

STHS' next principal eager to do great things

By Kathryn Reed

Passion and energy spill forth from Carline Sinkler as she talks about her next job – principal of South Tahoe High School.

“I’m excited about all the work being done, career technology education, getting students ready for college and life,” Sinkler told *Lake Tahoe News*. “What impressed me was the enthusiasm of the staff. They are student-centered and forward thinking. I feel like I’m coming into a community that is poised to do incredible work.”

She wants to build on the strengths that already exist.



Carline Sinkler will be South Tahoe High School's principal starting in the 2017-18 school year.

Photo/Provided

“Her interpersonal skills, enthusiasm and vision will enhance and strengthen the existing programs at South Tahoe High School,” Superintendent Jim Tarwater told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We loved her mission statement: where you pursue a communitywide

vision of thriving, future-ready students and schools through a collaborative, innovative learning-centered leadership.”

He said Sinkler made a great connection with both interview panels. The district interviewed five of the 29 people who applied. Sinkler’s first day will be July 19 at an annual salary of \$134,040.

Today she is principal of Herbert Hoover Middle School in San Francisco; a job she has had since 2013.

Sinkler, 50, has done a lot work around college and career readiness at the middle school level, and wants to take that to the next level.

“One of the things I’m really excited about is working around the sports medicine academy. I think that is super, super neat,” she said.

One of her first jobs will be to ensure everything is in place for the visit next school year from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in regards to accreditation. The school is finishing the first of two years on probationary accreditation status. Chad Houck was let go because of the accreditation issues.

Sinkler said she has looked at what the school and district have done to prepare for the next evaluation. While she knows it will be a challenge, Sinkler is confident regarding what is being done and believes the school will prevail.

While going from such an urban environment to the rural mountains might seem like 180-degree change, for Sinkler, coming to Tahoe in some ways feels like going home. She grew up in the upper peninsula in Michigan so she knows all about snow. She would cross country ski to the bus stop. Plus, she lives in Marin County near open space and not in The City.

A knee injury keeps her off the downhill slopes, but she is an

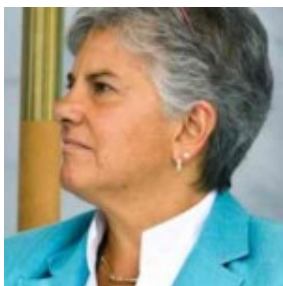
avid cross country skier and snowshoer. Mountain biking is another favorite sport. She's already done the Flume Trail. Paddleboarding is something else she enjoys doing with her husband. The two were even married at Emerald Bay.

Opinion: Wildfire awareness critical in Tahoe

By Joanne Marchetta

This June is wildfire awareness month at Lake Tahoe. It also marks the 10th anniversary of the Angora Fire, the most destructive wildland fire in memory at Tahoe.

An illegal and abandoned campfire started the Angora Fire on June 24, 2007. The fire quickly spread toward Meyers, stoked by strong winds and forests overgrown with hazardous fuels. In a few days, the fire burned 3,100 acres and destroyed 254 homes.



Joanne
Marchetta

The fire plunged the South Shore into emergency response as smoke billowed into the sky, embers rained down, and flames spread into neighborhoods. Firefighters rushed into action to

fight the blaze. Thousands of people were forced to evacuate. Some returned to find nothing left of their homes and belongings except ashes.

As I evacuated, watching other homes on my street catch fire, I experienced terrorizing emotions unlike anything I have felt before.

Fortunately, no human lives were lost in the Angora Fire, thanks to the heroic work of firefighters and law enforcement. But the fire changed people's lives. It proved the strength and resilience of Meyers and the greater South Shore community during the fire and in the weeks, months, and years after as people regrouped, rebuilt, and helped one another.

Ten years later, we see fully how much there was to learn from Angora. It showed us the threat of catastrophic wildfire is real at Tahoe. That any afternoon has the potential to turn into a disaster during fire season, and that we must work together to reduce that risk.

Lots of anger was directed toward TRPA after Angora. TRPA had been working to help address the wildfire threat, but many saw our actions as too little, too late, and years of frustration were leveled at the agency during and after the Angora tragedy.

TRPA heeded the call for reform and I'm proud of the positive changes we have made over the last decade. TRPA has partnered with many other organizations, and together we have taken important steps to improve the health of Tahoe's forests and prepare our communities and public lands for wildfire.

We are still working to address the harmful impacts of logging done a century ago during the Comstock era. That logging clear cut most of the basin and changed the composition of its forests. Trees grew back in much greater densities and in uniform-aged stands that pose a greater risk for high-intensity wildfires.

Agencies were working to thin Tahoe's forests and reduce hazardous fuels before Angora. The fire proved the importance of that work, burning much less severely in areas treated prior to the start of the fire.

