Yard and bake sale in South Tahoe

June 19 from 9am-1pm – Unity at the Lake Yard & Bake Sale at the Star Tahoe Building parking lot,2489 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Lots of baked goodies, household items, clothes, toys, tools, collectibles and more.

For more info, call (530) 544.2266 or visit www.unityatthelake.org.

Unity at the Lake Healing Circle

June 14 – Unity at the Lake Healing Circle – Regan Beach

6:30pm sharp.

Affirm and align in consciousness with the truth that we are already whole. One of the best ways to align our minds with divine mind and claim our divine inheritance. Bring a healing request to share in this powerful and prayerful ceremony. Bring a lawn chair. Love offering.

For more info, call (530) 544.2266 or visit www.unityatthelake.org.

Firewood permits available at Van Sickle Bi-State Park

Permits are on sale through June 11 for the Nevada Division of State Parks' spring wood sale. Permits may be purchased at the division office at 901 S. Stewart St., Ste. 5005 in Carson City from 8am-5pm.

Permits are $50 (exact cash or check only) per cord and there is a two cord limit per address/family.

Approximately 50 permits are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Wood pick-up must be scheduled at the time of purchase and pickup days are June 12 and June 13.

Approximately 60 cords are available in the Nevada portion of the Van Sickle Bi-State Park in an accessible location. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are strongly suggested. Van Sickle Bi-State Park is located on the south shore of Lake Tahoe behind Harrah's Casino in Stateline.

The wood consists of a mixture of pine and fir, some seasoned and some green. Most of the wood is in approximately 18-inch rounds, although some odd sized and large rounds are possible.

The wood was cut by the Nevada Division of Forestry and Great Basin Institute conservation crews as part of forest health efforts in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park.

Truckee diner star of Food

Network show

Don’t be surprised if you see some familiar sights while channel surfing, as Truckee’s JAX at the Tracks will be featured on the Food Network’s Diners, Drive-ins and Dives beginning June 7.

According to owner Bud Haley, the show’s producers were drawn to the restaurant’s “comfort food with an attitude” vibe, as well as the fact that it is housed in an original circa 1940s diner.



Guy Fieri of the Food Network at JAX in Truckee. Photo/Provided

Each episode features the affable bleached blond host Guy Fieri visiting everything from venerated greasy spoons to classic establishments that provide distinctive food. And while the show may look like Fieri drops in for an impromptu visit, nothing is farther from the truth.

“It’s a three-day process that required intense preparation and filming,” Haley said in a press release. “Guy was so happy to see what we are doing here, which is truly unique. The staff was a little awestruck at the beginning, but Guy put everyone at ease; he’s a gregarious and fun guy – exactly like he seems on TV.”

During the January shoot; JAX was open on a limited basis to accommodate the army of Food Network staffers who brought truckloads of film and audio equipment, not to mention a large rack of wardrobe selections for the host.

“They were here 12 hours a day, I was really impressed with how detail-oriented the staff was,” Haley said.

On the first day the program staff concentrated on still shots of the interior and the exterior. Day 2 was all about the exacting preparation of some of the restaurant’s signature items: Kobe meatloaf, Maryland Crab Cake Eggs Benedict and homemade pulled pork sandwiches.

Day 3 was all about capturing Jax’s friendly ambiance as Fieri interviewed diners about their favorite items and tried some himself.

“Guy never ever eats eggs, and his staff had told me this, but he tried our Eggs Benedict and he truly enjoyed it,” Haley said.

JAX is located at 10144 West River St. in downtown Truckee.

For information about program days and times, click here.

Councilman did legal work to evict Broc’s Puppies

By Kathryn Reed

When the city attorney found out Tuesday that a councilman did the legal work to evict Broc’s Puppies, he said, “I’ll talk to Bruce.”

Bruce Grego, the councilman in question, believes because the work had nothing to do with the ordinance he voted on a year ago that bans future stores like Broc’s in the city limits, there is nothing wrong with having worked on the eviction.



Bruce Grego

“It was for failure to pay rent. It was a standard vanilla eviction,” Grego said. “The eviction was not based on a violation of the ordinance.”

Broc’s Puppies has been in the news for years. Part had to do with the city deciding to ban the sale of live cats and dogs, then the store on Highway 50 near Tahoe Keys Boulevard was raided by law enforcement, the owner was arrested on a parole violation and is back behind bars, and then the property manager had the business evicted this spring.

Don Huggins is the property manager for owner Helen Edgin. Huggins said he had Grego file the paper work involving the eviction.

Huggins and Grego have a long history of working together. Grego leases the building his law office is in from Huggins. Huggins has been a client of Grego’s many times.

