LTUSD sets kindergarten registration dates

Kindergarten registration for Lake Tahoe Unified School District is May 2-13 at all elementary schools.

To be eligible for enrollment, a child must be 5 years of age on or before Dec. 2, 2011. California Law requires:

1. You bring child's birth certificate.

2. You bring proof of immunizations, which includes the Varicella (Chicken Pox), Hepatitis B and for most children – the last booster shot.

3. Your child has a health examination upon entry to school [schedule with your family doctor or El Dorado County Health Department at 573.3155].

4. Your child has an oral health examination upon entry to school (or signed waiver) Dental examinations that have occurred in the last 12 months meet this requirement.

5. Proof of California residency.

Call your neighborhood school for an appointment to preregister:

Bijou Community School (530) 543.2337

Sierra House Elementary (530) 543.2327

Tahoe Valley Elementary (530) 543.2350

Environmental Science Magnet School (530) 543.2371.

Obesity Prevention Foundation promoting healthy eating

One part luxurious luncheon, one part chef-led cooking demonstration, and one part charitable fundraiser – the recipe for the Obesity Prevention Foundation's "Life Inspired" event brings together some of the top chefs in the region to showcase local food for a good cause.

The May 21 fundraiser at Rancharrah, the exclusive and storied Harrah estate, is the Reno-based Obesity Prevention Foundation's largest source of funding. The foundation fights childhood obesity through education and promotes healthy eating and exercise.

True to the foundation's mission, the "Life Inspired" luncheon will promote healthy local, seasonal and fresh foods. Local farmers will display their seasonal produce for guests to browse before the chefs turn the farm-fresh items into a three-course meal served on the grounds of the Bill Harrah's 147-acre Reno estate. As the chefs cook, they will demonstrate the connection between local ingredients and their fresh, healthy culinary creations.

Farmers from Nevada Grown, a Nevada farmers' cooperative, and Whole Foods will provide the fresh ingredients for the luncheon.

The lunch is only one part of the day-long series of "Life Inspired" events at Rancharrah, which includes live music and a speech by NBC "Biggest Loser" contestant Michelle Aguilar and other events.

Lunch begins at 11am May 21. Tickets to the luncheon include admission to the all "Life Inspired" events. To register click here.

STPUD booster station plans upset Tahoe Paradise residents

By Kathryn Reed

An industrial facility in a neighborhood on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe has brought cries of concern from people that are being heard by utility district officials.

A last-minute meeting was convened Wednesday night and another one is set for Saturday at 10am at the project site. Residents in the Grizzly Mountain area off North Upper Truckee Road will be able to meet with South Tahoe Public Utility District board members and staff about the booster pump station that is planned for the area.



The proposed booster station on Grizzly Mountain Road may look like this one on Apache Drive. Photo/Provided

At the April 21 public hearing on the issue, one neighbor spoke out against it, while others sat in the audience.

Concerns for many of the residents who have spoken with *Lake Tahoe News* are how the process works, why this location was selected and what the structure will look like.

What irks people is the district was looking at the property last fall, and closed escrow in January after the board approved the $146,000 purchase at the Jan. 6 meeting. What neighbors want to know is why they weren't informed about STPUD's plans before the land was bought. Many have said it seems meaningless to ask for input now.

John Thiel, principal engineer, acknowledged at Thursday's board meeting he could have done a better job getting the message out – and will next time.

Lynne Paulson, who lives about 400 feet from the proposed site, didn't get noticed about the 30-day comment period because STPUD only sent letters to residents within 300 feet.

(The comment period was supposed to end today, but has been extended to April 25. Comments are being taken on the project – even though the land has been purchased for this use without public input.)

Paulson read the following into the record, " … the purchase of the land prior to project review and approval combined with the planned contracting for the pipeline to this location has resulted in the impression that the booster station project is being steam rolled over us. This doesn't provide the transparency and accountability needed for open government processes."

She intends to submit a more detailed letter in the next three days.

For Russell Paul, who lives directly across from the project

site, his voice is filled with frustration.



