Lahontan TMDL meeting

The Lahontan Water Quality Control Board will meet Sept. 8 at 9am at Lake Tahoe Community College. There will be a public hearing about the proposed amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan to incorporate the TMDL into the overall plan.

The board expects to certify the revised plan at the November meeting.

Fine sediment particles and nutrient pollutants are impacting Lake Tahoe's famed clarity. The Tahoe Total Maximum Daily Load was a science-based effort designed to determine pollutant reductions needed to restore historic clarity within the lake and craft a cost-effective, workable strategy to reduce them.

This video describes the TMDL analysis and provides information on what people can do to help.

California lawmakers getting paid when they don't show up

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

California legislators collected tens of thousands of dollars in taxpayer-funded per diem payments for floor sessions they did not attend this year, records show.

Failing to show up for work typically did not hurt lawmakers' pocketbooks: Only about one of every four absences included the loss of the tax-free $142 per day in living expenses.

The bulk of compensated absences was tied to medical ailments

or to lawmakers who missed floor sessions at the same time they were campaigning for higher office.

Derek Cressman of Common Cause said that absent lawmakers had better have a good excuse for voters who depend upon them.

Read the whole story

Gay ski week in Lake Tahoe

Lake Tahoe Winter Fest celebrates its 16th year on the South Shore this year.

Lakeland Village is again the host hotel.

Click here for more information.

Camp Rich beach is for all ages – despite what some say

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – Sipping Rum Runners, listening to live music, ogling all the flesh and maybe dipping into Lake Tahoe. It's what I did on a regular basis when I first moved to Lake Tahoe right out of college in the late 1980s.

It's what I did when I would come back to visit.



All ages enjoy Lake Tahoe near South Shore's Beacon restaurant. Photos/Kathryn Reed

It’s what I like to do on occasion now that I live here again in my mid-40s.

Who cares, you ask? Well, a 36-year-old married woman with two children trashed this scene in a July article for The Mommy Files on sfgate.com. She ripped Lake Tahoe, primarily the South Shore, to pieces.

I decided last Sunday to visit the Beacon – home of the slushy rum concoction – sit on the beach and take in the scene. I even dunked into the chilly water. It was just as it was 20-plus years ago. That’s a good thing. The only thing that seemed different is it wasn’t just 20-something-year-olds and hard bodies. The rest of us fit in, too.

The San Francisco writer bemoaned the scantily clad beach-goers. I’m not sure what she expected. It’s a beach. Worldwide beaches are going to show-off more flesh than clothing – some places it’s all skin.

Plenty of children were running around the beach. Some were in the water. Some were at the restaurant with their parents listening to the Steve Walker band belt out what might be favorites of their grandparents.

Yes, the Beacon is a party scene in the summer. It’s lively, it’s fun, it’s happening.

I didn’t see trash on the beach like this woman talked about. I was annoyed by cigarette smoke – but I am anywhere I smell it, especially when I’m outside. It wasn’t constant, though.

All ages were enjoying the roped off area of the water where they could safely kayak or enjoy other rental toys in an area where motorboats can’t get to.

Just a little farther out are an array of boats hooked to buoys bobbing up and down in the gentle breeze. The marina is doing a fair amount of business. People saunter along the dock that jets into the lake.

From the beach, no snow is visible on the mountaintops. Still, they loom all around in a spectacular display of natural beauty.

The sfgate.com article goes on to gripe about parking at Emerald Bay.

I could easily gripe how when I go to her city for a Giants game the parking garages change their prices depending on the hour of day (cheaper if you arrive early), who the opponent is and how many tickets have been sold. At least in Tahoe where there is a parking fee, it’s the same price the whole season.

Yes, touristy spots are crowded. They are everywhere in the world. The sfgate.com writer might want to drive into The City for a Giants game and see what those of us coming from Tahoe have to deal with in her hometown.

The sfgate writer talks about Alpine County being quieter, easier to manage. It is. So are Marin and Sonoma counties in her neck of the woods.

Instead of storming off in a huff from the Beacon, she should have strolled down farther on the beach where it is quieter.

