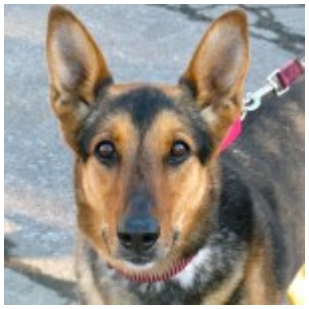
Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Lady is a beautiful German Shepherd who is about 6 years old and on the small side, perhaps 50 pounds.



She loves to play with other dogs, and didn't chase the cats that she met at the shelter.

Lady is an active, friendly girl who will do best in a home where she'll get regular exercise.

Lady is spayed, microchipped, 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 to Pet Finder 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

STPUD ratepayer info may become public information

By Kathryn Reed

South Tahoe Public Utility District board members are expected to vote March 15 whether to release ratepayer contact information to the Citizens Alliance for Responsible Government.

John Runnels, a member of that group, made a presentation to the board Jan. 19. Because all five members were not in attendance the vote was pushed back to this Thursday when all are expected at the meeting.

Runnels said his group wants to be able to send direct mailings to ratepayers – in particular about Proposition 218 notifications.

State law requires the utility district to notify people by mail of potential increases in sewer or water rates. People must be told of the pending vote 50 days before the board is scheduled to take action.

Runnels told the board at the January meeting that the district's "PR is limiting." He contends people don't believe it's the truth; that the district puts a spin on the information.

"We say what rate increase we are proposing, what it means to various customer classes, what the current rate is and what it would be with the increase," Dennis Cocking, South Tahoe PUD spokesman, told *Lake Tahoe News* after the meeting. "You have 45 days if you want to protest. You don't have to give a

reason.”

The district sends its Proposition 218 notifications to all 17,000 ratepayers even though some are only sewer customers.

“We have always met the letter of the law,” Cocking said.

Once the paperwork is sent the board cannot increase the rate beyond what people have been alerted to. However, they may reduce the increase like they did last year when the proposal was to up sewer rates 2.5 percent and the board chose to increase rates by 2 percent.

Notifications will go out this spring because of proposed changes to metered water customers. Right now people on meters have a bill that is based on a 55 percent fixed rate, 45 percent variable based on usage. It may go to a 65-35 split. The eventual goal of the district is for it to be 70 percent fixed, 30 percent variable.

Other rate increases are possible.

At the January meeting the board, with President Eric Schafer absent, was all over the place with the thought of releasing ratepayer information. Part of the problem was setting such precedent. Part was not knowing who else the Alliance might give the addresses to and the potential ratepayers would be inundated with junk mail. Some liked the idea of being transparent.

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Meeting info:

March 15 at 2pm, 1275 Meadow Crest Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

Wildlife rehab center looking for volunteers

Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care's 32nd annual two-day training seminar is May 19-20.

For $60 people will learn how to be a wildlife volunteer. The lectures cover diets, feeding techniques, housing and first aid, capture and transportation, and anatomy and examination.

The deadline to register is May 13.

The Saturday session is from 8:30am-4m and Sunday from 9:30am-4pm at LTWC in South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (530) 577.2273 or go online.

Sierra to host women-only snowboard competition

Billabong Flaunt It Finals are March 31 at Sierra-at-Tahoe.

The finals of this North American women-only snowboard series is a Swatch World Tour rated event.

Sierra is expecting some of the best snowboarders in the industry to ride. Jamie Anderson, who trains at Sierra is a 2012 X Games gold medalist, is a Billabong sponsored rider and may make a visit to the finals.

For more information, go online.

Opinion: Is GOP becoming the war party?

By Pat Buchanan

Denouncing Republican “bluster” about war with Iran, President Obama went on the offensive Tuesday:

“Those who are … beating the drums of war should explain clearly to the American people what they think the costs and benefits would be.”

The president had in mind such remarks as those Newt Gingrich delivered to the Israeli lobby AIPAC that same day: “The red line is now … because the Iranians are deepening their commitment to nuclear weapons” – an assertion the Joint Chiefs and U.S. intelligence agencies say is blatantly false.



Pat Buchanan

They insist: Iran has not made the decision to build a bomb.

Perhaps the president was referring to Mitt Romney’s pledge to

that same cheering throng to “station multiple carriers and warships at Iran’s door” and deny Tehran even “the capacity to make a bomb.”

