A day to recognize workers started in 1882

The first observance of Labor Day is believed to have been a parade of 10,000 workers on Sept. 5, 1882, in New York City, organized by Peter J. McGuire, a Carpenters and Joiners Union secretary.

By 1893, more than half the states were observing “Labor Day” on one day or another, and Congress passed a bill to establish a federal holiday in 1894. President Grover Cleveland signed the bill soon afterward, designating the first Monday in September as Labor Day.

There were 153.2 million people 16 and older in the nation’s labor force in July 2011.

Of full-time workers 18 to 64, 84.7 percent were covered by health insurance during all or part of 2009.

The number of people who work from home — 5.9 million. About 11 percent of those who worked at home for some or all of their workweek reported working 11 or more hours in a typical day in 2005. Only about 7 percent of workers who worked outside the home reported doing so.

The 2009 real median earnings for male and female full-time, year-round workers, was $47,127 and $36,278, respectively.

Most people drive to work alone — 76.1 percent. Another 10.0 percent carpool and 5 percent take public transportation (excluding taxicabs).

The average time it takes people in the nation to commute to work is 25.1 minutes.

Opinion: Paying attention to vehicles can prevent a wildfire

By Teri Mizuhara

Did you know that keeping your vehicle up to date on its maintenance schedules can prevent wildfires? Yes, by making sure all your vehicles are in good working order you can reduce the potential of wildland fires occurring.

Recent examples of wild fires caused by vehicles are clearly visible in El Dorado County along Highway 50, Bass Lake Road, Gold Hill Road and Cameron Park Drive. In Amador County recent fire scars can be seen along highways 49 and 88 and Ridge Road where vehicles caused strings of wildland fires.

“When a vehicles engine is not well maintained, the exhaust system can become overtaxed thereby allowing fuel to enter the exhaust system which in turn overheats the catalytic convertor that melts and disintegrates. Pieces of the catalytic convertor exit the muffler at about 1200°F and can bounce into the dried grass along the edge of roads and start fires” says fire equipment manager Scott Hogan of the Amador-El Dorado Unit of CalFire.

“Another common cause of wildland fires occurs when tires that are improperly inflated (too little or too much pressure) blow out and literally shred into pieces and bounce off the road coming to rest in the dried vegetation which during summer months can catch fire. You can see an example of this in El Dorado County along Highway 50 in Placerville near the Ray Lawyer overpass,” says fire investigator Capt. Spec. Tom

Oldag. “The fire along the westbound lane of Highway 50 in Cameron Park occurred when a transmission failed and dropped out of a vehicle being towed.”

Towing vehicles, boats, campers, Jet Skis, etc., place added stress on a vehicles transmission and when that transmission hasn’t been properly maintained it can spell disaster.

Dan Stark of the California Highway Patrol adds, “If someone is having car trouble, we encourage them to find a safe place to stop, such as a paved shoulder or parking area. They should avoid pulling off into the weeds if at all possible because this can cause a fire. Drivers should also be wary of driving long distances on a flat tire because the tire will detached from the rim and could cause a fire under the right circumstances. Best practice is for the driver to drive a short distances at slow speeds to find a place to park.”

Hogan said, “Driving is something we do all the time, however we don’t always give it much thought. A well maintained vehicle helps ensure that you won’t end up on the side of the road with a trail of fires behind. This also saves you money, the better the engine runs the less fuel is wasted.”

Teri Mizuhara works for CalFire.

9/11: Helping at Ground Zero – a life altering experience

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 Solange Schwalbe

On Dec. 20, 2001, I traveled to New York City to celebrate my annual Christmas holiday that I have traditionally done since 1980. Only, this time the world had changed. Not only were the World Trade Center Towers and the five other WT buildings destroyed, the destruction changed the face of the entire world.

The towers were a part of my Christmas tradition. Losing them was like losing a friend you look forward to seeing once a year.

After Christmas Day, my friends and I embarked on a journey that would change my life.



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

We visited the perimeter of Ground Zero like thousands of other people. I was taking photos of what used to be there. Of nothing. I don’t know why.

When I realized what I was doing, I turned to my friends and asked about volunteering. Suddenly, I was full speed ahead to do just that.