“I was a client long before Bruce became my tenant,” Huggins said. “He has done my eviction work on apartments for 10 years or more. I paid for everything Bruce has done for me.”

South Lake Tahoe City Attorney Patrick Enright has been busy keeping track of all of Grego’s dealings.

Enright said the dollar amount of the work involved would dictate whether Grego has a conflict in helping to evict a business that he has also cast votes about. He earned $495 for the job.

Grego's involvement with the Broc's eviction came as a surprise to his council colleagues.

Grego's ethics were called into question this spring for which he faced an inquisition of sorts for having the city reimburse him for outside legal counsel expenses. The city was left with a black eye and Grego got paid.

Another issue involving Grego is his lease with Huggins. On Friday, Enright was shown a lease agreement between Grego and Huggins. He was not given a copy of it.

If the agreement were for more than one month at a time, Grego would not be able to vote on issues related to the redevelopment area the council approved in May. No written agreement existed between the two men until May 28.

Purge unwanted belongings for 5 bucks at Dump Day

By Ellen Nunes

Winter is over at last and it's time to clean out all that

unwanted stuff that’s been piling up and get ready for summer. Luckily, the Clean Tahoe Program’s Annual Community Cleanup Day – known by locals as “Dump Day” – is June 5 from 8am-4pm at the South Tahoe Refuse Transfer Station at 2140 Ruth Ave. in South Lake Tahoe.

Every June, Clean Tahoe sponsors this community event where local residents can dispose of a truckload of unwanted household and bulk items for $5.

Clean Tahoe is a community-focused nonprofit organization committed to maintaining Lake Tahoe’s mountain beauty through litter and nuisance abatement in the city and El Dorado County through community education, and by giving residents the opportunity to be actively involved in keeping their neighborhoods clean.

In addition to the $5 per truckload Dump Day price, there are discounted prices for other items. Tire Amnesty Day, sponsored by El Dorado County Environmental Management in Placerville, is back this year. Up to nine tires per residential load can be dumped free. E-waste items such as computer monitors and televisions are free. Refrigerators, freezers and other items containing Freon, will cost $15 instead of their normal $36 each.

A maximum of 20 gallons per household of hazardous household materials, including oil for recycling, can be dumped free. Like last year, we will not be accepting needles (bagged or loose) or heavy construction-type items such as concrete, asphalt, roofing materials or dirt. Pine needles can be put out and picked up by STR curbside for no additional cost on regular trash days.

Every California resident coming through the line will receive a free six-pack of compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) courtesy of Sierra Pacific Power.

For this special June 5 event, the Transfer Station gates will

close at 4pm instead of the usual 5pm to allow time to separate the large amount of items coming through the gates on this day. All vehicles in line at 4pm will be escorted inside and allowed to dump their loads. Once the gates are closed, late arrivals will be turned away.

This is a very popular community event, and residents need to plan ahead for a wait in line.

Community Cleanup Day is intended for residential dumping only. Commercial loads will pay regular fees and Douglas County residents will pay an extra $5 fee since they do not pay a yearly fee to support the Clean Tahoe Program.

Individual residents, or community groups who want to do something extra in the spirit of Community Cleanup Day can clean a community lot pre-selected by Clean Tahoe or pick one of their own. As a thank you, Clean Tahoe will provide a free Dump Day line pass, which allows the holder to bypass the line to dump all their items. The usual $5 gate fee is also waived.

For more details about Community Cleanup Day, to volunteer yourself or your group to clean a community lot, or for information on Clean Tahoe's other programs and activities throughout the year, call the Clean Tahoe Program at (530) 544.4210.

Ellen Nunes is program manager for Clean Tahoe.

Strife over what to do with Tahoe's aging urban areas

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Redevelopment of aging, polluting urban areas will prove critical to restoring Lake Tahoe’s troubled environment in coming decades, Tahoe land-use regulators insist.

Environmental groups counter that the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency appears to be steered on a path that could substantially alter the lake’s rustic characteristics, bringing taller buildings and denser development around the lake.



Razing the Biltmore and starting over is one example of redevelopment controversy.

The emerging debate comes as TRPA, established by Congress in 1969 to save an endangered national treasure, prepares a new strategy guiding land use for the next 20 years. The stakes are high, both sides agree.

Read the whole story

Urbanization of Tahoe may be its downfall

By Rochelle Nason

Tahoe is on the verge of changes that will affect it for generations to come. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is deciding the ground rules for how to develop Tahoe for the next 20 years. The most disturbing proposal is to require taller buildings and higher density on more than 800 acres across the lake, in the name of “smart growth.”

Yes, get ready for TRPA’s new refrain: “Build, baby, build.”



