STPUD water meter meetings

South Tahoe Public Utility District is having two workshops about water meters. The first is April 28 at 6pm; the second is May 1 at 10am.

For more information, click on meters.

Sugar pine planting

Help the Sugar Pine Foundation plant fungus-resistant sugar pine seedlings in Zephyr Cove on May 1.

Meet at the Zephyr Cove Library (233 Warrior Way, Zephyr Cove) at 10am.

Planting instruction, seedlings, tools and refreshments will be provided. If you can, bring your own trowel or a shovel. Kids are welcome.

The event will run from approximately 10am-noon.

The Sugar Pine Foundation is a South Lake Tahoe-based nonprofit organization that is working to restore white pines in the Tahoe basin and surrounding areas. Tahoe's white pines are threatened by a nonnative, incurable fungus called white pine blister rust. The Sugar Pine Foundation finds trees that are resistant to the fungus and plants their progeny.

Imploring the importance of water conservation



To the community,

The Department of Water Resources reminds the public that May is “Water Awareness Month,” a time to appreciate and carefully use the water resources essential to California’s special quality of life.

“Water is vital to California’s people, animals, ecosystems and economy,” noted DWR Director Mark Cowin. “As warm weather and vacation season arrive, the need is greater than ever to use water wisely and practice water conservation.”

DWR, in partnership with the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), will continue to run the ”Save Our Water” program. The program, which was created by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s 2009 drought declaration, aims to educate Californians about easy ways to conserve water indoors and outdoors. Visit the website at www.saveourh2o.org.

Sierra snowpack and winter rainfall increased in much of California in early 2010. As April ended, Sierra snowpack water content statewide topped 130 percent of average for that time of year. But the state still is recovering from three consecutive dry years. Some major reservoirs are lagging below average.

Lake Oroville in Butte County, the key Northern California storage reservoir for the State Water Project (SWP), stands at

just 56 percent of average.

Reflecting these conditions, SWP deliveries for 2010 currently are estimated at 30 percent of the amount requested by the SWP contractors.

If wet weather patterns continue, a slight adjustment to 35 or 40 percent in the final SWP allocation for 2010 could occur.

Water Awareness Month originated during California's 1987-1992 drought to help educate consumers on using water resources efficiently.

During the recent three dry years, many regions activated drought restrictions and intensified their water conservation efforts. As of April 2010, 67 local water agencies in California mandated water conservation while 56 other agencies urged voluntary conservation practices.

In May, DWR will publish its 2009 Update to the California Water Plan, the most comprehensive report available on water issues, including supply and demand, conservation, global warming impacts and water resource

management. Persons interested in reading the report can access it online at www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/cwpu2009.

During May 4-7, DWR officials will participate in ACWA's annual Spring Conference. The association represents about 450 public water agencies that deliver more than 90 percent of California's water supply.

DWR staff will engage in several special Water Awareness Month events at several locations around the state.

California Department of Water Resources

NV Energy posts quarterly net loss

NV Energy Inc. (NYSE: NVE) today announced a consolidated net loss of $1.7 million, or 1 cent per share, for the quarter ended March 31, 2010, compared with a consolidated net loss of $22.2 million, or 9 cents per share, for the quarter ended March 31, 2009.

The improvement in the first quarter 2010 versus the first quarter 2009 was due to an increase in rates as a result of the southern Nevada utility's general rate case, effective on July 1, 2009.

NV Energy's two utilities contributed gross margin of $304.9 million in the first quarter 2010, $21 million higher than the first quarter 2009.

"Much of the first quarter-to-quarter improvement is attributable to our investments in new generating facilities in southern Nevada that are now included in rates," said Michael Yackira, president and chief executive officer of NV Energy.

Headquartered in Las Vegas, NV Energy Inc. is a holding company whose principal subsidiaries, Nevada Power Company and Sierra Pacific Power Company, are doing business as NV Energy. Serving a 54,500-square-mile service territory that stretches north to south from Elko to Laughlin, NV Energy provides a wide range of energy services and products to approximately 2.4 million citizens of Nevada as well as approximately 40 million tourists annually.

