

Martis wetland restoration to begin

Middle Martis wetland restoration projects will take place starting Aug. 10 and last through October.

Trail access in some areas of Waddle Ranch may be disrupted for short periods. Construction crews may escort bikers and hikers through the restoration site.

The Truckee River Watershed Council is sponsoring the restoration of Middle Martis Creek with several partners and funders. The middle Martis restoration project will restore 40 acres of meadow as well as several reaches of the creek.

When completed, the project is designed to:

- Restore wetlands on the north side of Highway 267;
- Improve water quality by reducing of excessive erosion;
- Preserve existing wetlands and riparian areas on south side of Highway 267;
- Protect existing roads including Highway 267, Sawmill Flat Road, and the Waddle Ranch access road.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Prince and Princess

Hi everyone – we are Prince and Princess – 3- and 6-month-old, black and white kitties. We're super cute, fun, silly, love attention and we want to be your next best friends.

Come over to the shelter and meet us. You can't go wrong with two truly noble cats such as us. The thing is, we keep getting overlooked when people come to the shelter and adopt kitties. And the only reason we can think of that's making that happen is that we're a package deal. Yup. We have to be adopted together. But really two cats are much better than one; we have each other to play with when you're away from home, and we really love each other, too.

So, here's the deal, the shelter people have worked it out so it only costs half of what it normally would to adopt us – only \$80. We'd love to be part of your family. Come meet us and see how regal and awesome we are.

We have been neutered and spayed, microchipped, and vaccinated. We are available at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes (but be sure to meet us first!).

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**.

– Dale Payne

Spinal cord injury inspires fund-raising swim



Mark Bender, with his family, wants those with spinal cord injuries to live full lives. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

“When we meet real tragedy in life, we can react in two ways – either by losing hope and falling into self-destructive habits, or by using the challenge to find our inner strength.” – Dalai Lama

Mark Bender chose to find his inner strength when his life was turned upside down three years ago. While body surfing in Hawaii a wave threw him to the ocean’s floor. He is now a quadriplegic.

Out of the tragedy he started a nonprofit called Finding HUP.

The goal is to help others like him get back into “the mix” – as in doing some of the things they could do when they were able bodied.



Ric Llewellyn

Part of the inspiration for the nonprofit came from hitting roadblocks with not finding equipment to do the things he wanted to do. He knew he couldn't be alone.

Finding HUP's name comes from the cycling world where the crowd yells “hup, hup” to cyclists passing by. Bender used to be a competitive cyclist. He has learned to use a hand bike.

Bender's friend Ric Llewellyn, a former South Lake Tahoe resident and brother of longtime local Randy Llewellyn, is on a quest to raise money for Finding HUP.

“Finding HUP is about helping others, getting back into some sort of athletic endeavor,” Llewellyn told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Promoting adaptive athletics, proving scholarships, equipment and resources to go to camps for people who are paralyzed is what Finding HUP is about.

Llewellyn on Aug. 24 plans to swim from Emerald Bay to Nevada Beach as a fundraiser for the charity. This is 8½ miles.

“The rules for marathon swimming is that it has to be a minimum distance and you have to do it without a wetsuit,” Llewellyn explained. “I want it to be a legit marathon swim.”

The goal is to raise awareness about the foundation as well as

money for it. Bringing attention to spinal cord injuries in general is also part of the plan.

Notes:

- To donate, go **online**.
 - More info about Washington-based Finding HUP is **online**.
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Opinion: AG proves EDC supes' incompetence

By Larry Weitzman

Fact is an overused word. Just because something is written or spoken doesn't make it a fact, as a fact must be proven to be a fact. Likewise use of the term "proven fact" or "known fact" is redundant as all facts to be a fact must be proven and therefore known. Without the acceptance of "fact," science or life as we know it would not exist. Two plus two equals four is a fact. In fact, (pun intended) all arithmetic is fact.



