Chautauqua performance in Genoa

Nevada State Parks invites the public to attend a free Chautauqua-style presentation at Mormon Station State Historic Park on Aug. 20 at 10 am.

Doris Dwyer, professor of history at Western Nevada College, will give a portrayal of Sara Royce, one of the few female 49ers on the California Trail, who followed her husband and his dream of riches in California. Learn how Sara's commitment to a "traditional world" influenced her to open a school and educate the children of Grass Valley.

The outdoor presentation lasts about 45 minutes with time for questions afterward. Visitors are asked to bring lawn chairs and a beverage. Dogs will not be allowed at the presentation.

Mormon Station State Historic Park in Genoa is 20 minutes from South Lake Tahoe, via state Kingsbury Grade and Foothill Road.

For more information, contact the park at (775) 782.2590.

Squaw devotes a weekend to dogs

The Village at Squaw Valley is paying tribute to man – and woman's – best friend with the 2nd Annual Peaks and Paws Festival on Aug. 27-28.

Dogs and their owners can enjoy bluegrass music, wine and an array of events and demonstrations specifically designed for

furry friends. A line-up of some of the region’s most popular bluegrass acts will play in the village each day from 2-8pm, with outdoor events kicking off earlier in the day. All of the proceeds from the festival will benefit the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe.

The Dead Winter Carpenters will headline the festival along with a lineup of hit bluegrass acts including Montana Slim String Band and Brothers Comatose. The music compliments the perfect setting for sipping wine, sampling craft beers and enjoying the mountain views.

The Peaks and Paws Festival hosts an evening wine tasting in The Village at Squaw Valley from 5-8pm both days. The wine tasting costs $25 per day, with all proceeds benefiting the Humane Society. Lagunitas beer is also available for $4 from 2-8pm.

The festival’s pet-partner events will kick off on Saturday with the Mutt Strut – a 3K run for dog owners and pets. The run will start and finish in front of Squaw Dogs in The Village. The Mutt Strut costs $5 to enter, with all proceeds benefiting the Humane Society. People without pets are also welcome.

Peaks and Paws welcomes two pet-friendly hikes this year. On Aug. 27, people and pets can join a guided hike around High Camp, exploring the wildflowers and wildlife that live at 8.200 feet. On Aug. 28, there will be a guided hike through the cascading waterfalls of Shirley Canyon. Both hikes start at 1pm and are free of charge, though a Cable Car ticket is needed to access Saturday’s hike.

For more information and details about all the events for that weekend, go online.

History: Student enrollment goes from 30 to 4,000

Publisher's note: ***This is reprinted with permission from the March 1976 Lake Tahoe Historical Society newsletter.***

February 24 was "Back to School" night for Historical Society members who heard Thelma Bernhardt and Dorothy Lockett recall their school teaching experiences of twenty and thirty years ago on the South Shore and were hosted to a tour of the new modern Sierra House School facilities by Principal Stan Rose. A highlight of the tour was the historic Sierra House Wall constructed of wide planking obtained from outbuildings remaining from the original Sierra House waystation which was located directly across Pioneer Trail from the present school. Bob Doudell of the School District was introduced and applauded for his efforts in designing and constructing the attractive memorial wall.

Thelma Bernhardt, a Berkeley graduate and resident of Lake Tahoe since 1947, was a substitute until starting as full-time 2nd grade teacher in 1952. Later she retired to take care of her family, but returned to teaching when Bijou School opened in 1961. She taught fourth grade at Bijou until her retirement last year. She recalled the first school building at the "Y" (later moved to the area generally behind the American Legion Hall and presently used as the Carpenters' Union Hall). School started immediately after Labor Day with an enrollment of about 30, which gradually decreased to about 12 as residents left in October or November, or as soon as the snow fell, not to return until the April or May spring

weather. Sometimes there were not enough students to put on the Christmas program.

School at one time was held in the American Legion Hall, which was divided into four little rooms. Later the “fireside” room became the kindergarten room. Outside concrete basketball courts were built to inaugurate a sports program – but the students had to clean off the snow before they could be used.

There was no library in the early days. It was very much of a highlight when the bookmobile came form Placerville. Great care went into choosing the book or books you could keep until the bookmobile came back again in two weeks – that is, if it could get back over the Summit in two weeks. The upstairs loft of Pat Amundson’s house at 961 Cave Rock once held the library. Then it was moved to Bob Wakeman’s on Highway 89, before the Friends of the Library finally were able to build the present library. The “new” school (now the Intermediate School) had a wall in one room devoted to books once it was built.