Burger night benefits STHS performing arts

South Tahoe High School Burger Night at the Red Hut on Ski Run Boulevard is April 30 from 5-7pm.

The event benefits the South Tahoe High School Performing Arts Booster Association.

Dinner includes a burger (veggie available) homemade chips, beverage and a sundae or root beer float.

Tickets are $10. They can be purchased at the door or from students enrolled in art, music or acting classes. Orders to-go can be placed by calling (530) 544.1595. Tickets are good only on April 30.

K’s Kitchen: Manicotti worthy of a birthday celebration



By Kathryn Reed

Birthdays mean eating what you want and either having someone else make it or take you out for it. At least that’s how I was

brought up. And it’s a tradition that I have carried on into my adult life.

Every April I’m pretty sure I know what Sue will want for her birthday. Every now and then she surprises me, but usually it is manicotti that she requests.

I must admit it wasn’t until we were onto leftovers that I asked her what it is about manicotti that she likes.

“I like the flimsy soft noodles and gooey warm cheese,” Sue said.

Plus, her favorite food group is Italian.

I like that it’s something different than regular spaghetti or a lasagna. And when you are the cook, you can tell the recipient a lot of work went into making it. That’s the other thing I like about this particular recipe – it’s not hard to make. The most time consuming component is stuffing the manicotti shells.

It tends to be one of those recipes that tastes better when the outside temperature is cold – so it works about nine months of the year in Lake Tahoe.

The recipe I use is from “Shared Secrets” that was put out by the Butte-Glenn Medical Society Auxiliary. My sister, Jann, used to be a member. Betty Wang submitted the manicotti recipe for the cookbook, which was a fundraiser for the auxiliary.

One thing I like to do to make this and so many recipes come together faster is let someone else do a bit of the legwork. I don’t have a problem buying grated cheese, or sliced mushrooms or chopped olives. It saves me time.

The recipe, I just realized as I’m typing it, calls for canned mushrooms. I’ve never used canned mushrooms for anything. I throw fresh sliced ones on top.

I think with how cheesy this is, it is better to serve the Parmesan on the side.

Manicotti

1 (10 oz.) pkg. chopped frozen spinach, thawed

½ lb. Ricotta cheese

1½ C grated Monterey Jack cheese

1½ tsp Italian seasonings

1/8 tsp nutmeg

½ C chopped olives

16 manicotti shells

3½ C mushroom spaghetti sauce

1 (4 oz.) can slice mushrooms

½ C grated Parmesan cheese

Squeeze spinach until dry. Combine spinach, Ricotta and Jack cheeses, Italian seasoning, nutmeg and olives. Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling water for 10-12 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water. Stuff each shell with cheese mixture until full – don’t worry if shell splits, just put the open seam on the bottom of the pan. Pour half of the spaghetti sauce into the bottom of a 9×13 pan. Place the filled pasta shells in the baking dish. Pour the remaining sauce on top of the shells. Garnish with mushroom slices.

Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until sauce bubbles.

Sprinkle on Parmesan.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

• Jay Chung, a doctor of internal medicine who specializes in rheumatology, has joined Barton Health.



Jay Chung

• North Tahoe Public Utility District has launched a website featuring North Tahoe parks, including North Tahoe Regional Park, local beaches, boat launches, and bike trails. The district has revamped its own website, too.

• The door continues to revolve at a restaurant near the South Lake Tahoe Y. It was a bakery then a Chinese restaurant and is about to be a Thai restaurant.

• Christmas Cheer has moved to 1120 Third St. in South Lake Tahoe.

Barton CEO paints bleak

picture for health care

By John Williams

How is America’s health care reform going to affect the health care marketplace? That’s the big question being asked by hundreds of health care providers across the nation just like Barton Health.

According to the California Hospital Association, there are 54 million Americans – including 7 million Californians – who are without health care insurance. As a nonprofit health care provider, Barton Memorial Hospital is dedicated to treating everyone who comes in the door, regardless of their ability to pay. Our goal is to provide high-quality care for everyone by offering affordable, medically necessary care consistently in all of our facilities.



