‘King Arthur’s Quest’

Embark on an adventure with the legendary King Arthur, Guinevere, Lancelot and a host of others on July 23 as the Missoula Children’s Theatre and 50 local students present “King Arthur’s Quest” at the Lake of the Sky Amphitheater at the Taylor Creek Visitor’ Center on the South Shore at 2pm.

This production is part of the Missoula Children’s Theatre’s unique international touring project and is presented locally by Tahoe Arts Project.

Admission is $10 for adults and $5 for children.

For more information, call Tahoe Arts Project at (530) 542.3632.

State fair food is more than cotton candy and corn dogs

By Cynthia Hubert, Sacramento Bee

Back in the 1950s, we had hot dogs on sticks. Later, fair vendors impaled and cooked offerings such as alligator sausage and walleye.

The deep fryer began to dominate fair food about a decade ago, introducing us to fried Snickers bars and Twinkies and butter balls.

This year at the California State Fair, diners are sampling maggot sandwiches and grilled raccoon, fried scorpions and dried crickets.

The increasingly exotic offerings at fairs around the country are more than just marketing gimmicks, according to culinary specialists. The trend is a reflection of an evolving American palate, popular TV shows that highlight unusual cuisine, and the innate desire to sample the latest thing.

“American people are getting more adventurous, and food TV has a lot to do with it,” said Sacramento restaurateur Randall Selland, whose establishments include the elegant Ella and The Kitchen.

“I think it’s neat that the fair is offering more than just deep-fried Twinkies and Cinnabons. It is opening up people’s minds to new things.”

Read the whole story

Popularity of raising chickens spreading to neighborhoods

By Ben Miller, Reno Gazette-Journal

When Julie Peterson’s children asked her if they could have a pet eight years ago, she didn’t just want a cute critter to pet. She wanted a pet that would give back.

She came home with chickens.

“I thought they’d be utilitarian,” the Galena resident said.

And utilitarian they are: Today, Peterson’s flock of more than 100 chickens, about 25 ducks and two geese yield 15 to 20 eggs

per day. Besides having a steady supply of eggs to cook with, Peterson trades them to friends, neighbors and coworkers. Her family regularly enters the birds into show competitions for prize money and has raised two to be eaten. The chickens eat her weeds, clear bugs from her yard and leave fertilizer on the ground. They also chow down on scraps from her kitchen and the hospital where she works.

“I probably take home 20 pounds of green garbage a week that I give to my chickens,” Peterson said. “And they love it.”

Though she lives in Reno, Peterson is hardly alone when it comes to raising poultry.

While Nevada doesn’t see quite as many chicken enthusiasts as California and the eastern half of the country, the chicken culture is growing – fast.

“It’s new, it’s growing and it’s growing rapidly,” Peterson said.

For example, Peterson belongs to the Northern Nevada Poultry Fanciers Association, which involves about 20 families spread across Northern Nevada and parts of California, she said. When she got involved with the group five years ago, the organization got about five inquiries a year about raising chickens. These days, the association is more likely to get five inquiries a month.

Read the whole story

Robert C. Amundson –

1938-2011

Born and raised on the Scripps Estate at Glenbrook, at age 14 Robert C. Amundson received a driver's license and drove schoolchildren from Glenbrook to South Lake Tahoe.

Bob was born April 25, 1938. He died July 13.

During the winter of 1951-52 he and his skimates skied over Echo Summit to Strawberry and back to obtain needed medical supplies because Tahoe was snowed in. Bob qualified for the 1955 winter Olympics as a ski jumper – skiing with Spider Savage and Jill Killmont Booth.

Bob, along with his father, developed the Logan Shoals Harbor, Logan Creek Estates and Cedar Brook subdivisions, all in the Glenbrook area. He also was instrumental in creating the M.S. Dixie and served as captain for 10 years. He often spoke of many of the charter cruises which he cherished, such as the Governor's Manpower Conference where he met Jimmy Carter; the Apollo-Soyuz cruise where he met the astronauts and cosmonauts; the Maharaja; and the memorable graduation groups and weddings. He loved it when he was referred to as "Mr. Tahoe."

He served in the U.S. Army for three years. He worked construction in Okinawa and Liberia, owned an 18-wheeler and drove for many local companies as well as long line trucking.

Bob loved his shop where he spent hours building and repairing anything. If he wasn't sure how to do a job, he would "jerry rig" it and somehow it always worked out. He was fondly called "Big Bob" by the neighborhood children and "the Honey Do man" by his wife's widowed friends. He went out of his way to help anyone he could.

Bob was a past member of the Tahoe-Douglas Sheriff's Posse; American Legion; Nevada Antique Tractor and Engine Club and

Order of Ahepa. He was a member of the St. Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church.

He was predeceased by his parents, Margaret and Ken Amundson and his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Tom and Lorna Poulakidas.

