South Lake Tahoe in the market for lobbyist

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe may have a new lobbyist working on its behalf this summer.

The Houston Group, touted by former members of the City Council as being bloodhounds that could bring money to town, is going to have to bid for the job and prove its worth.

Anyone who bids on the lobbyist request for proposal will have to include performance goals. That isn't something that is in the current contract.

The RFP, which opened May 9 for one month, says, "The city is seeking a state representative to plan, develop, coordinate, and implement a strategy to advocate for the city's interests at the highest levels in both the state of Nevada and state of California, through the office of the governors, state legislators, and state agencies [both states]."

Records show the Sacramento-based Houston Group did as-needed work for the city prior to signing a contract Feb. 6, 2007. That contract ensured the Houston Group $3,750 a month no matter what they did. It was reduced to $2,500 a month on May 14, 2009.

When that reduction took place then-Mayor Jerry Birdwell and Councilman Bill Crawford wanted the lobbyists to stop working for the city because no one could show how the agency had earned its pay. It was then-City Manager Dave Jinkens and Councilwoman Kathay Lovell who strongly advocated to keep

paying the bill.

The contract has no expiration date – as is the case with many contracts the city enters into.

The point of having a lobbyist working on South Tahoe's behalf is to have a voice at the capital and in the Capitol, to be notified of legislation that may affect the city, and to be alerted to money that may be available.

Besides South Tahoe, the Houston Group also represents Tahoe City and Placer County – which could present a potential conflict of interest. When this reporter spoke with Doug Houston in June 2008 he said, "We don't have competing clients." In that same conversation he said, "I'm in Tahoe about every other week. We have clients throughout the basin."

Perspective lobbyists may be interviewed at the June 21 council meeting – in public.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• On May 6 the Nevada Assembly approved a bill that would make it a crime to introduce nonnative species into state waters – including Lake Tahoe.

• Lake Tahoe Community College Foundation raised $284,128 in 2010.

• What are you doing about your child's dental health?

• Alpine Meadows and Kirkwood Mountain resorts have a pass for

the 2011-12 season to ski both areas or five if one includes Homewood Mountain Resort, Red Lodge Mountain Resort in Montana, and Durango Mountain Resort in Colorado.

• Sacramento’s City Council has jumped on board the 2022 Olympic Games bandwagon. Where are the five counties and one city that represent Lake Tahoe?

Illness sidelines Amgen cyclist

By IlGruppo.cc

Team NetApp’s Steven Cozza has been forced out of his home race, the Amgen Tour of California, due to illness. The California native was recently diagnosed with an intestinal infection and will have to skip the team’s first race outside of Europe.

“That news came as a shock for Steven,” said team manager, Ralph Denk.

“The fact that he won’t be able to ride at a race in his own country of all places is very regrettable for all of us.”

Despite Cozza’s absence, the German outfit will still field a strong team for North America’s premier road race and is headed to California with a very specific list of objectives.

Read the whole story

Bill would ensure gays get just due in history books

By Diana Lambert, Sacramento Bee

For decades, California educators have wrestled with how to teach history in the public schools.

Given the diversity of race, ethnicity and religion in California's classrooms, whose story do you tell? Who are the leading characters? And how are they portrayed?

Existing state law requires social studies lessons to incorporate the storylines of American Indians, African Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans. In the 1970s, textbooks were amended to highlight the contributions of women. In recent years, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh representatives have lobbied for their place.

Now, state lawmakers are considering a bill that would add another thread to that complex tale: requiring public schools to incorporate the achievements of gays and lesbians into the history and social studies curriculum.

The bill, dubbed the Fair Education Act, also would add bisexual and transgender people, Pacific Islanders and people with disabilities to the list of groups whose stories must be highlighted. The legislation would prohibit school districts from adopting materials that reflect negatively on a person's religion or sexual orientation.

