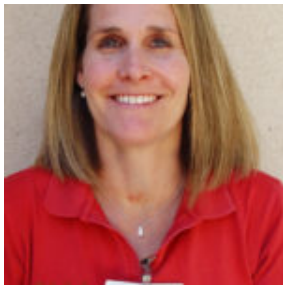


Keyboarding all day doesn't have to be painful

By Jana Mortellaro

Spending hours typing on a computer keyboard can lead to back pain, neck pain, and repetitive-stress injuries of the fingers, hands, elbows, and wrists. But you can avoid such problems by practicing the following strategies.

Comfort basics



Jana
Mortellaro

Be sure to schedule regular breaks throughout the day:

- Briefly rest your eyes every 30 minutes. Spend 10 to 30 seconds looking across the room or out a window.
- Take a 10-minute computer break every two hours. Get up and move around to relieve stress and reduce muscle tension. Gently shake your hands and wrists.
- Occasionally switch to other tasks that don't involve typing.

Improve your posture

Improper posture can lead to aches and pains. To reduce stiffness, follow these suggestions:

- Sit with your back, head, and neck in a line perpendicular to the floor. Don't lean or hunch over the keyboard.
- Keep your back at a right angle to the floor and your hips, knees, and ankles at 90 degree angles, with thighs and forearms parallel to the floor when you sit. Sit with your feet flat on the floor. Use a foot rest if your feet can't reach the floor.
- Avoid leaning on your elbows on the desk or chair armrests.
- Keep your shoulders down, not hunched.

Hand and wrist protections

These tips can help reduce pain in your hands and wrists:

- Keep your wrists flat and in a straight line with your forearms.
- Learn how to type properly. Memorizing the keyboard and using the touch-type method puts less stress on the fingers than the hunt-and-peck method.
- Keep your fingers and thumbs in a slightly curved, relaxed posture, not straight and extended, while you're typing.
- Rest your hands frequently, relaxing them with your thumbs up.
- Avoid bending your wrists up and down or straining your hands from side to side at the wrists. Move your arms to reach for keys at the edge of your keyboard.
- Don't push or rest your wrists or forearms against hard desk edges; this can compress your nerves and cause or aggravate nerve problems. Consider using a wrist rest.

- Adjust your laptop computer if you're using it for an extended period. You can attach a full-size keyboard and mouse to most laptops and raise the monitor to the correct height by placing it on a stand.

Mouse musts

Gripping and clicking a mouse improperly may lead to discomfort. When you use a mouse:

- Keep it within easy reach of the keyboard.
- Hold it gently; don't grasp or tap it forcefully.
- Avoid extending or flexing your wrist back while using the mouse. Concentrate on keeping your wrists even with your hands and forearms.

Get help

If you are experiencing joint or muscle strain or have signs of repetitive hand trauma, contact your primary care provider. Prompt treatment can reduce the discomfort and speed up your recovery.

Jana Mortellaro provides rehabilitation and occupational therapy services at Barton's rehabilitation services in Stateline.

Editorial: Rice, Sears, Allen for LVFPD board

Publisher's note: *The following endorsement is from Lake Tahoe News after a team of seven community members gathered to*

discuss who should be on the Lake Valley Fire Protection District board.

Lake Valley Fire Protection District will be 70 years old next year. One would think with that kind of history it would run like a well-oiled machine. Not so.

A five-member board oversees the operations of the 86-square-mile district that covers most of the unincorporated area of the South Shore on the California side. Therein lies the problem. Much of the board has been entrenched for years, thus creating a good ole boys' club.

Three positions are open, with four people running. The second longest serving board member – Greg Herback since 2003 – is stepping down. That leaves Dave Huber (on since 1990), Bob Bettencourt (2004), Rob Rossi (2010) and John Rice (2011). Bettencourt and Rice are running for re-election.

These five men stood by while former Fire Chief Gareth Harris had two votes of no confidence from staff. They stood by while the El Dorado County Grand Jury investigated the chief. They drew a line in the sand when it came to working with South Lake Tahoe on the ambulance joint operating agreement. The buck stops with them when it comes to having let some key staff leave, for morale to have tanked and for a once prideful department to spiral into dysfunction.

None of the four candidates – Tony Sears and Leona Allen are the challengers – chose to respond to *Lake Tahoe News'* questions. The media is a conduit to the elected body's constituents. Not wanting to answer difficult questions or be political are pathetic excuses for not being accountable to the people they represent.

The board members need to realize they work for the people of the fire district, not for the employees of the district.