He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Shirley Amundson; his children and grandchildren Nicole (Mike, Brandon, and Logan Zaza), Robert Charles Amundson II (Terry), Melanie (Morgan) Petrelli, and Lisa (Frank, Brenna Long and Carmen Greaves); sister Suzanne (Roland) Werner; sister-in-law Judee (Ben) Price; friends Joyce Hinton and Rozanne DeLeau; many aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews, and his dogs Duke and Bruiser.

A memorial will be at 2pm July 22 at Walton's Chapel of the Valley at 1281 N. Roop St. in Carson City.

In lieu of flowers, make contributions to the American Cancer Association.

Visit LTN at today's farmers' market



Lake Tahoe News will be at the farmers' market in South Lake Tahoe today from 8am-1pm.

Stop by, say hi, give us some news tips, pick up a free pen, buy a T-shirt and eat your veggies.

The market is in the American Legion parking lot on Highway 50.

Opinion: A vision for No Child Left Inside

By Garry Bowen

Late last week, a significant bipartisan bill was introduced in Congress that could be valuable to the Lake Tahoe economy, not to mention the educational efforts of both of Tahoe's represented states. The fact of a bipartisan introduction these days may seem significant enough on its own, but the fact that this one directly relates to what Lake Tahoe's agencies have always said they are about makes this one an extraordinary opportunity.

The bill is SB2447, the No Child Left Inside Act, introduced by Sens. Jack Reed, D-R.I., Mark Kirk, R-Ill., and Reps. John Sarbanes, D-Md., on July 14. As we approach the 15th annual Lake Tahoe Environmental Summit talks, and with *Lake Tahoe News* reporting yesterday work on a vision for Tahoe, I thought I'd throw mine into the mix. California and Nevada's educational statures are hurting, both being in the lowest 10 percent of the nation, while the United States continues to lose global ground in the very area (called STEM for Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) called for in the 21st century.



Garry Bowen

Lake Tahoe can benefit by being of better service to our world.

Says Sen. Reed: “Teaching children about the environment and giving them a hands-on opportunity to experience nature makes them smarter and healthier. Environmental education should be an important part of the curriculum in our schools. This legislation will reconnect more kids with nature and help raise student achievement in core subjects like math, science, and reading.

“Environmental awareness should be second nature for our young people and protecting the environment is crucial to future economic growth.”

From Sen. Kirk: “Our education system needs new, innovative approaches to prepare our children to compete in the 21st century global economy. By utilizing the natural world as a classroom, we can engage more students in STEM education while exposing them to the benefits of being outside and living an active lifestyle.

“This bill promotes hands-on learning and an integrated curriculum, while bolstering important science education programs.”

From Rep. Sarbanes: “By creating an environmental education grant program and providing teacher training for environmental education across the curriculum, we can prepare our children for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics jobs that will be the cornerstone of the United States’ 21st

century economy. Research shows that hands-on, outdoor environmental education has a measurably positive impact not only on student achievement in science, but also in reading, math, and social studies.

“By creating an environmental education grant program and providing teacher training for environmental education across the curriculum, we can prepare our children for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics jobs that will be the cornerstone of the United States’ 21st century economy. Research shows that hands-on, outdoor environmental education has a measurably positive impact not only on student achievement in science, but also in reading, math, and social studies.”

What’s my vision surrounding this bill? As I’ve been engaged in this work, that of the North American Association of Environmental Educators and the NCLI Coalition for about two years, along with work on global sustainability for more than a decade, this introduction is particularly noteworthy for our future.

And California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson conducted a forum on No Child Left Inside the Friday before his election last November – the timing may be “on”.

The model that I am working with to accomplish this is an extremely well-done Nature Center that focuses on K-12 curriculums, is in a LEED gold complex on 255 acres, and has an overlay of a master’s degree program in sustainable development. The complex consists not only of stream environment zones, forests, and several watershed examples, but the solar gain, indoor air quality, and energy saving aspects of green building are all part of the youth experience while there. As this particular model was built without the input of No Child Left Inside directions, Tahoe can indeed improve on a model that already exists to call its own, for an unprecedented future.

As I have been advocating “policies equal to the scenery” for a long time, this direction allows an eco and geo tourism scale not yet seen, but eminently amenable to Lake Tahoe, and as a counteraction to our gaming decline. People will need new reasons to spend additional time here, and my own extensive experience with Bill Harrah for 10 years suggests an intrinsic understanding of our current industry.

The notion that nature plays a key role in boosting brain function and emotional and physical health has been around for awhile – recently popularized by Richard Louv’s 2005 book “Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Kids from Nature-Deficit-Disorder”. The essence of his message, and the idea that this book is this generation’s “Silent Spring”, comes from the fact that our youth are continually bombarded with thoughts about almost everything but what they will need to realign our world from these distortions.

Third-graders in England, for example, know all the Pokemon characters’ names, but nothing about the tree outside the window. What better place to augment what our Environmental Magnet school is already attempting for our own kids than to expand upon that effort with offerings that contribute mightily to the regional economy. I have spoken elsewhere about a recent study conducted by UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science and KQED that found a major discomfort level with teaching about the outdoors and science, an outgrowth of the last decade’s emphasis on “teaching to the test”, but that just makes a relatively major opportunity to make learning about nature more of a major attraction – with fun, healthy sharing a goal. California alone has more than 250,000 teachers, a not insignificant amount.