The bill was authored by state Sen. Mark Leno, a San Francisco Democrat and one of the first openly gay men to serve in the Legislature. He argues the legislation simply adds gays, lesbians and transgender people to the list of minority and gender groups already represented in public school lessons.

“It is apparent that we are censoring the history lessons of our students by denying them the facts of the struggle for equal civil rights for the LGBT community,” Leno said.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Geothermal power is Nevada’s energy solution

By Lisa Shevenell and Daphne LaPointe

Nevada often has been in hot water, but this time it’s doing us some good. Nevada’s wealth of hot springs already hosts several operating geothermal power plants, and international companies are investing in an ever-increasing number of new geothermal development projects – more than anywhere else in the country.

Geothermal power could become a billion-dollar-per-year business in Nevada and account for 35 percent or more of the state’s electricity needs.

Nevada state law requires that 25 percent of our electricity must come from renewable power by 2025, and geothermal energy alone is more than enough to meet this legal requirement.

Production capacity from all active geothermal power plants in Nevada is about 425 megawatts.

Geologists at the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology at the University of Nevada, Reno and other geothermal experts estimate that by 2025, Nevada could add up to 3,000 megawatts of geothermal power-generating capacity – enough to power 1.5 to 3 million homes (one megawatt can power 500 to 1,000

average-sized homes). This would significantly decrease Nevada's dependence on fossil fuels for power generation.

Lisa Shevenell and Daphne LaPointe are with the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Read the whole story

Tahoe snowboarder signs deal with Discrete Sport

Discrete Sport LLC has added four snowboarders to its athlete roster. Ralph Backstrom of Lake Tahoe and Matt Annetts of Jackson Hole are both big mountain snowboarding specialists with proven skills in competition and film projects.

"I'm super pumped to be a part of Discrete," Backstrom said in a press release. "I look forward to future projects with them, they are doing it right."

The other athletes are Sam Taxwood and Griffin Siebert, both based in Park City.

Backstrom has proven himself on the big mountain circuit, racking up wins and top three finishes on the Masters Tour and New Zealand Heli Challenge.

Discrete TV was introduced in November 2010 to provide a platform for Discrete's athletes, artists, and employees a fun place to create content.

Discrete Headwear began business operations in 2008 and is a collaboration of athletes, designers, musicians, artists, and photographers.

Barton 1 of 2 hospitals offering hydro preps for colonoscopies

By Kathryn Reed

Air vs. water. Super bad tasting liquid vs. tablets in water. Spending the night in the bathroom vs. sleeping.

Those are some of the differences between the traditional prep for a colonoscopy and using hydrotherapy.

Hydrotherapy has been around for a number of years, but used mostly in the wellness community as a cleansing mechanism for the intestinal system.



Susan Frailey and Dan Norman of Barton Health explain how the hydrotherapy machine works. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Barton Memorial Hospital this spring became the second hospital in the country to offer this procedure. The other is in Connecticut. And there are four freestanding endoscopy centers that use is.

“It’s a standard colonoscopy with a better prep,” explained Susan Frailey, registered nurse at Barton.

While the procedure is new to Barton, Frailey has performed more than 2,000 of them – mostly through a business she used to have in Meyers. Her clients were going to her for digestive health.

One day Barton anticipates the wellness components of hydrotherapy to be part of a larger program it envisions developing.

For now, Dan Norman is the only doctor at Barton using this method. Of the three docs who do colonoscopies Norman is the main guy, having performed more than 40,000 endoscopic procedures in the last 30 years. The two others do a few colonoscopies each month.

Besides having the testimony of Frailey, a study presented to the annual American College of Gastroenterology in 2006 convinced Norman offering an alternative to the Golytely and Fleets Phosphasoda preparations made sense. The latter has recently been pulled from use because of patient deaths.

Anyone who has ingested Golytely knows the taste and subsequent flushing of the colon makes for a long, horrible night that entails being near a bathroom.