Larry Weitzman

It is unfortunate that some of our grand juries don't operate on fact and their inability to do so (too much politics injected) has now cost the public tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of dollars. I am referring to the 2014-15 El Dorado County Grand Jury report about which I wrote a column last year. The column's point was that the grand jury has become a political body and a kangaroo court. It didn't deal in facts, but hearsay. It called statements from witnesses' testimony, but since it wasn't sworn, it was nothing but hearsay and couldn't be considered fact. It was my third column discussing the grand jury's lack of credibility that clearly should be renamed the Gossip Jury. The first column was published July 2014 and the second in July 2015 entitled.

Grand Jury report item 14-12 was about several non-issues trumped up against the auditor. Most, if not all, of it was based on non-sworn interviews; hearsay in other words. One of those issues was not paying legitimate invoices from vendors or delaying those payments. There is a penal code section (424, 425) forbidding such practice. Notwithstanding the factual evidence to the contrary and the acceptance of a mountain of hearsay or gossip, the political grand jury recommended that the district attorney investigate auditor with the ultimate goal of the removal of our only county watchdog so he could be replaced by a county lapdog. The Board of Supervisors, in their unthinking style, accepted the recommendation anyway and eventually the attorney general did an investigation costing our county untold thousands of dollars, while county potholes continue to grow and proliferate.

The district attorney turned to the state Attorney General's Office for the investigation to prevent any appearance of a conflict of interest. The state attorney general has spoken. It completed its investigation and will take no further action. It was obvious there was nothing to this folly as I

have repeatedly said in these columns, but at what cost?

Most of this started with former CAO Terri Daly and HR director and former interim CAO after Daly, Pam Knorr, spending perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars trying show malfeasance of the auditor. The irony is that it was Daly and Knorr who should be fired with their wild spending and bullying of employees. Daly is already gone and even in her absence she couldn't keep her word with respect to the severance contract she executed with EDC for which she received a huge package of \$153,000. EDC should have filed a lawsuit for its recovery for Daly's breach of the contract, but our weak-kneed supervisors are afraid of their own shadows and have no bite. Maybe dental implants are the answer?

Knorr, as described in a June 2015 column more or less started this second round of an expensive witch-hunt when she was hired in by our BOS as interim CAO. Knorr then hired in her friends from Alpine County, the same private investigator she used in Alpine, to wit: Ken MacHold. But instead of hiring him on a direct contract at \$50 an hour as she did in Alpine, she used the subterfuge of the Prentice, Long and Epperson law firm who allegedly hired MacHold as an employee and the fee more than doubled to \$110 an hour. The contract was probably illegal as there was no workers' comp insurance provided during the contract but that didn't stop Knorr. Incidentally, the Prentice law firm just happens to be the law firm hired by Knorr as Alpine County counsel during her tenure as Alpine County CAO. Meanwhile, MacHold, while at Alpine, worked with Knorr to help her get a large legal settlement (almost \$200,000, which is about 2.5 percent of the total Alpine County budget) which was approved by Alpine's County counsel, Prentice. It is a tangled web.

Knorr, as interim CAO, even tried to hide first invoice from MacHold of over \$15,000 by writing it off to the new courthouse project. Knorr even stonewalled the *Mountain Democrat* when it inquired about the contract and the invoice.

The bottom line is that the grand jury has now been proven wrong with respect to both reports cited above by the attorney general. The facts are that there was never anything to the GJ allegations as it was based on hearsay and not fact. It was gossip, not testimony under penalty of perjury, and that goes for both reports, GJ 13-20 and GJ 14-12. And now the attorney general found the reports as specious as the allegations. Both reports were concocted and pushed by politics and power by two CAOs. And at what cost? How many hours of county time were spent? How many hours of AG time? And then there are the hard costs. We don't know what was invoiced with respect to MacHold but it was over \$15,000 and up to about \$64,000, Knorr's executory contract authority without BOS approval.