Salvation Army has a 24-hour respite center that offered food, counseling, supplies, massage, anything the rescue workers may need. The food was rich and wonderful. All of the local restaurants donated their high-calorie dishes. Volunteers from

Salvation Army served and cleaned-up the dining area 24-hours a day. Three shifts. I worked mornings, 7am-3pm.

Busing tables, I was able to connect with so many rescue workers. I would say, “Hi, my name is Solange, but call me ‘Hollywood’ – it’s so much easier!” When I go Jeeping in the Rubicon, my handle is Hollywood. Everyone called me Hollywood.

A week before my time was up, a man came up to me and offered me a job because I could talk to anyone. He said his workers would listen to me. “What? I’m a sound editor in feature films. I don’t belong here. I’ve never worn a hardhat in my entire life.”

Two weeks of training and I was working with pay in the Pit for three months. My dad thought I was still volunteering.

I worked as a safety monitor in WTC6. This building was located in the northwest corner of the “Bathtub”. It was built against the North Slurry Wall. Tower One fell on WTC6. In order to demolish the rest of WTC6, the Slurry Wall needed to be reinforced. My job was Safety Monitor for 30 drillers for a “Confined Space” – like a mine, no air and no way out. We were located underneath the debris pile of Tower One.

The being of my life was put into a box, put into the closet, shut the door and walk away. I ate, breathed, laughed, cried, wore, felt, saw Ground Zero 16 hours a day. Every day. No days off.



Solange Schwalbe says

rebuilding her house after the Angora Fire was less stressful because of her experiences at Ground Zero.

The sight of the destruction was so overwhelming that we would use humor to get around the pit. I'd get a call on the radio, "Hey Hollywood, what's your 20?" "I'm at the pool boss, by the diving board!" The sound was overwhelming. Loud all the time with heavy-duty excavators and vehicles. The "Back-up Beeps" were heard all the time. The Nextel Chirps were always going off. The drone was never-ending.

Touch. What looks like dirt was really Zone Dust. Cement, glass, metal, and every possible element of our lives pulverized around us. It was really sticky and it smelled bad. The smell was like disgusting burnt hair. Everything was chemically and biologically based. Hideous.

The past 10 years has been way too difficult. My life in Lake Tahoe was put on hold. I did not work for two years. I stayed with my dad until his wife kicked me out just after the second anniversary of 9/11. I was so distraught I actually learned how it felt to not want to be around anymore. Never have I felt that. It's the sickest feeling I have ever felt.

Thank God one of my colleagues hired me on to his movie, and I landed a teaching gig that allowed me to get a place to live.

In 2005, I was diagnosed with a blood clot in the base of my brain. Ground Zero?

In 2007, my home burned down in the Angora Fire along with 253 other homes. Digging through my ashes for six weeks was like

my own personal Ground Zero. This time I was digging for my own possessions. I rebuilt out of anger. My new house is beautiful.

I have my career back as a motion picture sound editor in feature films, and I am still teaching at Video Symphony in Burbank.

I will be attending the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center like I have every year. The biggest difference this year is that because of the political presence (including President Obama), the families of the victims are the only people who will be able to attend the ceremonies. No firefighters, no cops, no EMS, no rescue workers, no volunteers. If it were my decision, due to the lack of room at the site because of the new construction of the Freedom Tower, the ceremonies would be at Madison Square Garden for everyone. We could have a procession from Ground Zero to MSG.

Every year I am at the WTC Cross at 8am on 9/11. This year the WTC Cross has been moved underground for the new memorial. I am devastated. This will be the first year that I will not be able to be at the Cross.

I feel an incredible amount of anxiety getting ready to travel to New York City for two weeks. There are many events planned for the week prior to 9/11. I will probably not attend any of them. My main focus is to see and be with my Ground Zero family. We all worked together in the pit.

I have been able to heal from the Angora Fire. I will never get over Ground Zero. I have the WTC Cross tattooed on my shoulder. I wear my Cross chain every day. Ground Zero will always be a part of me. I suffer from anxiety disorder because of it. I fear nothing. Things don’t matter anymore. How significant a person is in my life has changed. I always wanted to be friends with everyone. Now, I choose a few. My

perspective, priorities and how I respond to events have totally changed. I'm more compassionate, less trusting.

