

Youth get an education about why school is important

The Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe joins 4,000 clubs across the country with a focus on making sure youth have the support and motivation to stay in school and graduate from high school.

The Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe will continue to ensure that our youth know that pursuing a higher education or trade certificate is the next step. The local club recently hosted a creative careers symposium that showed teens how important it is to get an education in order to pursue your dreams for the future. Local business members and entrepreneurs engaged the members with inspiring stories of how they pursued their career paths.



Jeanette
Minier speaks
at Lake Tahoe
Boys & Girls
Club.

Photo/Provided

Presenters were: Jeanette Minier, artist and sign designer; Gina Stowell, artist; Travis Parker, professional snowboarder; Donna Vano, Guinness world record holder; Drew Little, Tall Ships engineer; Casey O'Neil, Workforce Investment Act coordinator; Ryan Cassidy, Boys & Girls Club program leader

and professional musician; and Mike Tillson and Enrique Perez, USFS/Generation Green supervisors.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- On a motion by then City Councilman Bill Crawford, the South Lake Tahoe City Council on a 5-0 vote shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, approved \$2,500 be sent to New York City for relief efforts.
 - El Dorado County supervisors will visit Tahoe for their only 2011 meeting at the lake on Oct. 11 at 9am at Lake Tahoe Airport.
 - My Reading Buddy – which has children reading to dogs – has two locations on the South Shore. Check out the fall schedule.
 - Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce is taking nominations for its Blue Ribbon Awards through Oct. 14. Winners will be announced Nov. 17.
 - South Lake Tahoe author and eco-activist George Drake will be taking the Climate Ride Challenge in October by bicycling more than 320 miles in five days down the coast of California in an effort to raise awareness on sustainability issues.
 - Here is Caltrans' Sierra roadwork schedule for next week and here is the El Dorado-Tahoe schedule.
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USFS looking for volunteers during kokanee run

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is looking for volunteers to assist during the annual kokanee salmon run in October. Prospective volunteers can submit a resume and learn more at an informative session on Sept. 21 at 6:30pm at the Forest Supervisor's Office in South Lake Tahoe.

☒ Volunteers will answer visitor questions and lead conservation education programs for kids. The Forest Service is asking for volunteers to commit to a minimum of six hours or more per week through the month of October. Training will take place the week of Sept. 26.

The Forest Supervisor's Office is located at 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe. For more information, contact Jean Norman at (530) 543.2673 or email jdnorman@fs.fed.us.

Opinion: Financial problems in El Dorado County Department of Transportation

Publisher's note: *The following is a letter El Dorado County Auditor-Controller Joe Harn wrote to the Board of Supervisors.*

Dear Board Members:

The purpose of this letter is to document my concerns about our County Department of Transportation's culture and financial management.

The current DOT Director inherited a bloated administrative staff and a culture where cost control was not a priority period. I have attempted to work quietly and patiently with the current DOT Director and the CAO with the hope that cost cutting and efficiency would become part of the philosophy at DOT. Unfortunately the culture has not improved. There is a severe performance problem at DOT.



DOT's lack of professionalism in dealing with a utility bill from the City of Placerville illustrates the depth of the problem.

On May 2, 2011, the DOT Director signed and submitted an unusually large (\$208,759.57) claim for water and sewer services. Utility Bills from the City of Placerville and a memo signed by DOT's Chief Financial Officer supported the claim. The memo stated, "We have worked with EID and the City to carefully check the consumption for each account. Meter readings were manually verified and found to be accurate..." On May 5, 2011, my staff e-mailed DOT and its CFO as follows, "The water consumption for Building A appears to have increased 800% from the previous year." On May 9, 2011, DOT responded to my staff, "I would suspect water usage variations could be, in part, due to outside temperature changes..." DOT's May 9th e-mail was concluded with the statement, "I hope this will answer your question..." In response to DOT's vague inadequate response my staff asked DOT for meter readings. We received the meter readings on May 19th.

