Tallac Association without an executive director

By Kathryn Reed

Board members of the Tahoe Tallac Association will be working without an executive director for the foreseeable future.

Lori Cramer has tendered her resignation effective the end of the month. Notice was give to the board at the July 11 meeting, with it being made public July 14.



Lori Cramer

It was a mutual decision with the board because of the financial situation the group is in – owing Cramer money, needing to repay loans to board members, and revenue not as robust as anticipated.

The organization did learn this week $11,000 in the form of a grant and $5,000 in sponsorship money will be coming in this month.

Today the board is having what board President Ginger Nicolay-Davis described as “an all-day strategy session.”

She told *Lake Tahoe News* board members will be divvying up the executive director duties. What to do about a leadership position likely won’t be decided until the bulk of the summer festival is over.

Nicolay-Davis said TTA – which puts on the annual Valhalla Arts and Music Festival each summer at the Tallac Site on the South Shore – has no intention of going away. In fact, she said since word has gotten out about the nonprofit's struggles, people are coming forward to help however they can.

She also said the U.S. Forest Service, which owns the property, wants to continue the 32-year-old partnership.

Nicolay-Davis said the board would be adding members, but not immediately.

"We don't want to bring new people on until all of our ducks are in a row," Nicolay-Davis said.

Celebrity chasers flock to Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – It doesn't matter that Jack Yoder wasn't alive when Mike Eruzione was making a name for himself as captain of the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team. Getting the player's autograph – again – was a dream as good as gold for the Sacramento youth.

Yoder ran under the rope as Eruzione was walking toward him on the 18th hole at Edgewood Tahoe on Thursday. Yoder learned about Eruzione's accomplishments from his parents while attending previous American Century Celebrity Golf Tournaments.

His younger brother, Tommy, not long after, was boasting about having gotten Boston Celtic's Ray Allen's signature.



Action at Edgewood Tahoe on July 15 starts at 9:30am with Jim McMahon, Bode Miller and Robbie Gould teeing off. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Some people, though, don't even know who some of the most popular celebrities are. Two girls in their late 20s asked who Michael Jordan is. The guy they were with promptly informed them Jordan "is the greatest basketball player ever."

Someone else asked who the guy in red is. "Tim Brown – future hall of famer," came the response from a woman walking by. The wide receiver played for the Raiders for 16 years, earning the nickname Mr. Raider.

July 14 was the celebrity-amateur round of the tournament at Stateline. People who have enough money can write a check to play with one of the celebrities. And some of them have a sense of humor.

When Brown was introducing himself to the four guys he was about to tee off with, they said something about their birthdays. Theirs, they said, was the same as Brown's. Brown was so intrigued he turns to those he knows in the bleachers

on the first hole to tell them. Then the guys start laughing and say they were kidding – they had just been reading Brown's bio the night before.

Players participated in another "sport" between holes 17 and 18. Each was handed a bottle of Korbel Champagne, told to shake it and then see how far they could send the cork.

It's a good thing Allen is still playing basketball. His initial attempt fizzled.

As he walked by the markers of better cork poppers, he joked, "See, those are all the alcoholics in back."

Actor Oliver Hudson was leading at that time with about a 70-foot rip of the cork.

Several of the celebs were out on the putting green and driving range in anticipation of the real event that begins today and concludes Sunday. Based on where some of the balls were on the driving range, more practice is needed.

Each day fans are out seeking autographs. Former NBA all-star Penny Hardaway was signing whatever was put in front of him – including a basketball shoe.

Despite the high water of Lake Tahoe, plenty of boaters found a slice of beach to anchor on along the 17th hole. A bar closer to the clubhouse caters to the people on that side of the rope.

This is the third trip to the tournament for one guy from Kansas City who was with friends on a boat. He had autographs of every player from KC. He, too, is a Eruzione fan.

"I watched the 1980 Games. I cried during that game," this grown man said. Then he smiled. "I watched (Eruzione) putt in.

"They have some of the top dogs playing here."

ngg_shortcode_0_placeholder (Click on photos to enlarge.)

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Tectrans will take over day-to-day operation of BlueGo, the South Shore's bus system, on July 24.

• South Tahoe's sign ordinance will be discussed at a special July 26 7pm City Council meeting at Lake Tahoe Airport.

• Cynthea Preston is president of Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe – the first woman in that position.

• Forester Ken Pimlott, 45, of Cameron Park has been appointed director of CalFire.

• Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., will do some fundraising while he is in town next month for the annual environmental summit. He is asking for a $10,000 per person contribution for a weekend at the Hyatt in Inline. Half goes to Reid's leadership PAC, the remaining money is split between his special guests Bill Nelson, D-Fla., and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, R.I.

Lockout affects how basketball players, owners interact on golf course

By Kurt Helin, NBC Sports

As he has done for years, Charlotte Bobcats owner Michael Jordan will be at Lake Tahoe this weekend golfing in the American Century Celebrity Golf Championship.

So will Ray Allen, Shane Battier, Jason Kidd, Deron Williams and Clippers coach Vinny Del Negro. They'll all be hanging out together.

