Spring Ski Run Cleanup Day

The Friends of Ski Run will be hosting the second annual Spring Ski Run Cleanup Day on June 11 from 11am-12:30pm. Anyone interested in helping keep Ski Run looking topnotch should meet at the Blue Angel Cafe at 1132 Ski Run Blvd. before 11am.

Lunch will be provided to volunteers, thanks to the Blue Angel Cafe.

FoSR will provide gloves and trash bags.

South Shore art festival benefits TAP

Tahoe Arts Project is hosting its 10th annual Art Festival July 9-10 at South Tahoe Middle School. Admission is free.

The festival will feature more than 40 local and visiting artists, food, children’s art projects, face painting, entertainment, raffle and auction prizes and fun for the entire family.

Denise Mancour was selected as the feature artist for the festival and her image “Dusk at Tahoe” will be available for sale on T-shirts. TAP will also be raffling off a framed print of the image.

New to the festival this year is Viridiana Chavez-Bautista from Oaxaca, Mexico. She will be showing and selling hand-woven wool rugs. Each of these rugs is handmade in Teotitlan Del Valle, a small Zapotec village famous for this remarkable

handicraft and located about 15 miles south of Oaxaca.

Local entertainers will be performing and there will be raffle and auction prizes, including items donated by the Festival artists.

The festival is a fundraiser for Tahoe Arts Project, a nonprofit organization that brings professional performing arts to more than 5,000 K-12 students and the community of South Lake Tahoe. For more information call (530) 542.3632.

Haunted Walking Tour in Truckee

It is time to get spooked during the third annual Historical Haunted Walking Tour in downtown Truckee on Oct. 20 and Oct. 21.

Old-timers will tell historic tales of the Wild West, ladies of nocturnal delight will sing a tune and entertaining characters will share titillating folklore along the nearly two-hour walk. Covering Truckee's most historic sites, the tour will entertain guests from near and far with spooky legends and unsolved mysteries. Find out what loggers loved most about Jibboom Street, the first road built in Truckee.

Learn how the Truckee Regulators administered justice years ago. Discover the never-told-before story of the world's most famous Lilliputian in this old railroad town.

The Richardson House was a favorite site on the 2010 tour. Built by a lumber baron for his wife in the late 1880s, the house featured a performance by Maggie Richardson's "ghost."

Maggie, the first wife of the house, was tormented by her son’s death, and her story, like each memorable performance along the guided tour, was captivating.

The tour benefits the Truckee Donner Historical Society and Trails & Vistas, two well-respected, Truckee-based nonprofit organizations.

For more information, go online or call (530) 305.4231.

Both sides agree TRPA dysfunctional; SB271’s future uncertain

By Anne Knowles

CARSON CITY – A hearing on the bill to withdraw Nevada from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency closed today with opponents and supporters of the legislation agreeing the agency is dysfunctional and in need of reform, but differing on how to overhaul it.

The Assembly Government Affairs committee ended two days of testimony and will consider Senate Bill 271 during a work session at its next meeting. If the bill passes out of the committee, it moves to the full Assembly for a vote before the end of the legislative session on June 6. If it passes there, SB271 will go to the desk of Gov. Brian Sandoval, who is expected to sign the legislation.

The biggest sticking point seemed to be the bill's provision to withdraw from the TRPA if reforms outlined in the legislation do not occur, with proponents saying nothing will change if there aren't consequences to inaction and critics saying that such a threat kills any chance of negotiating with California legislators to fix problems at the bi-state regulatory body.

"Secretary of State (Ross) Miller said withdrawing from the TRPA would be irresponsible," said Joe Johnson, co-chair of the legislative committee at the Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter in Reno, referring to testimony from Miller, who introduced an amendment to the bill at Wednesday's meeting. "We think the threat of withdrawal is irresponsible as well."

The bill has sparked useful discussion between California and Nevada, said Kyle Davis, political and policy director, Nevada Conservation League & Education Fund in Reno.

"Let's let the negotiations between the two states continue," he said before the committee. "The deadline to withdraw removes any incentive for those opposed to the TRPA to negotiate. They'll just wait out the clock."

But Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, D-North Las Vegas, chairwoman of the committee, said if the bill helped jumpstart a discussion between the two states, then the threat of withdrawal played an important part.