On May 31st my staff e-mailed the DOT Director and CFO the following, "Based on information provided with the claim, Building A water consumption appears to have increased by approximately 800%...Please provide justification to support the increase." My records indicate there were no communications between the two departments between May 31st and June 13th. On

June 13th I e-mailed the DOT Director and asked for his guidance on this matter. Despite the fact that my office had been asking DOT a totally legitimate question that DOT was unable to answer, during the period between May 2nd and June 15th DOT did retract its \$208,759 payment request.

On June 15th, the DOT Director left me a voice mail message stating that he would be sending me data that supports the City's Utility Billings. Later in the day on June 15th the DOT Director, via e-mail, asked me to retract his payment request and asked me to return the claim unpaid to DOT.

As part of the fiscal year end accounting process, I am required to accurately record all unpaid amounts due to vendors, other agencies, etc. in the County's books. Accordingly, on August 16th my staff asked DOT for any additional support for this \$208,759 payment request and all correspondence between DOT and the City about this matter.

On August 18th DOT responded. DOT's CFO has indicated that there has been NO WRITTEN communication between DOT management and the City regarding this matter. This is ridiculous and clearly indicates the lack of care, concern, and responsibility by DOT's management when it comes to the public's money. If our water bill increases 800%, DOT management has a responsibility to write the City to document our concerns and to explain that the Utility Bill will remain unpaid until our concerns have been resolved.

The August 18th communication also indicates that DOT has reached the preliminary conclusion that the City has over billed us for 1,000,000 cubic feet of water or by \$131,200. DOT reached this preliminary conclusion three and one half months after the DOT Director and CFO approved this grossly overstated claim. DOT almost cost the County \$130,000. My staff's diligence saved the County \$130,000.

I have drafted this letter on Sunday afternoon at my home. I

do not have the benefit of all my files and my staff to bring additional details about this matter or other matters to your attention. Regardless, I implore your Board to work with the CAO and other County staff to change the culture and improve the performance at DOT.

If you have any questions, feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

Joe Harn, Auditor-Controller

Newly published audio tapes provide real-time view of 9/11 attacks

By Jim Dwyer, New York Times

For one instant on the morning of Sept. 11, an airliner that had vanished from all the tracking tools of modern aviation suddenly became visible in its final seconds to the people who had been trying to find it.

It was just after 9am, 16 minutes after a plane had hit the north tower of the World Trade Center, when a radio transmission came into the New York air traffic control radar center. "Hey, can you look out your window right now?" the caller said.

"Yeah," the radar control manager said.

"Can you, can you see a guy at about 4,000 feet, about 5 east of the airport right now, looks like he's —"

“Yeah, I see him,” the manager said.

“Do you see that guy, look, is he descending into the building also?” the caller asked.

“He’s descending really quick too, yeah,” the manager said. “Forty-five hundred right now, he just dropped 800 feet in like, like one, one sweep.”

“What kind of airplane is that, can you guys tell?”

“I don’t know, I’ll read it out in a minute,” the manager said.

There was no time to read it out.

In the background, people can be heard shouting: “Another one just hit the building. Wow. Another one just hit it hard. Another one just hit the World Trade.”

The manager spoke.

“The whole building just came apart,” he said.

That moment is part of a newly published chronicle of the civil and military aviation responses to the hijackings that originally had been prepared by investigators for the 9/11 Commission, but never completed or released.

Read the whole story

9/11: ‘Women at Ground Zero’

– gripping, inspiring

Publisher's note: *This is one in a 12-part series running from Sept. 1-12 about how Lake Tahoe is tied to 9/11.*

By Kathryn Reed

Now I understand why “Women at Ground Zero: Stories of Courage and Compassion” cannot be read all at once. It is so emotionally charged that it requires the reader to pause long enough to digest the words on the page.



But at the same it's one of those books you don't want to put down because it is so gripping.

Authors Susan Hagen and Mary Carouba embarked on a journey to New York City just after terrorists destroyed the Twin Towers Sept. 11, 2001. Their frustration with seeing no women rescue workers on television or in other news accounts led the Californians to search these women out.

The book is about 33 women; including three who died in the attacks. They are firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians and therapists. It's not that their stories are more important than men's. It's that until Hagen and Carouba came around no one was talking about the women. The media and politicians focused on the men.

But this is not a book for women. It's for everyone who cares about what happened that day. It also puts a more human touch on the tragedy that I had not connected with before.



