Law enforcement to be out in force on Cinco de Mayo

The Avoid the 6 – El Dorado County DUI Task Force will be deploying DUI saturation patrols throughout a number of cities supporting routine DUI patrols on May 5 starting at 7pm.

Additionally, CHP will be deploying saturation patrols onto freeways and in unincorporated county jurisdictions to stop, test and arrest impaired drivers who fail to use a designated driver.

Cinco de Mayo is a special opportunity to gather with friends and co-workers for chips, salsa and margaritas, celebrating California's rich cultural diversity. It is also a night when dangerous and often deadly outcomes occur because another impaired driver hits the road drunk.

Local venues are planning special reduced rates for drinks creating the probability for even higher numbers of intoxicated drivers for a Saturday night. DUI statistics indicate the greatest number of DUI deaths and injuries occur late Saturday night and early Sunday morning which is why law enforcement will be out in force as a deterrent.

Caltrans set to begin roadwork in Lake Tahoe Basin

Caltrans announced today that construction will resume on five road work projects on the California side in and around the

Lake Tahoe Basin.



The projects are designed to rehabilitate and reconstruct drainage facilities – allowing roadway run-off to be directed to treatment collection facilities rather than Lake Tahoe and its tributary waterways. Some projects will also improve safety and traffic flow and encourage walking and bicycling with wider shoulders, lane restriping, adding or widening bicycle lanes, and installing some sidewalks and traffic signals.

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Projects in El Dorado and Placer counties include:

1. Highway 267 near Northstar – May 1

Location: Highway 267 near Northstar Drive to near Brockway Summit

Purpose: Slope stabilization and shoulder paving to reduce runoff damage

Approximate hours – May 1–3, 7am-5pm; May 4, 7am-noon; May 7–10, 8pm-5am; May 10–11, 8pm-noon.

2. Highway 50, South Lake Tahoe – Mid-May

Location: Trout Creek Bridge to Ski Run Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe

Purpose: Stormwater collection and treatment, widen shoulders, sidewalks, Class II Bike Lanes, pedestrian lighting, traffic signals, landscaping

3. Highway 50 South Lake Tahoe – Mid-May

Location: Ski Run Boulevard to Wildwood Avenue in South Lake

Tahoe

Purpose: Stormwater collection and treatment, widen shoulders, sidewalks, Class II Bike Lanes, pedestrian lighting, traffic signals, landscaping

4. Highway 89 near Squaw Valley – Mid-May

Location: Highway 89 from the Nevada County line to Squaw Valley Road

Purpose: Pavement rehabilitation to restore ride quality for motorists, bicyclist, and improve drainage

5. Highway 89 Lakeside Project – Mid-May

Location: Highway 89 from the Tahoe City to Tahoma

Purpose: Stormwater collection and treatment, widen shoulders, curb, gutter, retaining walls and pavement resurfacing (with asphalt concrete)

Motorists are asked to allow up to 30 minutes of extra driving time in some areas.

Placer County planning for adequate parking in Kings

Beach

Placer County is buying two parcels in Kings Beach that will be used for parking.

A 1.1-mile section of Highway 28 through the middle of this Lake Tahoe community will be transformed from a four-lane highway with one signalized intersection into a three-lane thoroughfare that uses roundabouts and other traffic calming features. The project will build sidewalks, bicycle lanes and other aesthetic improvements.

Because on-street parking will be reduced when the project is built, part of its design is to add off-street parking primarily in the commercially developed areas adjacent to the highway. The two parcels obtained last week will be used for that purpose.

The utility relocation work is expected to begin this month.

LTN tidbit 1: Daily digest keeps you in the know



May is 31 tidbits about Lake Tahoe News month.

LTN tidbit No. 1:

Did you know you could get an email sent to you each morning listing what has been posted on *Lake Tahoe News* in the last 24 hours?

All you have to do is go to the bottom right of *Lake Tahoe News'* home page and enter your email address. After you receive the confirmation email, you receive an email each morning listing what has been posted in the last 24 hours. You may scan the headlines or click on one to get the whole story.

This is all free.

Here is information about becoming a paid subscriber.

Opinion: Collaboration needed in Tahoe basin, not divisive letters

To the community,

Having been a volunteer firefighter (almost 30 years), EMT (four years)and reserve deputy sheriff (12 years) in Alpine County, been the Alpine County Board of Supervisor's rep on our Fire Safe Council, plus one or two other activities, I personally feel Mr. [Carl] Ribaudo's letter was, although I'm sure heartfelt, just a cheap shot.

After this last Lahontan board meeting I had coffee with Nancy Gibson, USFS supervisor, and told her of our experience on the

Alpine County Board of Supervisors. We have worked collaboratively with the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest on a NEPA-CEQA document regarding the Hawkins Peak Communications project, certainly not to the scale of the Lake Tahoe Fuels Project, the Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest is from Region 4, out of Ogden, Utah, with the forest operated out of Sparks and the Carson Ranger District, out of Carson City, Nevada.



