Keeping creativity alive in youngsters

By Vicki Barber

I just watched the movie “Avatar” and I have friends telling me I should be watching the TV show “Glee”. I love to visit art museums when I’m traveling, although I’m certainly not one who can draw a straight line without a ruler. I’m as left brained a thinker and doer as most education administrators, yet part of my job is to foster those who can create, build, and provide the arts, music, and drama that so appeal to the right side of our ever active brains.

With so many of our schools cutting back on “frills” these days because of funds and increased academic pressures, where do we find the support for those children whose talents lie in the creative arts? In El Dorado County since 1958, it’s been at Sugarloaf Fine Arts Camp. It wasn’t always called Sugarloaf and it wasn’t always at the Sly Park Environmental Education Center, but the 52-year-old summer camp has always had the express purpose of allowing students to explore the arts and their own abilities to express those arts.



Vicki Barber

A child started somewhere to dream up the visual graphics from Avatar. Somewhere there was permission and encouragement to go beyond the boundaries of what we know every day. That permission created a science fiction planet filled with eight

foot tall creatures with vibrant colors, yellow eyes, cat-like ears, and very long tales whose hair braid ends connect with the other living species on the planet as well as the vibrancy of the life force itself. That's not textbook "stuff." That's imagination and vision.

A child started somewhere to create music, sing, dance, and be in the Glee Club. How do they hit notes like that? When the rest of us may be afraid to dance or sing, or, even worse, be different in front of others, for some young people creating music is like breathing. If they didn't do it, they'd suffocate. So where do they have the opportunity to try out their wings?

Leonardo da Vinci said, "There are three classes of people: those who see, those who see when they are shown, those who do not see." A picture is worth a thousand words. Sometimes art expresses what we can't even find the words to say. Da Vinci was once a child. The entire world is grateful he found a way to express his art for the rest of us to enjoy. There are children like da Vinci today who are ready to express the art that the rest of us want to see.

So Sugarloaf Fine Arts Camp has existed for its 52 years to encourage middle school and high school students to find out what they can do in music, theater, photography, and dance. Each year students explore the boundaries of their favorite creative expression. Who knows what's beyond "Avatar" or who's our next American Idol? Perhaps an even better discovery may be one who can find a way to paint a landscape to go over a fireplace in grandpa's house just because it feels good to do it.

You can find information about Sugarloaf Fine Arts Camp here.

Vicki Barber is superintendent of El Dorado County Office of Education.

Docents needed at Tahoe City Field Station

Do you love Lake Tahoe and have an interest in learning more about the lake? Do you enjoy science, learning new information, and sharing your knowledge?

Residents who would like to help people learn about the region's environmental assets and challenges are needed to serve as volunteer docents at the UC Davis Eriksson Education Center. The education center is located at the Tahoe City Field Station, commonly referred to as the Historic Fish Hatchery, just east of downtown Tahoe City at the corner of Lake Forest Road and Highway 28.

Visitors to the center include school groups from the greater Lake Tahoe-Truckee region as well as area residents and basin visitors.

One three-hour training course and a copy of the UC Davis Docent Training Manual will provide docents all the information they will need to discuss the historic hatchery site, fish of Lake Tahoe, local environmental issues and scientific research in the region. No prior experience is necessary and all are welcome.

The docent training class will be at the UC Davis Field Station on June 26 and June 30 from 1–4pm.

To RSVP for one of these training dates, contact Heather Foslund, AmeriCorps member at (775) 881.7560, ext. 7483 or email hfoslund@ucdavis.edu.

For more information about the docent program, contact TERC

education coordinator Heather Segale at (775) 881.7562 or email hmsegale@ucdavis.edu.

Lakefront luxury condos ready to be built in S. Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Five multi-million dollar condominiums will replace a rundown building that looks like a relic from an architectural era that would be best not repeated.

Tahoe Lakeview LLC had the final subdivision map and condominium plan approved by the South Lake Tahoe City Council last week. TRPA permits are already in hand.



Five luxury condos are slated to occupy this site in South Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Don Reid, who owns the property on Lakeview Avenue near El

Dorado Beach, was in the audience May 18 in case the council had questions. With him was Gary Midkiff of Midkiff and Associates.

“I hope this summer,” Reid said of when construction will begin. “We still have some hurdles – political and financial.” Construction is expected to take 12 months.

