Opinion: Suggestions to save South Tahoe money

To the South Lake Tahoe City Council,

Councilmember Bruce Grego returns the $937.50 to the city that the grand jury said was unlawful to receive.

No conference money for the City Council. Council takes the same cuts in benefits as city employees. No PERS for councilmenbers. No line item in budget for the City Council.



Bill Crawford

Reduce the number of city paid holidays.

No city manager’s gas allowance of $500 a month. No gas allowance for city attorney.

No city employee dines at city expense.

Itemize monthly all budget transfers in and out of accounts.

Warrants to be in council packets for the public to see.

No hiring of outside lawyers and consultants. Staff is the expert(s).

Declare the Redevelopment Agency bankrupt. TOT belongs in the general fund. Tear city credit cards up.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

Crime prevention training class

Tim Zehring, retired 22-year veteran of the Mesa Arizona Police Department and executive director of the International Crime Free Association, will teach “Train the Trainer Workshop” in October.

The Oct. 11 8am-5pm session is to train managers, while the Oct. 12 9am-5pm event is only for law enforcement.

Zehring developed this law enforcement based crime prevention solution in 1992. This program is now successful in more than 2,000 cities, 12 countries and 44 states including California and Nevada. Since the inception of the local program last year, more than 60 have participated from Lake Tahoe, Douglas County and Carson Valley.

Seating is limited and preregistration required. For more information or to register, contact Melanie Raulston-Arnold at Laketahoecrimefreeprograms@msn.com or (775) 790.6694.

Tahoe chefs ready to dazzle Restaurant Week diners

By Kathryn Reed

Twenty-seven restaurants and only eight days. It’s going to make the decision about where to eat difficult.

The second annual Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week, which includes Truckee, is Oct. 2-9.

To give locals an added incentive to eat out and visitors a reason to come to the basin, the event was moved from early September to early October. September is often a busy month, while October it slows down in the basin.

“Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week is a celebration of the scrumptious and culinary talent that has made the Lake Tahoe region the best mountain dining destination in the country. It’s also designed to generate overnight visitors and increase the number of diners during a slower time of year,” organizer Pettit Gilwee told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I started Restaurant Week because I’m a lover of all things food and wine and I wanted to showcase what Lake Tahoe has to offer. My goal is have the event pay for itself by year five.”

It’s a money saver for those eating and money generator for those fixing the food.



Three-course lunch and dinner options are offered at $20, $30 and $40 – with each restaurant able to choose what amount to charge and what the menu is.

“It’s tough to track where people are from, but after polling restaurants that participated last year, they reported an average 23 percent increase in the number of guests and a 20 percent increase in revenue, compared to the same time period last year, Labor Day week of 2009,” Gilwee said.

With most of the people in 2010 being new customers, this added to Edgewood restaurant’s desire to be part of the event again.

Soule Domain in Kings Beach did more business in 2010 during

Labor Day week than this year – which is when Restaurant Week was last year.

Organizers said it's near impossible for them to track where people are from, so it's up to the restaurants if they want to.

Beyond the economics of the whole event, the food is the focus.

"It's nice to give our chef an opportunity to create something different," said Bryan Davis of Edgewood restaurant in Stateline. (The difference this year is the restaurant is closed Mondays and Tuesdays in October, so Restaurant Week diners won't be able to go to Edgewood those days.)

Chef-owner Charlie Soule of Soule Domain in Kings Beach likes being able to do something different in the kitchen during this week.

"It's not just an increase in traffic, but it also exposes them to special menus," Soule said. "We get to offer stuff that is a little over and beyond what we normally do."

He plans to focus on what will be in season for fall, using more earthy flavors like shitake mushrooms and figs, while incorporating the last hints of summer produce such as tomatoes and basil.

For those dining out, there are no tickets to buy or coupons to redeem. It's just a matter of making a reservation – or reservations. Most of the menus for the event have been posted online so you know what you'll be served. That's also the place to see which restaurants are participating.

Owners of Alpine and Homewood part of 49er stadium deal

By Lisa Fernandez and Howard Mintz, Contra Costa Times

The San Francisco 49ers are going into the theme park business, investing in a $70 million deal to buy the Great America theme park – and bumping out of the way one of their biggest opponents to building their new stadium in Santa Clara: the park's current owner.

While the team already provides its share of ups and downs on the field, taking control of the roller coasters next door to the planned $1 billion stadium gives the Niners a chance to blend football and thrill rides into one of the Bay Area's biggest attractions.

Jed York, the 49ers president, cheered the deal in a statement Monday, saying it creates "great synergy and collaboration between two of the largest family entertainment destinations in the region."

The team wouldn't reveal whether it plans to integrate Jim Harbaugh with Planet Snoopy – but teaming up with a San Francisco real estate firm to buy Great America will pay off immediately on one front: eliminating the park's owner, Cedar Fair Entertainment, and its lingering lawsuit to hold up the $1 billion stadium deal.

Santa Clara stadium backers have sparred with the park owners ever since the 49ers and city officials began negotiating a South Bay stadium deal five years ago.

In a statement, JMA Ventures, the real estate firm heading the Great America purchase, praised the prospect of pairing Great America with the 49ers stadium, a stark departure from public comments by Cedar Fair officials who've expressed concern an

NFL stadium could damage the park's business and create parking headaches for park patrons.

Read the whole story

'Murder in an English Manor'

The Kiwanis Club of Lake Tahoe is hosting "Murder in an English Manor" on Oct. 1 at 6:30pm at the South Tahoe High School theater.

The event is to raise money for Friday Night Lights – aka renovations to the football field.

The dinner, auction and "murder" tickets are $30.

Call (530) 541.6487 for information or tickets.

