Memorial Day weekend DUI checkpoints



The Avoid the 6 DUI Campaign will be deploying officers this holiday weekend at DUI/Driver's License Checkpoints and DUI Saturation Patrols to continue efforts toward arresting drunken drivers, lowering deaths and injuries, and educating the public about the dangers of impaired driving.

As the summer season kicks off at the end of May holiday travelers, college graduates and communities enjoying local festivities are warned that driving drunk won't be tolerated.

The Avoid DUI campaigns are proving successful. Memorial Day weekend alcohol involved deaths and injuries over the past three years have dropped dramatically by more than 26 percent from Memorial Weekend 2007 to 2009.

Data for California over past Memorial Day weekends show 516 people were killed or injured in 2007, 431 in 2008 and 385 in 2009.

The enforcement campaign begins Friday night with a DUI/Driver's License checkpoint in the city of Placerville.

More local DUI Saturation Patrols will be out on Saturday and Sunday nights in South Lake Tahoe and Placerville.

The California Highway Patrol is deploying extra officers Memorial Day weekend onto freeways and county roads in their jurisdiction.

In April, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported another significant annual decline in traffic deaths in California; traffic safety experts are hopeful to

report similar declines in alcohol impaired deaths for 2009 within several months. Funding for the Avoid Campaign is through a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Future of polystyrene in South Tahoe up in the air

By Kathryn Reed

Will Styrofoam be banned from use in South Lake Tahoe?

It's what the Sustainability Commission wants and recommended to the City Council this month. But the council was mum on its opinion about getting rid of the product that many restaurants use for to-go containers.

The problem with polystyrene is it doesn't breakdown.

Another recommendation by commissioners when they spoke May 18 was to have a time period where bags would not be used. The idea is to encourage reusable bags. Much of the last year the commission has talked about wanting to curb the use of plastic and paper bags in the city limits.

During council member comments, Mayor Kathay Lovell suggested the bag-free movement could be tied into August's annual environmental summit.

The commission is also in need of another member because Kirstin Cattell resigned. Two student members may be added as well.

MV Transit set to put brakes on South Shore bus service

Publisher's note: ***Updated May 28, 2010, at 11:55am.***

By Kathryn Reed

MV Transit may walk away from its three-year contract to provide bus service to the South Shore of Lake Tahoe if something isn't done about the more than $2 million it is owed.

The Fairfield-based company entered the contract Aug. 1, 2009. On May 25, the firm gave South Tahoe Area Transit Authority – the coalition it has the contract with – a 60-day termination notice.



Transit on the South Shore has hit a serious roadblock.

The company also informed employees things might soon change. This must be done via the WARN Act. WARN kicks in when 50 or more jobs are eliminated or an entire plant is about to be shuttered. WARN mandates employees be given at least 60 days

notice.

MV has 70 employees on the South Shore. Management is having one-on-one meetings with employees to let them know what is going on.

“We’ve never been current in our billing. It’s just gotten worse,” Thom McAleer, MV general manager, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

A payment plan was in place, but the deficit kept growing.

McAleer is hopeful things can be worked out so MV continues to operate BlueGo, the name of the local bus system.

“This is a fragile situation for MV. MV has never walked away from a contract. We don’t take it lightly,” McAleer said. “But at some point we need to protect ourselves. We need to have assurance that future billings will be current and there will be a solution to the outstanding billing and how they will pay the billing that is in arrears.”

Stacy Dingman, spokeswoman for the STATA board, said the notice to end the contract surprised her.

“Ideally, we will resolve our issues and it will be business as usual except it will be a different operation model that we can afford,” Dingman said. “If we can’t resolve our issues, STATA would operate (the system). Our intention is to flawlessly as possible continue the operation. We will have to make some service changes.”

When MV started it was contracted to provide 96,000 hours of service a year. That has been reduced to 67,000 hours. Whoever operates BlueGo, the Nifty 50 Trolley and the ski shuttles in the future will likely have even fewer hours.

This also means riders will have to adapt to another schedule change with fewer options. Dingman wants riders to have input into future changes.