None of the condos has been pre-sold. Reid expects them to range in price form $2 million to $2.5 million. He has bought a large billboard on Highway 50 in the American River canyon that travelers to South Tahoe pass.

The name of the project is Pavati Lakefront. Maybe sales would be going better if www.pavatilakefront.com actually went someplace.

The permitting process has been going for two years, according to Midkiff. One piece that isn’t complete is getting all the agencies to sign off on Reid being able to extend the pier and remove the boathouse.

Four buoys come with the site. Buoys and piers are a big deal at Lake Tahoe because a limited number are available. In essence, they are a commodity unto themselves.

Reid, who lives in Folsom, hired Midkiff because as a former Tahoe Regional Planning Agency employee, he is well versed in how the system works in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Reid has owned the parcel for three years.

Besides the city and TRPA, Midkiff said this project involves Lahontan Regional Water Control Board, California Fish & Game and California State Lands.

“It’s an opportunity to take a parcel that long ago had a house torn down that was not rebuilt and has a three-unit apartment, and hopefully start to improve that neighborhood,” Midkiff said.

The condos are expected to range in size from 1,800- to 2,500-square-feet. Each will have a custom floor plan. Rock and wood will be used extensively inside and out to fit in with the mountains more so than the structure that is there now.

“My dream is for it to be the nicest thing on the lake,” Reid said.

Each unit will have a 150-degree view of Lake Tahoe. The parcel sits right on the lake.

Dining at Bistro Danielle helps fight cancer

Eating and giving to charity at the same time is what Taste of Tahoe is all about.

Bistro Danielle is this week’s restaurant that is donating a portion of profits to the South Shore’s Relay for Life. The offer is good through Saturday.



Zephyr Cove's Bistro Danielle is raising money for Relay for Life.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

For more information about Taste of Tahoe, click here.

South Shore launches summer with slew of activities

The South Shore Summer Series launches the season June 10-13 with a weekend of live music, culinary delights, paddle-wheeler race, concerts and competitions stretching across the shore from Camp Richardson Resort on the west to Zephyr Cove on the east.

Guy Fieri, Food Network superstar and host of NBC's "Minute To Win It", brings his "Rock 'n' Roll Culinary Tour" to Harrah's Lake Tahoe's South Shore Room June 11. Fieri describes his show as "cooking, music and all the things I can't say or do on TV."

Blue Öyster Cult, listed in VH1's countdown as one of the greatest hard rock bands of all time and cited as a major influence by other acts such as Metallica, will perform in Harrah's South Shore Room June 12.



The Ren Faire

returns for two weekend in June at Camp Rich.
Photo/Provided

The 50th anniversary of the opening of the original Playboy Club is June 10. To celebrate, Playboy has invited 50 venues in 50 cities to party with them simultaneously on the exact date the first Playboy Club opened in Chicago in 1960 . Vex Nightclub at Harrah's Lake Tahoe is among the chosen elite. The search for the 50/50 Playboy Bunny title will conclude June 10 at Vex. Tickets are $10 in advance or $20 for men and $10 for women at the door.

Multi-talented world welterweight champion Manny Pacquiao will perform with his band and friends at Harrah's Special Events Center June 12 at 7:30pm. Tickets are $49.50 to $199.50, available at Harrah's or online.

The first stop of the X-Dance Action Sports Film Festival is June 10-12 and features the top international films on wakeboarding, surfing, mountain biking, skateboarding, snowboarding and skiing at Tahoe's MontBleu casino. 968 Park Hotel will host the VIP Opening Night Party, to meet and greet the athletes, filmmakers and the godfather of action sports Warren Miller.

Mark Twain's Wild West Weekend at Zephyr Cove Resort springs into action with frog jumping, poetry reading, interactive stories from Mark Twain, and a mini-triathlon for kids June 12-13. The event's highlight is a Mark Twain Lecture Dinner that Saturday and includes a four-course meal with guest speakers Robert Stewart, author of "Aurora, Nevada's Ghost City of Dawn," and Robert Hirst, general editor and official curator of the Mark Twain Project and Papers. Tickets are $100.