How I dealt with the Angora Fire would have been completely different if I had not experienced Ground Zero. I would have been the "victim" in a pity party the whole time. Instead, I felt angry but empowered.

I am not afraid to die.

Gaming Commission agrees to stronger rules for places like Dotty's

Publisher's note: ***A Dotty's is going to replace part of the former Bill's Casino in Stateline.***

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

The Nevada Gaming Commission on Thursday amended its regulation for licensing small casinos, placing more requirements on establishments like the Dotty's chain.

The amended regulation will require slot parlors like Dotty's to build new amenities within two years to maintain their licenses.

Dotty's caters primarily to women who don't like traditional bars and taverns.

Under terms of the revised Regulation 3.015, licensees will now be required to have a permanent bar with seating for at least nine customers, a contract or service agreement with a

licensed liquor distributor and facilities to serve alcohol by the drink, and a restaurant of at least 2,000 square feet with seating for at least 20 customers. Establishments also must be open at least 12 hours a day, if the company wants to have more than four slot machines. With a restricted license for small operations, companies can have up to 15 slots.

Read the whole story

Recreation meeting on North Shore

The North Tahoe Public Utility District is putting on a recreation and parks community meeting Sept. 20 from 5:30–7:30pm at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach.

This Open House style meeting will provide residents with an opportunity to give input on priorities for the Recreation and Parks Department.

The Boys and Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe will also be in attendance as the district's main recreation provider to give information on the programs they offer. Other recreation providers and partners are also being invited to attend.

In December 2010 the North Tahoe Public Utility District Recreation and Parks Commission was disbanded due to a lack of volunteers willing to serve on the commission. The commission was the link between the board and the community on matters of parks. In order to keep those connections with the community active, the board committed to providing an opportunity for residents to give input on projects, funding priorities and other items related to parks. This meeting will give residents

an opportunity to comment on topics such as maintenance and capital priorities, launch ramp hours, to name just a few.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Time to toast – September is California Wine Month.

• Cold and Trout Creek Community Forum is Sept. 13 from 5:30-7:30pm at Sierra House Elementary School in South Lake Tahoe. It’s an opportunity to learn about water quality and defensible space projects going on in the neighborhood.

• South Lake Tahoe planning commissioners on Sept. 8 at 3pm at Lake Tahoe Airport will discuss the car wash-convenience store-gas station that wants to go in at the corner at the Y near Raley’s.

• South Lake Tahoe is looking for volunteers of all ages – including youths – to help with the Sept. 10 Bijou Bash. Email tfranklin@cityofslt.us for more information.

• Resort at Squaw Creek recently completed a $53 million renovation.

• Caltrans has released its El Dorado-Tahoe schedule for roadwork for next week as well as the Sierra roadwork schedule.

Quest is on to save Tahoe's famous Thunderbird Lodge

By Adam Rasmussen, Channel 2 News

The Thunderbird Lodge and yacht in Lake Tahoe first opened in the early 1930s, and over the years have become one of northern Nevada's biggest cultural tourist attractions.

But the lodge is struggling, and now the Thunderbird Preservation Society is raising money to keep the famous yacht at Lake Tahoe. Officials say keeping it in the water and maintaining it is important to the community.

"It's kind of like a racehorse," says Dave Marion, captain of the yacht. "You put it in gear and it wants to go even at idle speed."

The Thunderbird yacht is arguably the most valuable wooden boat in the country. Described as a mix of a car, a boat and an airplane, George Whittell Jr. first put in the Lake Tahoe waters in 1940. It entertained celebrities like Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Ty Cobb. It was bought by Bill Harrah in 1962, who put two Allison aircraft engines in it. But any future boat rides could be coming to an end soon.

"Our mission is to preserve the historic estate, the yacht, and to educate the public," says Bill Watson with the Thunderbird Preservation Society.

And to preserve the yacht, the Thunderbird Preservation Society needs to raise $1.5 million. They say if they can't raise that much, it could be moved from Lake Tahoe. And while the boat has entertained so many celebrities over the years,

it’s one today that is doing his best to keep the boat floating in Tahoe.

“This is certainly a part of the history of Tahoe, and it would be such a waste, such a shame if it were no longer taken care of,” says C.B. Sullenberger.

