," said Gary Brand, grand knight. "We were impressed with the guests in attendance, their politeness and their gratitude, and we encourage other clubs and service clubs to avail themselves of the same opportunity offered by B&B."

In addition to sponsoring a B&B Adopt A Day of Nourishment, the Knights of Columbus put many hours into serving St. Theresa Church through fundraisers, pancake breakfasts, spaghetti dinners and helping where needed by the church.

Doing an outstanding job representing the Knights at their AAD sponsorship dinner were Romeo Aladen, Philip Armstrong, Gary Brand, Steve Elder, Steven Quilici, Nicholas Nizich and Earl Scilingo.

Thank you to a wonderful Catholic men's organization and all of its members.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Horace

Horace is an 8-year-old who has all the good characteristics of an older dog and all the best features of a puppy.

He is house trained, he walks nicely on the leash, he likes to play with girl dogs and has lived with cats and small children. He enjoys riding in cars and is very happy hanging out in a crate, and like a puppy he is quite playful and affectionate.

Horace came to the shelter when his owners became homeless. He has been at the shelter for more than four months, and he is still a happy, friendly boy. But it is time for Horace to go home.

Please share his information with anyone who may be interested in a great companion.

Horace is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet. For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

New Upper Truckee River channel being tested

By Kathryn Reed

With the Upper Truckee River being about two weeks out from reaching its peak flow and the river well beyond its banks, it is too soon to completely assess what worked and what didn't in regards to the new channel near Lake Tahoe Airport.

It will likely be mid-July before officials are able to access all areas, with work not being able to start until mid-August.

The river hit 979 cubic feet per second on June 4. The channel was designed to handle 375 cfs. The winter storms and subsequent runoff are equivalent to a 10-year storm – as in, this amount of water will occur once every 10 years.

“For the most part the project has been a success. Part of the goal was to increase floodplain inundation and frequency,” Theresa Cody, restoration hydrologist with the U.S. Forest

Service, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “The project was meant to overbank, to do so about every year or two.”



This is a view of the northern tie-in of the new channel of the Upper Truckee River in August 2016 after construction was completed. Photo/USFS

In a perfect situation, restoration work like what the U.S. Forest Service did would have a couple years to settle in and for vegetation to grow to stabilize the bank before being tested by massive water flows.

Mother Nature, though, doesn't always cooperate.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board is the main overseer of the project because this state agency is tasked with maintaining water quality for the public.

“The storm water runoff really changed things out there, but

we don't have a good handle on what changed," Doug Smith, supervising engineering geologist with the Lahontan Water Quality Control Board, said. "We don't know the full extent (of damage) because it is flooded. I've sent them a couple letters saying that things didn't go as planned and to get them to work on some plans. Last (month) I sent a lengthy technical comment letter on the interim plan. It was just a comment letter, not a fine or citation."

With the water everywhere, even looking like it might reach the runways at Lake Tahoe Airport, in some ways it appears like the project failed. Just the opposite is true; the bank breaching is a good thing and is what would occur if humans never messed with the river.

To reach the runways the river would have to rise at least another foot; this would likely happen in a 50-year storm.



This is what the new channel of the Upper Truckee River looks like now from nearly the same spot as the above photo. Photo/USFS

The purpose of the project was to restore the river channel to

what it was like before it had been straightened in places decades ago and meadows degraded by years of grazing.

Two-thirds of the work is on USFS land, while one-third is owned by the California Tahoe Conservancy.

The banks were eroding, carrying unwanted sediment to Lake Tahoe. The steepness of the banks was not allowing the river's water to overflow into the meadows. This then affected plant and animal life.

Last summer the last 1,000 feet of the 7,340-foot channel was built. What is known is that between 50 and 100 feet of bank in that section has eroded. Rock armoring will be put there this construction season to stabilize the area. In some spots the vegetation did not survive, so that will be replanted as well.

This summer the Forest Service plans to do more monitoring than originally planned. Geomorphic, wildlife and geological assessments will be done. Seeing how the **mussel relocation** worked will also be analyzed. Aerial images will be taken to get a different perspective.

The multi-year project was supposed to be completed last fall, but October storms prevented that from happening. The upstream portion of the former channel did not get completely filled in.

