

Drug Store Project promotes healthy choices

To the community,

On March 30, 325 6th-grade students from South Tahoe Middle School, St. Theresa and Zephyr Cove Elementary participated in another successful drug prevention demonstration called The Drug Store Project.

A massive project like this is only successful thanks to the time, effort and financial support of many who care. In fact, the many consisted of 38 agencies and more than 150 volunteers all with the same concern; providing our youth with information to prevent them from ever becoming involved with drugs.



Tahoe-Douglas
fire Capt. Jim
Anti, who is
part of the
bomb squad
talks safety
with kids
Tuesday.

Photo/Laurie
Brazil

The Drug Store Project is a reality-based demonstration which focuses on "choices". We as adults can teach information

concerning the dangers of drugs to our children, we can intervene when we know something is occurring, but it is the individual child who will make the choice when the time comes. We hope that learning how choices affect not only them, but the many friends and family who love them, will help children to make the right choices for their futures.

On behalf of Tahoe Youth & Family Services I'd like to thank the amazing volunteers who participated in this year's event. I'd also like to thank the following agencies which make this program happen: Barton Health, Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement, California Conservation Corps, CalSTAR, California Highway Patrol, California National Guard/DDR, Douglas County Probation, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, El Dorado Community Foundation, El Dorado County District Attorney's Office, El Dorado County Mental Health, El Dorado County Probation, El Dorado County Public Defender's Office, El Dorado County Public Health, El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, El Dorado County Superior Court, Embassy Suites South Lake Tahoe, Harrah's Harveys Lake Tahoe, Harrah's HEROs, Kiwanis, KTHO, Lake Tahoe Community College, Lake Tahoe Unified School District, Lake Valley Fire Protection District, McFarlane Mortuary, Optimist, Partnership of Community Resources, Pro Leisure, Rotary, St. Theresa School, Sierra Community Church, Soroptimist, South Lake Tahoe Fire Department, South Lake Tahoe Police Department, STHS Friday Night Live, STMS Leadership, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, and Vitality Lake Tahoe.

The collaboration of the Lake Tahoe area is an example for other cities and counties. We are fortunate to live in such a caring community.

I am honored to be a part of your team.

Lisa Huard, Drug Store Project coordinator

Tahoe Youth & Family Services

Lake Tahoe ski report, March 31



Freshies is the word of the day. More snow is coming down. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

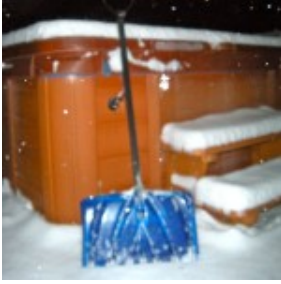
Mother Nature's March madness

By Kathryn Reed

Snow is continuing to fall this morning in the Lake Tahoe Basin. A winter weather advisory is in effect until 1pm today. A half inch has fallen between 6:30-7am on the South Shore.

"We won't see warm weather return for a little while," Brian O'Hara, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Reno, told *Lake Tahoe News* this morning.

He said it could be a couple weeks before Tahoe starts to see spring again.



Hot tubs are going to be needed after all the shoveling.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

On the South Shore at lake level about 9 inches have fallen in the last 24 hours. Reno recorded a trace.

Higher elevations – this includes the ski resorts – are reporting more than a foot of the white stuff. This means winter ski conditions have returned and the stop-and-go ice-slush that was on the slopes last weekend had been covered up.

Winds won't be a problem like they were on Tuesday. Just after midnight, though, some gusts of 40mph were being reported.

Chain controls are up around most roads leading into and out of the basin. On Tuesday Kingsbury Grade was like an ice rink with bumper cars as vehicles kept spinning out and running into each other. Highway 89 around Emerald Bay is closed this morning because of avalanche danger.

Assemblyman Ted Gaines reported seeing an SUV flipped over on Highway 50 on his way to Tahoe Tuesday afternoon.

The Sierra Avalanche Center's rating is "considerable" – meaning expert evaluation skills are needed.

For those flying out of Reno-Tahoe International Airport, call ahead because flights were delayed on Tuesday.