Interestingly this same 2014-15 Grand Jury in Report 14-07 lambasted this same HR Director Knorr in a report entitled "Board of Supervisors Neglects Human Resources." It speaks poorly of Knorr's business practices. Maybe the AG should also investigate that department as well.

We know that CAO Daly spent a quarter million dollars on her bogus "bully reports." Daly is gone, but not forgotten. But why is Knorr still here? In Grand Jury Report 14-07 one of the several recommendations was "The Board of Supervisors should appoint a qualified manager of Human Resources." The GJ also said: "The BOS should aggressively seek a new and qualified CAO." It was Knorr who gave us the incompetent Larry Combs. It was time for Knorr to be gone over a year ago and the BOS has and had that power. So what did they do, make her interim CAO, rewarding incompetence and politics. Then the BOS doubled down with Combs based on Knorr's recommendation. What is the BOS afraid of? Where is the AG investigation of HR Director Knorr's practices?

"Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts." Daniel Patrick Moynihan, senator from New York, 1976-2000.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Should you get screened for skin cancer?

By Nicholas St. Fleur, New York Times

Every summer as Americans slather on sun lotion, they are reminded of the dangers of skin cancer.

This year alone, more than 76,000 people in the United States will develop melanoma, the deadliest form of the disease, and about 10,000 will die from it.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force said, however, that there still isn't enough evidence to recommend total-body screenings and declined to take a position on the practice.

In short, the 17-member independent panel said that it could not determine – after reviewing thousands of research papers and studies from around the world – whether the benefits of screening outweighed the potential for harm if unnecessary or excessive procedures were performed.

[Read the whole story](#)

Pilot dies in glider crash

east of Minden

The pilot of a glider died when the aircraft crashed Sunday in the Pinenuts.

Joseph N. Lowenhardt, 74, of Minden was the only occupant.

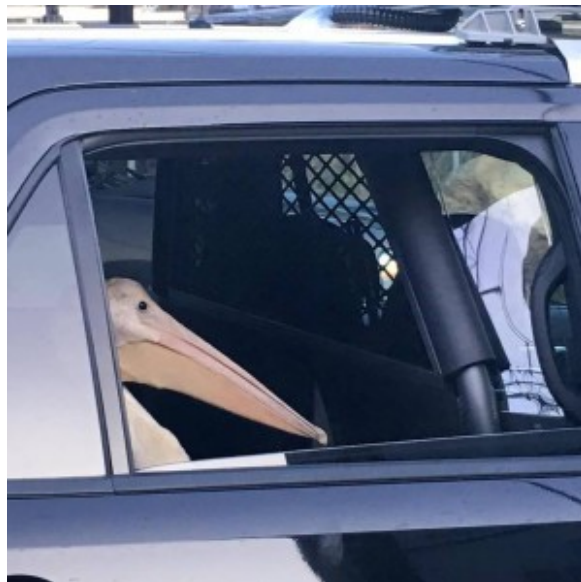
The Nevada Civil Air Patrol, assisted by the U.S. Air Force, located the crashed glider approximately 8 miles east of the Minden Tahoe Airport. The pilot was found deceased in the wreckage.

The crash occurred about 2:50pm Aug. 7.

The FAA is handling the investigation.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

CHP rescues pelican in Truckee near I-80



A pelican gets a free ride
to safety by the California
Highway Patrol.
Photo/Provided

By Alejandra Reyes-Velarde and Ryan Sabalow, Sacramento Bee

A California Highway Patrol officer, a former falconer, captured a pelican wandering near westbound Interstate 80 in Truckee this week.

The CHP got a call about an injured bird on the highway. Officers arrived about 7:15pm Tuesday to find the pelican on a hill beside the freeway. When CHP Officer Troy Griesemer approached the bird, it flew off between the first and second lanes on the highway, dodging a car to get to the other side, he said.

After Griesemer caught the pelican, it was placed in the back seat of the car and taken to the CHP office, where it sat for about an hour.