"We underestimated the amount of dirt we would need to backfill the full former channel. The largest lesson learned is we should have included a larger contingency to make sure we had enough dirt. At the end of the season we ran short on backfill material," Cody said.

This means there is water collecting in the back channel.

"The bottom line is they were not able to finish as planned," Smith told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We need to see if the original

permitted design or a different design needs to be implemented out there. That will be determined down the road. The Forest Service and us agreed the restoration project on the Upper Truckee River is very important and it needs to be done for the long haul and it needs to be done right.”

The price tag was \$7 million for this project. That was before the winter storms. Most of the money came from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act.

Opinion: More senior legal shenanigans in EDC

By Larry Weitzman

It has been recently confirmed from informed sources that a new attorney has been hired by senior legal. Her first day on the job was May 1. On May 25, this newly hired attorney was informed that her job was being eliminated in El Dorado County’s new proposed budget for 2017-18.

The new attorney’s prior position was in a law firm, a position that she quit in order to take this job with senior legal, which has a staff of one full-time attorney (this new hire), a part-time attorney, a paralegal and a secretary.



Larry Weitzman

In a phone call with the CAO, this columnist asked the question whether he knew or not that as of May 1, just four weeks before the release of the budget, did he know that the entire senior legal program was going to be terminated as has been proposed in the new budget. His answer was no. The upshot of this new El Dorado County budget for the fiscal year from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, means that even this new senior legal attorney who quit her job from a Sacramento law firm to take this job will be fired. According to the proposed budget, she will get a pink slip no later than Aug. 4.

Interesting fact No. 2: on May 5, District 1 Supervisor John Hidahl put out a press release and notice written by the new county public information officer, Carla Hass, telling the world that Hidahl would be having an El Dorado Hills Community Council Meeting on May 8 at 7pm to "offer a great opportunity for residents to learn about what's happening in the community. The featured speaker is Raelene Nunn, the District 1 commissioner on Aging... The county provides several important services to our seniors, including legal assistance and more."

To refresh your memory, just 23 days later, the budget would be published showing no more legal assistance to seniors.

The salary and benefits paid to Hass (about \$150,000/year would pay 60 percent of the EDC budget for senior legal). I am sure this same PIO will spin the termination of senior legal services as a benefit for county residents, like EDC will reduce probate costs for seniors now that conmen can more easily prey on what money they have left to live on.

More troubling is the fact that informed sources knew of this decision on or about May 20, meaning this decision may have been made by the county administration or the strong possibility thereof well prior to May 1, the date EDC hired this new senior legal attorney, as budgets are several months in the making. New hires beware, the decision of your hiring

in the future may be made after the decision to fire you, of course unless you have a high-ranking friend in county government. It's also appears obvious that high ranking county officials knew of this decision for some time.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Former MLB player Byrnes embraces a different sport

By Kyle Magin, Tahoe Quarterly

A mountain lion stalked Eric Byrnes during the 2016 Western States Endurance Run.

Somewhere around mile 55 of the 100-mile course, the 11-year Major League Baseball outfielder and former Oakland Athletic fled from the big cat. This was immediately before Byrnes, then 40, ran past a pack of trailside photographers situated squarely in the middle of nowhere (Michigan Bluff, Calif., population 672) to capture his sweaty face, and just before he saw an orangutan hanging between two pines in the Sierra Nevada's foothills.

"It was the hottest part of the day; it was 100-plus degrees," Byrnes, a part-time Truckee resident, says. "Once I saw the monkey, I was like, 'OK, my mind is playing tricks on me now.'"

Byrnes, a little better than halfway through the legendary June footrace that stretches from Squaw Valley to Auburn, had begun to hallucinate.

Read the whole story

Squaw to host NASTAR championships in 2018

Squaw Valley will host the 2018 Liberty Mutual Insurance NASTAR National Championships on March 21-25, the first time the event returns to the Sierra since 1981.

NASTAR participants qualify for the championships by earning a top 10 national ranking or a top five state ranking within their age, gender and ability group by Feb. 19. Racers can also qualify by earning a top ranking at their favorite resort or at the regional championships.

NASTAR continues to bring greater awareness to the sport, motivating participants of all ages to get involved in alpine racing. The program's integration with the U.S. Ski Team gives racers the opportunity to meet and interact with racers.