NTSB leaves Reno; public memorial planned for Sunday

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Update 7:50pm: While the death toll from Friday's air races crash rose to 10, federal investigators left the region Monday to begin the process of figuring out what caused a vintage World War II plane to slam into the tarmac near a group of VIP box seats during the National Championship Air Races.

The crash left dozens more injured with 17 people still being

treated in area hospitals. Two people are still missing.

What’s left of pilot Jimmy Leeward’s P-51 Mustang will be hauled to an off site facility for analysis while photo and video evidence from spectators was sent to Washington.

Gov. Brian Sandoval and local officials met with a representative from the NTSB Monday morning for a briefing. Afterwards, the governor said it’s important to wait for the NTSB to conduct its investigation.

“The Reno community has risen up in the face of extreme challenges, a fact highlighted today when the NTSB described the response from first responders as ‘tremendous,’ ” Sandoval said in a statement. “I could not be more proud of the outstanding response from the Nevada family.”

The date has been changed for a public memorial service for victims, families and others affected by the deadly crash at the National Championship Air Races in Reno.

The service is now planned for 6pm Sunday in the Idlewild Park arboretum, between the pond on Idlewild Drive at the east end of the park and the Truckee River.

The city said in a statement that it plans to dedicate a tree in the arboretum of Idlewild Park to all the victims.

Members of the local clergy will conduct the memorial service.

Read the whole story

Source of Taylor Creek spill unknown; samples taken

By Kathryn Reed

What exactly was dumped into Taylor Creek should be known late Tuesday afternoon when results from water samples taken Monday are delivered to South Shore officials.

While the substance appears to be petroleum, that still needs to be confirmed.

The U.S. Forest Service is recanting its earlier statement when officials said it was definitively astro turf soaked in petroleum that was the root of the problem.



A sheen of what appears to be oil floats on Taylor Creek Sept. 18. Photo/Kathryn Reed

"They have not identified the cause," Cheva Heck, USFS spokeswoman, told *Lake Tahoe News* on Monday.

She said the estimate is 1 to 2 gallons was put into the creek that goes directly to Lake Tahoe. However, if petroleum is

only one component of what was dumped, that amount could grow.

The spill was first discovered Sept. 17 by a Forest Service employee when he arrived at work at the Taylor Creek Visitors Center.

But Heck emphasized as of now everyone is calling this a tiny spill.

At this time biologists have not seen any evidence of harm to the waterway or animals. With the first school of about 20 kokanee salmon arriving Sept. 19, the health of the creek is critical. This is one of their prime spawning areas each fall in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

“We were checking to see if this material is just staying on the surface of the water, which appears to be the case,” said Scott Ferguson, senior water resources control engineer with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. “We moved some sediment and some rocks under the water to see if anything had gone down to the creek bed.”

With the substance staying on the surface, this will be better for the ecosystem.

“It looks like what I call a dump and run,” Ferguson told *Lake Tahoe News.* “It looks like we are down to an isolated area where we have some material trapped on the vegetation. That’s why when you disturb it you see the sheen.”

All indications are someone dumped the unknown substance into the creek. Where the contaminate is coming from is a vegetated area, that when rustled oozes more of the material so it flows downstream. If not disturbed, nothing more flows into the creek.

Because of how dense the vegetation is and not knowing what the product is, it won’t be removed until more is known. Authorities don’t want to drag out vegetation without knowing

what is on it.

Booms and absorbent sheets will also remain in the creek until officials know what they are dealing with.

Forest Service officials say this will not impede the salmons' quest to swim upstream even though the booms cross the creek in multiple locations.

Jim Harris, Forest Service spill coordinator, reported late Monday the substance was found 30 feet upstream from the foot bridge along the Rainbow Trail, that it was not expanding and nothing new was appearing.

Lahontan ordered the water samples; it's El Dorado County Department of Environmental Services that is overseeing the cleanup; and the Forest Service that is investigating the spill.

A cleanup plan beyond the booms will be determined once officials know what they are dealing with.

DCSD schedules two curriculum meetings

Douglas County School District is having two meeting to tell the community more about Common Core State Standards.

The meetings will include information about future small group work sessions by grade level and subject area on this topic. Those will begin in October, with the initial focus on writing instruction for grades K-6.

The first general meeting is Sept. 26 at 5:30pm, Carson Valley

Middle School in Gardnerville. The second meeting is Oct. 6 at 5:30pm at Zephyr Cove Elementary School.

Tahoe City Boy Scout bringing music to seniors

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Boy Scout Ryan Collins of Tahoe City is looking to bring local musicians together to perform for senior citizens.

“Play it Forward – Musicians Performing for Community” is Collins’ Eagle Scout Project.

Collins belongs to Incline Village’s Boy Scout Troop 37.

Collins, 17, of Tahoe City, developed the nonprofit project as a gesture of goodwill and companionship to the elderly.

“Play it Forward” is sponsored by the Reno Pops Orchestra, who will assume direction of the program following the initial series of performances.

Read the whole story

Names of confirmed dead from

Reno Air Races released

By Reno Gazette-Journal

These are the known victims of Friday’s crash at the National Championship Air Races that have been confirmed by family members or the Washoe County Medical Examiner’s Office:

Jimmy Leeward, 74, pilot, Ocala, Fla.

Greg Morcum, 47, Marysville, Wash.

Michael Wogan, 22, Phoenix

George Hewitt, 60, Fort Mohave, Ariz.

John Craik, 47, Gardnerville

Regina Bynum, 53, San Angelo, Texas

Sharon Stewart, 47, Reno

Confirmed Missing

Wendy Hewitt, Fort Mohave, Ariz.

Cherie Elvin, Lenexa, Kansas