The comradery at board meetings where the electeds are eating

dinner with staff before business commences shows a lack of division.

While the district appears to be on a better path with Jeff Michael temporarily being at the helm and the hiring of Tim Alameda as the next full time chief, the board clearly needs to change.

Lake Tahoe News is endorsing Rice, Sears and Allen.

Bettencourt is too much of an obstacle and old guard. The district can't afford to keep operating under his leadership, as he is the current board chair.

Rice has been in this community for quite some time, with a stellar reputation as the head honcho at Sierra-at-Tahoe ski resort. With new blood on the board, his voice should become louder and stronger. We hope he'll assert himself to be a leader on the board and restore the district to a prestigious level. That board needs a dose of the professionalism he brings to his day job.

Sears, we hope, will keep the board on the straight and narrow. The group could use an attorney among its ranks. The board functions in a loose fashion, with a lack of understanding of the Brown Act. While Sears is a deputy district attorney for El Dorado County, clearly his expertise of the law is different than what the board will need, nonetheless, he is ethical – a label that today cannot be applied to the board as a whole.

Allen might be a bit of a wildcard on the board. She has been called the mother of the department. For several years she was the administrative secretary as well as the public information officer. She is chummy with the rank and file members. That isn't always a good thing. What is good is that she is familiar with the workings of the board, the budget and how a fire department functions. Plus, she has the experience of being the key person at the Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Academy at

Lake Tahoe Community College. Hopefully, being a board member will not present a conflict of interest.

It is *Lake Tahoe News*' hope that Rice, Sears and Allen will restore Lake Valley Fire Protection District's reputation, instill a sense of professionalism and abolish the good ole boy status of the board. The community and staff equally deserve this.

Felons in Calif. county jails allowed to vote

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

Despite widespread opposition from law enforcement, Gov. Jerry Brown signed a bill that will allow thousands of felons in county jails to vote in California elections as part of an effort to speed their transition back into society.

Through a representative, Brown declined to comment on the bill by Assemblywoman Shirley Weber, D-San Diego, who said it would reduce the likelihood of convicts committing new crimes.

"Civic participation can be a critical component of re-entry and has been linked to reduced recidivism," Weber said when the bill was introduced.

Read the whole story

Lake Valley chip service ends this month

Lake Valley Fire Protection District will continue its curbside chipping service through October.

This free service assists homeowners by converting slash and cut limbs into wood chips for use on their property.

This action reduces flammable vegetation and helps homeowners create defensible space to protect their property from the threat of wildfire.

The program is offered to district residents of El Dorado County, Fallen Leaf, and Alpine County.

When your pile is ready to be chipped, contact Lake Valley Fire Protection District at 530.577.2447 to be added to the chipping schedule.

Johnson Meadows purchase almost done deal

Almost all the money needed to purchase the Johnson Meadows property in South Lake Tahoe has been secured. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife this week allocated \$4 million to the Tahoe Resource Conservation District for the acquisition.

In March the California Tahoe Conservancy gave the TRCD \$4.234 million for the purchase.

The approximately 209-acre property is the largest privately owned meadow in the Lake Tahoe Basin and the last large private property holding in the lower nine miles of the Upper Truckee River.

The Tahoe Fund is also a funding partner and trying to raise an additional \$100,000 to help secure the entire \$8,315,000 necessary to acquire the property.

The parcel combined with adjacent public land would connect more than 1,000 acres of river floodplain in near continuous public ownership within the river's lower nine miles.

White House calls for increase in firefighting funds

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

Devastating wildfires like the giant that is still chewing through Big Sur are driving the nation's firefighting costs to unprecedented levels, prompting the Obama administration to say the government is ill-equipped to handle the increasingly busy fire seasons of the historically dry West.

White House Budget Director Shaun Donovan on Tuesday called on Congress to better fund the U.S. Forest Service, the country's biggest wildland firefighting force, which in six of the past 10 years has exhausted its allocation for fire suppression.

The agency has dipped into other programs to make up the shortfall – including programs that aim to prevent wildfires in the first place.

USFS Tahoe facilities about to close for winter

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will soon begin closing recreational facilities around the Lake Tahoe Basin for the winter season.

Seasonal closures apply to many Forest Service recreation sites including beaches, campgrounds, and picnic areas, which traditionally close in mid-October. Forest roads close around mid-November for soil protection and public safety.

Tahoe recreation sites close Oct 16. Campgrounds closing include Nevada Beach, Fallen Leaf, Bayview, Meeks Bay, William Kent and Kaspian. Day-use areas and beaches closing include Nevada, Pope, Baldwin, Meeks Bay, William Kent, and Kaspian.