Rochelle Nason

Under the new plan, Tahoe could become unrecognizable to so many who love it: dozens of towering new resorts and subdivisions, more traffic, more pavement, more commercial space, and more luxury timeshares and condos.

TRPA accuses doubters of a “do nothing” approach. Let’s be real: We all want walkable, bikeable and accessible communities. We all want less traffic. We all seek to eliminate blight and nurture vibrant communities with beautiful views. Responsible redevelopment can be a true win win for everyone.

However, we do not have to urbanize Lake Tahoe to achieve those goals. In California and Nevada, there are many

communities with compact, two-story town centers that provide mixed use and preserve scenic views. But TRPA proposes six- to four-story buildings along most of Tahoe's main roadways, and developers are already saying that is not enough.

"Yes" versus "No"

The League to Save Lake Tahoe agrees with the TRPA that "just say no" is an outdated mentality. We supported the first big redevelopment projects at the lake over a decade ago, the Embassy Suites in South Shore and the timeshare resort at the foot of Ski Run. We also supported the Heavenly Gondola and Village for traffic reduction. These projects made sense because they transferred development from sensitive lands to the already highly-dense casino corridor, and created true open space in the process. We have also deferred to communities when it comes to economic development. For example, we set aside our multiple objections to the airport master plan and the convention center that form the city of South Lake Tahoe's vision for its future.

So, "just say no" has been on its way out for a while. However, "just say yes" can also be precarious. TRPA has "just said yes" to a string of projects that set dangerous precedents for irresponsible development in Tahoe. In the absence of checks and balances within the agency, communities are forced to seek the last-resort option of litigation.

These projects make it clear that Tahoe needs a strong environmental watchdog. TRPA "just said yes" to a timeshare project at Sandy Beach campground using excess and incorrect coverage. The League and community successfully fought to reduce the coverage by a third. The Burke Creek project is another example. TRPA "just said yes" to a developer who didn't want to count driveways as coverage, while this is a rule for all other property owners. Furthermore, the agency "just said yes" to new lakeshore development that will allow 62,000 more boat trips per year, while existing boat traffic

is contributing to pollution violations today.

Cooperation critical

The real question is: Why is the TRPA suddenly unable to put forth projects that are palatable to those outside the development community?

The League to Save Lake Tahoe boasts a 53-year history of offering constructive critique and alternative solutions to Tahoe's environmental challenges. And we often work with diverse interests to do so. For example, 15 years ago, the League initiated the effort to advocate for public funds for Tahoe. Since then, in partnership with the business community, we have secured hundreds of millions of dollars for environmental restoration here.

For this regional plan, the League seeks responsible redevelopment that concentrates on built areas instead of raw land. We seek height limits that protect Tahoe's scenic beauty. We support density changes that reduce traffic into and within Tahoe, and that acknowledge Tahoe's unique driving and living patterns. We seek plans that allow low-impact recreationists to enjoy Tahoe. We have long pushed for a near-shore clarity standard so beachgoers don't have to wade through wads of algae. We seek ongoing community-based planning so that communities aren't caught off-guard by specific projects. Finally, Tahoe needs a basinwide analysis of just how much pollution, vehicles, boats, and high-impact activities the lake can sustain before it is loved to death.

"Smart growth" is an excellent strategy for urbanized areas, where growth is inevitable. But it is not smart to apply it to Tahoe, a sensitive area that is threatened by growth and overuse.

Tahoe is at a critical juncture. We have common enemies we can unite against: fine sediment, invasive species, pollution, traffic, climate change, and overdevelopment. We must

cooperate to find scientifically sound solutions. If we do not, the biggest loser will be Tahoe.

When Congress approved the creation of an agency to protect Lake Tahoe, “build baby build” was not among its recommended strategies. To the contrary, it recognized urbanization as the problem and not the cure.

Please visit us at KeepTahoeBlue.org.

Rochelle Nason is executive director of the Leagues to Save Lake Tahoe.

Bottled water movie returns to Tahoe-Reno area

The Reno/Tahoe community has the opportunity to view “TAPPED”, an award winning documentary on the issues surrounding bottled water versus tap water. These screenings are presented by the Tahoe Water Suppliers Association.

The events are free and open to the public.

Summer dates:

June 11, 8pm: Free, Campfire Program, Galena Creek Regional Park, Reno. Co-sponsored by the Great Basin Institute.

July 22,7pm: Free, North Tahoe Events Center, 8318 North Lake Blvd., Kings Beach. Co-sponsored by the Squaw Valley Institute.

Aug. 21, 7:30pm: Free, Campfire Program, Martis Creek Lake Campground, Truckee. Hosted by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,

Martis Creek Lake.