Don Jardine

There was a bit of a learning curve on each side, but working together, we both saw all issues addressed, each in its own manner and this project is basically completed.

On a personal note, if Region 4 can make it happen, collaboratively, can Region 5, out of San Francisco, do it?

As I talked with Nancy Gibson, I imparted that we each have a role to play, regarding NEPA-CEQA, particularly in the Lake Tahoe Basin. There is a higher standard. But working together, we can meet these standards. We may or may not have another Angora Fire, I pray not, but working together we can reduce the public safety issues.

This does not even bring up the perfectly valid points brought up by the U.S. EPA rep at our meeting.

I feel Mr. Ribaubo’s letter was destructive and was no help as I talked with my friends at CalFire, Lake Valley Fire Protection District, our friends and cooperators with USFS, California State Parks and others about collaboration.

I feel all of the involved agencies and public have a continued opportunity to work together.

I’m sorry, his letter really burns me. We have many issues that we are required to address. Many thanks to all.

Don Jardine, chairman Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

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Foster children in S. Tahoe deserve stability in their lives

By Leila Rosner

More than 750,000 children are abused or neglected each year in the United States. At least 410,000 children live in foster care because their families are in crisis and cannot meet their day-to-day needs. In California, approximately 60,000 children are in the foster care system, 300 in El Dorado County, and approximately 100 foster children are from South Lake Tahoe.

These kids are from our local schools, from Bijou to the Magnet school, and our own neighborhoods, from Meyers to Stateline. They may take the bus to school with your children or play with them on the playground.

But here’s where it gets messy. A foster child from South Lake Tahoe is more than likely not going to be placed in a foster home in Tahoe, but will instead go to Placerville, Sacramento, or Jackson. Why? Because the need exceeds the number of foster homes in South Lake Tahoe.



Leila Rosner

Let’s put this into perspective. Meet Bradley (name changed to protect privacy), who came into the foster care system at age 2. Bradley was an adorable boy with brown hair and green eyes, an outgoing personality and a melt-your-heart smile. The toddler rarely laughs, but when he does, his chuckle is contagious. Bradley, however, was born to a mother with mental health issues that caused her to act more like a child than a capable, caring adult. For example, when Bradley misbehaved he was slapped, pushed, or, worse, held upside down by his feet and his head shoved into the toilet. After he choked up the water he had swallowed and gasped for air, his mother would shake her head in disappointment, with a “look what you made me do” expression.

Stories of abuse and neglect like Bradley’s unfortunately are not uncommon in South Lake Tahoe. Foster children may arguably be the most vulnerable of all human beings. They are completely dependent upon adults to provide for their needs. But when those caregivers mistreat, neglect, or cannot care for them, they are pulled from the only semblance of a family they have known. The only foundation, no matter how shaky, they have ever known.

Nationwide, foster children are meant to be placed in a family setting because this is where children thrive. They are also meant to stay in their school and even neighborhood if possible. Why? Because everything else is crumbling and changing around them. They deserve to wake up to a mom or dad, albeit, in a different family, and go to the same school the next day. They deserve to have their same friends. They

deserve the consistency of having the same teacher.

This ideal is not, however, what many South Lake Tahoe foster children experience. If there is no available home in South Lake Tahoe, these kids are placed off the hill. They are completely uprooted from any and all routine, any and all familiarity. Not only do they have to get used to a new family, but they have to go to new city, a new school or day care, have a new teacher, and make new friends.

The life of a foster child is never easy, but it becomes even more difficult and confusing if that child has to start over in every aspect of life. This is called compounded trauma. Trauma on top of trauma. Being abused and neglected is traumatic. Being taken from your parents is traumatic, no matter how abusive or neglectful they were. But being placed in a different city is a trauma that doesn't need to happen and wouldn't happen if there were enough people willing to become foster parents in Tahoe.

The problem not only has an emotional impact, it can also make reunifying the child with the parents more difficult. Children deserve to have visits with their parents and siblings, but what happens if they are placed in Sacramento and there is a snowstorm that makes it difficult to drive over the pass? They don't get to see their parents that day. What happens when a child is in first grade and has twice weekly visits for two hours? If you do the math, that's actually a six hour day for the child. They have to be in a car for four hours just to see their parents for two.

Let's go back to Bradley's story. Bradley was lucky. When Bradley was taken from his mother and placed into foster care, he was fortunate to live in a local foster home. He was able to play outside in his neighborhood, on his own playground, with the same familiar faces. He was able to attend the same preschool with the same teacher – the same teacher who greets him with a big hug and smile as soon as he opens the door.

Because of his abuse and neglect, Bradley had some issues to work through. For example, he was terrified of the bathroom. He would start to cry as soon as he thought he had to go into a bathroom. Bradley also would not make eye contact with anyone. He was hiding. He was scared. And, he didn't trust adults.