Unsettled weather will be here for the next several days. Another system will move through the Lake Tahoe area, bringing a chance of showers on Thursday and Friday. A high pressure will build a little before the following storm comes Sunday night.

Bundle up because the high today is expected to be 33 degrees, 36 on Thursday and in the low 40s for Easter weekend.

National honor for Tahoe Senior Plaza



Tahoe Senior Plaza Inc. recently received national recognition as a Community of Quality for outstanding management of Tahoe Senior Plaza in South Lake Tahoe.

Through the Communities of Quality National Recognition program, affordable multifamily rental properties can be certified as having achieved a high standard of excellence in the way they are maintained and managed, the services they provide residents, the experience and training of personnel, and other criteria.

To be recognized as a National Community of Quality by the National Affordable Housing Management Association a property must receive a high score based on: physical inspections; employee credentials; financial management; programs and services; endorsements; and photographs and reports.

Tahoe Senior Plaza was honored for resident services and

programs, such as flu clinics, van trips, holiday parties, monthly commodities for residents, community involvement donating time to entertain residents with music, art and dance. Using the Plaza for local sign ups for HEAP, educational speakers, community awareness groups.

Among the endorsements received by Tahoe Senior Plaza Inc. were those from long time residents Gloria Shindelbower and Lorayne Taylor; David Kelly, board president of TSP as well as chairman of TACCD; John Phillipsbury, senior vocational rehabilitation counselor for the state of California and long term secretary of TSP; and Delicia Spees and Daniel Masellones, TSP board members.

“There are thousands of providers of affordable multifamily housing in the nation,” NAHMA President Jim McGrath said in press release. “Tahoe Senior Plaza Inc. is among the select few that have achieved the very highest standard of excellence in property management and in the provision of services to lower-income families. These services enable residents to attain high levels of self-sufficiency and success in their lives and for their families. The work done by Tahoe Senior Plaza Inc. is a credit to its entire community.”

K-Tahoe card provides easy to redeem discounts



Free is the operative word when it comes to the K-Tahoe card.

It's free to get. Nothing to fill out. No code to remember. Using it at various businesses will bring more free things or at least discounts.

No coupons to cut, no to ink to wash off. No worries someone is tracking your usage and going to market some obscure product to you in the future.

KTHO FM-96.1/AM-590 is giving away the cards at the radio station (2520 Lake Tahoe Blvd.) in the Swiss Chalet Village in South Tahoe.

Participating businesses will be on the station's website and touted on air so the consumer knows where to go to get whatever the deals of the day or month are.

A date night has been created with Horizon casino – 15 percent off at any restaurant and then a movie ticket for \$7.50 instead of the normal \$10.

Blue Angel Café is offering a free bowl of chowder or house salad.

Les Schwab will rotate tires for free or give a six-point inspection.

Several other businesses are on board. To participate, call (530) 543.0590. To get a card, which fits in a wallet and looks like a credit card, stop by the station.

Gaines predicts worst is not over for California

By Kathryn Reed

Even though Ted Gaines considers himself an optimist, he painted a bleak picture when it comes to state government.

“Because of regulations, taxation issues and demographics there are a lot of state programs that are costly,” the Republican assemblyman from Roseville said. “We need to do a lot of work to get from point A to point B to restore the luster of California.”

Gaines drove to South Lake Tahoe on Tuesday afternoon in a blizzard to speak with more than two dozen constituents assembled at Lake Tahoe Community College. Nearly three hours after his talk started he was on his way back to Sacramento.



Assemblyman
Ted Gaines
answers
questions
Tuesday at
LTCC.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

He plans to introduce a bill modeled after one adopted by British Columbia, Canada, which was able to reduce the number of laws on the books by 43 percent in two years. In BC, they also had to take away a bill for every new one.

Gaines connected with many in the audience when he talked about having six children, four of whom are in college. He touched on owning an insurance business for 27 years, and understanding the pains of the economy and stranglehold of state and federal regulations.

He said he is looking at ways the state can help businesses and entrepreneurs, whether it's through more laws or backing away.

South Lake Tahoe Councilman Hal Cole asked about the proposed tax on independent contractors.