Read the whole story

Many in law enforcement against legalizing pot

By Brooke Edwards Staffs, Orange County Register

A growing number of California law enforcement organizations and leaders are voicing objections to a state ballot measure that would legalize recreational marijuana, saying it would

make the state less safe.

San Bernardino County District Attorney Mike Ramos said the initiative to legalize marijuana “will do nothing to curb black-market activity in California.” He is one of several police officials who is actively opposing the measure, a group that includes the Riverside Sheriffs’ Association, the Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs and the California Police Chiefs Association.

Law enforcement remains one of the most influential voices when it comes to debating issues such as marijuana legalization, according to Dan Schnur, director of the Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics at USC. And its credibility doesn’t seem to have declined, he said, despite recent controversies surrounding the relationship of police and community.

But marijuana legalization advocates so far have collected 40 times more campaign cash than opponents.

Read the whole story

Star Guide: Mars and meteors in August sky



Simulation Curriculum: 9:30pm Aug. 11, 2016 – the moon, Mars and Saturn in conjunction.

By Tony Berendsen

Mars is in Scorpio about 69 million miles from the Earth fading in brightness from its close approach of 47 million miles on May 30. Still the brightest object in the southern horizon the bright red color of Mars makes it easy to find in the early evening; it is a fast moving planet in the night sky, too.

The red planet orbits the sun at 54,000 mph, but the Earth's orbital speed of 67,000 mph zooms past it causing retrograde (when Mars moves from the east to the west in the sky) and then, as the Earth begins to round the sun in our orbit, Mars returns to its normal movement of west to east and seems to speed up a little due to our vantage point.

Over the next few weeks it will move quickly eastward passing between Saturn and the bright red star Antares. You can see this if you go out and visually mark the location of Mars and Saturn every few nights. To help find Mars and Saturn the moon will point the way on the evening of Aug. 11 when it will mark the upper corner of a triangular conjunction made by Saturn, Mars, and the waxing gibbous moon.

An added bonus to being out under the night sky watching Mars is the best meteor shower of the year. The Perseid meteor shower is a favorite of many, often producing up to 60 meteor streaks an hour, but this year we may see even more. Scientists predict the Earth will be passing through a fairly dense clump of comet Swift Tuttle debris this year doubling the number of meteors per hour. Material shed by Swift Tuttle as it warms from the energy of the sun fills an orbital path that the Earth passes through every year causing the meteor shower.

Perseid meteors are fast moving and come from the area of the constellation Perseus. Traveling thousands of miles per hour falling into the Earth's atmosphere particles of comet dust no bigger than the tip of your finger create this dazzling light show. They can appear in any part of the sky but will trace back to Perseus.

The peak of the shower is the night of Aug. 11 and the following morning of Aug. 12. In the early evening of the 11th the moon forming its triangle with Mars and Saturn will outshine some of the meteors, but if you wait until the early morning after the moon sets (about 1:30am) the sky will darken improving conditions for meteor watching. I plan to watch for Perseids the week before the peak to avoid the bright moon since the Earth will already be in the debris stream.

For millennia humans have watched the night sky. We have charted the paths of planets, proper motion of stars, and the subtle wobble of the Earth: precession. We have watched Venus climb above the morning horizon only to retreat and rise again in the evening and have seen Mercury do the same. There is no need of a telescope to notice these things; we need only our eyes. Our naked eye watching has helped scientists understand our place in the Cosmos, and sometimes a spectacular cosmic sight like Mars and meteors speeding across the sky.

Tony Berendsen runs Tahoe Star Tours. He may be reached at

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Tahoe Transportation District is considering ending BlueGo route 21x and making changes to routes 19x and 20x based on funding from Nevada. If approved, the changes would be effective Oct. 1.
- East West Partners is raising the minimum wage for its workers in Lake Tahoe and Vail to \$15/hour.
- Bush will be at Harrah's South Shore Room on Nov. 3.
- Tahoe Hockey Academy selected US Performance Academy for its online education component at the Meyers facility.
- Here is the Caltrans Sierra roadwork schedule for the week.