Sam Rudin at Boathouse Theatre

Sam Rudin – Boogie, Blues, and Jazz is July 3 at 7:30pm at the Valhalla Boathouse Theatre on the South Shore.

The cost is $15

With the rhythmic intensity of an entire band, Rudin attacks and caresses the keyboard, romping through the whole range of 20th century American music. He can evoke the spirit of Fats Waller, Oscar Peterson, Mose Alison, and Jerry Lee Lewis.

Summer Jazz in the Park

The free Summer Jazz in the Park is July 3 from 11am-2pm at the Valhalla Grand Lawn on the South Shore.

This is the newest addition to the Valhalla Summer Festival program.

Bring a picnic basket, lawn chairs and sunscreen and relax near the shoreline of Lake Tahoe.

Carolyn Dolan and Friends will be providing the music.

Carolyn Dolan and Big Red

Carolyn Dolan and Big Red are at the Tahoe Tallac Site on the South Shore on July 1 at 7:30pm.

Tickets are $15.

A soulful mix of rich vocals and harmonica by Carolyn Dolan, accompanied by guitarist Mick Clarke (formally with Long John Baldery), Billy Hancock on the organ (formally with Danial Castro), Bob Wider on bass and T. Moran on drums (formally with Eddie Money, Percy Sledge and Starship).

El Dorado County receives state transportation dollars

The California Transportation Commission has allocated $825 million in new funding to 92 highway, transit, and rail projects that are designed to strengthen California’s economy and upgrade the state’s vast transportation system.

The allocations included nearly $9 million from Proposition 1B, a 2006 voter-approved transportation bond. To date, the state has allocated nearly $8 billion in Proposition 1B funds.

El Dorado County is receiving $45,000 from the state Transportation Improvement Program for Placerville to construct a multipurpose trail to encourage non-motorized transportation and improve mobility, provide a connection to the bike and pedestrian overcrossing to Highway 50 at Bedford Avenue.

Neighborhood traffic enforcement snares 41 drivers

Between June 23-25, the South Lake Tahoe Police Department deployed officers into the Bijou neighborhood in support of the Residential Neighborhood Traffic Enforcement Program.

During that deployment, 41 traffic related traffic stops were made by the officers. Sixteen were for stop sign violations and 16 were for speed related and nine for other traffic violations.

Fifteen traffic citations were issued and 26 written warnings were given out. One vehicle was impounded due to the driver being cited for a third time for not having a driver’s license.

Because this particular neighborhood has such a major traffic related problem, officers will be in the Bijou neighborhood this week.

As a reminder, the speed limit for all California residential roadways is 25 mph unless otherwise posted.

If you would like your street or neighborhood put on the list, call or email Sgt. Shannon Laney at (530) 542.6104, slaney@cityofslt.us. Provide your name, number and a description of the problem in as much detail as possible to include times of days the problem is most prevalent.

Calif. Dems pass austerity budget; Brown expected to sign it

By Shane Goldmacher, Los Angeles Times

SACRAMENTO – The Legislature passed an austerity budget Tuesday night that would cut from universities, courts and the poor, shutter 70 parks and threaten schools but would not – by officials' own admission – restore California's long-term financial health.

The UC and Cal State systems would face about a 23 percent funding cut, among the steepest in the proposal. Cash grants for the needy would fall, a program to help thousands of teen mothers get an education would be suspended and hundreds of millions of dollars would be siphoned from mental health programs.

The state park closures would be the first ever. Courts would face what the state's chief justice has described as crippling reductions.

In an optimistic forecast, lawmakers built in an extra $4 billion of revenue. If all that cash does not materialize, K-12 schools – which had so far survived negotiations relatively unscathed – would face a cutback equal to shortening the academic year by seven days.

"These cuts will forever haunt our conscience," said Assemblyman Bob Blumenfield (D-Woodland Hills), who chairs the budget committee in the lower house. "However, those of us who do vote for this budget can take comfort with the knowledge that we did what was necessary to move ourselves toward stability."

Many of the cuts were adopted in March; more were undertaken Tuesday as a rare summer thunderstorm blanketed the city shortly before lawmakers began passing their second budget in as many weeks. Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed the first one but is expected to sign the new package before a fresh budget year begins Friday.

Brown lost his months-long bid to win enough Republican votes to extend temporary taxes that would have helped balance the books. Instead, he forged a deal with Democrats, who do not have enough votes to raise taxes alone.

As a result, temporary sales and vehicle tax hikes enacted in 2009 will officially come off the books Friday.

Read the whole story

So many opinions about S. Tahoe signs requires 2nd meeting

By Jessie Marchesseau

The room was far from empty at the South Lake Tahoe City Council sign workshop Tuesday. As planned, the meeting was for discussion and public input only, and no action was taken.

More than a half dozen residents and business owners took their turn at the podium to express concerns over the city's current sign ordinance.

"It took a problem, a bad problem, and sort of made it worse," said Paul Gonzales of the Tahoe Chalet Inn.

Like most of the other business owners and managers in attendance, Gonzales would like to see the ordinance changed. However, exactly what should be changed was a little harder for everyone to put a finger on.



Blue Angel Cafe's sign is an example of one that conforms to the ordinance. Photo/LTN

Director of Development Services, Hilary Hodges, presented a short history of the sign ordinance that went into effect in 1989. The floor was then opened to public comment. The council members listened thoughtfully to what the speakers had to say and visited many of their concerns during the council's discussion.

