Peace Vigil in S. Tahoe supports living without wars

Unity at the Lake is hosting a Peace Vigil on March 21 at 6pm in front of the Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd. in South Lake Tahoe.

The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

The Tahoe Peace Vigil is being held in support of a candlelight vigil on the same day in Afghanistan (Afghan New Year's Day), organized by the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers who wish to "live without wars." The Afghan youth will "light fiery candles of grief for all the youth and children of Afghanistan and the world who have been killed in conflict and in wars."

This meaningful event is an opportunity for people to make a difference in the world and to foster healing and wholeness.

For more information about the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers and their "Live Without Wars" project, go online.

Marketing workshop for small farms

"You can grow it, now sell it" is the message of Western Nevada College Specialty Crop Institute's workshop for small farms. The workshop is April 2, 9am-5pm at the WNC Carson City Campus, 2201 West College Parkway.

Cost is $35 if registered by March 23 or $45 if registered

after March 23.

Lunch is included and seating is limited.

With increased demand for local food, more farmers are building hoop houses to increase their food production and extend their growing season. New sales strategies need to be developed for yearlong sales that extend beyond the traditional summer harvest season. The workshop explores several sales and marketing options, including Community Supported Agriculture, farmers markets, farm stands, restaurants and institutional sales, and forming collaborative marketing groups.

Featured speaker Christof Bernau is garden manager and instructor at UC Santa Cruz, Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems.

Workshop participants will tour hoop houses at Hungry Mother Organics Farm along with the retail farm stand that opened in 2010. The stand features plant starts, fruit trees, fresh eggs and produce, and products from several local farms.

For workshop registration or details, contact Ann Louhela at (775) 351.2551 or email louhelaa@wnc.edu.

Celebrity golf tickets go on sale April 1

Early RSVPs for the July 12-17 American Century Championship indicate one of the strongest celebrity fields in the golf tournament’s 22-year history.

Super Bowl MVP Aaron Rodgers will join Michael Jordan, Charles

Barkley, Rex Ryan, Tony Romo, Jerry Rice and a reunion of one of baseball's greatest pitching rotations: Greg Maddox, Tom Glavine and John Smoltz in the field of 78 sports and entertainment stars at Edgewood Tahoe in Stateline.

Newcomers include Ryan, the volatile, quotable New York Jets head coach; Martin Brodeur, NHL All Star of the New Jersey Devils; Arian Foster, Houston Texans All-Pro running back; Deron Williams, New Jersey Nets All-Star guard; former Major League All-Stars Goose Gossage of the Yankees and Tom Glavine, Atlanta Braves; actors Tim Matheson of "Animal House" fame, and Rob Morrow of television dramas "Numb3rs" and "Northern Exposure".

Defending champion and former NFL quarterback Billy Joe Tolliver will likely see his stiffest competition from eight-time winner Rick Rhoden, four-time winner Dan Quinn and previous champions Chris Chandler, Jack Wagner and Mark Rypien. Additional challenges can be expected from last year's foursome of second place finishers Wagner, Romo, Smoltz and John Elway, NFL Hall of Famer who has played every year.

Tickets are available for advance purchase online beginning April 1. Prices are $15 each day for the Lake Tahoe Celebrity-Amateur on July 12, the practice round on July 13, and for the American Century Celebrity-Amateur on July 14; and $25 for each tournament round, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. A season pass for $60 provides admission for all six days. Kids 10 and under are free with a paid adult.

Discounted tickets for tournament rounds Friday through Sunday will be available starting June 1 at participating Raley's, Nob Hill and Bel Air Foods supermarkets.

S. Tahoe students make case intervention works for them

By Kathryn Reed

Positive adult intervention can put young people on a course of success. Four students who are part of the A Team – a group of South Tahoe and Mt. Tallac high school students – delivered that message.

“Many of us grow up too fast,” Alexandra Salinas told Soroptimist International Tahoe Sierra at the group’s March 17 meeting. “It’s hard because we’re asked to take on a lot of responsibility.”



Alexandra Salinas on March 17 tells SITS about the A Team. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The A Team has created to form a bond between students who otherwise may have dissed one another, who could be in rival gangs, who may never have spoken to each other. It sprouted from the gang issues that were going on in the South Shore a few years ago.

