Aramark in line to provide food to Reno schools

Publisher's note: ***Aramark operates the two South Shore paddle-wheelers and runs Zephyr Cove Resort.***

By Michael Martinez, Reno Gazette-Journal

Washoe County School District staff wants to hire a new company to manage food services, ending a near decade relationship with multinational company Sodexo.

Aramark, which provides food service and management for about 500 school districts nationwide, was recommended by a committee of a parent, teacher, nutritionist, administrator and the finance office, said Gary Kraemer, the district's chief financial officer.

Read the whole story

Photo exhibit captures off-beat Nevada



Sierra Nevada College is hosting the exhibit "Stop the Car, Dad!" a series of photographs by artist Erik Lauritzen.

While traveling the often deserted roads of Nevada, photographer Lauritzen was captivated by the evidence of human

presence affecting the Western landscape. From abandoned military installations to roadside vernacular architecture, the sites Lauritzen photographed reveal a certain irony often underlying everyday encounters in the Nevada desert.

“Stop the Car, Dad!” is on display through May 21 at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village, Prim Library, main floor.

The series “Stop the Car, Dad!” takes its name from the moment of curiosity that often accompanies the discovery of a roadside attraction. Whether bizarre, beautiful, or disturbing, these unexpected sites are strangely alluring. Lauritzen’s images in particular record places where development has given way to dilapidation. Now abandoned, these way stations are evidence of the “boom and bust” lifestyle accompanying the mining industry of Nevada.

Solitary signs and deserted buildings emerge as intriguing records of history. Lauritzen often traveled the Silver State as part of the Nevada Arts Council’s Artist in Residence Program.

Lauritzen founded the photography department at Truckee Meadows Community College and is founding director and curator of the Red Mountain Gallery.

Organized by the Nevada Arts Council, “Stop the Car, Dad!” is part of the Nevada Touring Initiative – Traveling Exhibition Program, and is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Nevada State Legislature. The Nevada Arts Council is a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

For more information or to schedule a group visit, please contact Library Director Betts Markle at emarkle@sierranevada.edu or (775) 881.7511.

Lake Tahoe ski report, April 9



Enjoy the spring weather because it is not going to last through the weekend. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Lower Kingsbury Grade aims to improve infrastructure

By Kathryn Reed

MINDEN – A wish list of more than $64 million worth of improvements to the Lower Kingsbury Grade area is circulating among Douglas County officials and property owners.

“It’s a major public policy decision to create a district like this,” Douglas County Manager Michael Brown said. “We would use the tax increment for water quality and transportation improvements.”

With papers scattered about him in his Minden office, all that was missing was a crystal ball to know how the proposed tax increment area might actually transform the Stateline area.



Douglas County Manager Michael Brown talks about the TIA. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The TIA has been talked about for close to two years. A decision to go forward or not needs to be made by the commissioners by September to have everything in order for that next fiscal year, 2011-12.

At the April 15 Board of Commissioners meeting county staff will update the elected officials with the proposed list of projects.

The tax increment area is somewhat of a hybrid of what the city of South Lake Tahoe is trying to do with its proposed redevelopment area No. 2 and what Ski Run Boulevard has done with creating a business improvement district.

Besides the TIA, in Nevada a special assessment district could be created. The major difference between a TIA and SAD is funding for the SAD comes from additional fees or charges to properties in the area.

A redevelopment area could also be designated instead of a TIA. Differences include properties in a RDA being able to opt out of the plan, no taxing agencies are exempt and there is more flexibility in what can be funded.

With a TIA, it means Douglas County School District would not

be impacted.

The TIA works on tax increment just like redevelopment in South Lake Tahoe. A base line year is established. From then on entities in the plan area that receive a portion of property tax dollars would be locked into that rate for the most part. As property values increase, the increased property taxes that are collected go to the TIA or redevelopment area.

Click on map to see the proposed area outlined in pink.

In the case of Lower Kingsbury Grade, if the TIA were approved, the money would go toward capital improvement and water/environmental quality projects.

“A tax increment area is helping me look at what projects I might do and how the Lower Kingsbury area might change,” Mike Bradford, who runs Lakeside Inn and Casino, said. “It provides some funding for improvements, like sidewalks and particularly for drainage.”

All jurisdictions in the basin must do a certain amount of Environmental Improvement Projects to comply with Tahoe Regional Planning Agency mandates. The TIA could help Douglas County fund its share of those projects.

“It’s something the county, TRPA and property owners have been working on,” TRPA spokesman Dennis Oliver said. “(The TIA) could be used for water quality.”

Some of the proposed projects include stream environmental restoration to Edgewood and Burke creeks as well as improving run-off from area roads.



Overhead wires on Kahle Drive may disappear if the Tax Increment Area is created.

Capital improvement projects might include putting overhead utilities underground on Kahle Drive. If Lakeside Inn goes forward with plans to overhaul its hotel and have rooms with a view, it would mean an unobstructed vista over Rabe Meadow if the lines went away.

Improving Kahle Drive would also mean a more inviting entry to Tahoe Beach Club; another planned development that has been stalled by the economy.

Money could also go toward improving the loop road around the Stateline casinos.

The TIA would be for 30 years. The amount collected in that time is unknown. It’s determined by the base year and how fast values go up.

JNA Consulting Group out of Boulder City in Southern Nevada has come up with a few scenarios. They are contingent on when three major developments – Sierra Colina, Edgewood Hotel and Tahoe Beach Club – come onto the tax role. Those properties will be valued higher when construction is complete. That property tax will help fuel a large part of the TIA.

