Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• On June 17 from 6-7pm Kyle Swanson, a doctor with Tahoe Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, will talk about preventing shoulder injuries. This free talk is in the Lake Tahoe Community College board room in South Lake Tahoe.

• Carson Valley Inn Food Truck Festival is May 31 from noon to 8pm in and adjacent to TJ's Corral, the outdoor events center.

• Placerville residents who oppose roundabouts have submitted signatures to qualify a measure for the November ballot that would require voters to approve all roundabouts.

• The May 24 Random Acts of Improv at Lake Tahoe Community College has been canceled.

Pre-K availability varies by state

By AP

WASHINGTON — The availability of state-funded pre-kindergarten programs varies widely from one part of the country to another, says a report.

For example, more than 9 in 10 4-year-olds in the District of Columbia attended such a program during the 2012-13 school year, while 10 states have no such program.

A number of states had fairly high enrollments, according to the report released Tuesday, though slightly lower than the District. More than 7 out of 10 4-year-olds in Florida, Oklahoma and Vermont were in such programs, while about 6 in 10 in Iowa, Georgia, West Virginia and Wisconsin were enrolled.

In fact, even as lawmakers from both parties have embraced the idea of expanding early childhood programs, the number of children enrolled in state preschool programs saw a modest decline of about 9,200 children in the 2012-13 school year — the first such reduction since 2002, when researchers at Rutgers University started tracking pre-K trends. Even as funding increased from a year earlier, more than half of states with programs made cuts. California alone, for example, lost nearly 15,000 slots.

Overall, $5.4 billion was spent by states on pre-K funding for about 1.3 million preschoolers.

The report is from the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers in collaboration with the Education Department's National Center for Education Statistics.

Given announcements of support by politicians for preschool, Steven Barnett, the director of the institute at Rutgers, said he expected more growth to be reflected in the findings, and yet, "the numbers aren't there."

"We were very surprised," Barnett said.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan said the data is a "reminder of how much work we still have to do to ensure that every child gets a running start."

President Obama has advocated for universal preschool for America's 4-year-olds. He's found Democratic allies in the effort on Capitol Hill, but Republicans such as Rep. John Kline, R-Minn., the chairman of the House Education Committee,

have said improving existing federally funded early childhood programs should be the priority.

Outside of Washington, governors from both parties have advocated for creating or expanding preschool. In Indiana, GOP Gov. Mike Pence, for example, signed into law in March a new pilot program for low-income children. In Connecticut, Gov. Dannel Malloy, a Democrat, recently successfully pushed through an expansion of about 1,000 preschool slots.

Those changes aren't reflected in the report's findings, nor are program expansions passed in New York that could have New York City alone add tens of thousands of children to state-funded preschool programs, possibly as soon as the fall.

Supporters say preschool programs help level the playing field for young children who enter kindergarten well behind their peers and never catch up, and members of the business community are among those advocates for preschool expansion. But the quality of such programs varies.

No states require preschoolers to attend school. Some states seek to offer it universally. Others base eligibility on family income. Under some setups, a community-based program receives public dollars. Other programs are within elementary schools.

While some states offer state-funded preschool to 3-year-olds, the programs are much more popular for 4-year-olds.

The District of Columbia serves about three-quarters of 3-year-olds. New Jersey and Vermont serve about 1 in 5 3-year-olds.

Public preschool programs can cost thousands of dollars per child annually. The District of Columbia – the highest spender – spent $14,690 per child in the 2012-13 school year, according to the report.

Barnett has said previously that about half of U.S. children attend any kind of preschool program at ages 3 and 4, and for about a third of these children it is a publicly supported program.

A separate study by the Education Commission of the States finds that in the current fiscal year, 30 states and the District of Columbia increased appropriations for state-funded preschools.

Opinion: We can solve Tahoe's clarity problems

By Jeff Cowen

I have had the pleasure of serving as a spokesperson and community liaison for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency for eight years and I have witnessed a lot of change at the agency and in our communities.

As I leave TRPA to join my wife in running our family business in South Lake Tahoe, I wanted to share with you some of the simple truths I have gleaned from hundreds of public meetings and many conversations with each of you.



Jeff Cowen

First, Lake Tahoe has a water quality problem. It seems obvious, but many of the conversations I have witnessed over the years seem to lose this fact. We all want something from Lake Tahoe, but we need to give back in order to keep things in balance.

Next, cooperation reduces regulation. Problems don't go away just because we can't agree on how to address them. So why not be involved and work together on the solutions?