The Great Lake Tahoe Sternwheeler Race churns the waters June 13 as the annual battle between Nevada's M.S. Dixie II and California's Tahoe Queen continues. The M.S.Dixie II leads the series 8-5. www.zephyrcove.com

The fifth annual South Shore Lake Tahoe Geocaching High Tech Treasure Hunt is June 12-13, with nearly 50 prizes stashed throughout the area waiting to be stalked by an anticipated 350-500 ambitious GPS-wielding trackers. Geocaching is an affordable family-friendly activity – it's $20 to rent the GPS for the weekend.

The Valhalla Renaissance Faire, June 5-6 and 12-13, at Camp Richardson Resort brings to life the authentic pleasures and pageantry of an Elizabethan country fair.

The inaugural Great Lake Tahoe Chili Cook-off is sanctioned by the International Chili Society, along with live music and Craft Faire complement the weekend festivities held at MontBleu Resort Casino & Spa. Winners of this event are eligible to compete in next fall's ICS World Championship Cook-off.

Take a step back through time and relive the adventures and rigors of the early pioneers as they forged their way west with the annual Highway 50 Wagon Train. The historical re-enactment of the Great Western Migration is June 5-13, ending in Placerville.

In celebration of its 150th Anniversary, the National Pony Express Association will conduct a re-ride of the Pony Express Trail, June 6-13. The 1,966 mile route follows the Pony Express National Historic Trail through California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas and Missouri.

The Tahoe Derby Dames, Lake Tahoe's only flat track roller derby league, play a demo bout at Bijou Park in South Tahoe for the Roller Derby June 12.

The 46th annual DeCelle Memorial Lake Tahoe Relay race, June 12, consists of 72 mile, seven-person running relay around Lake Tahoe. Each member runs 8-12 miles. This is a nonprofit event and proceeds benefit the local high school running programs.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

• El Dorado County sheriff's Lt. Les Lovell graduated from the state's command college this month.



Les Lovell

• Kings Beach's Char Pit is taking over concessionaire responsibilities at Sand Harbor this summer.

• The Nevada Supreme Court recently appointed Chase International broker salesperson and consultant Michelle Plevel as a mediator to the Nevada Foreclosure Mediation Program.

• South Lake Tahoe employees are set to get a 5 percent raise on Oct. 1 based on union contracts. This would amount to $675,000. Things could change as both sides negotiate a deal.

• Mary Bennington of Gardnerville is now executive director of the Tahoe Rim Trail Association.

Sawmill Pond fishing threatened by lack of cash

By Kathryn Reed

Fishing is a frustrating sport on a good day. But to know there is no way that talking about the one that got away is even possible, could make for a super bad fishing day.

That scenario may take place at Sawmill Pond on the edge of South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County if a funding source is not found to stock the tiny, albeit popular, fishing hole.



A family casts a line at Sawmill Pond on May 25. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Lawsuits filed in the past few years by the Center for Biological Diversity have made it so the county can't get fish from the California Department of Fish & Game. The other requirement is that fish put into Sawmill must have been fixed so they can't procreate.

This is one of two places in California where fishing is

limited to youths 14 and younger. Really, no adults are allowed to cast a line there.

A meeting on May 26 at 5:30pm in the Aspen Room at Lake Tahoe Community College is being put on by the county's Fish and Game Commission to explain the financial situation and find more sponsors.

It costs $6,000 to $8,000 a year to put fish in the pond three or four times a year. The commission gets money from the county via fines it collects from hunters and fishermen, service clubs like Kiwanis and Optimists, and from Nevada Bighorns Unlimited. But the donations are falling short and don't amount to what's needed to have multiple stockings a year.

"If we don't have the money, we'll have to cut back on the stocking," said Karl Weiland, one of seven commissioners.

The other commissioners are Tom Pedersen, Victor Babbitt, Rich Platt, Larry Nelson, John Turner and Kurt Mikkola.

The idea is to have fish in the pond from before Memorial Day until Labor Day.

The annual fishing derby will be June 5 from 8am-noon at Sawmill Pond. For more information about the derby or the stocking issue, call Victor Babbitt at Tahoe Fly Fishing Outfitters at (530) 541.8208.

Rallying support for

Chelsea’s Law

To the community,

In the continuing effort to better protect California’s children from violent sexual predators, I want to urge you to take part in the Chelsea’s Law Petition Drive.

Chelsea’s Law, which you can read about in detail here, is a bill pending before the Legislature. It was named after San Diego teenager Chelsea King, whose life was tragically taken by a convicted sex offender earlier this year.