From Sept.
1-12, Lake
Tahoe News is
looking at
9/11.

For someone like myself who was out of the country at the time of attacks, the book offered insight into this event on 9/11 and the months afterward that I was not aware of.

I learned the EMTs not connected to the New York City Fire Department were not given the same benefits as those who are employees. I learned about the police department's evidence department and the heartache of body parts coming in – like a hand with a wedding ring.

I winced as I read. Tears welled up. Anger – though I'm not entirely sure whom it was directed at – filled me. But overall I smiled when I finished the book and had a bit of time to reflect on what I had read.

The authors taking the initiative to research and write the book impressed me. But mostly I felt inspired by these women's stories.

Hagen and Carouba were on the South Shore in September 2010 to give a talk – which was funny and poignant at the same time.

Although the book first came out in 2002, a 10th anniversary release of "Women at Ground Zero" is out. More information about the authors is on their website.

Motive in IHOP shooting remains mystery; families planning funerals

By Martha Bellisle, Reno Gazette-Journal

Eduardo Sencion was on medications for some sort of mental illness. He came from a close-knit family who lived in three houses in the Carson City area, and he went to high school in South Lake Tahoe.

But despite hours of interviews with Sencion's family and searches of their homes, investigators have not determined why the 32-year-old took an assault weapon into a IHOP restaurant on Tuesday and fired randomly, killing five people, including himself.

"As of today, there was no precipitating factor or circumstance that we're aware of," Carson City Sheriff Ken Furlong said. "We're looking for that precipitating event."

"We're not coming up with anything at this point in time."

Sencion's family have been cooperating with officials as they try to piece together his final days and hours before the deadly attack, Furlong said.

But they, too, remain baffled.

"They are as confused as everyone else," Furlong said. "They, too, don't understand."

Sencion killed three members of the Nevada National Guard and one 67-year-old civilian during the Tuesday morning shooting

rampage. Seven others were injured before Sencion fatally shot himself.

A private memorial service was scheduled for Sunday for Sgt. 1st Class Miranda McElhiney of Reno; Sgt. 1st Class Christian Riege of Carson City and Maj. Heath Kelly of Reno. The Guard said Thursday that Riege was posthumously promoted to master sergeant effective Tuesday.

Florence Donovan-Gunderson of South Lake Tahoe was also killed, while her husband, Wally, remains hospitalized.

Read the whole story

Wreath-building event at S. Tahoe library

Friends of the Library is sponsoring an autumn wreath-making workshop with Anna McLeod on Oct. 1 at noon.

Bring the following supplies:

Wreath frame: sturdy wire, grapevine or straw.

2 spools florists' green paddle wire

Wire cutters and scissors or garden clippers

2-3 grocery sacks of 6-8 inch pieces of plant materiel: sagebrush, laurel, dried leaves, etc. Any autumn foliage that will hold its leaves and shape when it dries.

Pretty things to trim your wreath: small pine cones, berries, moss, citrus twigs, straw, dried flowers, etc. Keep in mind that an outdoor wreath might attract a hungry bear.

Ribbon – at least 6 feet high quality ribbon. Wide ribbon shows up the best.

This program is best suited to teens and adults. Call (530) 573.3185 for additional information. The event is free. The library is at 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

NV Energy offering solar rebates

NV Energy is accepting solar energy rebate applications from Sept. 16-28.

Rebates for projects range from \$1.70 per watt for residential customers and up to \$4.70 per watt for schools and public buildings.

A lottery will be conducted Sept. 30.

Applications are available online.

Education foundation has money to give away

Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation is accepting applications for enrichment grants.

The foundation has changed the period for acceptance of grant applications to twice a year. Grant applications for the fall

are due Oct. 7, while spring applications are due March 3.

Last year the grants funded anti-bullying programs, enrichment clubs, Mad Science Program, music visiting professors, outdoor winter education, Sphere of Influence, and Teen Truth Anti-Bullying Programs for a total of \$35,530.

The primary source of funds comes from the annual Food Fest, which will be Oct. 8 at Harrah's Lake Tahoe in Stateline from 6:30-10pm. Tickets are \$35 and are available at all schools and the district office.

Grant applications are available on the website.