A handful of topics came up multiple times throughout the meeting. Financial incentives were perhaps the most visited topic of the evening. A new sign can cost business and property owners thousands of dollars. Residents and council members seemed to concur some sort of financial incentive needed to be offered to help businesses bring signs into compliance.

The other hot topics were the use of banners and sandwich signs, and once again allowing reader or message board type signs. While all of the council members touched on these

topics, they were not fully in agreement.

One thing everyone agreed on, however: there is no consistent enforcement of the ordinance.

Among the council, there seemed to be a division of the sexes with Claire Fortier and Angela Swanson pushing for a quicker decision, fewer changes to the current ordinance and more stringent enforcement.

Tom Davis and Bruce Grego, on the other hand, approached the topic with less fervor than their counterparts. Both were in favor of liberalizing the current sign standards. Grego's opinion of the current ordinance is that it makes everyone's sign look the same. Davis advocates allowing more variety of signage and a grace period of another two to three years before enforcement begins.

Regardless of their differing opinions, council members acknowledged the urgency of the issue due to the current improvements being done to Highway 50. The work will require several businesses to move their signs, raising the questions: Should the city let them just move their old non-compliant sign, or require them to replace it with one that complies with the city ordinance? And should that ordinance be changed?

Even though the council was only supposed to meet once during the month of July, they added another sign ordinance workshop to the calendar, stating that this topic was too important to push back until August.

Over the next few weeks, South Lake Tahoe staff will be collecting input from local sign makers, business owners and the chamber of commerce to come up with a set of proposed changes to be discussed at next month's workshop.

The next sign ordinance workshop is scheduled for July 26.

Wildflowers cropping up along soggy bike trails

By Kathryn Reed

Wildflowers and mosquitoes are making their presence known in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Such are the benefits and hazards of a wet season.

The problem with pedaling in what is normally considered low-lying areas is water is still on the trails. This is leading to some sections having significant tire indentations and routes being created by cyclists to avoid the water.



Water on trails is creating an obstacle for mountain bike riders. Photos/Kathryn Reed

These user created trails could be doing harm to the landscape, but are likely to be less problematic than ruts that create erosion problems and potential safety issues.

Recreationists don’t know what trails are dry because with so much acreage in the basin it’s hard for landowners to mark what is unusable. After all, just last week the paved trail behind Meek’s in South Tahoe was under water in various sections as Trout Creek breached its banks.

Behind South Tahoe High School is normally a dry area this time of year. And for the most part it is on these trails on Gardner Mountain with its offshoots behind Camp Richardson and ones leading to Fallen Leaf Lake Road.

But some sections are swampy. Some are small ponds. Some are just puddles.

The problem could be exasperated by the burned trees from the 2007 Angora Fire not absorbing water so the low lying areas are more wet than usual.

Despite the muddy conditions in sections, what makes this area great right now is the lupine is coming out. The purple against the green of the meadows necessitates stopping pedaling to admire the abundance of life in this charred area. But the buzzing of skeeters requires moving on pretty fast.

The yellow flowers on the mule’s ear are sprouting. The distinctive red snow plants are in clumps. Groundcover of various colors is poking forth, too.

Each year since the devastating fire I’m amazed how the landscape looks different. It keeps getting better.

This is one of those bike rides that never has to be the same because there are so many routes. Usually we are up high enough to reach Fallen Leaf Lake Road. A week ago we had to dip down because the meadow we usually go through was more like a pond and was completely impassable.

This had us coming out right behind the stables at Camp Richardson. From there, we crossed Highway 89, got on the

paved path and headed home.

ngg_shortcode_0_placeholder (Click on photos to enlarge.)

Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe avoid accessing the routes via the high school football field this summer because of construction going on. Instead, off Highway 89, go in behind St. Francis Condominiums. Follow that path up. Then it goes off in all different ways. Hang on, be adventurous and have fun. Some parking is on the highway in this area if you need to drive to get there.

Convicted murderer who helped search for Dugard back behind bars

By Kirk Mitchell, Denver Post

STERLING, Colo. – For 32 years, Colorado officials took few steps to capture convicted killer Robert Charles Johnson, who escaped the Cañon City prison in 1975.

They filed, but didn't pursue, an escape charge against him. He traveled across the country and spent decades working as a river-rafting guide. Even a 1990 California arrest wasn't enough to get Colorado prison officials or prosecutors interested in chasing him down.

That changed in 2005 after the Department of Corrections created a cold-case fugitive unit. Within two years, Johnson was back behind bars.

Now Johnson, 60, faces more time in prison for his escape than he ever would have served for the original murder charge – and he still has as many as 10 years or so left to serve for that.

In an interview from Sterling Correctional Facility, he said he fears his golden years will be consumed behind bars even though he says he has lived a model life for decades.

Fremont County District Attorney Thom LeDoux said there has to be a penalty for escape regardless of how well someone behaves after fleeing – or there would be no deterrent.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Diego is a impressive Mastiff-pit bull mix, about 85 pounds, but he is a sweetheart. He is affectionate with people and likes to play with other dogs.



He is about 18 months old, and hasn't had much training, but he's smart, and should learn commands quickly.

He loves to play and has lots of energy. Diego was left behind when his owners moved from the area.

Diego is neutered, microchipped, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz