Yanish wins tie-breaker to be on KGID board

Natalie Yanish will officially be on the Kingsbury General Improvement District board.

She and Bob McDowell received the same number of votes on Nov. 2, necessitating a tie-breaker. They appeared before Douglas County Clerk Ted Thran on Nov. 19 to draw cards – with the high card designating the new board member.



Natalie Yanish

Yanish drew an ace and McDowell an 8.

The other new board members are Darya Vogt and Dan Norman.

Opinion: Ready to change the tide in Washington

By Tom McClintock

More than a year ago, pollster Frank Luntz stood before a group of about 40 House Republicans in a cramped conference room in the Longworth building. “I need to tell you

something," he said. "I've been looking at polling data from congressional districts across America for the last three months. I'm convinced that you are going to be in the majority next year." After a long pause, he added, "This time, please don't screw it up again."

I don't think we will.

The message of the last two elections could not be louder or clearer. Great parties are built upon great principles and they are judged by their devotion to those principles. From its inception, the core principles of the Republican Party have been individual freedom and constitutionally limited government. The closer it has hewn to these principles, the better it has done. The further it has strayed from them well, my God.



Tom McClintock

In the aftermath of the Bush debacle, House Republican leaders resolved to restore traditional Republican principles as the policy and political focus of the party and they achieved something no one at the time thought possible: they united House Republicans as a determined voice of opposition to the Left and rallied the American people. Republicans rediscovered why they were Republicans, and Republican leaders rediscovered Reagan's advice to paint our positions in bold colors and not hide them in pale pastels.

Ironically, in Reagan's home state, Republicans tried to campaign to the left of the Democrats and the result was disastrous. While the rest of the country was celebrating

historic Republican gains (including a shift of at least 61 U.S. House Seats, 6 U.S. Senate Seats, 680 state legislative seats, 19 state legislatures and six governors), the statewide Republican ticket in California imploded. Republicans nationally now hold more state legislative seats than in any year since 1928. In California, they hold fewer than at any time since 1978.

House Republicans were unfairly criticized as the party of "No." When somebody is driving you off a cliff, "no" is a handy word to have in your vocabulary. But it can't be the only word in the national debate over the future of the country and Republicans know it.

Over the last two years, House Republicans laid out detailed plans to revive the finances of our government and the prosperity of our economy, to return freedom of choice, competition and affordability to health care, to restore the integrity of our borders, and to return to our states their rightful powers and prerogatives.

A Republican House cannot alone enact such laws, but it no longer must labor in the obscurity of minority irrelevance. It now has the opportunity to elevate the national debate by putting forward these plans at a time when Americans are alert to the danger facing the nation and eager for an adult discussion about the fundamental mechanics of freedom – how freedom works and how we can put it back to work.

In 1858, Lincoln warned the nation that two antithetical philosophies, freedom and slavery, competed for the future and reminded us that a house divided against itself cannot stand. "I do not believe the house will fall," he said, "but I do believe that it will cease to be divided." Today two incompatible philosophies, freedom and socialism, compete for our future and the stage is set for one of the greatest debates in the history of the American Republic.

Upon the outcome of that debate rests the question of whether the United States of America will fade inexorably into history or whether it will begin its next great era of expansion, prosperity and influence.

Tom McClintock represents the California side of Lake Tahoe in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Ski report: Winds force Heavenly to delay opening

Updated Nov. 19 at 9:12am.

Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, is back for the winter delivering daily ski reports each morning to readers of *Lake Tahoe News*.



Yes, it's still fall – but in Tahoe the calendar means very little when it comes to weather and outdoor fun.

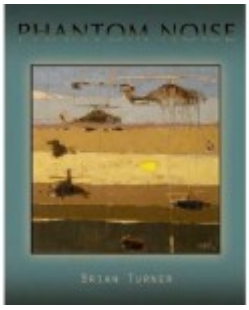
Heavenly opens Saturday if the winds cooperate, Northstar this weekend and Boreal has been whisking skiers to the top of the mountain since last month.

Click on ski report for all the details.

Iraq War vet brings life to conflict through poetry

By Stephen Ward

During his 2003 tour in Iraq, Brian Turner's humanity was confined within the white-and-blue lines of his college-ruled notebooks. His journal entries served as an intermediary; they were all that separated surges of poetry from diagrams for ambush.



"The poems were more for capturing the moment," he said, taking long pauses as he recounted the environment in which the works were produced. "They were mostly internal to start. … It's hard to think of freedom and democracy when you're worried about walking across the street."

Turner, who served in the U.S. Army for seven years, has won numerous awards writing about his experience as an infantry team leader in the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team in the Iraq War. He received the 2007 Poets' Prize for his work "Here, Bullet," a collection of poetry that surveys the tensions of an American soldier – from the boredom of service to the frailty of human life.

The 43-year-old author described a bittersweet relationship with the accolades he has received.

"For the poems I've written, people have had to die," he explained.

This notion comes as no surprise to those who have read his work. In perhaps one of the most abrasive poems in his assortment "Here, Bullet," Turner describes the suicide of a fellow soldier in the poem "Eulogy":

The sound reverberates down concertina coils

the way piano wire thrums when given slack.