But if “the capacity to make a bomb” means knowledge of how to build one and an ability to enrich uranium to bomb-grade, should they decide to do so, Iran already has that.

Does Mitt want war now?

Perhaps the president had in mind John McCain’s call for U.S. air strikes on Syria, an act of war rejected even by GOP Speaker John Boehner as “premature,” since the “situation in Syria is pretty complicated.”

Have the Republican uber-hawks learned nothing from the war for which they beat the drums 10 years ago?

Then they told us Saddam Hussein was implicated in 9/11, that he had chemical weapons, that if we didn’t invade his country we could expect anthrax attacks by Iraqi crop-dusters up and down our East Coast.

Those who asked for proof Saddam was a mortal threat were dismissed by Condi Rice: “There will always be some uncertainty about how quickly Saddam can acquire nuclear weapons. But we don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.”

The price of our heeding that bluster? Some 4,500 American dead, 35,000 wounded, $1 trillion sunk, 100,000 Iraqi dead, half a million widows and orphans.

The fruits of our victory? A Shia-dominated Iraq descending into sectarian and civil war.

The GOP’s political reward for marching us up to Baghdad?

Loss of both houses of Congress in 2006 and the White House in 2008, when the antiwar Obama crushed the war hawk McCain.

Today's GOP front-runners – Newt, Mitt and Rick Santorum – all clearly believe that a warlike stance toward Iran will appeal to the evangelical base and to Jewish voters who went for Obama by 57 points in 2008.

But they are rolling the dice with a war-weary America.

Ron Paul, whose youth vote the party needs and who receives the largest number of contributions from the military, has split with them on Iran.

The president, says Paul, is "closer to my position than the other candidates, because what the other Republicans are saying is reckless."

Most Republicans seem to be lining up with Newt, Mitt and Rick on a more hawkish stance. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell wants Congress to vote the president a blank check for war now. And the president is aware of and alarmed by the Republican stampede to war:

"The notion that the way to solve every one of these problems is to deploy our military – that hasn't been true in the past and it won't be true now. … Sometimes, it's necessary, but we don't do it casually. … We think it through. We don't play politics with it."

When rash decisions are made about war, said the president, mistakes are made, and "typically it's not the folks who are popping off who pay the price."

What to do about Iran – and whom to trust to deal with Iran – seems fated to be the foreign policy issue of 2012.

And the battle lines are drawn.

Bibi Netanyahu, the Israeli lobby and its allies in Congress will be demanding ever harsher sanctions and military action before November. For they assume, rightly, that the president does not want war and, if he wins, there will be no war with

Iran.

The Republicans will portray Obama as dithering, vacillating and weak, no true friend of Israel, though the U.S. military and intelligence community are behind Obama in his belief that a war now on Iran would be unnecessary, unwise and potentially calamitous.

Nervous Democrats, facing Sheldon Adelson super PAC ads in the Jewish communities of every swing state, all accusing Obama of "throwing Israel under the bus," will be pressuring the president to get tougher.

And Obama surely knows that an October confrontation with Iran, with war a possibility, or a reality, will mean the nation rallies around him and he wins a second term.

Will Iranian intransigence provide him a casus belli? Or will Iran negotiate seriously and agree to more intrusive inspections to prove its nuclear program is not aimed at a bomb?

Whether there is a U.S. war on Iran seems up to the ayatollah now. Will he play into the hands of Israeli and American hawks who are salivating over a war with his regime and his country?

Pat Buchanan is a founding editor of The American Conservative magazine, and the author of many books including "State of Emergency: The Third World Invasion and Conquest of America".

Building demolition would add

beach access in S. Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Providing more public access to Lake Tahoe as well as increasing the views for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists would be achieved if the Alta Mira building changed hands and then was leveled.

This nondescript building at 3339 Lake Tahoe Blvd. in South Lake Tahoe is on the March 15 California Tahoe Conservancy agenda. Staff is asking the board to enter an 18-month option at a cost of $10,000. This is essentially a down payment so the owner – called the Alta Mira Partnership – won't sell to someone else in that time frame.



The Alta Mira building in South Lake Tahoe that sits above the lake may be torn down. Photo/Kathryn Reed

"In our 27-year history we have tried to enhance opportunities to lake access," CTC Deputy Director Ray Lacey told *Lake Tahoe News*.