Everyone brought his lunch as there was no cafeteria. Once the PTA became active, that group provided a hot lunch once a week. On one occasion the PTA members barricaded the highway to call attention to the necessity for a safer crossing for the children at the Lyons Avenue corner.

The one school bus was a carryall driven by one of the teachers who once had the dubious thrill of having a wheel come off the loaded bus while she was traversing the old Meyers Grade, but proved equal to the occasion. The bus also was fitted with special blackboards which could be attached to the seatbacks so it might serve as an auxiliary classroom for the reading groups. The superintendent would warm it up for 30 minutes, then out would come the students bundled up in their winter wear for their reading class.

Heat was provided in the schoolrooms by big oil space heaters.

On one occasion, someone smelled fire, the Fire Department was called and it appeared that the smell was coming from the ceiling. The children were all evacuated while the firemen searched out the cause – a wad of bubble gum shot into one of the ceiling vents.

Carolyn Reed, a traveling music teacher, taught voice and some instrumental music. Catherine McBride, school nurse for many years until her recent retirement, was nurse and medical advisor to everyone in the community – even gave allergy shots.

For many years classes were offered only through the 8th grade with some secondary students going to the Douglas County High School, later to Placerville.

Dorothy Lockett, another Berkeley graduate, arrived here on July 4, 1948, with new credential, fresh ideas, and no place to stay. In looking for a room, she met Mrs. Stella Johnson who welcomed her as a guest in the Johnson home. On hearing there were enough children in town to start a kindergarten, she telephoned the Superintendent, Glenn Smith, and "never got a job so fast in all my life." Besides the kindergarten, Mrs. Lockett was engaged to teach art to all classes and kept the trunk of her car liberally stocked with powdered poster paint, brushes, crayons, etc. Having become stuck in the snow on one occasion, she poured four cans of red powdered paint out by the tires in an attempt to gain traction. Apparently this did not work, but a Globin's Laundry truck driver coming along a bit later was horrified at the carnage caused by the terrible accident.

The kindergarten tots, besides having the advantage of the stone fireplace, also cooked in the kitchen and kept tabs on the resident cat, Mother 6-Toes whom they had rescued from under the building. Mrs. 6-Toes later had six kittens who were regally outfitted and wheeled about in the doll buggies. The fish at the Trout Farm across the street were fed every

morning by the children.

She agreed with Mrs. Bernhardt that 1954 was the year the enrollment – and the population – began to grow. Classes were on triple sessions and railroad lanterns were used by the superintendent and teacher to take the children out to cross the highway after the last session of the day. A Stanford University Committee did a survey predicting a 10-year enrolment pattern, which was exceeded in two years.

She recalled Judge Lawson visiting her classroom once a week to "sit back and restore myself." Father Lyon, dearly loved by the children, was a daily visitor. Once a year Mrs. Rabe, dressed in an alpaca skirt and lovely white blouse with leg-of-mutton sleeves, came to inspect the school to see if it was keeping up to standards. Mrs. Rabe, a former school teacher, was conducted on tour by Mr. Smith with great ceremony.

There was little road equipment in those days – one rotary snow plow and one push plow. It was possible to drive in the dark from Meyers to Stateline and not see a single light of any kind. When she moved to a residence on Lodi Avenue, she got lost going home every evening, as there was no landmark to tell where to turn. The present "planning days" for teachers were then known as "Teachers' Institute." In 1953-54, Mr. Smith invited all the teachers of the County district to come to Tahoe for Institute and raised quite and uproar – "Who would want to go up to that wilderness?" In 1948 when she first arrived, there were perhaps 700 people in the entire Basin with less than 200 student enrollment. The January 1976 enrollment in the Lake Tahoe Unified District was over 4000.

Mrs. Lockett, who retired in 1972, gave tribute to the foresight of Superintendent Glenn Smith who arranged for the acquisition of sites for the present school facilities when property could be obtained at a reasonable cost, and whose foresight in long range planning has served to make the Lake Tahoe Unified School District one of the foremost districts in

the United States.

Book discussions at South Tahoe library

The third Wednesday of each month Friends of the Library meet to discuss a wide variety of critically acclaimed books.

Each meeting is at 3pm in the library conference room at 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Aug. 17 – “Shanghai Girls” by Lisa See

Sept. 21 – :Saving Fish From Drowning” by Amy Tan

Oct. 19 – “Unbroken” by Laura Hillenbrand

Nov. 16 – “The Heretic’s Daughter” by Kathleen Kent.

Caltrans issues warning to cyclists, walkers in Tahoe construction zone

By Deanna Shoopman

Caltrans is reminding pedestrians and cyclists to respect the cone zone around Lake Tahoe Basin projects, especially along the stretch from Trout Creek Bridge to Ski Run Boulevard on

Highway 50.

Caltrans crews are reporting that pedestrians and cyclists are crossing through the cone zone to access various destinations along the project site.

“The safety of all parties is our top priority and illegally entering a cone zone is extremely unsafe,” said Jody Jones, Caltrans’ district three director. “We understand the inconveniences these types of projects present, but we must enforce respect of the cone zones to ensure everybody’s safety.”

Caltrans officials are reminding pedestrians and cyclists that entering a cone zone is:

• Unsafe and can lead to serious injury and/or death

• Interferes with and delays construction

• Can result in a citation and fine

The project on from Trout Creek Bridge to Ski Run Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe is a 2 mile, $40.6 million road improvement project that is part of the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program. The project includes:

• New sand traps, stormwater detention vaults and filtration ponds to collect and treat runoff before it reaches Lake Tahoe

• Class II bike lanes

• ADA-compliant sidewalks

• Pedestrian lighting

• New intersection signals, landscaping and streetscaping

• Shoulders widening to six feet

“We are working hard to keep the construction on schedule so that cyclists and pedestrians can enjoy South Lake Tahoe without this significant inconvenience,” Jones said. “In the meantime, we just want everybody to be safe and to avoid entering a cone zone illegally.”

The project is funded by a combination of state, federal and local funds. In addition, $4.43 million in donated land was contributed by El Dorado County and the city of South Lake Tahoe.

Deanna Shoopman is a spokeswoman for Caltrans.

Ideas for packing school lunches full of brain food

By Johnathan Wright, Reno Gazette-Journal

Pity the poor peanut butter and jelly. Today’s school lunch boxes, primed by food culture, offer an opportunity to pack far more than the classic default sandwich.

Ban the bread (sliced, that is) for a day in favor of sliders built with:

Chicken and Alfredo-tossed broccoli;

Soft soft lavash lined with ham and vegetable cream cheese rolled up to make pinwheel; or

Naan spread with hummus, then folded over cucumber and honey.

Another lunch box strategy: presenting foods children already like in unexpected ways.

A cold ham and cheese casserole uses up leftover pork; if you like, substitute leftover chicken or hamburger. Tortellini vegetable skewers are like pasta salad on an (edible) stick.

Read the whole story

Calif.’s loss of teacher data grant could affect federal funding

By Diana Lambert, Sacramento Bee

Five years ago, California education officials jumped aboard the data bandwagon.

Nudged by federal mandates and competition for federal school dollars, California applied for and won a $6 million competitive federal grant to develop a data system to track teacher information, similar to a system the state is developing to track student information.

Last week federal officials stripped the state of the entire three-year grant for the California Longitudinal Teacher Integrated Data Education System, or CALTIDES, after Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed $2.1 million in funding for it in this year’s budget.

The consequences of that action are far-reaching, according to Gloria Romero, California director of Democrats for Education Reform, saying it will hurt the state’s chances of receiving millions of dollars in federal Race to the Top funds.

That money, Romero said, “will be sent to the states willing

to open up the books in compliance with federal law.”

The state already has failed twice in securing those funds. So, what happened?

In this case, the governor’s veto message said the data system wasn’t critical. Elizabeth Ashford, a spokeswoman for the governor, said Brown wanted assurances that the information collected by the system would be useful at the local level.

Read the whole story

Financial relief may be possible for Nev. special election

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – Secretary of State Ross Miller is seeking more than half a million dollars from a legislative contingency fund to pay the counties for the cost of the Sept. 13 special election in the 2nd Congressional District.

The request for $539,137 from the Legislature’s Interim Finance Committee Contingency Fund would reimburse counties for all costs and expenses to conduct the special election to pick a replacement for Dean Heller, who was appointed to the Senate by Gov. Brian Sandoval. The fund has just less than $12 million.

The request will be considered Monday by the Board of Examiners, made up of Sandoval, Miller and Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto. It will then go to the IFC on Aug. 31.

Former state Sen. Mark Amodei, R-Carson City, is facing Democrat state Treasurer Kate Marshall in the race, which also includes Independent American Party candidate Tim Fasano and independent Helmuth Lehmann.