Most years this shouldn't strike you as odd. But this summer – when the Trail Blazers GM nearly got a $1 million fine for an innocuous one word answer – it should.

David Stern and the NBA has forbidden anyone tied to teams – owners and coaches included – from having any contact with players. The league has threatened a $1 million fine to anyone who has contact.

But this tournament and these people all seem to have gotten clearance from the league. Reportedly Jordan and Del Negro can't talk to the players, however. So, if Deron Williams says hello to Jordan, MJ can only nod back? Nice set of rules.

(Just for full disclosure, you can watch the American Century Celebrity Golf Championship Friday on Versus, then Saturday and Sunday on NBC. Expect PBT to have some stories from the tournament.)

Read the whole story

Opinion: SB271 gives Nevada a greater say at Lake Tahoe

By Mike Young

As a longtime resident and Realtor who enjoys living in the Lake Tahoe area, I've spent nearly 25 years dealing with friends, clients and colleagues who are frequently frustrated by regulations and red tape imposed by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Thanks to a new law signed last month by Gov. Brian Sandoval, things are about to get better.



Mike Young

Sandoval was wise to sign SB271, a bill passed in the waning moments of the Nevada Legislature that would enable Nevada to withdraw from the TRPA if the state's concerns with the agency are not addressed in the near future.

For years, California has dominated the bi-state regulatory board, imposing confusing and onerous regulations that have done more to detract from the economy and quality of life at Lake Tahoe than they have to protect its crystal clear waters and unique environment.

The TRPA's heavy-handed approach has made even the most

routine development or home improvement project at Lake Tahoe a challenge.

To compound matters, the TRPA's Regional Plan was last approved in 1987 and expired in 2007.

Nevada state Sens. John Lee and James Settelmeyer, who were key sponsors of SB271, said one of its primary goals is to push for an updated Regional Plan guiding development decisions around the lake.

Other highlights of the Nevada law include:

• If the TRPA does not adopt an updated regional plan for the Lake Tahoe area, and if amendments supported by Nevada are not approved by Oct. 1, 2015, Nevada can withdraw from the compact on that date, unless its governor issues a proclamation extending the deadline for withdrawal to Oct. 1, 2017.

• This bill does not automatically call for Nevada's withdrawal from TRPA, nor does it change the current structure of the agency. The only thing that would change is the voting structure if California and Congress adopt Nevada's amendments to the compact. Nevada and California will continue to have the same number of seats on the Governing Board that they have now.

• SB271 eliminates the TRPA's super majority voting procedures that currently require four affirmative votes from Nevada and four affirmative votes from California. TRPA's Governing Board has 14 voting members and one nonvoting member. Each state appoints seven members, with a nonvoting member appointed by the president.

• Under an amendment proposed by Nevada Secretary of State Ross Miller, TRPA rules would now require at least four affirmative votes from the state in which a project is located and nine affirmative votes total.

• The new law does not change Lake Tahoe water quality standards. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region, set the water quality standards at Lake Tahoe. This will not change.

Nevada can't act alone. If one state makes changes to the TRPA Compact, the other state's legislature has to adopt those changes. Once both states have adopted those changes, they have to be ratified by Congress. So, any change Nevada makes to the TRPA Compact must be approved by California and Congress.

Leaders on both sides of the lake still have a lot of work to do on this issue.

Sens. Lee and Settelmeyer deserve our thanks for having the courage, strength and conviction to bring forth this legislation. The discussion was necessary because for too long the frustrations of homeowners at Lake Tahoe were swept under the rug. SB271 brought those issues out in the open for all to consider.

Gov. Sandoval also deserves praise for his leadership on this issue. I personally know he was under tremendous pressure by those interested in the status quo to veto the bill. I know his love for the lake is strong, and like every Nevadan, that he does not want it harmed.

But at least this new law balances the scales and sends an important message to everyone – that Nevada's voice must be heard.

It tells our neighbors across the state line that we share their love of the lake and their deep desire to protect the environment.

This is about what is right for Lake Tahoe and the property owners like myself who love Lake Tahoe.

Mike Young, a longtime Realtor with Chase International in Incline Village, is the president of the Nevada Association of Realtors, a professional trade association with nearly 15,000 members.

Lane wants to stay involved with bankrupt S. Tahoe project

By Kathryn Reed

Randy Lane is not giving up on being an integral part of whatever the rebar and concrete near the state line in South Lake Tahoe eventually becomes.

His firm, Lake Tahoe Development Company, this month asked the bankruptcy judge in Sacramento for more time to come up with a plan. South Lake Tahoe and the creditors have until Aug. 16 to file with the court their views on Lane's plan.

City Attorney Patrick Enright told *Lake Tahoe News* the city has no desire to allow Lane more time to figure out what to do with the 11 acres.



Debris covers parts of the

rebar-concrete bankrupt construction site in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“It’s the same thing he has been saying for the last two years,” Enright said.

That site was supposed to be a $400 million convention center, with two boutique hotels, retail and open space.

The idea is it would have complemented the Heavenly Village development on the other side of Highway 50.

Without all the parties foreclosing, Lane still has ownership of nine of the 29 parcels. Owens Financial is owed the most – about $25 million.

