

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Catch up with snowboarder Elena Hight of South Lake Tahoe in this video before the Dew Tour starts this weekend in Breckenridge.

- “Vagina Monologues” will be performed Feb. 24-25 at 7pm at the Blue Angel Loft in South Lake Tahoe. Tickets are \$15.
- Tahoe Maritime Museum in Homewood is open 10am-5pm Friday-Saturday-Sunday in the winter.
- The Soaring Society of America picked Minden-Tahoe Airport to host the National Open Soaring Competition in June. Minden will be the starting point for the 10-day event.
- Residents of El Dorado, Alpine and Amador counties just have to show a local ID to ski free Dec. 20 at Kirkwood. Those are the three counties the resort’s property sits on.

Budget gift: Artwork on a notecard

Publisher’s note: *Lake Tahoe News is looking for gift ideas that are less than \$20. Find out how to make a suggestion.*



Dirk Yuricich Photography has a wide range of items for the holiday season.

Notecards: Boxed sets of 10 different notecards for \$20. We just counted and we now have more than 100 different Notecard sets (apologies that we don't yet have all 100 sets on our website). Nice stocking stuffers or hostess gifts.

Gift Certificates: Available in any dollar denomination and may be redeemed at either gallery or studio/gallery, over the phone, or at our booth at art festivals.

Thank you to all who were looking for our 2012 calendar; we didn't make one for 2012, but plan to get a 2013 Calendar out early next year to ensure that we'll have one for you next year.

– Dirk and Lisa

\$65K allocated to deal with backlog of Nevada ethics issues

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – A state board this week approved a \$65,000 request from the state Ethics Commission to hire an attorney

to help reduce a two-year backlog of unpublished opinions.

The Board of Examiners, made up of Gov. Brian Sandoval, Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto and Secretary of State Ross Miller, approved the request submitted by Caren Jenkins, executive director of the state Ethics Commission.

The request to tap a legislative contingency fund to pay the salary of an attorney for six months must now be approved by the Legislature's Interim Finance Committee, which meets today.

"I know that it's unusual to fund a position at this level, but I fear that without immediate attention to the backlog we'll never catch up," Jenkins told the board.

The Ethics Commission is adding to the backlog as it hears and decides more cases, she said. There are approximately 60 opinions that need to be written.

The emphasis for the commission has been hearing matters and rendering decisions, Jenkins said. The backlog has been an issue for some time, but has recently hit a critical stage, she said.

The commission sought two additional positions from the 2011 Legislature but the request was not funded due to other demands on scarce tax revenues.

Sandoval asked if there systemic issues with the operation of the commission that could help reduce the backlog.

Jenkins said such changes are being considered. But even with the implementation of successful streamlining efforts, the agency will not be able to catch up with the backlog, she said. The commission has a meeting set for Wednesday where the issue will come up for further discussion, Jenkins said.

"It's not just money, I guess is the bottom line," Sandoval said. "I'm going to vote to support this today but I would

like to see some demonstration by the commission that it is seeking to improve its efficiencies and efficacy as well.”

Learn about the impacts of fragrances

Many people experience unpleasant physical effects from scented products, such as perfumes and colognes. Sometimes it might be a headache or nausea when passing by a department store’s fragrance counter or riding in an elevator with someone wearing a certain fragrance.

However, there is a growing number of people who suffer more severe reactions to these and many other types of products and chemicals. This condition is known as multiple chemical sensitivities and involves people who have developed an acute sensitivity to various chemicals in the environment.

People with MCS experience a range of debilitating physical reactions, some even life-threatening, to chemicals used in a variety of products, including fragrances and personal care products, deodorizers and cleaners, pesticides, wall and floor coverings, and building materials. It’s a complex issue with a variety of triggering agents and physical reactions. Different people are affected by different products in different ways. The common factor is that the reaction, whatever the type, is very strong and disabling.

To better understand what drives people to use (or not to use) fragranced personal care products, a group of UC Davis researchers conducted a nationwide survey on this and other emerging environmental issues. They will share the results of the survey, what science can tell us about fragrance chemicals

and environmental and human health, and where you can go to learn more about the ingredients in your favorite personal care products.

Fragrance chemical research will be presented Jan. 26 from 6-7pm by UC Davis graduate students Carmen Cortez, Jessica Abbott, Jennifer Balachowski, Susan Chen, and Meredith Niles of the UC Davis Responding to Rapid Environmental Change Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (REACH IGERT) program, a multidisciplinary group of graduate students who work on issues related to rapid environmental change.

A \$5 donation is requested. No host bar opens at 5:30pm. Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences is at 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village.

Opinion: Shopping locally needs to be more than a 1-day event

By Rhonda Ahbrams, Reno Gazette-Journal

President Barack Obama did it. Republicans did it. I did it. So did 103 million other Americans. We shopped at independent stores on Small Business Nov. 26. We bought gifts in small stores, ate meals at small restaurants. Now, how do we keep customers coming back to small businesses throughout the holiday season?

Small Business Saturday was the most successful “shop local” campaign I’ve seen in my 20 years of advocating for small companies. Yes, I know it’s a promotional campaign started by

American Express, but let's give credit where credit is due. Small Business Saturday significantly raised awareness of the importance of patronizing small businesses.