Blackwood Canyon, Luther Pass and Watson Lake campgrounds and Chimney, Kiva and Secret Harbor beaches will close Nov. 15. No services, such as water, restrooms or trash collection will be available at these sites after Oct. 30.

Meeks Bay Resort will close Oct. 16, and Round Hill Pines Resort closed on Oct. 1.

Camp Richardson and Zephyr Cove resorts remain open year-round.

The Taylor Creek Visitor Center is open weekends through the end of October and the Tallac Historic Site closed at the end of September.

Although facilities on National Forest lands in the Lake Tahoe Basin close for the winter season, the grounds and lake access remain open year-round. Keep in mind that parking lots and gates close and services, such as water, restrooms and trash collection are not available.

3-day literary festival returning to South Shore

WordWave, a three-day festival on the grounds of Valhalla at the Tallac Historic Site, returns Oct. 21-23.

This literary mash-up will feature oral storytelling, theater performances and free readings, panels on craft, and a novel writing camp for kids. Highlights include a staged reading of the WordWave one-act playwriting contest winners, a maker's station demo with bookbinding, letterpress printing, found poetry and art.

On Oct. 21, the festival kicks off with the annual Tall Timber Ball: Steampunk in the Woods fundraising gala. Tickets are available **online**.

A partial list of speakers for WordWave on Oct. 22 includes Galadrielle Allman, who wrote "Please Be With Me: A Song for My Father," about the late musician Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers; Melissa Cistaro, the author of the memoir "Pieces of My Mother" and poet Alice Anderson, author of "the watermark," and the forthcoming memoir from St. Martin's Press, "Some Bright Morning I'll Fly Away." That Sunday features James Rollins, Todd Borg, and other thriller and mystery writers in

a Mysterious Morning at the Grand Hall.

Free workshops include Novel Writing Camp for Kids with instructor Lewis Buzbee, Writing the Healing Story with Melissa Cistaro and House Afire: Burning Down Expected Narratives to Tell the Difficult Stories poetry workshop with Alice Anderson.

WordWave received more than 100 entries for the one-act play competition. Three winners will receive a cash prize and a trip to Tahoe to prepare a staged reading of the winning works on Oct. 22 at the Boathouse Theatre.

Visit the WordWave **website** for information and updates.

Squaw-Lahontan settlement funds to be allocated

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board in November will decide how to spend money from a settlement agreement with Squaw Valley ski resort.

The public has until Oct. 14 to weigh in on the decision.

Through the mid- to late 1990s, Lahontan issued several orders to address various issues of non-compliance with Squaw Valley Ski Corporation (now Squaw Valley Resort). Lahontan referred the matter to the California Attorney General's Office for further enforcement, and complaints were eventually issued by each party against the other. The parties settled their complaints in 2005. In part it required Squaw Valley to pay \$900,000 and complete specific projects.

Lahontan received \$354,187.67 from the Attorney General's

Office for money set aside and not spent by the Department of Justice for its legal fees in managing the agreement. The use of these funds is unrestricted for Lahontan.

Lahontan staff reached out to local nonprofit watershed groups to solicit potential water quality related projects that can be completed with these funds. Four projects were submitted from Friends of Squaw Creek, Truckee River Watershed Council, and the Alpine Watershed Group.

The Lahontan board will meet Nov. 9-10 in South Lake Tahoe to determine which project or portions of projects to fund.

Submit written comments to Lahontan@waterboards.ca.gov. Put "Proposed Expenditure of Squaw Valley Consent Agreement Funds" in the subject line.

Web-savvy park ranger turns spotlight on wilderness



For ranger Miranda LeConte, interacting with people is her favorite part of the job. Photo/Provided

By Sammy Caiola, Sacramento Bee

Miranda Leconte can't stand litterers. She's irked by backpackers who camp in Desolation Wilderness without permits, and she's got a lot to say to people who build fires there, despite the many warnings that it's forbidden.

If she sounds like a stickler it's because she is, but for good reason – it's her job. The 23-year-old Camino native just finished her first season as a U.S. Forest Service ranger, patrolling the 64,000 breathtaking acres of Desolation Wilderness area near Lake Tahoe and teaching people how to keep it clean.

Her environmental conservation crusade, much of which she documents on social media, has garnered the attention of 17,000 Instagram followers and some major outdoor gear companies. When she's not out maintaining trails or restocking permit boxes, she's most likely blogging about her work or striking a mountaintop pose for the camera.

Read the whole story