John Williams

However, with the uninsured population steadily on the rise, coupled with Medicaid policy changes, cutbacks in public and other subsidies, and a downturn in the number of fulltime residents and visiting tourists, health care for Lake Tahoe has been on rocky ground for the past year.

This unfortunate trend is expected to continue through 2011. Failure to support the local providers could cause our health system to dwindle in services offered, significantly impacting uninsured people and our entire community.

Take a moment to imagine South Lake Tahoe without services like an emergency department to treat unexpected, life-threatening conditions or a family birthing center to attend to delivering moms and their newborns.

Picture our community without the Barton Community Clinic, which sees thousands of uninsured and underinsured patients each year.

Would employers be able to recruit qualified candidates for positions if a solid health care foundation were not in town?

Discounted health programs like wellness lab draws, discounted EKGs, free health screening and H1N1 vaccination clinics would no longer be available. Patients would be required to travel significant distances for all their health care needs. Barton would not be here to provide financial assistance to help pay for medical care for those who cannot afford medical coverage.

When painted, the health care picture in South Lake Tahoe without a local community hospital is bleak. Unfortunately, the current reform is not going to strengthen the position of our health care providers.In fact, most hospitals may still see a larger financial hit with further deterioration in their balance sheets. Budget cuts to California's Medi-Cal program in 2009 have put patients and our hospitals at even greater risk.

Already in the works are further decreases in reimbursements for Medicare and more than likely Medi-Cal. The new Medi-Cal reimbursement cuts are further eroding an already under-funded program. Medi-Cal ranks last in the nation in payments to health care providers. California's community hospitals lost $2.8 billion in 2007 from inadequate payments for care provided to Medi-Cal patients and that loss continues to climb.

Adding to the financial strain, the current federal budget calls for payment delays to doctors and hospitals. For some

hospitals, such delays meant laying off health care workers, suspending services and perhaps closing altogether. Barton Health has been forced to look at cost containment including some cuts to employee benefits, layoffs and consolidation of services. These fiscal measures were necessary to ensure that Barton Health continues to function as a viable, competitive health care provider offering the highest level of quality care possible and employment for 925 community members.

Health care reform is needed to help broaden the reach of access to medical services for all Americans. At Barton, we are dedicated to working with the current reform bill for the benefit of our community and our hospital. We plan to consistently look at our services and streamline where there are opportunities, in an effort to survive the volatile climate of health care in our country and provide comprehensive services to our community. We will continue to seek grants and take advantage of rural health benefits, so that we can continue our dedication to enhancing performance and customer service, continue to recruit highly-trained physicians and purchase the latest technology.

John Williams is chief executive officer for Barton Health. He is also on the board of directors of the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California.

Reservoir experiment may change how milfoil is controlled



By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Experts plan this summer to try a new way to eradicate an invading underwater weed spreading throughout Lake Tahoe and the Truckee River.

The experiment at Martis Creek Reservoir, located south of Truckee, will target Eurasian watermilfoil. If it is successful, it could be employed elsewhere – including in the Truckee River, where the plant poses a potential threat to water intakes serving the region's primary water supply system.

"Definitely we don't want it to get worse. We'd like to control it," said Mark Foree, general manager of the Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

Read the whole story

LTUSD kindergarten registration

Kindergarten registration for Lake Tahoe Unified School District is May 10-14. The child must be 5 on or before Dec. 2, 2010.

California Law requires that:

1. You bring child’s birth certificate;

2. You bring proof of immunizations, which includes the Varicella (Chicken Pox), Hepatitis B and for most children – the last booster shot.

3. Your child has a health examination upon entry to school [schedule with your family doctor or El Dorado County Health Department at (530) 573.3155.

4. Your child has an oral health examination upon entry to school (or signed waiver) (dental examinations that have occurred in the last 12 months meet this requirement)

5. You bring proof of California residency.

Call your neighborhood school to make an appointment to pre-register:

Bijou Community School 543.2337

Sierra House Elementary 543.2327

Tahoe Valley Elementary 543.2350

Environmental Science Magnet School 543.2371