Is access to clean drinking water a basic human right or a commodity that should be bought and sold like any other article of commerce? Stephanie Soechtig's award winning feature film "TAPPED" is an unflinching examination of the business of the billion dollar bottled water industry. From the plastic production to the ocean where so many of these bottles end up, this inspiring documentary trails the path of the bottled water industry, and the communities that were unwitting chips on the table. A powerful portrait of the lives affected by the bottled water industry, this revelatory film features those caught in the intersection of big business and the public's right to water.

The website is www.tappedthemovie.com.

These screenings are presented by the Tahoe Water Suppliers Association in partnership with the Great Basin Institute, Squaw Valley Institute and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Martis Creek Lake.

For more information, contact Madonna Dunbar at (775) 832.1212 or email mod@ivgid.org.

Disabled out-of-towner crippling local businesses

By Kathryn Reed

"It is nothing more than a guy going through town and making money."

Those are the words of David Kelly, president of the Tahoe

Area Coordinating Council for the Disabled (TACCD). He is the face and voice of the disabled on the South Shore. And he is not happy with what a paraplegic from Carmichael is doing to businesses in Lake Tahoe.

Scott Johnson is a 48-year-old attorney. He drives around in a white van. Sometimes a passenger accompanies him. Sometimes he films places. He takes notes of cars without proper stickers parked in handicapped spaces and he looks if ramps exist at businesses. He is extremely adept at sending out form letters.



Re/Max Realty in South Lake Tahoe has been targeted by a disabled attorney.

Letters are addressed to the “landlord/business operator” and state they have 90 days to voluntarily bring the property to code or 60 days to provide Johnson with a disabled access compliance report and a post-construction review within six months.

It appears to be Johnson’s mission to take cash from small businesses all over Northern California because he was forced to a wheelchair after being struck by a drunken driver several years ago. Web searches show preponderance for this type of behavior. South Lake Tahoe is his latest cash cow.

When local disabled groups are against him, the motive seems more sinister than sincere.

Unfortunately, no phone number has been located for Johnson's company, Disabled Access Prevents Injury Inc. at 5150 Fair Oaks Blvd., Ste. 101 in Carmichael. Perhaps a bit of irony is the street address is the legal code number for someone who is mentally ill.

At the TACCD's monthly meeting last week two certified access specialists (CASp) spoke to the group about what recourse people may have.

Jeri Oishi, owner of Enchanted Florist, was at the meeting. She had received a letter from Johnson the week before.

"It's not one of those things I can ignore and it will go away," Oishi said. "I have a customer who has been here a number of times in one of those big motorized wheelchairs and he has no problem coming up the ramp so I know it works."

She said someone from the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce came by the florist inviting her to a meeting June 10 about the issue, but said first she would have to join the chamber.

"Yes we are bringing in an expert CASp inspector and an attorney. As you know 'membership has its privileges' and hence this event is being offered to members first at no cost," B Gorman, executive director of the Nevada-based chamber, emailed *Lake Tahoe News*. She further said non-members could attend by invitation-only at $20 as space permitted.

The problem with the Americans with Disabilities Act is little or no wiggle room exists if a business is out of compliance by a half inch even if it works for the people it was designed to help.

Kelly knows of construction being a couple degrees off and Johnson wanting to fight it.

"I think it is wrong. This is not what the ADA was meant to

be. It’s far from it,” Kelly said.

All the business owners contacted by *Lake Tahoe News* said they want to work with the law, help people with disabilities – but they don’t want an out of town swindler taking their money.

Clint Schue knows ignoring the threats from Johnson is not an option.

“I researched the guy. He is the same guy who sued the prior owners. They settled with him for several thousand dollars to make it go away,” the owner of Brothers Bar said.

That’s why settling isn’t a long-term solution. Johnson or anyone else can come back with another complaint.

Schue said Johnson came by his place in his white van in April. He asked about a ramp. Schue told him about the temporary one. Now a permanent one is in the back. The rails went up last week.

Re/Max Realty received a letter from Johnson last month.

“They aren’t even trying to come into my place. They drive by, send a letter and try to settle,” said Jesse Chamberlain of Re/Max in South Tahoe. “It would be one thing if he had an actual real estate transaction going on. It almost seems like they are harassing us.”

Interestingly, Re/Max’s offices are across the parking lot from TACCD’s.

Before the long weekend the white van was filming the Black Bear Inn. The vehicle went up and down Ski Run Boulevard taking pictures of the various businesses.

Kelly is working with South Lake Tahoe officials to have a building inspector become a certified access specialist. Then a sticker can be placed in a business’ window that should be enough to keep Johnson and his ilk at bay.