The STATA board will meet Friday in closed session to discuss the MV situation. Its next regular meeting is June 4 at the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency office in Stateline.

MV first came on board as a temporary operator when ATM abruptly left a couple years ago. Then MV was awarded a long-term contract.

John Andoh was the transit administrator until earlier this year when he was let go by the STATA board. The evaluation committee recommended MV be hired.

Dingman said Andoh was approving expenditures the board knew nothing about. Andoh said that isn't true, that he had been updating the board and had asked MV to defer payments based on a letter dated June 2009. STATA has no reserve fund. It was operating on a cash in, cash out basis.

Another money issue is all the costs associated with getting MV in place because of the disarray ATM left the transit garage in, the buses not all running and other unforeseen expenses.

When it comes to income, most of the grants are for buses, not operating costs. Ridership is down, so the fare box is far from full. The entities that make up STATA – South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado and Douglas counties, Heavenly Mountain Resort, the Stateline casinos and a few others – subsidize the transit operation.

The board approved a cost containment plan in the last year, but McAleer believes it did not go far enough. Nonetheless, he said MV wants to keep operating on the South Shore. The company just wants to be paid for the service it's providing.

Dingman said under no circumstances is the public bus system going away. The need is there and for it to not exist would create more problems, she said.

“It’s not about tourism as much as it’s about residents and the people who are transit dependent,” Dingman said of why BlueGo will continue on.

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2 finalists for WHS principal job to meet with public

By Kathryn Reed

Whittell High School’s new principal could be named June 8.

The two finalists will be at the school May 28 for a meet-and-greet. The first candidate will be on campus at 11:30am, the second at 1pm. The names of the two are not being released until then.

Before arriving in Zephyr Cove they will have been interviewed that morning by interim Superintendent John Soderman and the cabinet. The board could take action in two weeks.

Principal Sue Shannon gave her notice earlier this year.

Lisa Noonan, who has been offered the superintendent job, is being kept in the loop and will be able to offer input into the hiring process of the principal even though she has not signed a contract with Douglas County School District.

Both principal candidates are from Northern Nevada. Neither one is currently employed by the district.

The Friday meetings are informal and not intended as an interview. They are designed as an opportunity for the community to meet the candidates. This is the first time DCSD has done something like this.

Broken line cuts water to 100s in Tahoe Keys area

Hundreds of South Tahoe Public Utility District customers were without water for a couple hours on Tuesday afternoon. The liquid was flowing at 5:50pm

A major water main broke at Tahoe Keys Boulevard and Arizona Street. Officials at the plant didn’t know what caused the brake. No water meter work was being done in this area.

The agency fielded more than 150 calls from people wondering what was going on.

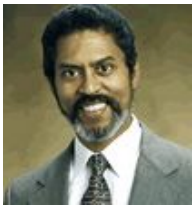
It’s suggested people run an outside line for about 10 minutes to flush out any potential dirt that may have gotten in the line.

LTCC president takes job in Seattle

By Puget Sound Business Journal

Seattle Central Community College has named Paul Tracy Killpatrick its new president.

Killpatrick, currently the superintendent-president of Lake Tahoe Community College in California, will replace Mildred Ollée, who retired after serving seven years at the school.



Paul Killpatrick

Killpatrick has served as president of the Lake Tahoe school for two years.

Read the whole story

Chickenfoot at Harveys in Stateline

Chickenfoot, the hard rockin’ supergroup featuring Sammy Hagar, Joe Satriani, Chad Smith and Michael Anthony, return to the scene of their hit Northern Nevada debut for a blowout concert at the 2010 Lake Tahoe Summer Concert Series at Harveys Outdoor Arena in Stateline on Sept. 11.

Aaron Hagar and The Wabos open the show.

Chickenfoot first performed together at a Sammy Hagar concert in Las Vegas in 2008. Following the show, which included a three-song Chickenfoot set with versions of Led Zeppelin’s “Rock and Roll,” Traffic’s “Dear Mr. Fantasy” and the hard-driving blues nugget, “Going Down,” it was clear that the chemistry was there. Their first album was released in June 2009 to critical acclaim and strong sales. A follow-up CD is planned for release later this year.