Read the whole story

Lukins Bros. customers’ water pressure restored

Updated 9:50am Sept. 4

Water pressure has been restored to all Lukins Brothers Water Company customers, according to Danny Lukins. This is because the tie between his company and South Tahoe Public Utility District has been opened.

“We will pull the pump to see what happened,” he said in regards to finding a more permanent solution to the problem.

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About 200 Lukins Brothers Water Company customers are not able to take a shower, run their dishwasher or do laundry because their water pressure has been drastically reduced since Saturday morning.



Danny Lukins, owner of the company, told *Lake Tahoe News* he was notified of the problem at 7:45am Sunday.

However, a customer in St. Francis Woods condos on Emerald Bay Road told *Lake Tahoe News* she has been contending with the water issue since late Saturday morning.

Lukins said the problem is the South Shore company lost its No. 1 pump station.

"I don't know if it was an electrical surge. It ran for a minute this morning and then quit running," Lukins said Sept. 4.

The pump is new; having been installed in June.

Besides having electricians come out to resolve the problem, Lukins is working with South Tahoe Public Utility District to have the valve that links the two systems be turned on. This could happen by 11 this morning. That would mean restoring full pressure for the customers along Emerald Bay Road.

– Kathryn Reed

STHS grad makes opening day roster for Jets

When the New York Jets open the regular season at home against the Dallas Cowboys on Sept. 11, South Tahoe High School grad Garrett McIntyre will be dressed ready to play.

This is the first season McIntyre has made an opening day roster. He is a backup outside linebacker.

In the preseason he had nine tackle and two sacks.



Garrett McIntyre

For the past two years he played for the Hamilton Tiger-Cats of the Canadian Football League. He has also spent two seasons in the Arena Football League with the San Jose Saber Cats.

After graduating from Fresno State in 2006 he signed as an undrafted free agent the Seattle Seahawks. That preseason he bounced between the Arizona Cardinals and Tennessee Titans.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

USFS trying to be innovative to fund healthy forest projects

By Kathryn Reed

“The biggest threat to forest health is a catastrophic fire,” Randy Moore, U.S. Forest Service Pacific Southwest regional

forester, said with remnants of the 2007 Angora Fire as a backdrop.

Moore was on the South Shore last week to promote the Veterans Green Corps program. He spoke with *Lake Tahoe News* a bit about the scarcity of funding sources for fuels reduction projects as well as the perceived diminishing concern for wildfires in the Lake Tahoe Basin.



Randy Moore

In August he toured the Angora burn area with Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., while both were in the basin for the annual Lake Tahoe Environmental Summit. While Feinstein at the summit mentioned the importance of continuing to keep forests healthy, it no longer resonates like when the 254 houses that were destroyed in June 2007 were still smoldering.

Moore said Feinstein is well aware of the need for money to keep forest projects going. But without reauthorization of the Lake Tahoe Restoration, it could be an uphill battle.

Even the fire chiefs in the Lake Tahoe Basin notice their cause is losing importance among those who control the purse strings.

Part of the problem is the purse is close to being empty and more interests – notably aquatic invasive species – are clamoring for the few dollars that are available.

Moore said he is asking Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Forest Supervisor Nancy Gibson to define, “What is life like

after SNPLMA?”

SNPLMA – Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act – has been the funding source for much of the work to create a healthier forest. Those dollars are about to run out.

Without fire coming through to naturally thin the forest, it has left the basin (and other forested areas) overcrowded and susceptible to a catastrophic wildfire. Flames jumping from crown-to-crown are near impossible to fight, whereas if a fire can be kept to the ground, it is easier to suppress.

The Forest Service owns about 80 percent of the land in the Lake Tahoe Basin. But the feds are not coming through with money to maintain it, instead the mantra is private interests need to cough up more dollars.

Still, Moore said his office is working on leveraging dollars and looking at opportunities.

He said $9.5 billion worth of water that is used in California communities comes off National Forest land, with another $16 billion worth of wood harvested from those lands. That is money other entities are making off water and lumber. It takes about $500 million to protect that property.

“When you look at large metropolitan areas, it’s in everyone’s interest to keep that landscape healthy,” Moore said.

What all that means and how the Forest Service may turn those resources into dollars remains to be seen. He doesn’t foresee his agency creating reservoirs to get into the water selling business.