Maybe she should have taken her children to the neighboring Tallac Site and shown them a bit of Tahoe history – something about how those rich San Franciscans developed the pristine property along Lake Tahoe's shore so many years ago.

Maybe if she were a more responsible mom, she would have done better research.

The Beacon, that beach and Camp Rich are just fine the way they have been for the 20-plus years I've been going there. Don't change a thing – accept for maybe lowering the price of the Rum Runners and allowing them on the beach.

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Labor Day begins season of fall events on South Shore

Labor Day at Lake Tahoe South Shore is the kickoff to Indian Summer season with fireworks, more warm weather and a multitude of events and entertainment.



Labor Day 2009 fireworks. Photo/Kurtis Rix-Amazing Imagery

A special pyrotechnics display highlights the weekend. The fireworks are visible throughout town with numerous vantage points including the Tahoe Queen and M.S. Dixie II paddle-wheelers, Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, Regan, and Nevada beaches.

A simultaneous broadcast to music will be featured on KRLT FM-93.9 and KOWL AM-1490.

Launched from three offshore barges, the display will ignite the alpine sky Sept. 5 at approximately 8:30pm.

With the average high temperature for September in the 70s and plenty of sunshine, fall boasts all of summer's glory, with fewer crowds and discounts at area attractions.

The 8th annual Tour de Tahoe Bike Big Blue will have participants circumnavigate the lake Sept. 12.

For ladies only, the Aflac Iron Girl Triathlon is Sept.19.

Run, walk, swim, paddle, peddle or golf during one of the many Lake Tahoe Marathon events, Sept. 22-26.

The inaugural Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week, Sept. 5-12, offers pre-fixe menus for $20, $30 and $40 at 29 restaurants around the lake. www.tahoerestaurantweek.com

The Kokanee Salmon Festival on Highway 89 on the South Shore is Oct. 3-4. The Kokanee Salmon Run includes a Kids Fun Run, 5k, 10k and half marathon along the trails near Fallen Leaf Lake where Aspens are changing color reflected in glass-like water. Information: www.camprichardson.com or (530) 542.6550.

Young farmers bucking the trend of withering profession

By Gina Kim, Sacramento Bee

There are small moments that make farming worthwhile for 26-year-old Toby Hastings – detaching a ripe Sharlyn melon from the vine with just a slight tug, digging for potatoes and finding nests of them huddled together, snapping the stem of a perfect strawberry.

Hastings is in his third season of coaxing life from tidy rows in the middle of an organic walnut orchard in rural Winters. He is simultaneously bucking two trends: the aging of the nation's farmers and the increasingly difficult feat of finding land that can be farmed and starting a business.

Hastings' Free Spirit Farm was born in 2008 when he became the "farmer incubator" – a name borrowed from the term business incubator – of the Center for Land-Based Learning, a nonprofit organization that exposes youths to sustainable agriculture and nature restoration.

Read the whole story

Nevada top among pro-debtor states

By Ashlea Ebeling, Forbes

Forget about hiding money offshore from the Internal Revenue Service—unless you want to risk the penalties, back tax bills

and threat of prosecution that thousands of American clients of ubs now face. But what about protecting your cash from vexatious litigants, a grasping ex-spouse or pesky creditors? Then offshore trusts are still an option, but a far less attractive one now that legal reporting requirements for offshore holdings have become more onerous and some U.S. judges have taken to jailing folks who won't (or can't) turn over offshore assets.

That's good news for the lawyers and bankers promoting domestic asset protection trusts instead. "U.S. clients don't want to be offshore anymore," crows Al W. King III, co-chief executive of the South Dakota Trust Co., who woos wealthy clients from his office in New York City. Last year New Hampshire became the twelfth state to allow these trusts (see table, below). As the competition has intensified, states have been tweaking their laws to make them even more favorable to debtors. Currently Alaska, Delaware, Nevada and South Dakota have the most trust business and the most pro-debtor laws.

Read the whole story

Tahoe trails rely on people getting dirty

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Let it be said that Julie Mitchell-Grove of the Virginia City foothills and Susan Burdick of Washoe Valley do not turn their faces away from dirt.