Randy Watson, one of the first people to have the hydro prep at Barton, is a believer in it. His first colonoscopy was with the drinks and air prep.

“With the hydrotherapy I really didn’t feel too much. You get a feeling of fullness,” the Zephyr Cove resident told *Lake*

Tahoe News. “It was nothing like you would imagine. It was a very sterile, clean situation.”



The hydrotherapy machine.

And no smell involved.

A little at-home prep is required, but nothing like the horrible gallons of mix of Golytely. People may eat a light breakfast the day before, drink three packets of the Miralax to loosen the stool, and sleep through the night.

What the hydro part entails is arriving at the hospital about two hours before the colonoscopy. The water cleansing is about 45 minutes – the rest is paperwork, admitting and sitting around.

A tube is inserted into the rectum, warm controlled water is put in, and the colon is massaged to release the contents. The flushing is done three to four times to make sure the colon is clean.

A clear panel on the machine that is attached to a wall allows Frailey to know if another flushing is needed.

Then the regular colonoscopy is done, where the interior of the small and large bowels are examined for polyps.

Norman, in his limited use of the hydrotherapy, said it’s producing as clean of a colon as the air prep. He foresees doing a blind study at Barton to measure one procedure against

the other so more clinical documentation can be added for the medical community to get educated about the procedure.

Norman said it's the lack of knowledge about this option that is keeping people from doing it. It costs the patient about $100, whereas the Golytely is a little more than $60. Neither is covered by insurance even though one is needed before a colonoscopy can be performed.

Norman is hoping the hydrotherapy method will get more people thinking about colonoscopies – a procedure that should be done starting at age 50 and then every 10 years for the average person.

This preventative procedure is the main test for colon cancer. Each year about 100,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with colon cancer and another 40,000 with rectal cancer.

Dugard's full story remains sealed in court transcripts

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

Jaycee Lee Dugard plans to offer the "full story" of her 18 years as a prisoner of Phillip and Nancy Garrido in a book that goes on sale July 12.

But prosecutors in the Garrido case are moving to block release of grand jury transcripts that describe her ordeal, at least until after the couple are sentenced next month.

Dugard's 256-page book, "A Stolen Life" published by Simon & Schuster, is being touted as telling "the full story of her

ordeal” and will include an unabridged audiobook read by Dugard herself.

The book “has been written by the 31-year-old Dugard herself and will cover the period from the time of her abduction in 1991 up until the present,” an announcement from the publisher and her spokeswoman said Monday. “In her stark, compelling narrative, she opens up about what she experienced, including how she feels now since she was found.”

Dugard was abducted in 1991 when she was an 11-year-old walking to a school bus stop in Meyers, near South Lake Tahoe. She vanished until August 2009, when she was found being held by the Garridos. By then, she had given birth to two daughters as a result of Phillip Garrido’s assaults upon her.

Read the whole story

Tahoe restaurant looking for summer cocktail contestants

Calling all bartenders and elixir aficionados – Lake Tahoe’s West Shore Café & Inn will kick off summer 2011 with the Spirit of the West Shore cocktail competition May 28.

Those who have a must-try drink that’s perfect for sipping on warm summer days are invited to submit their recipes for consideration by May 13. The top 10 recipe submitters will be invited to the West Shore Café & Inn May 28 to prepare their thirst-quenchers for a panel of taste-testing judges. The judges’ favorite will be deemed West Shore Café & Inn’s signature cocktail.

The winner receives bragging rights and a 2011-12 season pass to Alpine Meadows and Homewood Mountain resorts. Recipe submissions may be entered online.

Pizza fundraiser for TVES

Bob Dog Pizza at Meyers Station (3141 Highway 50, Meyers) is having a fundraiser for Tahoe Valley Elementary School on May 12 from 11am-9pm.

Eat-in, pick up, take-n-bake or delivery – (530) 577.2364.

Mention Tahoe Valley so 25 percent of the profits are donated back to Tahoe Valley Elementary School.