And it happens like this, on a blue day of sun,

when Private Miller pulls the trigger

to take brass and fire into his mouth:

the sound lifts the birds up off the water,

a mongoose pauses under the orange trees,

and nothing can stop it now, no matter what.

Life after war

In his new ensemble, “Phantom Noise,” Turner’s impressions of war remain a starring role in the work, despite inclinations to stop writing about the topic.

“To be honest, I tried not to write it,” he said. “There are so many other things to deal with in life … but I had to.”

The new catalog is more politically driven than its predecessor, Turner said.

“The morale of the soldiers, at least while I was there, mirrored the debate in America,” he added.

Turner strives to allow people access back into the war through his art. He referred to the lack of overarching war lines and the vagaries that succeed war as points missed when looking at war stories, citing “Platoon” and “Saving Private Ryan.”

One postwar hardship he faced was finding a job.

“In a lot of academic circles, it looks like there’s a seven-year gap in my resume,” he said, referring to his time served in the military.

Despite the supposed gap, the poet has an extensive history of teaching. After receiving his master's in fine arts from the University of Oregon, Turner taught English in South Korea and trained soldiers while serving in the Iraq War. This fall, Turner began teaching English classes in general writing and poetry at Sierra Nevada College.

Since he accepted the job and moved to Incline Village, Turner has felt at home.

"I really enjoy it here," he said. "It's one of the jewels of America. The campus is beautiful."

Meeting the author

Starting today, Turner will share his insight with the community in a two-day event at SNC. The function will include readings from his arsenal of texts and a poetry workshop.

When asked about the event, Turner said he was excited to share his voice with the community.

"I'm looking forward to it," he said. "I don't stress my own writing. I also like that it's open to the community. I get to meet people in other jobs that are poets as well."

The Friday reading is from 7-9pm in the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences and is open to the public and students. The poetry workshop on Saturday has a $50 registration fee and spans from 9am-noon. Both events are a part of SNC's Writers in the Woods Literary Speakers Series. A book signing will follow the reading tonight.

Smoke, flames at Fallen Leaf Lake are control burn

Updated Nov. 19 at 2pm.

By Kathryn Reed

FALLEN LEAF LAKE – Smoke fills the air and the crackling of fire can be heard. But no one is in sight at this controlled burn and no evidence of water is in the area to suppress the flames if they were to get out of control.

On the second swing by the intersection of Fallen Leaf Lake and Tahoe Mountain roads a man with a shovel and hardhat is spotted. It's Rob Kimball of Kimball Tree Service.



A control burn Nov. 18 at Fallen Leaf Lake. Photos/Kathryn Reed

He said his company was contracted by the Fallen Leaf Lake Fire Department to burn 50 acres. The process has been going on for two weeks.

"The ground is wet. Nothing is going to move outside of where it is burning," Kimball said.

He used a machine the morning of Nov. 18 to stack some of the

debris left over from the thinning project. Kimball said that’s why some of the piles appeared to be tall and caused flames to shoot 2-3 feet in the air.

Despite the high winds Thursday afternoon, Kimball said everything was under control. He said guys working with him were doing some burns on the water side of Fallen Leaf Lake Road as well.

Fallen Leaf Lake Fire Chief Gary Gerren said the project is being overseen by the Nevada Fire Safe Council. This agency has a list of approved contractors to do this type of work and Kimball is on that list.

With Fallen Leaf being a volunteer department, there isn’t the manpower to do the work.

“There is no regulation to have water available. You just need good prudent judgment,” Gerren said. This is because the fire season is over, the ground is wet and more moisture is coming.

Fire officials not associated with Fallen Leaf said a certain amount of wind is needed to blow the smoke out of the basin and not settle on the neighborhood where the burn is. They also said it’s not unreasonable for one person with a shovel to handle 20 burn piles, but would need a contingency plan if things got out of hand.

Over the course of the burn period about 300 piles have been burned. Before this project, Kimball’s crews burned 27 other acres for Fallen Leaf Lake.

A couple signs are posted on the intersecting streets saying “control burn” but no evidence of a water tender or other fire suppression unit was evident.

Kimball said he checks on the fire periodically throughout the night.

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Opinion: Sharing services makes sense in era of deficits

By Paul Saffo

Small-town living has long been part of the American dream, but amid California's fiscal crisis, it is becoming a nightmare. Cities like Vallejo have declared bankruptcy as municipal deficits deepen. Others, like Maywood in Southern California, have fired their city employees and outsourced everything from police and fire protection to pothole filling.

Cities all over the state are contemplating similar measures, but the Bay Area is particularly at risk of further municipal bankruptcies. Quite simply, the Bay Area has too many cities, and if serious steps aren't taken to consider all options – from sharing services, to merging municipalities and even disincorporation – the list of bankruptcies is certain to grow.

The nine counties of the Bay Area are home to 6.9 million residents, living in 101 cities. By contrast, Los Angeles County has nearly 10 million residents living in 88 cities, while Orange County's 34 cities represent 3 million residents. Over a third of Bay Area cities have populations of less than 20,000 residents, and nearly a quarter are smaller than 10,000 citizens. Among these are more than a few micro-cities like Belvedere, with just over 2,000 residents, and tiny Colma, whose population of just over 1,000 citizens is outnumbered 10-to-1 by a silent majority interred in the town's cemeteries.

