Douglas County libraries upgrading public computers

The Douglas County Public Library is upgrading its public computers.

The new system will be faster and include updated software programs.

The Minden Library will be closed April 30 and May 1 for the equipment installation. The Zephyr Cove Library will be open on April 30, but public computers will not be available.

Call 775.588.6411 for assistance.

Both libraries will resume their regular schedules May 2.

Poll: Californians dislike Congress

By Josh Richman, San Jose Mercury News

Six times as many California voters disapprove of how Congress is doing its job compared with those who approve, a new Field Poll finds.

But as dismal as that sounds, it isn’t even a record. The 13 percent approval rating Congress now boasts is better than the 9 percent all-time low it cratered to in September 2011 and

mirrors the 13 percent approval rating that Gallup found nationwide this month.

As usua, Californians feel better about their trees than about the forest: More voters approve (44 percent) than disapprove (33 percent) of the job their own representatives are doing.

“If there’s one thing that unites members of Congress, it’s the message that they send out to their own constituents: ’I’m great, and the problem is with all those other clowns,’” said Jack Pitney, a Claremont McKenna College professor and an expert on Congress.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• It’s finally coming down – the burned out house of South Lake Tahoe artist Peter Darvas. The Pioneer Trail structure was a total loss in September 2012 when a fire swept through. It has been a charred remembrance since then. Excavation is expected soon.

• Lake Tahoe residential white pages listings provided by AT&T have been removed from future YP Real Yellow Pages and YP Real White Pages directories. Other areas affected include Amador-Placerville, Auburn, Orange County, San Jose, Campbell and Kings-Tulare.

• Bradley Anderson is Barton Health’s newest urologist.

• Fort Churchill State Historic Park has a slew of hikes for

April and May. Here is the list of hikes.

• The video of Chips the bobcat that was rehabbed at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care is the U.S. Forest Service's most popular video:

Study: Casually smoking pot can change your brain

By Terrence McCoy, Washington Post

The days when people thought only heavy Cheech-and-Chong pot smokers suffered cognitive consequences may be over. A study in the Journal of Neuroscience says even casual marijuana smokers showed significant abnormalities in two vital brain regions important in motivation and emotion.

"Some of these people only used marijuana to get high once or twice a week," said co-author Hans Breiter, quoted in Northwestern University's Science Newsline. Breiter hailed the study as the first to analyze the effects of light marijuana use. "People think a little recreational use shouldn't cause a problem, if someone is doing OK with work or school," he said. "Our data directly says this is not the case.

"This study raises a strong challenge to the idea that casual marijuana use isn't associated with bad consequences," he added.

Read the whole story

Locals talk of struggles, joys of living at Tahoe



Jerry Johnson, from left, Jack Martin, Carolyn Meiers, Bob Rockwell and moderator Dave Borges. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – Tahoe has never been an easy place to make it. But something about the mountains, the lake – it keeps people here.

Four people with deep roots on the South Shore shared their stories Tuesday night with nearly 100 people who gathered at Camp Richardson Lodge. This is one of a series of programs Lake Tahoe Historical Society is putting on.

Jack Martin moved to the area in 1937 and is now in Gardnerville, Jerry Johnson arrived in 1946, Carolyn Meiers in 1953 and Bob Rockwell in 1962.

Martin's parents owned Martin's Lodge where the Raley's center at the Y is. Fishing was always Martin's love. He remembers when the road to Placerville would be closed and they'd go fishing on the lake because the warden wouldn't be coming to town.

Meat came from Barkley Meats. There wasn't always the money to pay for it, so when someone would come calling for cash the Martin boys were told by their mom to be quiet so the person would go away.

Martin said how Harvey Gross asked his dad, Bode Martin, to go in on the land that is now Harveys casino, but his dad said no because he wasn't into gambling.

Jerry Johnson also had a story about Gross. It was about 1946 and Gross could not make his car payment so the vehicle was repossessed.

"Everyone at Tahoe struggled financially," Johnson said. "There were no secure jobs here."

His father-in-law ran Nel's Tahoe Supply. He'd leave a note on the counter saying if you need anything, just add it to your account. And people did.

Electricity often was going out and sometimes for days at a time. During those times Meiers remembers filling the bathtub with water just in case it would be needed.

It wasn't until Rockwell was an adult that he found out why he and his family were regulars at the South Shore Room at Harrah's Lake Tahoe. He knew this wasn't normal because he never saw any of the other "motel kids" there. (His family used to own various motels in town.)

His dad told him it all had to do with a deal he made with a man, who still lives in town. The man worked at the showroom, but had a way with women he wasn't married to. A hotel room was always available for him in exchange for the unlimited comps.

Meiers remembers being a guest at the South Shore Room too, seeing people like Red Skeleton. Her dad had done all the wiring there.

