TRPA’s Code of Ordinances to be spelled out for people at workshops

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is hosting two public workshops to help orient customers to the reorganization of TRPA’s Code of Ordinances, which go into effect on March 1.

These workshops are designed to help property owners considering home or building improvement projects, along with planners, consultants, contractors, and land-use attorneys.

The workshops are:

Jan. 26, 6-7:30pm, TRPA Conference Room, 128 Market St., Stateline.

Feb. 2, 6-7:30, Donald W. Reynolds Community Nonprofit Center, 948 Incline Way, Incline Village.

Topics to be covered in the workshops include comparisons of the old and newly reorganized code, tips on how to quickly find information, and updates on the e code changes in progress.

For additional information, call Kristi Boosman at (775) 589.5230 or email kboosman@trpa.org.

Rotary looking for art

donations

The Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe is seeking art to be donated for a fundraiser to take place on Feb. 10 at Inn by the Lake.

One-hundred percent of the funds raised will go back into the community in the form of student scholarships.

The Rotary is collecting original fine art, limited edition prints, photographs, sculpture, fine jewelry, oil and acrylic paintings, watercolors, and ceramics. Framed art and unframed art that is in condition to be shown for auction will be accepted.

The deadline for donations is Feb. 3.

For more information, contact Pat Baginski at (530) 308.2504 or patchtahoe@gmail.com.

Tahoe Show

The Tahoe Show – Aug. 25 at MontBleu in Stateline – is a body building and figure competition.

For more info, go online.

Environmental novelist to speak in Incline

Environmental novelist Li Miao Lovett is the first author of the Writers in the Woods series this year at Sierra Nevada College.

Her visit includes a reading, book signing, and reception Feb. 10 at 7pm in the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences in Incline Village.

This evening is free and open to the community.



Li Miao Lovett

Lovett will also teach a fiction writing workshop from 9am-noon on Feb. 11. Workshops are open to the community and available for credit. Students are free. There is a $50 registration fee for community members. Register in advance online.

Lovett began her writing career after a 600-mile backpacking trip on the Appalachian Trail where she encountered a stalker, a compulsive poet, and 10,000 mosquitoes. She has been a frequent contributor to the *San Francisco Chronicle* and KQED Perspectives. Her literary and environmental writing has also been published by *Narrative Magazine*, *Earth Island Journal, China Rights Forum*, and Sierra Club's *The Planet*.

Supporting the mission of Words Without Borders, she has

organized events showcasing the works of dissident and censored writers.

Incline adaptive skier reaches South Pole

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Incline Village resident Grant Korgan – paralyzed since 2010 after a snowmobiling accident – has reached the South Pole.

The 33-year-old, who is using a device called a sit-ski, hoped to reach the South Pole on the 100-year anniversary of the Terra Nova Expedition, which arrived at the South Pole on Jan. 17, 1912.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Barton proactively pursues health of the South Shore

By John Williams

The New Year has always been the perfect time to reflect and look ahead with a fresh perspective. As the primary wellness provider for the South Lake Tahoe area, I would like to

address questions you may have about the future of healthcare and what Barton Health has planned for 2012 and beyond.

With healthcare in flux, many of us have questions and are wondering: “How will healthcare reform affect us?” While a great deal of unknowns exists, I’d like to share what we do know and help you make educated, sound health decisions for the future.


John Williams

In March 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care and Health Care Act (PPACA) and the Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (amendment the PPACA Act) were signed by President Obama. This law serves as the primary basis for healthcare reform legislation of the 111th Congress.

Healthcare reform was designed to address three main issues:

• Increase access to healthcare

• Improve patient quality

• Reduce cost.

For hospitals that rely on patient insurance coverage, the reform bill is a double-edged sword. While there will be more insured patients, insurance is expected to pay the hospital at a lower rate for inpatient services. In return, outpatient care will grow as more of the uninsured will have access to more healthcare facilities, rather than being treated in the emergency department, which has guaranteed treatment for patients. These are just a few of the provisions and changes

that will take place in the next four years. With this in mind, Barton continues to be proactive in seeking valuable services for the community and visitors. We are looking at 2012 optimistically, while pursuing the health status of our community by addressing wellness education patient access and improving care.