This is the view from Russell Paul's residence -- the lot where the booster station would go. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“I just feel they operate under this cloud of the good for all and move forward with projects. You can question their moves, but you can’t be part of the process. There is no process,” Paul told *Lake Tahoe News.*

He questions whether the lot below him is part stream environmental zone, which would preclude it from being built on.

Thiel, at the meeting, said only a small portion in the back is designated SEZ. He said this view lot has 3,584 feet of allowable coverage, so something much grander could have been built there.

Concessions have been made since the neighbors started making calls to STPUD in the last week or two. Thiel said the building will be smaller. The design will look more like a residence than what was originally planned. Initially, the district wanted it to look much like the booster station on

Apache Drive in Meyers.

While residents initially could not understand why the station was being put in when it didn't affect their neighborhood directly, the district has explained the need to have better water flow when the next wildfire strikes the South Shore.

Elevation is one criterion for where it goes. Tying into certain service areas is another.

The staff report explains, "The project consists of the construction of a new booster pump station to improve the primary water service to approximately 3,000 existing homes in the Flagpole and Twin Peaks water zones. The project increases water reliability to the Flagpole and Twin Peaks water zones by providing a second source of water to the area currently served by only one pipeline form the Arrowhead water zone (located in Meyers)."

Thiel explained to the board the redundancy is needed in case the first booster station is taken out in a fire.

The board is expected to vote on the matter in May.

At the end of the hearing on Thursday, STPUD board President Dale Rise said, "We will try to get through this. We will satisfy the public, but the public as a whole – the 10,000 water customers. We will try to mitigate this and make you happy."

Click on information to read more about the project. Funding for the more than $1 million project comes from matching funds for a Fire Protection Partnership Funding/USFS Forest Health Fund grant.

Learn how libraries help with research

Lynne Bajuk of the Lake Tahoe Historical Society will discuss how the library can help people in their research, and what resources are available online.

The talk is May 14 at 2 pm at the South Lake Tahoe branch library, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (530) 573.3185.

USFS bike trail meeting

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit has hired professional trail and bike park designers Hilride to work with trail users to create a plan for improving the Corral Trail. The Corral Trail is a popular multi-use trail on Lake Tahoe's South Shore that is popular with mountain bikers and open to dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles as well.

The first opportunity to participate in the redesign will be a workshop facilitated by Hilride on April 28, from 6-8pm at 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe. This meeting will be an information-gathering session at which trail users will be able to describe their interests and identify what types of experiences they are seeking.

On June 11, National Get Outdoors Day, Hilride will lead a design workshop on the trail after a brief session at the Forest Supervisor's Office. More details on the on-site workshop will follow.

‘Bullied, A Student, a School, and a Case that Made History’

Generation HOPE and Friends of Ally clubs at Lake Tahoe Community College are bringing “Bullied, A Student, a School, and a Case that Made History” to the South Lake Tahoe campus.

The documentary narrates the story of a student who, because of his sexual orientation, was the subject of unrelenting bullying by his classmates. This film will be presented with Spanish subtitles.

It will be shown April 29 at 6:30pm in the Duke Theatre. Tickets are $5 and will be sold at the door.

All proceeds from this movie will go toward scholarships for college students.

For more information,contact Arturo Rangel or Lisa Shafer at (530) 541-4660, ext. 231.

Tahoe Poetry Posse roaming the South Shore

On April 25 and 26, the Tahoe Poetry Posse will bomb the South Shore with poems. Kim Wyatt, publisher of Bona Fide Books, organized the event as part of National Poetry Month, which

occurs each April.

“We mark the most important times of our lives—graduation, weddings, and funerals—with poems,” Wyatt said in a statement. “They provide immediate connection in a way no other writing does. We want to share the power of poetry with our town, and, in a way, help people feel less alone.”