Lane admits something different than originally planned is what the market now dictates.

“The units will be smaller so you can be more competitive from a pricing standpoint. The market doesn’t want $2 million units,” Lane said.

Several entities have looked at the project, though all turned out to be false starts. Since the foreclosures started Vail Resorts has revisited the possibility of having a roll in the project. Initially the Colorado company was the hotelier. Vail backed out long before LTDC filed for bankruptcy.

Heavenly Mountain Resort is Vail’s only ski resort without a high-end hotel nearby.

JMA Ventures out of San Francisco, which owns Alpine and Homewood ski resorts, also studied the possibility of taking

over the project.

“Every week there seems to be more interest than the previous week,” Lane told *Lake Tahoe News*. “The solution is not filling in the hole and starting over again.”

For now, though, there is no serious investor.

City officials allowed construction to start without the Zephyr Cove developer having financing definitively in place. Lane was also allowed to go forward without a consolidated map being filed. That is why the bankruptcy process that started in October 2009 and subsequent foreclosures in December 2010 are convoluted.

The site continues to look more rundown by the day, with graffiti on fences, no passable sidewalks for pedestrians and debris inside the compound.

Lane would like to change some of that by October.

“I want to clean the place up, maybe fix the sidewalks,” Lane said.

Asked who would pay for that, Lane said, “Us, and a couple of the creditors and maybe the city.”

It’s possible at the early September court hearing the judge will put an end to Lane’s continuous pleas for more time. The judge could dismiss the case, which means the bankruptcy goes away. This could create a mess with property owners

The judge could also turn it into a Chapter 7 bankruptcy. This would mean liquidating the assets.

Wild West Weekend at Squaw Valley

Squaw Valley saddles up again for Wild Wild West Weekend with a host of Western-themed events.

Wild Wild West Weekend offers adults and kids the opportunity to channel their inner-cowboys at the High Camp Corral. Pony rides, a petting zoo, authentic Western-style barbecues, and two days of live music are all part of the July 23-24 weekend.

For more information, call (530) 452.4000.

USFS wins court battle to remove Angora's dead trees

By Kathryn Reed

The U.S. Forest Service is about to remove the trees that are a constant reminder of the June 2007 inferno that reduced 254 houses to ash.

This is because a federal judge on July 13 sided with the federal agency.

Earlier this year Earth Island Institute and the Center for Biological Diversity filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Sacramento contending habitat for the rare black-backed woodpecker would be destroyed if the 1,398 acres were logged.

The Forest Service said that is not the case and maintains not clearing the trees will increase the threat of another

catastrophic fire.

Judge Garland Burrell granted a summary judgment on all counts in the Forest Service's favor.



Remains of the Angora Fire in April 2011. Photo/LTN

Restoration work could begin as early as July 26.

"Work to control harmful invasive plant species, improvements to the road and trail system, and mechanical and hand-thinning of dead and some live trees to reduce the future risk of wildfire and improve forest health will begin this summer," the Forest Service said in a press release. "Planning and design for stream channel, wetland and meadow restoration projects continues, and some field work will begin next summer."

More than 3,000 acres, mostly USFS land, burned during the multi-day fire that started June 24, 2007, when a campfire that wasn't completely extinguished became a raging wildland fire on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe.

A substantial number of trees had been removed in the last four years prior to the lawsuit being filed. Health and safety reasons were the reasons given for felling them.

A number of seedlings have also been planted.

With the lack of alive trees in the area and the abundance of

moisture this winter and spring, water is everywhere in the burn area. Fresh vegetation and an array of wild flowers are sprouting in some areas. This will begin to stabilize the soil and absorb the water, but can’t take the place of the thousands of trees that were lost in the inferno.

Auditions for ‘King Arthur’s Quest’

Tahoe Arts Project is having auditions for Missoula Children’s Theater production of “King Arthur’s Quest” on July 18 on the lawn at Valhalla at the Tallac Historic Site from 10am-noon.

Approximately 50 roles are available for children 5 to 17.

Auditions are free, and no advance preparation is necessary.

If cast, there will be a charge of $50 per child to participate. A limited number of scholarships are available.

Contact Peggy Thompson at (530) 542.3632 for information.

Rehearsals will be July 19-22 from 10am-2:30pm. The performance will be July 23 at 2pm at the Lake of the Sky Amphitheater at the U.S. Forest Service Taylor Creek Visitors Center.

South Tahoe coach to attend national football summit

The NFL/USA Football Youth Summit assembles approximately 150 high school coaches and youth league commissioners from all 50 states to learn from experts.

Chuck Leonard of South Lake Tahoe will be attending the July 20-21 summit in Ohio. Leonard is co-commissioner of Sagebrush Empire Pop Warner.

Topics discussed at the summit include:

• Inspiring players to reach their potential as people and football players;

• Educating high school and youth football leaders on player health, including head injuries, dangers of steroids, heat and hydration and overall health and safety practices;

• USA Football’s CDC-approved concussion awareness and management information;

• Role-playing demonstrations regarding coach-player-parent relationships.