40,000 pot plants found near Markleeville

Marijuana plants with a street value of $30 million were uncovered south of Markleeville last week.

Alpine County sheriff’s officials believe the nearly 40,000 plants were part of a Mexican cartel grow.

U.S. Forest Service employees worked with deputies to rid the drainages and ridges of the plants.

South Tahoe native opens baseball academy in Reno

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Former MLB pitcher Bob Ayrault opened The Yard, a full-service baseball academy, in Reno last week.

The Yard, located at 4060 Kietzke Lane, offers specialized sports training, lessons, clinics and cage time for players and coaches. Individual and group lessons are offered seven days per week.

Lessons cost $45 per 30 minutes, $70 per hour or $50 per coach for two-hour Little League coaching clinics.

Ayrault, who was born in South Lake Tahoe, played two years in the major leagues.

To schedule group or private lessons or for more information on The Yard, call (775) 771.0326 or visit

Truckee Rotary looking for youth to travel on exchange

Local high school students with a passion for travel and excellent scholastic record are needed for the Rotary Club of Truckee's Youth Exchange Program.

Two responsible and active local students will receive the rare opportunity to live with a host family and study in a foreign country for a year. This is the chance to continue high school courses while learning a new language and culture. All costs (except airfare and insurance) will be paid for by Rotary.

Applicants must be high school students between the ages of 15 1/2 and 18 1/2 by the departure date of August 2011. Students will be chosen based upon their scholastic record, linguistic ability, community involvement, potential as a cultural ambassador and age.

Although the host country assignments depend on which countries choose to participate in the program, past exchange countries include Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Portland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan and Thailand. The chosen Rotary Youth Exchange students will spend up to a year with their host family.

Not only is this an opportunity to learn about another culture, it is also the chance to serve as an ambassador of Truckee, creating new connections and sharing your own

lifestyle and ideas. One of the main purposes of the international Rotary Youth Exchange program is to promote a better intercultural understanding in the world.

Contact Leisa Peterson at leisa.peterson@wellsfargo.com or go by the High School Student Assistance Center at Truckee High School to obtain applications.

Cycling endeavor benefits North Shore nonprofit

As the first rays of the rising sun illuminate the Sierra Nevada mountains Sept. 25, three members of the Elijah Bleu's cycling team will depart from Fort Bragg bound for Truckee.

The three riders – Hardy Bullock, Carey Thrasher and Ken Bossung – plan to ride nonstop for 300 miles in support of the mentoring programs made possible by nonprofit Big Brothers Big Sisters of Nevada County and North Lake Tahoe. Their 30-hour ride, which will take them through the communities of Willits, Clear Lake, Colusa, Marysville, Grass Valley, Nevada City, Downieville and Sierraville, includes more than 20,000 feet of climbing.

Team leader Bullock is no stranger to endurance cycling.

"Last year, friends and supporters helped me raise money for Big Brothers Big Sisters when I rode in the Everest Challenge – 239 miles with 29,000 feet of climbing," Bullock said in a statement. "After that ride, I made a promise to myself and to the kids who need the positive support of Big Brothers Big Sisters that I would continue to raise money and awareness through challenging events… and this will be, by far, the most

difficult cycling event we have ever attempted.”

The ride will finish at Elijah Bleu’s House of Coffee & Good Eats (10115 Donner Pass Road) in downtown Truckee, with a welcome-home party at 11am Sept. 26.

Members of the public as well as volunteers and children involved in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program are invited to meet the riders at 10am that Sunday at the new Truckee Recreation Center (8924 Donner Pass Road, at the Pioneer Center Roundabout) to ride the final mile with them down the hill to Elijah Bleu’s, where free food and beverages await.

Individuals or businesses interested in supporting the fundraising efforts of Hardy, Carey and Ken may email info@elijahbleus.com or call (530) 582.1040.

Reno-Tahoe Young Professionals Network on upswing

By Kara LaPoint, Reno Gazette-Journal

With about 250 members, the Reno-Tahoe Young Professionals Network is thriving in its third year as a not-for-profit organization – and just ahead of one of its biggest events.

Executives and board members say stronger infrastructure, improved strategic planning and a better understanding of member needs have put the organization in prime position to fulfill its vision of becoming the region’s premier network for young professionals.

“Our main mission is to help and retain our members,” said Gail Conkey, executive director of YPN. “That’s the overriding goal that drives all our decisions.”

The organization surveys its members annually, then develops plans based on survey feedback. This past year, members expressed a need for more professional development opportunities.

Read the whole story

Aerial fire retardant – good or bad?

Publisher’s note: ***This editorial is from the Sept. 14, 2010, Los Angeles Daily News.***

During Southern California’s fire season, most people become accustomed to visions of helicopters dropping a spray of red elixir, fire retardant, onto blazing hillsides.

The red substance – a mixture of water, fertilizer, an anti-corrosion chemical (to sustain the tank that carries the retardant) and red dye – draws out the oxygen from a wildfire, preventing its spread. However, the retardant, when dropped in bodies of water can be harmful to endangered species and their habitat.

In July, a federal judge found fire retardant aerial drops to be illegal and gave the U.S. Forest Service until the end of next year to find an alternative to the environmentally corruptive practice.

While environmentalists say they are not against the practice

of using fire retardant all together, they do want to minimize the harm aerial drops may have on endangered species and waterways.

Others have mentioned the danger posed to pilots who must navigate highly smoke-congested areas to deliver the retardant as a reason to stop the practice.

Supporters of the the aerial drop claim its use is justified because, ultimately, it can buy ground forces time to fight a wildfire head on. Basically, in conjunction with ground crews, fire retardant can be a valuable asset.