Gaines said nothing has been brought to the committee level, but ideas are percolating.

"I would be vigilant and keep an eye on it," Gaines told Cole.

El Dorado County sheriff's Lt. Les Lovell asked about the pending legislation to protect snow removal dollars.

Gaines said he is worried the state will take more dollars from cities to balance the \$21 billion deficit. His bill would protect snow removal funds. The bill has yet to reach the first committee meeting.

Mayor Kathay Lovell asked how cities would fare in upcoming state budget talks.

"I think there will be pressure at all levels. I think you will see a reduction in services," Gaines said.

From there Gaines delved into his opinions about the state prison system – don't let inmates out early, don't give them Cadillac medical care plans.

The assemblyman all but said he doesn't like Proposition 98, which guarantees a set amount of funding for education. Instead, he would like to give districts block grants for them to spend how they want.

"We are constantly micromanaging," Gaines said of government.

However, to Leanne Wagoner's question about what is going to be done about the continued cuts to domestic violence programs, he told the executive director of South Lake Tahoe Women's Center, "I will fight that fight to keep women's center in the state open."

He also suggested Wagoner engage first lady Maria Shriver in her cause.

"She has a lot of power," Gaines said.

One person brought up the issue of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency not being held accountable to the public because the Governing Board is not elected directly by the people.

Gaines said he has had his issues with boards like TRPA for the same reason. But he also said he sees hope in the direction Executive Director Joanne Marchetta is taking the bi-state regulatory agency. He does not favor reducing funding for TPRA.

Cole, who is also on TRPA's board, said it's best if TRPA can give more control to local jurisdictions when it comes to things like sign ordinances and land use.

Gaines told John Adamski he would look into the local resident's concern about what he perceives as a stalemate between the U.S. Forest Service and Lahontan Water Quality Board when it comes to forest fuels reduction.

Local resident Ken Weitzman asked if the state is going to weigh-in on the city's redevelopment proposal that will be before the City Council on April 6. Gaines said redevelopment

areas are a local issue and he didn't give a direct answer on the property tax issue at the state level.

Gaines said with the approval of Proposition 11, which mandates redistricting be by a public commission and not in a backroom by lawmakers, "it should make district seats more competitive." This will be done this year.

"I think more will get done in the Legislature," Gaines said of eliminating gerrymandering.

Gaines admitted he doesn't trust state government and that local jurisdictions should learn to fend for themselves.

"There are tremendous stresses everywhere in services provided by government. It will affect the poor more," Gaines said. "Communities are better when they create their own revenues base. If you create a stable tax base, the better you are going to be."

Composter: Healthy plants need nutrient-rich soil

By Kathryn Reed

MINDEN – "America's Garden Book" was first published in 1939. It talks about humus (not hummus) as the key to good soil composition.

In 1978, Craig Witt graduated from UNR with a degree in agriculture. Nothing in his textbooks said anything about humus; the organic matter that is created after plant and/or animal matter decompose. He left Reno for his family farm in the Carson Valley with a certificate to spray pesticides.



Craig Witt
talks
composting at
Full Circle
Compost.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

And spray he did.

“We kept adding more fertilizer and got less results,” Witt said. “My grandfather told me he was not sure about the stuff I was learning in college.”

The 350-head of cattle were producing less milk and the 600 acres they farmed didn’t turn out the quantity of produce they had before pesticides were introduced.

Witt, who had his first garden as a second-grader, knew things had to change. His mother’s diagnosis of liver cancer nearly 25 years ago also led him down the path of researching nutrition.

For 15 years he has been operating Full Circle Compost in Minden. In his backyard in Gardnerville last year he grew sunflowers 15-feet tall and tomatoes 12-feet high.

“Commercial garden soil looks like wood,” Witt said. “Humus is the end result if composting was done right.”

He is quick to point out that compost is a verb and not a noun.

The soil amendments he sells are so refined it's delicate to the touch. It's almost a silky texture instead of coarse. And there's no smell.

What people grow their plants and produce in matters because if it's not full of nutrients, the plants will suffer. Soil is like a food source for plants. What goes into the compost mix will dictate the richness of the end product.

"People are becoming more aware soil is living," Witt said.