"What's a different hammer than withdrawal," that would be effective, asked Kirkpatrick.

Supporters of the bill believe it will hasten change at the agency instead of force Nevada out.

"When this bill first dropped, I talked about all the problems I had with the bill, all on the record," said Leo Drozdoff, director of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for Nevada. But various amendments to the bill

addressed his concerns, he said.

“The best way for Lake Tahoe to be protected is to have a strong TRPA,” Drozdoff said. “And the best way to have a successful TRPA is to pass this bill.”

Drozdoff’s department contributed the section of the bill that garnered near unanimous support. Section 22.5 delegates more decision-making to local entities. The goal is to address concerns of homeowners at the lake who complain it takes years to get approval to make changes to their homes and properties that have no environmental impact on the lake.

“The TRPA is so draconian” that homeowners can’t fix cracked driveways without approval from the agency, said Sen. John Lee, D-Las Vegas, who with Sen. James Settelmeyer, R-Minden, sponsored SB271.

“When the TRPA first started there were 16,000 additional building lots available. It was like Disneyland for developers,” Lee said. “But 90 percent of that is built out now and we no longer need a regulatory body to oversee everything. We need one to oversee environmental issues.”

Government Affairs has not posted its next meeting, when it will take up a work session on SB271 and likely vote, but during the session it was scheduled to meet every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

$5 dump day at South Tahoe Refuse

El Dorado County residents who reside on the South Shore of

Lake Tahoe who have electronics, furniture, mattresses, appliances, tires and other large trash items to throw away may dump them for $5 per truckload June 4 from 8am-4pm.

Nevada residents may dump their junk for $10 a truckload.

This is Clean Tahoe’s annual Community Clean Up Day.



Lots of trash was dumped in 2010.
Photo/Provided

Free secure document shredding and free e-waste disposal will also be available.

Bring the junk to the South Tahoe Refuse Transfer Station at 2140 Ruth Ave., South Lake Tahoe.

Clean Tahoe’s mission is to keep El Dorado County clean and beautiful. In partnership with Vail Resort’s Echo charitable giving program, Clean Tahoe Program is opening up the gates to South Tahoe Refuse Transfer Station so local residents can throw unwanted items away at a minimal cost.

Caregiving support class

Caregiving is a difficult and often challenging role that one can undertake, and taking the opportunity to share information and feel connected to others who are providing care is a vital step to perform this task to the best of your ability.

Take the opportunity on June 9 from 5:30-7:30pm at the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Highway 50, South Lake Tahoe to become connected and rejuvenated at your local support group.

Refreshments will be served.

Free respite care is available to qualified caregivers. Pre-authorization is required for respite services. Questions? Contact the Family Caregiver Support Program at (530) 621.6151.

Propane issue still a threat to Serene Lakes community

Truckee Fire Protection District and Placer County Environmental Health are still working to ensure that all properties in the Serene Lakes community affected by leaking propane systems are cleaned up. Several properties remain unabated, so the incident command team left in place the voluntary evacuation order.

Since March, there have been 42 properties affected by propane in the Donner Summit community that have leaked from storage tanks and the plumbing that connects the tanks to houses. Three active sites remain; the rest have been mitigated.

The voluntary evacuation order underscores the inability of public safety agencies to guarantee that the area is absolutely safe from any ill effects of propane. The area cannot be declared “safe” until all of the snow in the Serene Lakes area has melted or additional monitoring is completed showing that there are no hazardous concentrations of propane left near the leak sites. The cooperation of property owners at properties where hazardous levels of propane have been found is tantamount in getting these areas declared safe.

Passive dissipation (natural evaporation of propane) can be effective, however it comes at the expense of a safe environment for neighbors. Propane and gas systems (tanks, regulators and piping) still buried in the snow may hide potential leaks. Property owners need to ensure the safety of their properties by clearing snow from around their propane systems.

Extraordinary snowpack this season has created the leaks when the weight of dozens of feet of snow and ice broke plumbing between tanks and houses. Two other homes in other areas of eastern Placer County were also affected by leaking propane, however, those sites have been remediated.