Brown acknowledged that for the TIA now would be a good time to create it because property values are stagnant and

therefore as the economy picks up, the tax increment will accordingly. However, he points out, this could be a negative for the rest of Douglas County because it will not reap the benefits of those gains.

He said it is something the commissioners have been discussing. Commissioner Nancy McDermid, who has been a proponent of the TIA, did not return phone calls or emails.

Spread of casinos continues to take its toll

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the April 7, 2010, Reno Gazette-Journal.***

It was only about 30 years ago that Nevada admitted that the gaming genie was out of the bottle and would never go back in.

That's when Nevada, which had long enjoyed a monopoly on casino gambling among the states, agreed to allow gaming companies doing business here to join the gold rush that followed New Jersey voters' decision to authorize casinos in Atlantic City.

It all seems rather quaint today as Nevadans tally up the damage that the spread of casinos has done to their home-grown gaming industry, as well as the collateral damage to state and local governments that long depended on gaming taxes to pay the bills.

Read the whole story

‘Fire’ exhibit at LTCC



Artist Peter Goin will have an exhibit at the Haldan Art Gallery at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe from April 15-June 18.

The opening reception is April 15 from 6–8pm.

There will be an artist’s talk April 15 from 5–7pm in the Aspen Room.

The title of the exhibit is “Fire” and is chromogenic development print in 16-inch by 20-inch.

Th Haldan Art Gallery is open Tuesday-Thursday, 11am-5:30pm; Friday from 11am-2:30pm.

The gallery is free and open to the public.

1-mile trail to link North-West shores of Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

In the 1970s the predominant thinking was a bike trail through Tahoe City was not feasible. By the late 1980s the conceptual design for Lakeside Trail was drawn. In 2010 the final funding

piece has been approved for the last 1.1 miles of trail that will connect the existing 17 miles of trails on the North and West shores.

Cindy Gustafson, general manager of Tahoe City Public Utility District, shed tears of joy when she addressed the California Tahoe Conservancy board last month after the funding was approved.

“People use these trails for work, recreation and shopping,” Gustafson said. She has been working on bike trails since joining TCPUD in 1991.

Up to $2.5 million of CTC money has been allocated for the final phase. Bond sales in California will pay for it. Because the money in not in hand, a start date can’t be set.

The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association has put up $1.075 million and another $727,000 is needed for all of the improvements.

If the money does not come this building season, it’s possible bids will be sought in the fall, with construction slated for 2011.

“A boardwalk will enable people to cross streams and go through sensitive areas,” explained Peter Eicher of the CTC.

A 10-foot wide Class 1 trail is planned.

“Some areas of the trail will be constructed using standard trail construction techniques involving the placement of a minimum of 6 inches of aggregate base material with 3 inches of concrete-asphalt. Trail signage and lighting will be included to address public safety,” the staff report says.

Paving stones will be used at intersections with the idea the change in surface will alert users to pay attention ahead. Plus, water can permeate them.

A dirt trail exists now, but it’s rugged enough that people often need to walk their bikes. Plus, it is disrupting the natural vegetation and does not provide for that continuous path for cyclists.

This last section of trail is close to the lake. It’s near the Tahoe City Marina and will link to the campground on the edge of town.

K’s Kitchen: Mom’s Rice Soup



By Kathryn Reed

So many recipes are seasonal either because of the ingredients or the weather outside. With winter being at least a six-month long season in Lake Tahoe, soup is always a good choice.

Many soups are relatively easy to make and don’t involve going up and down every aisle of the grocery store. One I like in particular is from my mom.

On the recipe she hand wrote for me years ago it says, “Mom’s Rice Soup, since 1955”.

That was the year she and dad got married so I thought there might be a fun story behind the recipe. Mom doesn’t recall where the recipe came from – so no fun story for now. With it being “Mom’s” recipe, she certainly has taken ownership of it. And I’m OK with that.

Neither mom nor dad had the soup as children, so it hasn't been in the family many generations.

"It's perfect for when you don't feel good," mom said. I remember her fixing it for me as a kid when I was sick. That's probably why I consider it one of my comfort foods.

We both like that we usually have all the ingredients in the house – no matter the season. It's fast and easy to make, too.

Mom's Rice Soup – serves 3-4

4 C water

2-4 tsp or cubes bouillon

1 medium to large carrot, grated

1 small to medium onion, chopped fine

1 stalk celery, chopped fine

1/3 to 1/2 C uncooked rice

Bring all ingredients to a boil and continue boiling very gently for 30 minutes.

'Documentary Papers, Stories of Undocumented Youth'

As part of Global Youth Service Day, Lake Tahoe Community College's H.O.P.E. club, in association with the Boys and Girls Club of South Lake Tahoe, is screening "Documentary Papers, Stories of Undocumented Youth" on April 24 at 6pm in the Duke Theatre at LTCC.

“Papers” is the story of undocumented young adults and the educational challenges they face, for there is no form of state and/or federal financial aid they can count on to continue with their dream of higher education.

For more information on this documentary, visit www.papersthemovie.com

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Former Zephyr Cove priest’s lawsuit tossed

By Martha Bellisle, Reno Gazette-Journal

A Washoe District Court judge has thrown out a lawsuit filed by a Catholic priest who claimed the Diocese of Reno and its bishop defamed and wrongly fired him after he raised concerns about a deacon and alleged death threats.

In his order, Judge Patrick Flanagan granted the diocese’s motion to dismiss the case filed by Richard DeMolen, the former pastor of Our Lady of Lake Tahoe church in Zephyr Cove, saying the First Amendment prevents a court from becoming involved in a contractual dispute involving a religious organization.

Jeffrey Dickerson, DeMolen’s lawyer, said they plan to appeal the ruling.

Read the whole story