At Full Circle Compost recipes are used to create their different blends. It's a combination of 10 percent horse manure, 10 percent cow manure, 30 percent green waste, 10 percent finished compost carbon, and 40 percent pine needles/wood waste, with the latter mostly coming from the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Witt will take green waste (for a fee) from people, as well as sell the different blends of composting material.

He said soil in this part of the Sierra Nevada is often deficient in calcium. So he adds some of the mineral to his mixture. Feather mill is added to another blend to boost the nitrogen content.

It's possible with all the compostable matter being delivered to Full Circle Compost that a Tahoe Blend could be created. Witt says he'd need someone on the South Shore, like Tahoe Sand and Gravel or Aspen Hollow, to sell it.

For six years Witt has been composting at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center in Carson City – known casually as the Prison Farm.

All the food waste people want to give him goes here. Lira's Market in Gardnerville was the first company to bring him food scraps. Whole Foods in Reno does now. A group in Truckee this year had a zero-waste crab feed and all the shells,

compostable paper products, flatware and bag it was collected in ended up at the prison. South Tahoe Refuse's collections from its pilot compost program end up at the prison, too.

Besides food waste, the crab shells, bones from meat products, meat, compostable food service products, and paper are part of the mix.

Grinders are used to blend everything together. Wood chips are mixed in. A machine turns the whole concoction. Water is regularly sprayed on the mix to keep it moist.

"When you turn it, it gives the bacteria fresh air, oxygen. You want aerobic bacteria in a compost pile," Witt said. "When steam comes off, it means moisture is leaving."

Temperatures of the mix hit 150 degrees, which is hot enough to kill any pathogens.

It takes 10 weeks for food waste to be turned into soil amendment.

Embassy Suites in South Lake Tahoe uses the compost from Full Circle for its plants. Zephyr Cove Resort, which is part of the pilot program on the South Shore, is considering using the end product in its grassy areas.

At the office in Minden, Witt has several worm bin containers that are more suited for the backyard gardener. He said they work at Tahoe because they don't attract critters.

This is called vermicompost. It's sold in stores. If it's good quality, it won't stick to your hands.

Worms till the soil and eat the pathogens.

"You don't see worms in dead soil," Witt said.

Not only is the end product a rich compound that is good to garden with, but a liquid that Witt calls "worm wine" is

produced. This can be sprayed onto plants as a natural fertilizer.

His end result looked like root beer, whereas the commercial product looked like Mountain Dew, so it was severely diluted before it was sold.

For more information about Full Circle Compost, [click here](#) or call (775) 267.5305.

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Desolation Wilderness volunteers sought

The U.S. Forest Service is looking for dedicated volunteers who love the outdoors, enjoy working with people, and who are dedicated to preserving one of our nation's most popular wilderness areas, the Desolation Wilderness.

The Desolation is jointly managed between the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit and the Eldorado National Forest.

The public is invited attend either one of two volunteer program meetings to learn about the different volunteer opportunities, what is required, and how your help is important to the preservation of the Desolation Wilderness.

Meetings:

South Lake Tahoe

Date: April 22

Time: 7pm

Place: LTBMU Supervisor's Office, 35 College Drive

(530) 543.2694

Placerville

Date: April 29

Time: 7pm

Place: Eldorado Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Road

(530) 647.5439

Management shake-up at Indian casino leading to Tahoe

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

Thunder Valley Casino named a new general manager today, completing a management shuffle that began more than a year ago.

C.J. Graham, currently the Lincoln casino's assistant general manager and vice president of table games, will become general manager in June, shortly before Thunder Valley completes its hotel.

Read the whole story

Forest Service chief warns of more severe wildfires

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

A combination of forest restoration projects, creation of communities that can survive fire and aggressive fire fighting will be needed as wildfire danger increases across the country, the chief of the U.S. Forest Service said Tuesday.

Wildfires are getting larger and burning more fiercely, Tom Tidwell told a Reno conference of wildfire experts.

Warming climate and increasing development near forested terrain will result in increasingly dangerous fire behavior, Tidwell, chief of the Forest Service since June 2009, said.

[Read the whole story](#)