According to American Express, the sponsor of Small Business Saturday, about one-third of Americans shopped at an independent business on Nov. 26, and sales from Amex cardholders at those businesses increased 23 percent over last year's Small Business Saturday. More than 2.7 million people "liked" the Small Business Saturday Facebook page; to put that in perspective, that's more Facebook fans than NASCAR.

"Black Friday was the best day ever in my history, and Small Business Saturday was right up there," said Pam Hammond, owner of the delightful gift shop, Paddington Station, in Ashland, Ore.

Ashland is always packed the Friday after Thanksgiving as the town hosts a holiday parade and caroling in the downtown plaza. But Hammond said Small Business Saturday kept the momentum going.

Read the whole story

LTCC professor leads charge to bring etexts to students

By Kathryn Reed

Free college textbooks?

Maybe.

Lake Tahoe Community College Professor Larry Green is part of

a pilot program that allows students to use a statistics textbook for free. On Tuesday, he was in Sacramento with lawmakers to lend his support representing California faculty to make etexts available to more students.



Larry Green

The average annual cost for textbooks is \$1,260. Often times, new (instead of used) texts have to be bought because publishers change content. This then means at the end of the semester or quarter college bookstores won't buy them back. New texts come out usually every three years, and each time a new edition is published on average it's 12 percent higher than the previous addition, according to the 20 Million Minds Foundation.

The Center for College Affordability and Productivity last month said books and supplies represent the largest cost increase for postsecondary students receiving aid and grants.

"There's a clarion call from students and middle class families to make higher education more accessible and affordable. Textbook prices are going up four times the rate of inflation, and many students say they drop out of college because they can't afford to spend more than \$1,000 a year on books," state Sen. Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, said in a statement. "If we can use technology to maintain the high quality of materials while cutting the cost, we need to do it. Open source digital textbooks can bring real relief of nearly \$1,000 a year to each college student."

Green was by the state Senate president's side Dec. 13

advocating passage of the bill Steinberg introduced that would allocate money for open education resources (OER) for the UC, CSU and community college systems.

“If all goes as planned, our students at LTCC could save thousands of dollars each year by using these OER textbooks. Since the materials will have a Creative Commons License, all students in the world, not just in California, will benefit,” Green told *Lake Tahoe News*.

According to the Government Accountability Office, textbooks for community college students can account for 75 percent of their education costs, while books reflect 26 percent of the cost of attending a CSU.

The idea of the legislation is to have 50 key lower-division textbooks now being used by undergraduates be available digitally – via computer or mobile device. Printed versions would still be available, too. And hard copies would also be in college libraries for students to access. The etexts would be free.

If the legislation passes, then a request for proposals would be sent out. Publishers, faculty or others could respond with an idea for how they will create “high quality digital open source textbooks and related courseware”.

Green said, “With over a billion dollars spent on textbooks each year by our students, the \$25 million proposal makes sound economic sense. For many years, I have taken the lead on this effort.”

Green knows something about numbers. He is a math professor.

Manzarek-Rogers Band

Manzarek-Rogers Band plays at Harrah's Lake Tahoe on Jan. 14 at 7:30pm.

Cost is \$20. For tickets, call 800.786.8208.

'Tartuffe: Born Again'

"Tartuffe: Born Again," a contemporary adaptation of Moliere's classic French comedy, translated and adapted by Freyda Thomas, will be performed at the Duke Theatre at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe.

Moliere's legendary comedic characters are delightfully at home in this modern day version that played at New York's Circle in the Square. Tartuffe is now a shamed televangelist who uses his telegenic charms to scam the wealthy Orgon into financing his new television show. Written in modern verse, this fast-paced and hilarious play shines a light on religious hypocrisy and those who manipulate the media to enhance their own image and exploit the unsuspecting for personal advantage.

Performances:

March 9 8pm

March 10 8pm

March 11 2pm

March 15 8pm

March 16 8pm

March 17 8pm

March 18 2pm.

Lake Tahoe News apologizes for website glitches

To *Lake Tahoe News* readers,

Tired of being unable to log-on to *Lake Tahoe News*? That was a rhetorical question. Your frustration is not likely to be greater than ours.

We apologize to everyone for all of the inconveniences in the last few weeks. In our efforts to speed up the site we then made it hit or miss with being able to log-on to the Home page. While other pages were always easily accessible, the Home page hasn't always been.

Having a growing business is a good thing, but when the pain of it is felt by our loyal readers, well, that's just not acceptable.

We could get into the minutia of detail about how all this IT stuff works, but it doesn't matter. What matters is that *Lake Tahoe News* is there – every page – when you want it. To achieve this, we are doing some heavy lifting this afternoon that will take several hours. If you don't see any new stories

after this one for several hours – even well into Friday – don't be alarmed.

Thank you for your loyalty to *Lake Tahoe News*.

Kathryn Reed, LTN publisher

Family Science Day

Celebrate winter at the free Family Science Day on Jan. 5 from 2-5pm at the Tahoe Center for Environmental Science.

There will be hands-on winter-themed science activities for kids ages 8 and older. Families are invited to explore the mysteries of snow and ice, conduct scientific experiments to discover what snowflakes look like under microscopes, what wind chill actually is, and why some animals hibernate, among many other activities.

For details, contact Andrea Wilkins at alwilkins@ucdavis.edu or (775) 881.7560, ext. 7474.

The center is at 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village.