Too many cities means wasteful duplication of services. Many Bay Area cities already share or outsource fire protection and are moving to share other services such as police and maintenance, but this still leaves plenty of pointless duplication. A hundred and one cities inevitably means too many mayors, city councils, city managers, administrators, town halls, maintenance yards and all the other costly trappings that make a city a city.
Paul Saffo is managing director of foresight at Discern, an institutional investment research firm based in San Francisco.

Read the whole story

Demand calls for second showing of 'Race to Nowhere'

Educators, administrators, parents, and college students packed two rooms in the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences at Sierra Nevada College on Nov. 4 for a screening of the educational documentary "Race to Nowhere".

In response to public demand, "Race to Nowhere" will be screened again Dec. 2 at 7pm at Sierra Nevada College, Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, Room 106.

The film highlights the mounting pressures and stresses children experience – from elementary school through high school – in an effort to gain admission to top colleges.

"Race to Nowhere" was the first presentation of the 2010-11 "Discussions on Education Series" co-sponsored by the Teacher Education Department at Sierra Nevada College and the Lake Tahoe School. More than 140 people attended the event from around the Lake Tahoe Basin including Incline Village,

Truckee, Tahoe City, and South Lake Tahoe.

The ongoing discussion series will explore the American school system from provocative, at times opposing, perspectives with the intent to create positive dialogue about the challenges facing education reform in the U.S. and local communities.

All events in the series are free and open to the public but please register your attendance at http://rtnsierranevada.eventbrite.com. For more information, contact Katrina Midgley at (775) 831.1314, ext. 7517, kmidgley@sierranevada.edu, or Mary Danahey at marydanahey@gmail.com.

Finding inspiration from nature

Perched atop her Pathfinder, Jessica Day is oblivious to traffic whizzing by on Highway 89. Her focus is on Mount Tallac.

Parked in front of the gate at the Tallac Historic Site, Day is sketching the mountain. Her goal is to redesign the shirts at The Brewery, one of two places she works. (The other is Sierra-at-Tahoe.)



Jessica Day

Bundled in a sweat shirt, her fingers still work despite the chill in



Mount Tallac by Jessica Day.

the air and wind in her face.

“I’m at (Lake Tahoe Community College) dabbling in art and English,” Day said. She graduated from South Tahoe High in 2006.

From the look of her pencil sketch, she is more than dabbling.

– Kathryn Reed

Southwest celebrates 20 years at Reno-Tahoe Airport

By Kara Lapoint, Reno Gazette-Journal

When Southwest Airlines first began service at Reno-Tahoe International Airport 20 years ago, it operated 12 nonstop flights to two cities, Las Vegas and Oakland, with just 15 employees.



Today, the airline runs 28 non-stops from Reno-Tahoe to 12 different cities, with connecting service to 53 cities. It operates out of four gates with about 120 employees – seven of whom have been there all 20 years.

Monday marks the 20-year anniversary of Southwest's service at RTI.

Providing 22,914 flights to and from Reno-Tahoe in the past year alone, Southwest now accounts for 53 percent of the airport's total flights.

In a poll posted on RGJ.com last week, 82.6 percent of voters said they use Southwest Airlines when flying from Reno-Tahoe.

Gustavo Johnson, a student at the University of Nevada, Reno, said he uses the airline to travel home to Salt Lake City because it offers a nonstop flight, competitive airfare, free baggage and great customer service.

Read the whole story

North Tahoe leadership program seeks applicants

The North Lake Tahoe-Truckee Leadership Program, embarking on its eighth year, is accepting applications for the 2011 program. This program creates an opportunity for potential leaders to broaden their understanding of the region and its issues, challenges and opportunities, while developing and honing their leadership skills.

Since 2003, the program has graduated more than 165 individuals.

Again, the workshops will be led by Shannon Beets, vice president for Institutional Effectiveness and Compliance and Associate Provost at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village. Each workshop is integrated with one-half of the time spent on regional issues such as special districts, planning, and nonprofit advocacy; and one-half on leadership skill development such as collaboration, team basics, and negotiation.

The program begins in January and ends with a May graduation and consists of five sessions, with two optional days where participants will be “out in the field” getting a close-up view of issues and challenges facing our community and how various agencies work.

Businesses can help support the program with a one-day sponsorship for $500.

Information about the program, sponsorships, and applications can be found on www.TahoeTruckeeLeadership.com. The tuition fee for the Leadership Program is $750; $500 for nonprofit agencies, and covers all expenses of the program including meals and supplies. Partial scholarships are available. Deadline for applications is Dec. 10th and space is limited.

For more information, contact Lynn Saunders at the Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce at (530) 587.8808 or email lynn@truckee.com; or Cheri Sprenger at the North Tahoe Business Association at (530) 546-9000 or e-mail cheri@northtahoebusiness.org; or Kym Fabel at the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce at (530) 581.8764 or email kym@puretahoenorth.com.