One of the houses they lived in was behind the old Barton Ranch. Bill Barton, better known as Papa Barton, would come over for fried brains that Meiers said her mom would make. All the while he would be smoking his pipe.

"He was a delightful man, very quiet and very unassuming; unlike Alva, who was a real chatterbox," Meiers said.

Johnson's memories date back to when Cave Rock had only one bore, and Kingsbury Grade and Pioneer Trail were gravel roads.

Skiing was a part their lives at one time. It's just what you did if you lived here. Johnson was the only one at South Tahoe High to letter in basketball and skiing at the same time.

There was Nebelhorn Ski Resort at the top of Echo Summit and White Hill near Spooner Summit. By 1962, Heavenly had three chairlifts and two rope tows. Rockwell remembers lift tickets being $4 for adults and $2 for kids.

——

Notes:

• DVDs of the November history talk are available at Lake Tahoe Museum.

• There will be another history talk in the fall.

Opinion: Ruling makes it easier for public officials to keep secrets

By Joyce Terhaar, Sacramento Bee

Remember the $2.8 billion movie studio proposed for Dixon? The one that turned out to be a mirage because the woman behind it had a long history of bad debt, broken promises and angry investors, who were out millions?

The reporting by Sam Stanton and Marjie Lundstrom revealed information vital to Dixon residents and city officials. In the resulting public glare, Carissa Carpenter and her company left town. The deal died.

Yet one issue that came up in their reporting remains a concern for all who believe that work done by public officials, on behalf of the public, ought to be open to scrutiny by the public.

That hasn’t always been the case when public officials – in Dixon or elsewhere – use personal cellphones or other electronic devices.

On March 27 in a published decision, the 6th District Court of Appeal determined that San Jose city officials could keep private any texts or emails about city business that they had sent on their personal cellphones or other electronic devices.

The appellate court reversed a Santa Clara Superior Court decision that would have made the records publicly available after activist Ted Smith sued. Several media organizations,

including the *Sacramento Bee*'s owner, the McClatchy Co., the California Newspaper Publishers Association, the Los Angeles Times Communications LLC, the First Amendment Coalition and California Broadcasters Association supported Smith's case.

Read the whole story

Recession impacts community college completion rate

By Sacramento Bee

Completion rates at the California Community Colleges have fallen steadily over the past four years, according to the first update of the system's Student Success Scorecard.

The accountability report released Tuesday, which tracks key performance measurements across the state's 112 community colleges, shows that the six-year completion rate for students seeking to earn a degree or transfer to a four-year institution fell to 48.1 percent last year.

Read the whole story

Clothing swap on the South

Shore

The All Tahoe Clothing Swap will be at the American Legion in South Lake Tahoe on May 13 at 6pm.

It’s being billed as the biggest, baddest, best clothing swap in Tahoe history.

The event is open to anyone and everyone, and sharing the word is encouraged. All clothing donations should be clean and in good-to-great condition. Clothing donations will be accepted at the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority office in Stateline, and at Strategic Marketing Group behind Grass Roots until May 9.

Entrance fee for the All Tahoe Clothing Swap is a canned or non-perishable food item(s) for Christmas Cheer. Attendees do not need to donate clothing to attend, though it’s encouraged. Any unclaimed clothing will be donated.

More information can be found at the event Facebook page.

Californians split on drought response



Frank Gehrke with the

Department of Water Resources measures the water content of snow at Phillips Station earlier this year. Photo/LTN file

By Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee

Californians agree their state is parched, but they diverge by region on how supplies dried up and what should be done about the drought.

“There’s clearly a consensus that the state has a serious water shortage,” Field Poll director Mark DiCamillo said of a survey on the subject released Tuesday. “There, however, is no consensus to what got us into this situation.”

Most voters told the Field Poll the state is grappling with a serious water shortage, and nearly two-thirds described the shortfall as “extremely serious.” While recent rains have somewhat replenished snowpack and reservoirs, the current drought remains one of the state’s worst.

Read the whole story

---

5 significant projects on SLT’s to-do list

Tahoe’s other season – construction – is already starting. South Lake Tahoe is soon going to into the act.

Project	Category	Estimated Cost
Harrison Avenue Streetscape Project	Water/Air Quality	$5 million
Bijou Erosion Control Project	Water Quality	$10M to $11.5M
Class 1 Bike Trail Rehabilitation	Air Quality	$550 to $650K
City Facility ADA Improvements	Regulatory	$100K
Fire Station No. 2 Vehicle Bay Addition	Facility	$75K

Source: *South Lake Tahoe*

Jim Marino, assistant director of public works, on April 15 gave the council an update on what to expect this construction season. The above chart outlines the capital improvement projects for this summer.

Part of the Harrison Avenue will be the creation of Champions Plaza at the corner of Highway 50 and Lakeview Avenue. It will be a combo of community art and recognition of local athletes.