Today, agencies around the lake are working as a unified group, the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, to reduce hazardous fuels in Tahoe's forests. Formed after the Angora Fire, the team has made exceptional strides, treating more than 69,000 acres of the 117,000 acres of wildland urban interface where Tahoe's forests and communities meet. This remains a top priority as we work to return Tahoe's forests to a healthier, more natural condition less prone to catastrophic fires.

As we enter another fire season, we must all remember the importance of creating defensible space. Properly managing flammable vegetation around our homes and businesses significantly reduces the danger of wildfire. Please contact your local fire district to get a defensible space inspection done this spring if you have not already.

Consider getting involved with the Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities. Spearheaded by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, this program is building and strengthening partnerships between homeowners and fire protection districts so important steps to create fire-adapted communities can be tackled at the neighborhood level.

Please be mindful of the importance of wildfire prevention. Ninety percent of fires that ignite each year at Tahoe are human caused. Angora showed the damage one illegal campfire can do. While enjoying Tahoe this summer, take every precaution to avoid starting a fire.

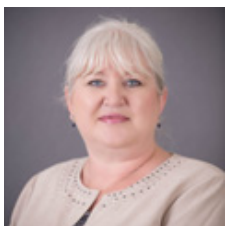
The Meyers community has made an inspiring recovery from the Angora Fire. That recovery has not been easy, and burnt trees still standing and visible for miles on Angora Ridge are a stark reminder of the danger wildfire poses.

That danger persists as our region grapples with the impacts of drought and a warming climate. Wildfire is a natural and important part of the ecosystem in the forests around our homes, but each fire does not need to be a disaster. The time to prevent and prepare for Tahoe's next wildfire is now, before it is burning.

With public agencies, homeowners, residents, and visitors all aware of this danger and working together to prevent and prepare for wildfires, we can continue to take the important steps needed to protect our communities and improve the health and resiliency of the forests and natural resources we all treasure at Tahoe.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

LTCC hires VP of Administrative Services



Russi Egan

Lake Tahoe Community College board of trustees at a special meeting May 18 agreed to hire Russi Egan as vice president of Administrative Services.

She currently has the same position at Palo Verde College in

Southern California, a job she has had since December 2015. However, she has been with the school since 2004 where she has been the chief business officer and fiscal services manager.

The two-year contract starts July 1. She will be making \$139,481 a year, plus \$18,456 in health and welfare benefits.

The position became available earlier this year when Jeff DeFranco, who had the job, was hired to be president of LTCC.

“She works at a college that’s very much like LTCC, and she understands both the positives and the challenges that come with running a small college. She has a strong reputation at Palo Verde as a fixer who came in during an economically difficult time and turned things around,” DeFranco said in a statement.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Free food distribution in South Lake Tahoe

The Food Bank of El Dorado County will be in South Lake Tahoe on May 24.

Food for those eligible to receive this assistance will be handed out at a new location. From 10-11am people make pick up food at St. Theresa’s Catholic Church on Lyons Avenue.

For more information, email info@foodbankedc.org.

Nev. peak still honors disgraced Confederate leader



Jeff Davis Peak in Great Basin National Park in Nevada.
Photo/National Park Service

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Jefferson Davis is famous mostly because he presided over the Confederate government that sought to preserve the institution of slavery and tear the United States asunder in the Civil War.

His dark stint in power is the reason city leaders in New Orleans recently removed a statue of Davis from a position of prominence in the city's central business district.

The removal knocked the legacy of slavery from a cultural pedestal in New Orleans but hasn't wiped the Davis name from other positions of high honor, including a mountain peak in a remote corner of Nevada.

At 12,771 feet in elevation Jeff Davis Peak towers over Great Basin National Park in Baker. There's also a Jeff Davis Peak in Alpine County.

Read the whole story

STHS swimmers to compete in state championship



STHS swimmer Louis Marin, center, competes in the 10- yard breast stroke. Photo/ProvidedS

South Tahoe High School's swim team is headed to the state competition on Saturday.

Twenty-four athletes qualified for regionals and participated in the 3-A Northern Regional Swim Meet on May 12-13. The boys and girls' teams each finished in regionals in second place overall for the season.

Eleven of the swimmers will be at the state competition on May 20 at the Carson Aquatic Center.

Finishing in the top three at regionals in individual events to qualify for state were: Temugen Enkhbayer, Tristan Klasko,

Hannah Lucas, Louis Marin, Alexandra Otomo, Maia Smith and Sophie Stewart.

Marin came in first in the 100-yard freestyle and 100 breast stroke. Otomo won the 100 back stroke and was second in the 50 freestyle.