Today, however, Bradley has been adopted into a loving family. The very same family who took him on that first day in foster care. Bradley makes eye contact. He is no longer fearful of the bathroom. He is able to trust adults. In fact, observing Bradley, you would never know there was trauma in his background. Even though the family had no intentions of adopting, that little 2 year old won their hearts and will be a part of their family forever. Bradley is loved.

All of our children deserve a safe and stable home, whether in foster care or not. Maybe your own home could be this safe place.

In honor of Foster Care Month in May, would you consider making a difference in the life of a child?

Foster parents have monthly reimbursement for expenses ranging from $609 to $790 depending upon age. Foster children come with their own medical, dental, and vision insurance. Support services are available through 24 hour on-call social workers, transportation help, and training through Foster and Kinship Care Education at Lake Tahoe Community College.

To learn more about becoming a licensed foster parent or adoptive parent, please contact one of the following:

Foster Family Service – (530) 544.2111

Koininia Family Services – (530) 541.1870

El Dorado County Child Protective Services – (530) 573.3201.

Leila Rosner is an instructional specialist in Foster and

Kinship Care Education at Lake Tahoe Community College.

Tickets on sale for Fair Play Wine Festival

The annual Fair Play Wine Festival is the weekend of June 2-3, 11am-5pm each day.

Sixteen wineries are participating.

Tickets are $20.

Go online for more information.

Free document shredding at St. Theresa School

Iron Mountain Secure Shredding will be at St. Theresa School (1041 Lyons Road, South Lake Tahoe) on May 12 from 10am to 1pm to shred people’s old files.

Iron Mountain is donating its services in hopes people make a

donation to St. Theresa School.

Individuals and businesses are welcome.

Law breakers force all dogs from Upper Truckee Marsh

By Kathryn Reed

Poop bags have been replaced with pamphlets about why dogs are no longer allowed in the Upper Truckee Marsh.

Today begins the second annual three-month ban of canines – even ones on leash – from this popular South Lake Tahoe meadow that leads to Lake Tahoe.

While those who like to take their best friend for a walk in this area won't be able to until Aug. 1, neighborhood lore has it that this also happened when the land was privately owned.



No more walking in the Upper Truckee Marsh for AJ. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Before the California Tahoe Conservancy took ownership several years ago longtime Tahoe families owned the land. It was known as the Barton Meadow before the CTC called it the Upper Truckee Marsh. On maps, the sandy area is called Hartoonian Beach.

Cattle used to roam this acreage. And when they were being rounded up, even the locals stayed out of the meadow for about three months a year for fear of being trampled in a stampede by the herd. Plus, the cowboys shot dogs caught off leash.

By comparison, the $150 potential fine levied in this modern day era pales by comparison.

The whole point of the CTC closure is to preserve the marsh that provides critical habitat for wildlife – in particular a variety of birds. This marsh is the largest wetland habitat in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

“It’s the public’s responsibility to respond to and honor the objectives by which we are trying to manage that property,” Dana Dapolito, CTC associate environmental planner, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We are providing the information. They need to take that step to comply.”



Even on leash, AJ is forbidden from swimming in Trout Creek where it meanders through the Upper Truckee Marsh.

For the first 24 days of April sheriff's deputies wrote 18 citations. However, the CTC does not know how many of those were people with dogs off leash or people drinking alcohol or campfires or some other unpermitted activity.

What the landowners do know is compliance of the leash law, according to their land steward, is at 65 percent this year. This compares to late last summer-early fall when it was at 80 percent when dogs were let back into the marsh.

With an average of 400 dogs a week being seen by the steward this spring because of the extremely temperate conditions and lack of snow, that equates to 140 dogs running around off leash. They could be trampling on sensitive habitat and scaring wildlife.

Even when the closure is not in effect, the leash law has been – and always has been the rule since the Conservancy has owned the land. And prior to it becoming public property, no one was ever supposed to be in this area without permission by the private landholder.

Had people followed the leash law rule, those who do what they are told would not be punished. Instead, the majority of dog owners are paying the price for the minority – that one-third of dog walkers seen without a leash.

"Our goal is not to levy fines," CTC Deputy Director Ray Lacey told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The citations are for flagrant disobedience."

Of the nearly 5,000 CTC properties in the basin, this is the only one with this type of closure.

O’Rourke reportedly going to start new job by July

While South Lake Tahoe City Manager Tony O’Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News* on April 30 that he is still negotiating with Yakima, Wash., officials, news outlets in that town make it sound like it’s a done deal he will be moving north.

“I’m gonna make it hard on myself, I’d like to come up there and buy a home, how’s that as a starting point? That’s a pretty good anchor point into the community. The city has nothing to worry about,” O’Rourke is quoted on KAPP-TV.



S. Tahoe's No. 1 and No. 2 officials -- Tony O'Rourke and Nancy Kerry -- at the April 30 Bonanza Park ceremony. Photo/LTN

Yakima’s City Council on April 27 offered O’Rourke the job of city manager.

Also according to the television station, O’Rourke plans to start the new job by July.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report