Counties budget for and cover the costs of administering regularly scheduled elections in Nevada, but Miller said previously that neither the counties nor the state have budgeted for costs to run a special election. As a result, Miller issued emergency regulations he said are necessary to assist the counties during a financially difficult period and are also necessary to ensure the proper administration of the special election by the counties.

Under the emergency regulations, counties must submit invoices and other supporting documents with the request for reimbursement to the Secretary of State's office following the election.

Miller said reimbursement of eligible costs and expenses "will be contingent upon available and authorized state funding."

The district covers all of 16 of 17 Nevada counties, plus a small portion of Clark County. The district has 141,330 active Democrat voters, 172,281 active Republican voters and 60,519 active nonpartisan voters.

3-day outdoor expo at El Dorado County Fairgrounds

Lovers of the great outdoors in El Dorado County can gather at the fairgrounds in Placerville for the second annual Gateway to the Sierra Sportsman's Outdoor Expo Sept. 30-Oct.2.

The expo celebrates the rich and plentiful opportunities for outdoor recreation in El Dorado County and beyond, from fishing and hunting to boating, archery, biking, barbecuing and more.

Highlights of the three-day expo include seminars and hands-on demonstrations in such topics as fly fishing, bear hunting and river guide services, as well as special hands-on demonstrations for children including free catch and release trout fishing sponsored by Wilderness Unlimited Foundation. Also featured are vendors in outdoor sports offering the latest know-how and equipment, clothing and accessories.

Barbecue fans are invited to watch how the pros do it in the KCBS sanctioned Smokin' for Gold BBQ Cook Off on Oct. 1. This competition features teams competing for prize money and the Grand Champion trophy. Then, on Sunday everyone is invited to try their hand at the grill in the "just for fun" Open BBQ Cook Off. Following each event, Expo attendees are welcome to sample the cooks' creations during People's Choice tasting events, five tastes for $10.

Go online for a full list of expo activities, vendor information and daily schedules.

Census: Interaction between kids and parents on the rise

Many young children are getting a head start on acquiring the skills needed to read, as family members take time out of their day on a regular basis to read aloud with them, the U.S. Census Bureau reports.

In 2009, half of children ages 1 to 5 were read to seven or more times a week by a family member.

“Selected Indicators of Child Well-Being (A Child’s Day): 2009” uses statistics from the Survey of Income and Program Participation to provide a glimpse into how children younger than 18 spend their day, touching on subjects such as the degree of interaction with parents and extracurricular activities. These statistics are compared with those from earlier years.

While reading interactions are more frequent among families above poverty, reading interactions among low-income families have increased over the last 10 years. In 2009, 56 percent of 1- and 2-year-olds above poverty were read to seven or more times a week, compared with 45 percent below the poverty level. However, while parental reading involvement for children above poverty was not different from rates in 1998, it rose from 37 percent for those below poverty.

According to this latest look into the lives of children, more children are taking honors or advanced placement classes. From 1998 to 2009, the percentage of children ages 12 to 17 enrolled in gifted classes climbed from 21 percent to 27 percent.

At the same time more children are taking gifted classes, fewer are participating in athletics. Regardless of the children’s age, participation in sports decreased from 41 percent in 2006 down to 36 percent in 2009.

Other highlights:

– The percentage of children who talked or played together with a parent three or more times in a typical day increased from 50 percent in 1998 to 57 percent in 2009.

– The percentage of children who ate dinner with a designated parent seven times per week on average increased slightly from

69 percent in 1998 to 72 percent in 2009.

– The percentage of children whose parents praised them three or more times per day increased from 48 percent in 1998 to 57 percent in 2009.

– Children 12 to 17 years old were more likely than children 6 to 11 to participate in sports in 2009 (41 percent and 32 percent, respectively).

– Younger children 6 to 11 were more likely than older children to participate in lessons (32 percent and 29 percent, respectively). Lessons include those taken after school or on the weekend in subjects such as music, dance, language, computers or religion.

– In 2009, 5 percent of children 6 to 11 and 9 percent 12 to 17 had ever repeated a grade.

The Survey of Income and Program Participation produces national estimates for the U.S. resident population and subgroups and allows for the observation of trends over time, particularly of selected characteristics, such as income, eligibility for and participation in government assistance programs, household and family composition, labor force behavior and other associated events.

Questions for each child are asked of the designated parent.