With all of our current consternation about funding sources, as SNPLMA dries up, it is interesting to note that U.S Secretary of Education Arne Duncan still has about $4.5 billion in allocated funds awaiting the receipt of innovative directions for the future. California and Nevada have so far

not been able to tap into those funds, as their directions have not been innovative enough – this bill emphasis could be the stepping stone for an entirely new direction for the community and region, as both the demographics and psychographics are addressed by such a direction.

And, as they say, "not a moment too soon."

Just the work in the direction of more fully comprehending the inherent vital advantages of global sustainability will assist the basin agencies' in something other than the provincial attitudes they've adopted, while giving all the communities the boost they so fervently want. Contradictions neutralized.

What would be a next step? Well, as the imminent vision effort is about championing projects, mine would be to organize a tour of the facility mentioned above as to its' obvious viability to the directions so often talked about, but not yet realized. Then, marshal the significant resources to actualize "new".

Garry Bowen has a 50-year connection to the South Shore, with an immediate past devoted to global sustainability, on most of its current fronts: green building, energy and water efficiencies, and public health. He may be reached at tahoefuture@gmail.com or (775) 690.6900.

Tahoe City rafters waiting for more water

By Emerson Marcus, Reno Gazette-Journal

TAHOE CITY – The serenity of river life brought Jack Simon,

22, back to Tahoe City this summer.

Simon, then an English major at DePauw University in Indiana, worked last summer as an intern for a Lake Tahoe entertainment guide. To earn extra money, he also worked as a river guide, taking rafters through the stem of the Truckee River.

“It’s the greatest job in the world,” Simon said of river rafting. “People spend a lot of money to do what I do every day.”

Simon graduated in May and two weeks later was back in Tahoe City. But since his return, the Truckee River Raft Co. has not sent one rafter down the river because of low water levels.

Simon has had to take a job at a local 7-Eleven. The lack of rafting also has hurt the economy in Tahoe City and forced many people to ask, “When are water levels going to increase?”

“I talk to the river raft people nearly every day,” said Bric Haley, manager at the River Ranch Lodge in Tahoe City. “We are always talking. We are always discussing when they are going to open the dam.”

Haley said 15 percent of reservations have canceled, primarily because of the absence of rafting.

“I have to admit, as tough as it is on the local economy here, the water master has no choice,” Haley said. “He has to do his job.”

Read the whole story

Interactive murder mystery at Tallac Site

Solve the murder at this authentic Tahoe-based radio theater performance. This audience-interactive play with local actors celebrates the Roaring 20s' South Shore lifestyle.

Mystery Radio Theatre is at the Valhalla Boathouse Theater on the South Shore Aug. 13 at 7ppm.

Reserve seats early, as this event always sells out. Wine and hors d'oeuvres are included in the ticket price.

Cost is $45 for adults, $20 for children (12 and under), $35 for Tahoe Tallac Association members, and free for 2011 TTA season passholders.

Summer events adopt environmentally friendly practices

By Ben Miller, Reno Gazette-Journal

As summer pushes on in Reno-Tahoe, events such as Artown, the Reno River Festival and the Reno-Tahoe Open blossom with visitors, entertainment acts and food and beverage vendors.

And with all of our region's events come waste. Participants and spectators buy bottled water, drink beer out of plastic cups and leave trash on the ground.

But in recent years, many events – with the help of businesses and vendors – have begun to fight back. The Reno River Festival in 2010 powered musical acts on the Wingfield Park Stage with biofuel and offered beer in biodegradable cups from Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., said Betsy McDonald, director of public relations for the Bauserman Group, which manages public relations for many events in the area. The Reno-Tahoe Open, which is Aug. 4-7 at Montreux Golf and Country Club, is aiming to be carbon neutral. And the Haws Corp., an international water delivery systems company headquartered in Sparks, is sending a water bottle refill station on tour with acts such as Blink-182 and Dave Matthews Band this year.

The goal, McDonald said, is to keep the events clean and keep them going for years to come.

Read the whole story

SNC has scholarship money for recent high school grads

The Sierra Nevada College Millennium Plus Scholars Award is a $50,000 scholarship (four years at $12,500) earmarked for the approximately 8,000 2011 graduating high school seniors who will be eligible for the Guinn Millennium Scholarships.

Students are awarded Guinn Millennium Scholarship recipient status upon graduating from a Nevada high school with a 3.25 gpa and completing a rigorous high school curriculum. Students interested in receiving Sierra Nevada College's Millennium Plus Scholars Award – which supplements the Guinn Millennium Scholarship – must meet the Nevada state scholarship eligibility requirements and apply for the award by Sept. 1.

Students may apply the $1,980 from the state and $12,500 from Sierra Nevada College (both annual amounts) toward tuition.

Contact the Admissions Office at the college with any questions, or to learn more about scholarships and additional financial aid at (775) 831.6223 or admissions@sierranevada.edu.