Looking ahead

As a proactive rural community healthcare provider, our priorities lie in addressing healthcare reform, enhancing our medical services and working collectively with community partners to help ensure the success of our economy. Barton Health's key focuses for 2012 include:

• Implementation of an electronic medical record system

• Conducting a Community Health Needs Assessment

• Securing the designation of a Level III trauma center

• Implementation and expansion of specialty services

• Innovation and recruitment.

Electronic medical records

To meet healthcare reform requirements, Barton will join other facilities across the nation and implement an electronic medical record system. The Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) will ensure safe and quality care for patients. The system will provide easy access to health information for caregivers including lab work, medications and X-rays and will enable a seamless transfer of patient medical records from one facility to another.

Quality measures

The success of a hospital is based on the care we provide and I am proud to state the quality-of-care we provide has

improved significantly over the past few years. Under healthcare reform, all hospitals will be judged on the quality and the consistency of care they deliver through a program known as Value Based Purchasing.

The hospital value based purchasing program rewards hospitals for improving our patient's experience of care while reducing medical mistakes. Hospitals will be measured on patient experience and quality of care. With these scores, the federal government will take funds from the poor performing hospitals and reward the outstanding performers.

Hospitals will benefit if they have high scores and show improvement. Barton will continue to focus our efforts in this arena, benefitting our community with exemplary patient experience.

Community Health Needs Assessment

The Community Health Needs Assessment is not only a requirement of healthcare reform, but will identify the health issues that are in the greatest need of support on the South Shore. Barton plans to identify barriers to access for healthcare, preventative healthcare needs, modifiable health risks and quality-of-life issues. The goal is to obtain a quantifiable gauge of the overall health status of our community. We will be requesting input from the public and will work alongside health experts in the area to identify issues and create programs to address the major needs within our community.

Expansion of services

Trauma Center: Barton Memorial Hospital, in conjunction with the region's emergency medical services response team, is working to establish Barton Memorial Hospital as a Level III trauma center by seeking approval from El Dorado County to begin operations by spring 2012, with official designation by spring 2013. This designation will improve the overall

quality-of-care for trauma patients, allowing them to stay in the area for care rather than being transferred to another medical facility outside of the area.

Tahoe Center for Orthopedics: Barton Health is well on its way to creating an orthopedic center of excellence. Tahoe Center for Orthopedics is comprised of the area's leading orthopedic surgeons, nurses, sports medicine specialists and support staff, all designed to offer a first-rate patient experience like none other in the region. In 2011, we remodeled the private-patient-rooms at Barton Memorial Hospital, added a pre-operative education component, hired a nurse dedicated solely to the care of orthopedic surgical patients and added a home visit rehabilitation program. New for 2012, TCO will expand its orthopedic program, allowing patients to receive surgical and rehabilitation care the same day an injury occurs.

Innovation and recruitment

In 2011, our services expanded throughout the region with growth of specialty services, physicians and technology. We recruited a world-renowned physiatrist from the Mayo Clinic, a talented audiologist and introduced dedicated cardiac services. Telemedicine, a program allowing patients to remotely consult with physicians outside of the area, will expand in 2012.

With grant funding through Access El Dorado, a countywide community collaborative, the program will provide telemedicine equipment to out-patient offices and assist in offering adult endocrinology, psychiatry (adult and child), cardiology, neurology, dermatology and infectious disease consults. Our telemedicine program has minimized the need for patients to leave the area for care while enhancing medical services in our community.

In addition to telemedicine and specialists, Barton continues

to increase technology and procedures that rival our “big city” counterparts, such as the single-incision gall bladder surgery, incisionless reflux procedure, the HALO breast exam and colon hydrotherapy.

Meeting the needs of our region

Barton’s mission is simple – to support our residents regardless of their insurance coverage or ability to pay. With the unemployment rate in South Lake Tahoe at a 16.7 percent, Barton is committed to offering free to low-cost wellness programs and services.

Free wellness lectures, discounted flu shots and complimentary health screenings are among some of the vital services we offer.