– Provide to Lake Tahoe News

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Happy Homestead Cemetery in South Lake Tahoe will dedicate its public safety memorial wall on May 19 at 1pm.
 - Truckee High School's senior fashion show is May 21 at 6pm. Doors open at 5pm.
 - Due to the severity of ground water and water runoff on the Incline Village Championship Course, the course's opening date is now May 26.
 - Douglas County School District board of education is having a public hearing regarding the 2017-18 budget on May 24 at 5pm at the Airport Training Center in Minden.
 - On May 20, Tahoe Expedition Academy will host a first responder appreciation barbecue at the Tahoe Vista Recreation Area. Money raised will benefit C.O.P.S. (Concerns of Police Survivors) and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. The event is from 10am-3pm.
-

Shooting suspect apparently commits suicide on I-80 in Truckee

By Nashelly Chavez and Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

The man identified as a possible suspect in Wednesday's homicide in Lincoln died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound after his vehicle was stopped by law enforcement officers on Interstate 80 near Truckee, authorities said.

The shooting was reported to Lincoln police about 8:20am by a man driving in the 2400 block of Lincoln Airpark Drive – the same location where a woman was later found sitting in the driver's seat of a vehicle in a home's garage. The woman, who was said to be in her 30s, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Investigators had identified a possible suspect, and that his vehicle had been spotted eastbound on Interstate 80 near Truckee.

[Read the whole story](#)

Remembrance planned for cyclist who died in SLT



Joseph "Rocky"
Heether

Joseph "Rocky" Heether, 64, of South Lake Tahoe is the man who was killed last weekend while riding his bicycle on Highway 50.

There will be celebration of life at Lakeview Commons on May 19 at 6pm.

The cyclist and vehicle were both going west on the highway near Takela Boulevard at about 7:40pm May 13 when the bicyclist cut in front of the driver, according to police reports. The collision is still under investigation.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Almost 4-foot drop in Lake Tahoe's clarity

By Kathryn Reed

It's clear that things are getting murkier. Lake Tahoe's clarity diminished by nearly 4 feet in 2016.

In 2016 the average depth of clarity was 69.2 feet, which is a 3.9-foot decrease from 2015. In 2015, clarity dropped 4.8 feet. The worst overall reading was in 1997 at 64.1 feet.

Measurements have been taken since 1968, when the Secchi disk could be seen at 102.4 feet.

Researchers from UC Davis released the numbers May 18. Scientists use what looks like a white dinner plate to determine the lake's clarity. It is dropped over the side of a boat at several locations throughout the year and then how far someone can see it is the measurement.

Climate change is being blamed for the brunt of the decline.

"In 2015, clarity was reduced by relatively warm layers of turbid water entering near the lake surface. In 2016, the clarity was reduced by the early onset of spring favoring the growth of light blocking blooms of very small algal cells," Tahoe Environmental Research Center officials said in a press release.

The numbers were better in winter than summer. The best reading was 95.1 feet on Jan. 25, and the worst was 44.3 feet on June 7. The winter average of 83.3 feet was the highest since 2012. However, the summer numbers were alarming. There was a 16.7-foot decline in one year.

A large *Cyclotella* bloom is part of the reason for the summer problem. This single-cell algal species is able to thrive as Lake Tahoe's waters warm. In 2016, the lake's temperature was at record-high level.

"Climate change is impacting Lake Tahoe. TRPA and its partners are committed to working with researchers to better understand the threats a warming climate poses, and to promote solutions that will improve the resiliency of Lake Tahoe's environment and communities," Tahoe Regional Planning Agency spokesman Tom Lotshaw told *Lake Tahoe News*.

While experts point to the five-year clarity average of 73.1 feet surpassing the 2016 interim restoration target of 71 feet, that average will keep dropping if the trend of lower

visibility continues.

Still, scientists are confident there has been a leveling off of sorts. The nearly \$2 billion spent on environmental improvements in the Lake Tahoe Basin since the inaugural Lake Tahoe Summit in 1997 is credited with stemming what had been years of degrading clarity. Reducing fine sediment particles from the lake is the biggest change, and one that is ongoing.

“Storm water reductions are contributing to the improved winter clarity,” Tahoe Regional Planning Agency spokesman Tom Lotshaw told *Lake Tahoe News*. “From local, state, and federal governments reducing storm water pollution from roads and restoring natural areas like streams, marshes, and wetlands, to homeowners installing measures to capture and infiltrate storm water on their properties, this work is helping protect and restore Lake Tahoe’s famous water clarity.”

What all of these numbers don’t reflect is what goes on along the shore of Lake Tahoe where people have the most interaction with the water. The near shore, as scientists call it, with its algae and ever-increasing brown color is a whole different topic.