Ted Gaines

The initial goal of the Chelsea’s Law Petition Drive is to collect 20,000 signatures from across the state. The signed petitions will ultimately be presented to the Legislature as official testimony in support of the bill.

To express your support for this critical measure which will go a long way toward reforming California’s sex offender laws, please print out this petition and circulate it among your family and friends.The petition can be downloaded here and mailed to:

Attention 75th Assembly District

9909 Mira Mesa Blvd., Ste. 130

San Diego, CA 92131

Please return completed petitions by June 10.

Just think – if each of us commits to asking 10 of our friends and neighbors to sign the petition, we can truly demonstrate that we are serious about making changes to protect children from violent sexual predators.

We still have some convincing to do in the Legislature before we can make Chelsea's Law a reality, so we really need your support. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ted Gaines, California Assembly 4th District

Gondola, tubing hill open at Heavenly for 3-day weekend



Heavenly Mountain Resort will operate the gondola Memorial Day Weekend from 10am-4pm for sightseeing, tubing and sledding.

Heavenly's super tubing hill at Adventure Peak at the top of the Gondola will be open all three days from 11am-3pm. Offering two lanes stretching 560 feet with a 65-foot vertical drop, it's the largest tubing operation at Lake Tahoe. The super tubing hill is priced at $30 per hour. Guests must be at least 40-inches tall to ride the super tubing hill.

For the tinier tykes, Heavenly will offer sledding for kids 6 and younger. Pricing is $10 per hour.

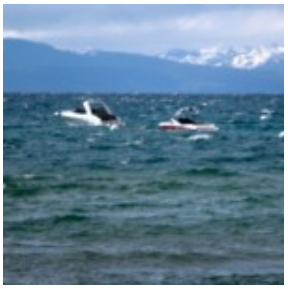
A ride on the Heavenly Gondola transports sightseers to The Deck, a 14,000-square-foot observation platform nestled among massive granite boulders nearly 3,000 feet above the lake, offering views of Desolation Wilderness, Carson Valley and Lake Tahoe.

Heavenly Gondola costs $32 for adults (19 to 64), $26 for seniors (65+) and teens (13 to 18), and $20 for children (5 to 12). Kids 4 and under ride for free.

Watercraft inspection stations opening this weekend in Tahoe

To improve boater services at Lake Tahoe this year, seasonal watercraft inspection stations will open Memorial Day weekend at four designated, roadside locations around Lake Tahoe.

Access to roadside inspection stations are designed increase efficiency at Lake Tahoe boat ramps and increase access to aquatic invasive species decontamination equipment, according to watercraft inspectors.



Boating inspections

are changing
at Lake Tahoe
this summer.

Four roadside inspection stations will be soon opening around the Tahoe Region:

* Alpine Meadows Ski Resort; off Highway 89 on Alpine Meadows Road at the Deer Park parking lot.

* Northstar at Tahoe Resort; off Highway 267 on Northstar Drive at the Castle Peak parking lot.

* Meyers; 2128 Keetak St., near the intersection of highways 89 and 50.

* Spooner Summit; at the intersection of highways 28 and 50. Only vessels less than 26 feet can be accommodated at the Spooner location. Larger vessels can proceed to launch sites.

Signage along the roadways will alert drivers with trailer and car-top vessels of the location of the station so they can avoid waiting in line for an inspection at a boat ramp or marina. The roadside stations are expected to operate from 6am to 8pm daily through the summer boating season. Watercraft inspections and certifications will also continue to be available at all open public and private launch facilities.

“We appreciate the efforts of all boaters to clean, drain and dry their vessels before launching in Tahoe and want to be sure the inspections are convenient and efficient for them,” Tahoe Resource Conservation District Watercraft Inspection Program Coordinator Nicole Cartwright said in a statement. “Roadside inspection locations are crucial to protecting Lake Tahoe from invasive species while improving services.”

Sites have been selected and are being operated in consideration of the surrounding neighborhoods. Noise and parking are being managed by trained inspectors and managers

to reduce impacts to nearby communities.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, in cooperation with the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, is aggressively working to protect Lake Tahoe from the threat of aquatic invasive species. TRPA cooperatively leads the effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region now and in the future. For additional information, call Jeff Cowen at (775) 589.5278 or send an email to jcowen@trpa.org.