Additionally, the Barton Community Clinic treats nearly 19,000 uninsured and underinsured patients each year and continues to grow. Helping Hands, our financial assistance program, is designed to relieve some of the burden of medical bills for residents who are eligible. Barton’s Community Advisory Committee has awarded nearly $75,000 in grants since 2009, addressing oral and mental health, obesity, nutrition and physical fitness programs for both children and adults.

Growth and prosperity

Our goals are aggressive as we pursue improving the health status of our community – both economically and medically. Our partnership with Lake Tahoe Basin Prosperity Plan will help create a more resilient economy, while supporting the revitalization of environmental quality and an improved standard of living for our residents.

While we enhance patient care, expand our wellness programs and improve our facilities, we plan on continuing to support the economic wellbeing of South Lake Tahoe. We will accomplish this with contract work, mostly local, to expand our Community

Clinic, by continuing to upgrade our patient rooms and by improving other patient care facilities.

In addition, as the largest year-round employer in South Lake Tahoe with more than 900 employees and contracts with groups who employ more than 140 physicians, we continue to support our area's businesses. We look forward to supporting our community's health for years to come.

John Williams is president and CEO of Barton Health.

Blood drive in Stateline

Blood drive officials are asking people to give a pint before the first punt. That's because the blood drive is Super Bowl Sunday.

It is at Kahle Community Center in Stateline on Feb. 5 from 11am-4pm.

More information is on the flyer.

Gizmo Guys bring comedy-juggling act to schools, casino

Tahoe Arts Project continues its 25th season with the comedy/juggler duo The Gizmo Guys on Jan. 27 at the MontBleu theater.

Allan Jacobs and Barrett Felker have amazed and amused audiences around the world. They work in a variety of venues, including theaters, corporate functions of all types, cruise ships – you name it, they've done it. They've made numerous television appearances, won international juggling competitions, and taught at top circus schools.

But what makes their act so appealing is their uniquely winning combination of technique and humor.

The Gizmo Guys will bring their Objects in Motion show into the South Shore schools Jan. 23-27 to teach children how juggling relates to science and math.

Their full show can only be seen on the South Shore on Jan. 27 at 7pm. Tickets are $12 for adults and $8 for children and seniors. They may be purchased in advance at the California and Nevada visitors centers on the South Shore.

To charge tickets by phone or for more information, call Tahoe Arts Project at (530) 542.3632.

RAOK: Putting others first

Kindness, is what this month's promotion on *Lake Tahoe News* is all about. While it's called Random Acts of Kindness, it's also about just being kind.



Lisa Huard is the latest winner. Sierra Athletic Club is letting her workout there for a month. Lisa is being recognized for her generosity toward a friend who is contending with a serious medical condition.

We want to hear about the Random Acts of Kindness you are witnessing, or being a part of either by being the giver or receiver of a RAOK.

Write about as many acts of kindness as you like. The promotion lasts until the end of January.

Previous RAOK stories may be read by going to the Random Acts of Kindness tab at the top of the page.

There are a few rules associated with Random Acts of Kindness. If you want to read them, check out this story.

Curriculum not set for gay history in California schools

By Diana Lamber, McClatchy Newspapers

SACRAMENTO – A controversial California law approved last July

amid heated debate isn’t likely to affect California classrooms any time soon.

The Fair Education Act adds lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans, as well as people with disabilities, to existing state law that requires that the contributions of women and minorities be taught in California social science classes. It also prohibits materials that reflect adversely on people because of race, gender or other characteristics.

The law officially took effect Jan. 1. But the California Department of Education hasn’t laid out a companion curriculum, and state officials say they are leaving it up to school districts to determine how to comply.

While some local districts are working to design new curriculum, many others are simply waiting for the state’s next adoption of new history and social science textbooks, scheduled for 2015. School officials say they have received little direction and have few resources – financial and otherwise – to do much else.

“Right now we don’t have any funding to do the curriculum we need,” said Christopher Hoffman, superintendent of the El Dorado Union High School District. “We aren’t going to add anything.”

Hoffman said the district will wait for the next round of textbooks or direction from the state.

Read the whole story