In addition to the Alpine Ski division, the NASTAR National Championships will also host snowboard, telemark and physically challenged disciplines.

NASTAR stands for National Standard Race and is the largest public grassroots ski racing program in the world.

Short-term rentals can't hide

in Truckee

By Sage Sauerbrey, Moonshine Ink

Short-term rentals have become a linchpin component in the housing conversation, and communities across the West have had very different ways of facing the issue.

Jackson Hole, Wyo., recently banned short-term rentals, San Francisco has adopted a series of different regulations, and Mammoth Lakes only allows short-term rentals in specifically zoned areas. Last year, Truckee searched for a solution and reached out to Ulrik Binzer and his newly founded company Host Compliance, and Placer County followed suit shortly after.

Host Compliance analyzes a set of 17 different public data sources to investigate where properties are being used as short-term rentals so that the town can contact them and bring them into compliance.

Read the whole story

Mental illness doesn't have to be a solo journey

By Jeanne Nelson

As an active leader in the South Lake Tahoe chapter of NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, I work closely with family members who have loved ones with mental health issues. For many, one of the hardest times was learning about their child, partner, or friend's diagnosis and not knowing what to do next. Some were shamed for not addressing their loved one's

needs sooner and others were told they were too protective or doing too much.

I have been in this same position as a parent and unsure what to do for my adult child. Based on what I have learned and heard, here are few tips about what to do after you learn about your loved one's symptoms or diagnosis.

- Avoid the blame game. Mental illness is not someone's fault. Avoid blaming yourself or others.
- Get informed. Learn all you can about your loved one's diagnosis. Seek out ongoing educational opportunities to stay abreast of brain research and discoveries. It is important to keep current on brain science to the same degree as behavioral science.
- Keep the communication lines open between you and your loved one. NAMI has many resources, including family-to-family program available in South Lake Tahoe, with suggestions for best communication practices.
- Know the resources available. Familiarize yourself with resources and services in the community. Visit one of the six mental health resource kiosks in South Lake Tahoe or find an in depth list of services **online**.
- Find a community of support. It's not just about getting help for your loved one, but also for you. Attend the NAMI family support group at the South Lake Tahoe Library on the second Tuesday of each month from 6-7:30pm.
- Avoid hiding. The more we talk, the more we learn, and the more we reduce the stigma.

Imagine how we would think about mental health if we assumed all our children, colleagues, or neighbors had a mental health condition. Maybe we would be more proactive in getting timely healthcare and supporting prevention education. We might focus less on "what ifs" and more on solutions.

Jeanne Nelson is a leader of NAMI El Dorado County in South

Lake Tahoe. NAMI is a grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of those affected by mental health.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- The slope along Highway 50 near Logan Shoals where boulders are on the pavement will be stabilized this summer. The contract is out for bid.
 - June 10 is the one day a year when anyone can fish in any public fishing water in Nevada without a fishing license or trout stamp.
 - There is no admission to this year's Placer County's fair, which runs June 22-25.
 - Cynthia Lynes will be offering free psychic readings on June 10 from 1-3pm at her gift shop at 2540 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.
 - Here is a visualization from NDOT on what Highway 50 between Stateline and Highway 28 could look like:
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Endangered Species Act can't save whitebark pines

By Maya L. Kapoor, High Country News

U.S. Forest Service research ecologist Bob Keane has studied whitebark pine, a coniferous tree of the high country, for more than thirty years. Still, when asked to describe a whitebark to someone who's never seen one, he takes a breath and pauses for a moment. "Gosh," he says.

The shape of the tree is very distinctive, Keane says. Instead of growing cone-shaped like other conifers, whitebarks branch like hardwoods. "A lot of the undergrowth is very small, so you see these open park-like stands of beautiful spreading trees," he says. This shape is an adaptation that shows Clark's nutcrackers flying past that a tree below has many nutritious cones and might be worth a travel stop.

Clark's nutcrackers cache thousands of whitebark seeds, dispersing the pine across the high country, where the tree is a keystone species. Whitebark pine is one of the first trees to break ground after a fire, thanks to those nutcrackers, and it stabilizes soil and snowpacks at timberline. Living a millennium or more, whitebarks shape the West's high mountain ecology in countless ways.

Read the whole story