There may still be undiscovered leaks in the Serene Lakes area. Even in areas where the propane systems are exposed, it is possible for propane to be trapped under the snow. As propane is heavier than air, it will follow a path of least resistance, and can travel long distances under crusted snow.

Dugard says Garridos stole

her life; couple sentenced in kidnap, rape of S. Tahoe girl

By Maria L. La Ganga, Los Angeles Times

PLACERVILLE — Nearly 20 years after Jaycee Lee Dugard was abducted while walking to a school bus stop, the couple who pleaded guilty in her kidnapping and rape were sentenced Thursday to prison terms that could keep them behind bars for the rest of their lives.

Phillip Garrido, a 60-year-old convicted rapist, was sentenced to 431 years to life in prison. His 55-year-old wife Nancy was sentenced to 36 years to life in prison.



Jaycee Lee Dugard not long before she was abducted in South Lake Tahoe.

In recommending that Garrido receive a sentence of 431 years to life in prison, El Dorado County District Attorney Vern Pierson described the serial rapist as “a sexual predator who stole the childhood and innocence from an 11-year-old child. Defendant Garrido’s actions caused her mother Terry Probyn to have to endure an 18-year-long nightmare.”

Before the Garridos' sentencing Thursday in a Placerville courtroom, a tearful Probyn addressed the court. "How could someone take away the one person in the world I loved so deeply? Where is she? Is she hungry? Is she cold? Is she hurt? My baby was gone and all my dreams turned to nightmares. She was a vulnerable child and I was unable to help her.

"During 18 years away, I could hear her crying, not with my ears, but with my heart. I could feel her pain, not with my body, but with my heart…. I lived in hell on earth. It was you Nancy Garrido and Phillip Garrido that broke my heart."

Probyn then read a statement from her daughter, who did not attend the hearing: "To Phillip Garrido, I hated every second of every day of 18 years because of you. To you Nancy, I have nothing to say."

Before sentencing Phillip Garrido, Judge Douglas C. Phimister said the "defendant lacks a soul. What you have done is beyond horrible. May you think long and hard about what you did."

Read the whole story

Tahoe Truckee superintendent announces retirement

Steve Jennings, who has headed the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District for the past three years, announced his retirement at the June 1 board meeting. The 39-year veteran educator will serve until Feb. 29, 2012.

Jennings said he is excited to enter the next phase of his life, but added he will miss working with the many wonderful

employees, parents and community members who are so dedicated to quality education in this community.



Steve Jennings

“One of the biggest rewards of my position has been the passion this community has for its schools,” Jennings said. “The financial and emotional support this area gives to education is remarkable.”

None of the current board members was serving when he was hired.

Kirsten Livak, TTUSD board president, praised Jennings’ achievements. Livak admires Jennings’ ability to remain calm.

“He never pressed the panic button, no matter what was thrown his way,” she commented. “Despite many complex challenges, Steve’s ability to stay focused established a sense of stability, continuity, and reliability among his staff. The principals came to see him as a source of strong leadership that was very much needed in TTUSD. We will most certainly miss Mr. Jennings. He has made many positive contributions to our community.”

Jennings, who was hired by TTUSD in March 2008, worked as a teacher and principal in Montana before coming to California in 1988. He served as principal, deputy superintendent, and superintendent in Paradise for 20 years before taking over operations at TTUSD.

After 39 years in education, Jennings said he is looking

forward to spending more time with his family. An avid fly fisherman, he and his wife plan to eventually move back to Montana.

Livak said the governance subcommittee of the TTUSD board will work with a specialized recruitment firm as well as district administration to develop criteria for the position and search for a replacement.

Carson Valley Trails Association project day

Carson Valley Trails Association is planning a Genoa Foothill Trail Project kick-off celebration and trail building day June 5 at the Eagle Ridge Trailhead, located 1.8 miles north of Genoa off of Jacks Valley Road on Adams Ranch Road.

An information booth will be set up from 9am-5pm to learn more about the Genoa Foothill Trail Project and pick up a copy of CVTA’ Local Trails Guide map.

Trail building volunteers will meet at the Eagle Ridge Trailhead at 9am. Volunteers should bring lunch and water, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes, work gloves and sunglasses. Tools and hard hats will be provided.

For more information, go online or call (775) 722.8784.