Tickets are $59.50 in advance and $65 at the door, plus applicable service charges. Tickets available at all Ticketmaster locations and online at www.apeconcerts.com and www.ticketmaster.com.

Chickenfoot to headline concert at Harveys

Chickenfoot, the hard rockin' supergroup featuring Sammy Hagar, Joe Satriani, Chad Smith and Michael Anthony, return to the scene of their hit Northern Nevada debut for a blowout concert at the 2010 Lake Tahoe Summer Concert Series at Harveys Outdoor Arena in Stateline on Sept. 11.

Aaron Hagar and The Wabos open the show. Tickets go on sale this May 28 at 10 a.m. via TicketMaster outlets, www.ticketmaster.com and www.apeconcerts.com.

Chickenfoot first performed together at a Sammy Hagar concert in Las Vegas in 2008. Following the show, which included a three-song Chickenfoot set with versions of Led Zeppelin's "Rock and Roll," Traffic's "Dear Mr. Fantasy" and the hard-driving blues nugget, "Going Down," it was clear that the chemistry was there. Their first album was released in June 2009 to critical acclaim and strong sales. A follow-up CD is planned for release later this year.

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Lessons about adventurer come to life for Tahoe group

By Laurie Brazil

The enthusiastic and impassioned Carolyn Treanor recently treated guests and members of Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra to the history and background of adventurer and educator Richard Halliburton (1900-1939).

Among many of his accomplishments, he was the author of seven books, all of them New York Times bestsellers. They included: “The Royal Road to Romance”, “The Glorious Adventure”, “New Worlds to Conquer”, “The Flying Carpet, Seven League Boots”, and “The Book of Marvels” – with several remaining on the list until 1938.



Halliburton mingled with the California nobility of his time and among his credentials he was also a cultural ambassador, bringing home to Americans some knowledge of the existence and traditions of foreign people and in turn returning a sense of his own country’s values to the locales he explored. Through the Sea Dragon Expedition he hoped to create a symbolic cultural link between Asia and America, and to show that many societies might meaningfully and peacefully co-exist in one world.

The Sea Dragon 2 Expedition Home Project will commission the building of a Sea Dragon replica in order to trace and complete Halliburton’s failed and fatal attempt to cross the Pacific in March 1939.

Sea Dragon 2 will sail across the Pacific from Hong Kong to

Treasure Island in the San Francisco Bay in 2014 for the 75th anniversary celebration of the opening of the Golden Gate International Exposition, also known as the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair. Treanor stated, "Our goal for the 'Chase the Horizon Project' is to produce a 13-part adventure series and children's animated series with the focus on world geography, history, and culture. The adventure series will be based on the 20th century adventurer Richard Halliburton and the 21st century adventurer Tim Bailey."

Treanor would like to inspire anyone to become involved in this project and she is willing to share her information with any group.

For more information about this event, call Carolyn Treanor at (775) 691.2527 or click here.

Laurie Brazil is a member of Soroptimist International Tahoe Sierra.

Wilderness training for would-be trainers

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association is offering a Leave No Trace Training for Trainers on June 12–13 in Incline Village and D.L. Bliss State Park.

This training will teach not only Leave No Trace wilderness skills and ethics, but also how to share the knowledge with others including teaching techniques and interactive Leave No Trace activities for all ages.

Leave No Trace is a nationally recognized set of principles

designed to encourage wilderness users to walk more lightly on the Earth.

The Leave No Trace Trainer’s Training is geared towards those who would like to take a leadership role in disseminating Leave No Trace principles to others. Appropriate for educators, wilderness professionals, TRTA volunteers, and others.

The course will be an overnight in D.L. Bliss State Park and a $65 donation to the TRTA is encouraged. Dinner and breakfast will be provided.

For more information, contact Mila Dunbar-Irwin at programs@tahoerimtrail.org or (775) 298.0238 or visit www.tahoerimtrail.org.