This building would be the end point of Lakeview Commons when

it is totally developed. Getting rid of the building would visually improve the area as well as provide another 190 feet of beach access for the public. A little more than 2,000 linear feet of sand exists from El Dorado Beach to the Alta Mira building.

“This would provide a proverbial anchor to the edge of El Dorado Beach,” Lacey said.

It was a grant of more than $6 million from the Conservancy to South Lake Tahoe that made Lakeview Commons a reality. This project overhauled the land at El Dorado Beach at the corner of Highway 50 and Lakeview Avenue.

Another $4 million to $5 million is needed to complete the project that would end at the Alta Mira building. That money, though, is not in anyone’s budget.

Also unknown is where the $2.5 million would come from to buy the 0.55-acre Alta Mira parcel.

Bruce Eisner, CTC program manager, said his agency has about $1.5 million that could go toward buying the Alta Mira building, but the rest would have to come from other sources.

The Tahoe Fund is one group that may be able to help.

While the board of this nonprofit has not voted on this particular topic, some members have expressed an interest in exploring acquiring the land.

“This is a key piece of property. We don’t have any definite commitments to it,” Cindy Gustafson, chairwoman of the Tahoe Fund board of directors, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We are not in a position where we could singularly acquire it, but we would work with partner agencies.”

Eisner said if the Conservancy in the next 1½ years decides to buy the property, the agency would stipulate the current owners demolish the existing building before title would be

transferred.

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Meeting info: California Tahoe Conservancy board meets March 15, 9:30am at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe.

Quilt display at Zephyr Cove library

The Douglas County Public Library in Zephyr Cove is displaying several quilts with the theme “My Favorite Things”.



Created by members of the Carson Valley Quilt Guild, the display of “Challenge Quilts” was created by quilters who purchased fabric from other members of the Carson Valley Quilt Guild. The fabrics were then made into quilts showing their favorite things.

The display is located inside the library and will run through the end of March.

The Zephyr Cove Library is located at 233 Warrior Way.

Yo-yo historian takes this toy seriously

By Sam McManis, Sacramento Bee

CHICO — Some time ago, when Alex Trebek's people telephoned the gregarious Bob Malowney, he might have considered saying he'd have his "people" call them back. Just to, you know, mess with those haughty TV types.

But "Jeopardy!" researchers sincerely needed information on yo-yo history, and Malowney takes his yo-yoing seriously, so who was he not to oblige?

Though too modest to admit to it, Malowney is a veritable font of yo-yo lore, a scholar of the spinning art, the go-to guy for a pastime that has had its ups and downs but always provided generations of kids-at-heart like him with endless delight.

If you're passing through Chico, or staying the weekend in this lovely college town, be sure to drop in on Malowney, 63, a docent deluxe who likely will spin the "Jeopardy!" yarn for you.

"They asked me about whether the yo-yo was once used as a Filipino weapon," he recalled. "You go to (the book) 'Ripley's Believe It or Not' in 1953, and it shows this guy sitting up in a tree with a water buffalo down there and he's going to bonk the buffalo on the head with the yo-yo."

A total urban (jungle?) myth, Malowney told them.

Read the whole story

Placer County giving out money to mitigate impacts of gaming

The Placer County Indian Gaming Local Community Benefit Committee has been allocated $67,853.22 from the state controller to distribute in the form of grants for programs and activities designed to mitigate the impacts of gaming upon the community.

As required by state law, the committee was formed in 2005 to award grant funds to local government agencies from the Indian Gaming Distribution Fund to help offset impacts associated with Indian gaming such as traffic enforcement and family wellness.

The grant application period is open until 5pm March 28.

For more information, call (530) 889.4030.

TOCCATA sets dates for Bach performances

J.S. Bach’s “Passion According to St. Matthew” will be presented by TOCCATA – Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – from March 31 through April 6.

Many consider this to be Bach’s greatest masterpiece.

Performances are March 31 at 4pm at Sierra Bible Church in Truckee; April 2 at 7pm at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Reno; April 4 at 7pm at St. Theresa Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe; and April 6 at 7pm at St. Patrick’s Episcopal Church in Incline Village.

Tickets are available at the door with cash or check or online with a credit card.

For more information, call (775) 313.9697, or email ToccataTahoe@gmail.com.