It gives them a family in the sense of being there emotionally

for one another that many of them have never experienced. It has given them hope for a future filled with optimism.

Salinas presented the PowerPoint that had been prepared by fellow student Alberto Caballero. Joining them were students Luis Enrique Perez and Ricky Molina, and adult coordinators Amy Jackson and Jean Beemer.

The A Team got its name from the three original collaborators who started it – Jackson, Aaron Barnett and Adrian Escobedo. Their names start with A.

About 14 students are part of the group.

“Not one girl is pregnant, not one girlfriend is pregnant, not one is in jail,” Beemer said. “Every one of them is a productive member of Tahoe. Each is a strong, loving kid.”

Salinas has earned her dental certificate at the high school and now wants to become a dentist. She credits the A Team for giving her that drive and bringing out her ambition.

Molina said being introduced to sports through the A Team channeled his energy into something positive. He’s hoping to go to college.

Perez used to show up for school about 1pm. The A Team helped him realize an education is important. He’s not sure what he wants to do in the future. Last year is participated in Generation Green with the U.S. Forest Service and this week he interviewed with UPS.

Caballero is considering joining a branch of the military.

Beemer admitted it’s hard for some young adults to leave Lake Tahoe because their families need the income they bring in from whatever job they have now.

One of the outcomes of the A Team is instead of students resolving issues through fights, they are seeking resolution

through trusted adults. They are being proactive instead of reactive.

If funding weren't an issue, about 100 students could be in this program.

"With losing so much staff, I'm not sure how we continue. It's one of those things we might lose," Jackson said in reference to the A Team.

The group she and Beemer are working with now is the second generation of A Teamers, with the third generation having meetings once a month and wanting more time together.

But the budget for Lake Tahoe Unified School District doesn't have the extras for programs like this – for the adults, for a room to meet, for a little bit of food to entice participation.

"I'm so glad for this program, but so sad it's about money and not people," Wendy David said. She is a member of the Soroptimist and on the LTUSD board.

Jackson admits with this being a preventive program it's hard to have concrete measurements in regards to it success. Though, the comments made Thursday by four students seemed to convince the women listening that the A Team is working.

Final Kinder Cup Race on March 20

The Heavenly Ski and Snowboard Foundation will host the Kinder Kup Race Series finals at Heavenly Mountain Resort March 20 from 8am to 2pm.

Open to all skiers and snowboarders age 6 and under as of Dec. 31, 2010, the Kinder Kup series is designed to introduce young athletes to competition in a friendly environment. No previous race experience necessary. Entry is $20 and includes a World Cup only competitor lift ticket.

On-site registration is available the morning of the event at the Heavenly Foundation building from 8am to 9am. Practice begins at 9am, each competitor is allowed two practice runs; the race starts at 10am. Every competitor is awarded a participation medal and a swag bag filled with goodies. Overall champions will be awarded trophies at the final event.

The foundation will serve coffee and bake sale items throughout the morning. The barbecue begins at noon and combos include a burger or hot dog, chips and a drink for a $7 donation to the foundation.

DA: No compassion for Nancy Garrido

By Phil Willon, Los Angeles Times

Another court delay Thursday dashed speculation of possible guilty pleas from Phillip and Nancy Garrido, the couple accused of kidnapping and sexually tormenting Jaycee Lee Dugard and holding her captive for 18 years in their backyard compound in Northern California.

After a hearing in El Dorado County Superior Court, District Attorney Vern Pierson criticized comments made by Nancy Garrido's defense attorney a few weeks ago, when he called for compassion for his client because Garrido was "like her

mother” when Jaycee’s children, fathered by Phillip Garrido, were born.

“Perhaps my alleged lack of compassion comes from my awareness of many disgusting facts concerning Nancy Garrido’s personal involvement in this case,” Pierson said in a statement.

Pierson said Nancy Garrido not only assisted her husband when he snatched Dugard off a South Tahoe street 18 years ago, but also helped imprison the girl in the couple’s backyard and videotaped other young children to “provide her rapist husband with sexually perverse entertainment.”

