STHS construction zone about to be teaching center

By Kathryn Reed

An excitement was in the air as more than a dozen people toured the Construction, Arts and Transportation Academy at South Tahoe High School. Between now and April 18 the final touches will be put on the building that will welcome students April 19.

Between the $64.5 million bond approved by voters in November 2008 and the more than $30 million Lake Tahoe Unified School District will receive from the state in matching grant dollars, the facilities in the district are being transformed. Most of the dramatic changes are occurring at the high school, though ever school will reap the benefits of the bond.



STHS Principal Ivone Larson, center, begins a tour of the CAT building. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Angela Swanson, former board member and now consultant for the architectural team, gave the committee an update on state dollars. With bond sales going well in March, $4.3 million should be in LTUSD’s coffers in June. Although the state has

approved $30 million in matching funds for LTUSD, much of the money is not in hand.

On Wednesday it was the bond oversight committee's opportunity to tour one of the two buildings currently under construction at South Tahoe High. The other building is in the back of the campus called Stadium View because it overlooks the football field.

(Click here for more info on both buildings and some history.)

The committee is tasked with making sure the dollars are spent appropriately. Proposition 39 mandates the district do the projects outlined in the bond proposal. This means as board members change, pet projects cannot be introduced. What can change is an expansion of what's in the bond, which is how the sports medicine building can become a reality.

"This is a building like you've never seen in this district," STHS Principal Ivone Larson told the group as they entered the CAT building.

Joe Stewart of SMC Contracting was part of the tour.



Contractor Joe Stewart, center, speaks with Josh Mercow and Harold Singer on Wednesday.

“The complexity of the building was a challenge. But ultimately the complexity is the beauty of the building,” Stewart told *Lake Tahoe News*. “The CMU (concrete masonry unit) is structural, but it’s also part of the design.”

The concrete blocks will help with energy costs because of how they retain heat. Solar was looked at, but it didn’t pencil out.

Natural light filters in from the multitude of windows. Studies have been done that prove people learn better with natural light instead of under fluorescents.

“Smart lighting controls the system. It will sense occupancy and daylight harvesting,” LTUSD Facilities Director Steve Morales said. This will save on energy bills.



Views from the art room.

Instructors will be able to control the lighting as well. It’s possible to dim the lights over the students so the focus is on the teaching wall.

Smart boards may be the one item not installed when classes begin after spring break.

Even what the floors are made out of was given careful consideration. A rubber floor with resins that will eliminate the need for them to be refinished are in the construction area. The arts section has a concrete floor with a finish for durability and ease of cleaning.



Construction, Arts and Transportation building at STHS.

It doesn’t look like your typical auto shop or construction learning area. The exterior blends with the environment. It’s neither over-the-top Tahoe architecture, nor the typical institutional design.

The views from where the art students will study are stunning – or perhaps, inspiring, as Larson put it.

Committee member Amanda Adams asked whether the campus could be used as a demo-learning area for locals needing to put in BMPs, the erosion prevention measures.

Morales said part of the revegetation plan was designed by students and will be implemented by them as well.

By being three months ahead of schedule it means Stewart and his guys will be able to start demolition of the little theater the first week of May, with asbestos abatement beginning April 12.



LTUSD Facilities Director Steve Morales explains the intricacies of the building.

A special groundbreaking ceremony for the performing arts-media building will be May 21.

Replacement of the tennis courts should begin July 1, with players able to use them by Aug. 15.

The school board is having a special meeting April 6 to vote on contracts for projects that are in the pipeline.

Eating local key to saving farming land

By Helen Thompson, Sacramento Bee

Why is agriculture vital to the Sacramento region?

To start, our region's farms help feed the world. Roughly half of the nation's specialty crops come from California, while more than 28 percent of the state's production is shipped overseas. Agriculture also is one of the few regional bright spots in this recession, increasing about $300 million in value – a 22 percent jump since 2006.

Read the whole story

SLT Women’s Center brings awareness to sexual assault

To the community,

April is Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Prevention Month. This month, South Lake Tahoe Women’s Center is raising funds to support our local Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). The team promotes the health and healing of adult and child sexual assault victims, holds sex offenders accountable for their crimes, and helps prevent further sexual violence from happening in South Lake Tahoe.

Our El Dorado County SART is a multidisciplinary group of local professionals that include Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), South Lake Tahoe Women’s Center advocates, law enforcement, and the District Attorney’s Office, who work together to care for adult and child survivors of sexual assault and child abuse and hold the offender accountable in the criminal justice system.