The two women recently participated in a day of trail construction connected with the Tahoe Rim Trail, the 165-mile

trail encircling Lake Tahoe.

They pulled at roots. They worked the shape and the slope of the trail. They patted dirt. They edged the forming trail with duff.

None of it was easy, but none of it was too difficult – on that section.

“It’s similar to doing yard work all day, although I probably take more breaks and drink more wine while doing yard work,” Burdick said.

Read the whole story

Parton impersonators from Tahoe share stage with singer

By Kathryn Reed

It’s one thing to impersonate a living star; it’s another to share a stage with that person.

That is exactly what two veterans of Carnival Cabaret did Saturday night. Sean Paul, who is the current Dolly Parton in the female impersonation show at Horizon in Stateline, and Kevin Wiley, who has had that role in the past, was part of the 25th anniversary celebration of Dollywood.



Sean Paul as Dolly Parton in Carnival Cabaret. Photo/Yon Ju Kim

“It’s a great opportunity to work with a country legend. I’m still kind of speechless over the whole thing,” Paul said before the Aug. 28 event. “This will be the first time I will have met her. She has seen me before. I have gone to her concerts dressed like her.”

News about Paul and Wiley’s trek to the Nashville Performing Arts Center could not be released beforehand because they were part of the surprise for the guests.

The event is one of many Parton is having to commemorate this being the 25th year of Dollywood, which is a theme park in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Through her nonprofit she has a literacy program that this year coincidentally gave out 25 million books to a youngster. The program started as a tribute to her father who could not read and write.

Miley Cyrus and her dad, Billy Ray, were expected to be in the audience. After all, Parton is Miley’s “fairy godmother”. They, with Kenny Rogers and other country stars, were part of an hour-long television show with Parton celebrating Dollywood that aired earlier this summer.

Before Saturday’s event Paul was fretting about how he would hold up in 4-inch heals for eight hours. After rock climbing

Tuesday, blisters covered a good portion of his feet.

Thousands of people impersonate the buxom country star. The men with ties to Lake Tahoe and Sandy Anderson, a woman who impersonates Parton with Legends in Concert, are the three who performed “9 to 5” with the real Parton on stage last night.

Paul took one of the outfits his mom, Kris Scheramann, made for him. She makes most of his costumes.

He has been performing Parton in shows for almost 20 years, having started in Las Vegas.



Sean Paul

“I’ve always had a fondness for Dolly Parton music,” Paul said.

Wiley now lives in Los Angeles where he is an executive for Magic Castle in Hollywood. He was Carnival Cabaret’s Parton before Paul took over.

Whopping cough vaccine to be given at farmers’ market Aug.

31

The El Dorado County Health Services Department, Public Health Division in South Lake Tahoe is offering the booster vaccine which protects against pertussis (whooping cough) at low cost during next week’s Tuesday farmers’ market.

The vaccine will be available at the Health Department’s booth at the market at the American Legion Hall on 2732 Lake Tahoe Blvd. in South Lake Tahoe on Aug. 31 from 8am-1pm.

Individuals may also schedule an appointment to receive the vaccine at the Health Department clinic by calling (530) 573.3155. The cost for the vaccine is $10.

The booster pertussis vaccine, called Tdap, is given in one dose and is recommended for anyone over the age of 7 who has not previously received the vaccine or who is not fully immunized. Childcare providers, women of childbearing age, pregnant women and people who have contact with pregnant women and infants are also encouraged to be vaccinated against pertussis. Parents who wish to have their child immunized must bring their child’s immunization record. Tdap is a combination vaccine which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis.

El Dorado County health officials continue to see a record number of pertussis cases in the community, with 38 cases reported so far this year, compared to three last year. California has had eight deaths due to pertussis since the beginning of this year, all among young children who were primarily infected through an adult. Pertussis is a contagious respiratory infection that can lead to severe coughing fits and be fatal to babies. Symptoms of pertussis typically start with a cough and runny nose for one to two weeks, followed by weeks to months of rapid coughing fits that sometimes end with a whooping sound. Fever is rare.