Now, on to my farewell tips to the community:

Get defensive and do your BMPs. After the Angora wildfire burned 254 homes to the ground, defensible space was on everyone's mind. Soon after, enthusiasm waned. Now we seem to have forgotten that thinning trees and replacing wood roofs are critical to making our neighborhoods safer and protecting Lake Tahoe. May is Wildfire Awareness Month in the Tahoe basin and all local fire protection agencies are asking that we again take up the banner of wildfire threat reduction. It is not a question of if, but when a wildfire is going to visit us again.

Get a site assessment on your property. Eventually, everyone needs to know how much land coverage they have and how much they are allowed to have. In the Tahoe basin, this information is just as big a factor to a property's value as the number of bathrooms. A coverage assessment is also the first step to taking advantage of new land coverage exemptions under the Regional Plan Update. Your property may already have this information on file, but if it doesn't, don't let the filing fee deter you. Knowledge is invaluable.

Get out of here once in a while. Tahoe's awesomeness is better understood with fresh perspective. Just as many learn from TRPA how to successfully balance the human and natural environments, we benefit from the input of others.

Stick to the plan. Every year, a little bit more of the

Regional Plan gets updated and it is working. Restoring an entire watershed with tens of thousands of private homes tucked into nearly every corner will take generations to complete. Even though I am one of TRPA's biggest cheerleaders, I am also a small business owner and a homeowner who understands the regulatory process from both sides. I can say with some authority that the Regional Plan that so many of you supported is worth taking the time to implement.

If we stick to the plan, we can ensure that this is the generation that solves Lake Tahoe's water quality woes. The next generation may have issues of its own to grapple with, but at least their lives will still revolve around a clean and pure Lake Tahoe.

Debate, but be willing to compromise. Lake Tahoe doesn't care if you are rich or poor, left or right, paddleboarder or wakeboarder. The actions of every one of us matter equally in this fragile watershed, so in order to save it we need to move beyond our differences and focus on what we share. There will always be voices that try to sway with hardline opinions and fear of the unknown. As I have watched decisions get made over the years, I have learned that solutions do not reside in extreme positions.

Finally, I am grateful to everyone who has ever asked me a question, offered input, or blown off steam to me about TRPA over the years. I and everyone at TRPA love to serve others and we owe it to you to continually listen, learn, and improve. Yours in service, Jeff Cowen.

Jeff Cowen will be with TRPA through the end of June.

Fewer Calif. options for Tahoe cable customers

By Kathryn Reed

Charter Cable customers in Lake Tahoe have one less California network affiliate. That means KCRA is the lone California station accessible to viewers around the clock.

Last week the company stopped providing KTVU, the Fox affiliate out of Oakland, during the day and instead offers Reno's KRXI.

KTVU and KRXI representatives told *Lake Tahoe News* an agreement between the stations could not be reached. However, the 10pm news on KTVU can still be seen via the KRXI channel. KTVU is also available online.

This reporter placed an anonymous call to Charter inquiring about initiating service in South Lake Tahoe. At first the cable company salesman didn't know if the network affiliates are in California or Nevada. Then after some research he came back and said all the channels are in California.

This just isn't true.

The only California network channel that people in the Lake Tahoe Basin can get throughout the day and night is NBC affiliate KCRA.

The troubling aspect for California viewers is that during an election season all the news and advertising is from Nevada.

In summer 2004 Meyers got KCRA after not having the California channel for a year. At that time the problem was blamed on the need to put in fiber optic lines on the power poles in the Upper Truckee area, which of course required Tahoe Regional Planning Agency approval.

“The last time they dropped the ABC San Francisco station, the City Council asked the Charter regional manager to come in and explain why that had happened. The discussion led to the leaving of KTVU and KCRA. They wanted to be rid of KCRA at the time because of what they explained to us were transmission problems. The KCRA station managers also came up and said that they had the capability to provide the signal,” a *Lake Tahoe News* reader said in an email.

Social media impacting hiring practices

By John Weber, Wall Street Journal

Social networks offer a window into how people live their lives.

But should employers be looking into that window?

It’s becoming an increasingly important question. The number of people fired over social-media posts is rising, and many employers look closely at a job candidate’s online presence before making a decision.

For an idea of how prevalent those practices have become, consider a 2013 survey from CareerBuilder, which helps corporations target and attract workers. According to the survey, 39 percent of employers dig into candidates on social sites, while 43% said they had found something that made them deep-six a candidate—such as posting inappropriate photos or information, or bad-mouthing a former boss.

On the flip side, 19 percent said they found information that sold them on a candidate, such as communication skills or a professional image.

Read the whole story

North Tahoe opening seasonal recreation sites

North Tahoe Regional Park's summer hours are 7am-8pm.