The couple confessed to the crimes last month because Phillip Garrido, 59, hopes to negotiate a reduced sentenced for his wife, according to Stephen Tapson, Nancy’s Garrido’s attorney.

Read the whole story

Local USFS employee earns national award

Project Learning Tree, the environmental education program of the American Forest Foundation, has named South Lake Tahoe’s Joy Barney one of five 2011 National PLT Outstanding Educators.

Barney is the Conservation Education Program specialist with the U.S. Forest Service’s Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

PLT’s Outstanding Educators are selected for their commitment to environmental education, exemplary use of PLT, and exceptional teaching skills.

Barney will be honored at PLT's 25th International Coordinators' Conference in Montgomery, Texas, June 6–9.

Barney was recognized for creating conservation opportunities for the children and adults in five counties around Lake Tahoe and for forging creative and productive partnerships, such as the South Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition. She created Generation Green of Lake Tahoe, a program in which high school students learn job skills, teamwork, and an understanding of natural resources. Many of these students have used this experience as a foray into other volunteer and paid opportunities.

After the Angora Fire, Barney received a PLT GreenWorks grant to create the Angora Burn Tree Education and Planting Project. Using PLT lessons, Barney engaged the community in the post-fire healing process. Generation Green and younger students also learned about and helped reforest the area.

In addition to attending the PLT International Coordinators' Conference, Barney is invited to attend the World Forestry Center's International Educators' Institute July 10–16 in Portland.

Wind, snow and more snow blowing to Tahoe

Winter is holding out as long as it can. Even though the calendar says spring will arrive Sunday, don't count on it – at least not in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a winter storm watch from Friday afternoon through late that evening in

Tahoe.



Perhaps people prayed too hard for snow when the Fallen Leaf Lake chapel was open. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Snow could be coming down at a rate of more than 2 inches an hour.

The Weather Service is calling for accumulations of 6 to 12 inches for Northeast California, mainly west of Highway 395 and in the basin below 7,000 feet.

For spots above 7,000 feet, which includes the passes, up to 1.5 feet could fall.

Fifteen to 25 mph sustained winds could be associated with this storm, with gusts up to 45 mph. Ridge gusts may hit 75 mph in the Sierra. This all is a recipe for whiteout conditions.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Federal Advisory Committee meeting

The Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee is meeting March 31 from 10am-4pm at the U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management office, 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

LTFAC will address issues related to federal activities at Lake Tahoe. Items on the agenda include a Tahoe Working Group presentation on the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act Round 12 capital project nominations and science themes, followed by a public comment period.

LTFAC consists of 20 members representing a broad array of constituencies.

No health risk seen in radiation headed to Calif. from Japan

By Ralph Vartabedian, Los Angeles Times

Small amounts of radioactive isotopes from the crippled Japanese nuclear power plant are being blown toward North America high in the atmosphere over the Pacific Ocean and will reach California as soon as Friday, according to experts.

A network of sensors in the U.S. and around the world is watching for the first signs of that fallout, though experts said they were confident that the amount of radiation would be well within safe limits.

Operated by the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. network known as Radnet is a system of 100 radiation monitors that work 24 hours a day, spread across the country in places such as Anaheim, Bakersfield and Eureka. In addition, a network of 63 sensors is operated by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization, an international agency allied with the United Nations.

Atmospheric experts said the material should begin showing up on the West Coast as early as Friday, though it could take up to an additional week for the 5,000-mile trip from Japan to Southern California. Although the organization has told its member countries that the first indication of radiation would hit on Friday, the plume from a North Korean nuclear test in 2006 took about two weeks to travel to North America, U.N. officials said.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which oversees the U.S. nuclear industry, said Wednesday that it did not expect dangerous levels of radioactivity to hit the West Coast, Hawaii, Alaska or U.S. territories in the Pacific. But whatever levels reach the U.S. initially are likely to increase in subsequent days, because radioactive emissions from the damaged Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant have grown since the disaster began Friday. The NRC sharply raised its warning to American citizens in Japan, urging them to evacuate an area within 50 miles of the Fukushima complex. Japanese authorities have ordered an evacuation within about 12 miles of the plant.

Read the whole story