Read the whole story

Tahoe area authors share works with receptive audience

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – Words danced off the tongues of writers as if they were lyrics. Words lingered in the air heavy with emotion. Words fell flat.

Mostly, though, the listener was left wanting more.



Jeremy Evans

of South Lake Tahoe reads to a full house Sept. 17. Photo/Kathryn Reed

More words can easily be found, but it won't be the author reading aloud.

Twelve authors delivered a rousing portrayal of literary brilliance Sept. 17 during the second annual Celebration of Writers Around the Lake at the Valhalla Grand Hall. Each read a segment of their work – all of which was on display. Many of the nearly 70 in attendance were snatching up autographed copies of fiction, nonfiction and poetry.

Krista Benjamin took something so ordinary and turned it into a whimsical poem of sorts.

"One thing about being a writer is you can be a shameless eavesdropper," she said.

She was at an anthropology conference her husband, Scott Lukas, (who also read Friday night) was attending and started writing down what she heard in the hallway. It made for a fun transcript of sorts.

As with most poetry, it always sounds so much better spoken than read in silence. And with the authors' speaking the words, the inflection is precise and delivered as intended.

Karen Terrey brought some regional lore into her work with references to Donner Party cannibalism with lines like: "Would you have to be dying to eat me?"

Scott Lankford and Jeremy Evans saw their published works for the first time that night. Lankford's is titled "Tahoe Beneath the Surface: The Hidden Stories of America's Largest Mountain

Lake.” It didn’t capture me, but Sue had high praise for the reading.

Evans’ book is “In Search of Powder: A Story of America’s Disappearing Ski Bum.” The segment he read about a Mammoth ski bum, turned family man made me wonder if Evans saw a bit of himself in this vignette. I’m looking forward to the copy of his book arriving in my post office box.

Gailmarie Pahmeier, a poet who was at last year’s event, captivates an audience not only with what is being said, but how it is said.

Sue’s response when Pahmeier was done was, “Wow! She’s brilliant.” I concur.

Ann Ronald read the most disturbing piece. Her fictional book called “Friendly Fallout 1953” borders on nonfiction. The people aren’t real, but most of the circumstances involving the atomic testing in Southern Nevada and the subsequent fallout are very real.

I want to know more. But at the same time I don’t.

The writers featured on Sept. 17 were:

• Jeremy Evans, nonfiction, “In Search of Powder: A Story of America’s Disappearing Ski Bum”

• Scott Lankford, nonfiction, “Tahoe Beneath the Surface”

• Ann Ronald, fiction, “Friendly Fallout 1953″

• Janet Smith, poet, “All of a Sudden Nothing Happened”

• Michael J. Makley, nonfiction, “Cave Rock: Climbers, Courts, and a Washoe Indian Sacred Place”

• Suzanne Roberts, poet, “Shameless, Nothing to You”

• Gailmarie Pahmeier, poet, “New Poets of the American West”

• Karen Terrey, “Tangled Roots Writing”

• Jeanine Stevens, poet, “Caught in the Clouds”

• June Saraceno, poet, “Altars of Ordinary Light”

• Krista Benjamin, poet, “New Poets of the American West”

• Scott Lukas, nonfiction, “Fear, Cultural Anxiety, and Transformation: Horror, Science Fiction, and Fantasy Films Remade”

The event is put on by Tahoe Writers Works.

15th Annual Truckee River Day

The 15th Annual Truckee River Day is Oct. 17. The event will include a full day of restoration followed by a celebration fair.

Truckee River Day started in 1996 with only three weeks of planning. Four hundred volunteers came to lend a hand and completed 10 projects. Since that first year thousands of volunteers have participated in the restoration projects throughout the Truckee River Watershed. Each year the number of volunteers and completed projects has grown.

“The 15th anniversary of Truckee River Day marks the completion of over 100 restoration projects with the help of 5,000 volunteers,” Lisa Wallace, executive director of the Truckee River Watershed Council, said in a press release. “Our volunteers pounded-in willow stakes, planted wild rose, built meadow boardwalks, placed fish gravel and spread pine needles. Together we have done a lot of work, but there is still a lot to do – we need another 15.”

This year participants will have their choice of half day or full day projects followed by a celebration at the Truckee River Day Fair. The fair will include live music, food, educational and art activities, and the annual fish release.

To participate in this year's festivities, visit the website or call (530) 550.8760.

PC workshop for businesses

The North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce is hosting a computer demonstration as part of their Chamber EDucation series titled "Learn How to Modernize Your Business PCs" Sept. 21 from 8:30-10am at Granlibakken Resort, 725 Granlibakken Road, in Tahoe City.

The demonstration is a firsthand look, along with a live demonstration, of Microsoft Office 2010 and Windows 7 and will focus on how these programs can assist a business.

Ron Baker of JFG Systems, who is a Microsoft-certified gold partner and a SonicWall certified gold partner, will provide the demonstration.

All attendees will receive certificates that allow them to register for complimentary online software training when they purchase Office 2010 and/or Windows 7.

Registration is $20 for North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce members and $30 for non-members and includes Granlibakken's buffet breakfast. Seating is limited.

To register and for more information about the workshop, call North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce Manger Kym Fabel at (530) 581.8764 or download a registration form at

www.NorthLakeTahoeChamber.com, click on Programs and Documents.

Meeting about concealed weapons in Carson City

The Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association annual Nevada Carry Concealed Weapon Permit Holders Forum is Sept. 30 from 9am-noon in Carson City.

Douglas County Undersheriff Paul Howell, Julie Butler of the Division of Records and Technology, and Frank Adams, executive director of the Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association, will moderate the panel.

The meeting will also be broadcast on the Nevada Legislature's website.

The event is at the Nevada Legislature Building (401 S Carson St.), Room 1214.