Parking is $5 for non-residents and free for residents with a valid resident sticker.

Annual North Tahoe PUD parks parking discount passes are available to non-residents for $100 per vehicle. They are available at the district offices during normal business hours. These expire on December 31, 2014 and are not pro-rated.

Tahoe Vista Recreation Area and Boat Launch is open seven days a week from 7am-8pm, weather permitting.

Daily boat launch fees (which include parking until the lot is full) for the Tahoe Vista Recreation Area are $15 for North Tahoe Public Utility District residents and $20 for non-residents. Daily vehicle parking fees for Tahoe Vista Recreation Area are $5 for North Tahoe Public Utility District residents, $10 for non-residents and $25 for buses.

Season parking and launch passes are available at the main NTPUD office on National Avenue for $150 for residents and $275 for non-residents. Please note that the District will not be maintaining Coon Street boat launch so these launch passes

will not be accepted at that location if it is open.

When no staff is present, the launch will be closed and locked. Fees listed above do not include TRPA fees.

TRTA working in Tahoe City on National Trails Day

Tahoe Rim Trail Association on June 7 is celebrating the 22nd anniversary of National Trails Day.

TRTA is kicking off the summer trail building season by pitching in to help maintain the trail heading east from Tahoe City on the 64 acres near Fanny Bridge.

No experience is necessary. Groups and families are welcome.

The event is from 8:30am to 4pm.

Meet at the parking lot to register, get lunches packed, provide details for the day and to wrap up at the end of the day.

Tahoe Rim Trail Association will provide lunch for all preregistered volunteers.

For more information or to register, contact Morgan Fessler at morganf@tahoerimtrail.org or 775.298.4489.

Handbell concert at S. Lake Tahoe Library

There will be a handbell concert by Tintabulations, an ensemble from Reno, on June 14 at 3pm at the South Lake Tahoe Library.

The concert series entitled Greetings From Tintab weaves stories from the group's past with modern bell literature. Traditional folk songs, smooth jazz, and classic rock are all part of the concert, as well as original works for bells written by some of the nation's foremost handbell composers.

Performing on 120 bells and chimes, the 14 musicians that comprise Tintabulations prove that bell ringing can be entertaining year-round and not just at the holiday season.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Sophie

Sophia is a playful 5-year-old Chihuahua mix with soft long hair.

She’s very sweet and loves to go for walks, and would fit into just about any home.

Sophia is spayed, microchipped, tested for heartworm, and vaccinated. She 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 online or 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

Editorial: Measure L – vote yes in June

Publisher’s note: ***Lake Tahoe News convened an editorial panel of six South Shore residents to decide on this endorsement for the June primary.***

Twenty bucks doesn’t get you much these days unless you are at the South Lake Tahoe Library.

For that amount of money you get unlimited access to books, periodicals, an array of events, time on computers and the ability to pick the brain of the experts who work behind the counter.

In all of those resources a whole new world could be discovered – life beyond the confines of Tahoe, as well as imaginary places. Books stimulate the imagination, they educate us, they relax us and they challenge us to think differently.

Libraries are the great equalizer. The cost is the same for everyone – free. This is because property owners pay the taxes to keep them going.

But they are also an equalizer in that they provide access to information. Even in this high-tech world we live in, not everyone has a personal computer or smart phone. Nor does everyone have the means to purchase books.

Even for those who do have the money to buy books, the library is still a resource. So many people don't want to buys books so the libraries "rent" them. These days they can even be checked out as an ebook. Many people who are in book clubs choose the library over the bookstore.

Audio books are also available. These are great for long car rides or for those whose eyesight isn't what it was.

Programs are offered starting with infants. Study after study proves that reading to children will better prepare them for school, and thus life. For adults whose first language is not English, these programs help teach them a new written and verbal language as well.

The library is constantly coming up with creative ways to reach people. The "appy hour" was developed to help people with smart phones learn how to use various apps.

Then there is the Friends of the Library that brings in authors to give readings and sign books. This nonprofit group is an extension of the library and is able to provide events beyond what the county can do.

But the problem is the tax that supports the library is about to expire. If it does, it means the South Lake Tahoe Library would have to cut hours and programs, and one day may not exist.

We can’t imagine our town without a library. That is why we whole-heartedly support Measure L.

Measure L will be on the June 3 ballot. It is specific to the South Lake Tahoe library. It asks residents to continue paying the $20 year fee per parcel. This is not a new tax, but would be continuing the one already in place. The amount could go up based on the Consumer Price Index of no more than 3 percent per year. It will never exceed $28.50 per year. It would expire in 12 years. It will require two-thirds of the voters’ approval for passage.