Our El Dorado County SART has been in operation for more than 15 years. When one of our community members is the victim of any form of sexual violence, the Sexual Assault Response Team is called into action. Each agency responds to the different needs of the victim through the medical, reporting, legal and healing process.

Currently our SART is missing a key component and this is having a direct impact on children in South Lake Tahoe. There are currently no child Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners at Barton Memorial Hospital. When a young child has survived sexual abuse and needs to have a medical exam for evidence and wellbeing, they must travel more than two hours from South

Lake Tahoe to Nevada where there is a hospital with a SANE on staff. In California, the closest hospital is in Oakland.

For adults, we only have two SANEs, which aren't enough to cover the need, and adults must travel to Nevada as well. This means that after the victim has been sexually assaulted they must travel more than two hours for medical attention to address the unique needs of a sexual violence victim. This is unacceptable.

Throughout April the Women's Center will be having various events and fundraisers to raise funds to support the El Dorado SART. We need your financial support to send registered nurses to training to become Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and to purchase equipment for evidence collection. With these desperately needed funds, victims of sexual assault will be spared the emotionally taxing wait to receive services. It is our responsibility as a community to support our most vulnerable members, so victims will be supported right here in South Lake Tahoe within minutes of the sexual assault disclosure.

Please call Leanne Wagoner for more information on how you can help at (530) 544.2118; visit our website at www.sltwc.org for the calendar of events scheduled for April; or stop by our business office at 2941 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Leanne Wagoner, executive director of the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center

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Holocaust survivor to speak

at LTCC

The American Association of University Women and Lake Tahoe Community College Library present author and Holocaust survivor Paul Schwarzbart on April 10 at 10am in the Aspen Room.

Schwarzbart survived the Holocaust as one of the so-called “Hidden Children.” As a boy growing up in Belgium, he escaped the concentration camps by taking on a new identity and hiding out at a Catholic school.

By pretending to be a Catholic schoolboy, his life was spared. But the pain and loneliness of living under a false identity, and not knowing what had happened to his parents, took its toll.

Schwarzbart wrote about his experiences in his heartbreaking, yet hope-filled book, “Breaking the Silence: Reminiscences of a Hidden Child.”

A movie detailing his life will be shown as well, and light refreshments will be served.

Stricter rules for Lake Tahoe boaters

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

More than a decade after Lake Tahoe regulators banned polluting two-stroke Jet Skis and two years after boat inspections commenced to guard Tahoe from invading plants and animals, officials are poised to take the next step to protect

the lake from boating impacts.

Last week, governors of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency took on a long-discussed “blue boating” program designed to offset the environmental effects of motorboats cruising the famous Sierra lake.



The Blue Boating Program on Lake Tahoe begins in April. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The program is designed to protect Tahoe from various problems associated with boating, including engine emissions and noise, dirty bilges and sewage discharge.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Paddle Fest

Tahoe Paddle Fest at El Dorado Beach in South Lake Tahoe is June 25-27.

Celebrate the second annual Tahoe Paddle Fest with non-

motorized watercraft from around the world. There will be demonstrations, competitive paddling events, boat skills workshops and exhibitions that feature indigenous boat building and crafts. An engaging celebration of native crafts, arts, culture, live music, and entertainment.

Death Ride

Tour of the California Alps – Death Ride – is July 10.

One of the premier cycling events in the West, the Alpine County Chamber of Commerce and the Alta Alpina Cycle Club invite you to participate in the 29th anniversary of the "Death Ride." It begins and ends at Turtle Rock Park north of Markleeville.

South Tahoe Fine Arts Festival

Festival of Fine Arts at South Tahoe Middle School is July 10-11.

This outdoor festival will include fine-art booths, food vendors, children's art activities, entertainment and fun for the entire family.

Parking and admission are free.

American Century Celebrity Golf Tournament

American Century Celebrity Golf Championship at Edgewood

Tahoe Golf Course in Stateline is July 13-18.

The most prestigious and richest celebrity tournament in golf. Get up close and personal with celebrities while enjoying the magnificent views from Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. Past participants include Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley, John Elway, Jerry Rice and Jack Wagner.

Hot August Nights

Hot August Nights comes to the South Shore July 30-Aug. 1.

Celebrate America’s love affair with classic cars and rock ‘n’ roll. Daily show-n-shines with cash and trophy awards, poker walks, cool car showroom, classic car auction, automotive exhibits, special night time cruising, swap meet, sock hop/prom, and free ’50s and ’60s live entertainment.