The poetry bomb will take place over two days, and Wyatt and her team hopes to place 10,000 poems in the hands of local residents. Each member of the poetry posse will take a specific part of town, such as Bijou or Meyers, to canvas with poems. Suggestions for poems to include were solicited from local poets and writers and placed into sacks for distribution. Instructions are included, for example, don’t place in mailboxes because it is illegal.

Wyatt would like to see the poems pass from hand to hand.

“When times are hard, poetry can give people hope,” she says. “We’re hoping that people receive the exact poem they need to read at that moment.”

Other events for National Poetry Month include a poetry slam at LTCC on April 26 at 7pm, hosted by Poetry Grand Slam Champions Matt Blesse and Denise Jolly. The slam will be in the LTCC Teaching and Learning Center, and will take up to 10 competitors. The entry fee of $5 will go toward the cash prize, but there will be other prizes as well. Audience participation is free and open to the public.

For more information about Bona Fide Books, the South Shore’s only small press, go online or call (530) 573.1513.

Ensign stepping down May 3; Heller seen as replacement

By Karoun Demirjian, Las Vegas Sun

WASHINGTON – Embattled Sen. John Ensign announced this afternoon he will resign from office, effective May 3. The move opens the door for Republican Gov. Brian Sandoval to appoint Rep. Dean Heller to finish out the term.

“It is with tremendous sadness that I officially hand over the Senate seat that I have held for eleven years,” Ensign said in a statement. “The turbulence of these last few years is greatly surpassed by the incredible privilege that I feel to have been entrusted to serve the people of Nevada. I can honestly say that being a United States Senator has been the honor of my life.”



John Ensign

Sun columnist Jon Ralston first reported earlier in the afternoon that Ensign would step down.

If Heller is appointed, it would give him a strategic leg up as an incumbent against his presumed opponent in the 2012 Senate race, Democrat Rep. Shelley Berkley. Berkley is still expected to run.

Nevada State Democratic Party spokesman Zach Hudson released a statement Thursday afternoon criticizing Heller.

Read the whole story

Study: Compulsive gambling more common than alcoholism

By Liz Benston, Las Vegas Sun

For decades, researchers have said that alcoholism is more common in the U.S. adult population than compulsive gambling.



But last month the University of Buffalo's Research Institute on Addictions published a surprising report concluding just the opposite.

After age 21, gambling problems are more common than booze dependence, the institute found in analyzing data from two national studies.

The study included all forms of gambling, such as lotteries, office pools, charity bingo, Internet gambling and raffles.

The results have drawn skepticism from some treatment experts in light of long accepted research that drinking problems are at least twice as common as gambling problems. Even the institute's chief investigator, John Welte, was surprised by the results.

"I didn't expect problem gambling to be more common than alcohol dependence for such a wide age range," he said.

Read the whole story

Future management of Humbug Valley in question

By Jane Braxton Little, Sacramento Bee

CHESTER — An Indian tribe and a state agency are vying to become long-term stewards of a 2,300-acre area in the Humbug Valley, just east of the Pacific Crest Trail where Plumas and Tehama counties meet.

The Maidu Summit Consortium, a group of Maidu Indian tribal, nonprofit and grassroots organizations, and the California Department of Fish and Game have applied to become owners of the area.

Here's what they are fighting over:

Southwest of Lake Almanor, carbonated springs gurgle into a wet meadow where endangered willow flycatchers nest along a trophy trout stream meandering through Humbug Valley. Flanked by a pine and fir forest that rises to 7,000–foot peaks, the heart-shaped valley hosts a hotbed of biodiversity in an extraordinary mix of Sierra Nevada and Cascade Range species.

Owned for a century by Pacific Gas and Electric Co., Humbug Valley is one of nearly 1,000 separate parcels of utility company lands designated for permanent protection under a 2004 accord reached by the state Public Utilities Commission following PG&E's bankruptcy reorganization.

A total of 140,000 acres of some of California's best wildlife habitat and fishing streams are in the process of being assigned new managers, some of them permanent owners. Under the terms of the agreement, the lands valued at $300 million

will be preserved permanently and kept available for public use. No commercial development is permitted.

Read the whole story