SLT providing bridge for businesses to be successful

By Kathryn Reed

Start-up mode is stressful in any business, but especially when you don't want your boss to know about it. That's the situation one South Lake Tahoe couple finds themselves in as they are about to branch out on their own.

To get ready for a spring roll out the couple used the city's TIES program. TIES, or Tahoe Inventors Entrepreneur Services, has several components – coaching, relocation, business loans, website design, business plans and more.

"(They) are still in the process of starting their company. They've come a long way since they started with us. They still have a long way to go. For our part, we've helped map out a reasonable road to success, but it's their sweat and persistence that will make it happen. It's a daunting task to start a company, and I daresay they are a little bit stressed out right in the middle of it,"Jim Mikles of Golden Capital Network said of the couple.

Golden Capital Network is one of the consultants the city contracts with to provide the services.

All of the money in the program is from grants. None is from the general fund. The city tries to use local businesses to provide the services.

The first $300,000 grant for coaching came three years ago.

About 30 people are in the program today.

It’s not just about people starting a business. These programs are for people in all phases. For some of the assistance income eligibility guidelines need to be met, but most people in town qualify.

“Before you go under, before you go into default we can be that bridge. We can make a difference,” Nancy Kerry, a TIES adviser for the city, said. She also said to let the city determine eligibility and to not assume you don’t qualify.

Karen Estes, who owns Simple Tahoe Weddings, participated in the program a couple years ago.

“We realized my website was outdated. I wanted it to be hip, simple and easy to navigate,” Estes said.

Grants the city secured paid for her website. She said the site is making her business even more successful.

Kerry said it’s not the city’s job to solve people’s problems, but it can give them direction

“We want people to succeed. It’s advice and information. It’s linking you to the right sources,” Kerry said.

Through TIES workshops are offered on how to keep costs low, becoming green, being an effective leader, making sure employees represent your business appropriately, networking, cross-promotional ideas, and social media.

Information discussed in the one-on-one sessions is confidential.

Business loans are what are called micro-loans because they are small, the business must have five or fewer employees, and the business is considered low income or is creating jobs for low-income people. Average loans are $25,000.

The money comes from the state. As people repay their loans, then more money is available for the next person in need.

This is a small component of the TIES program because fewer people qualify. Ten open loans exist today.

“The bottom line is the city is a business. We need business in the community to be successful for us to be successful,” said Gene Palazzo, one of the city’s TIES advisers.

For more information, call (530) 542.6044 or (530) 542.6043.

America to open Lake Tahoe Music Festival

Wrapping up its â€œAmerica â€“ 40th Anniversary Tour,â€ musical sensation America opens the Lake Tahoe Music Festivalâ€™s season July 22 at West End Beach at Donner Lake. Combining folk-jazz elements and slinky Latin-leaning percussions, America continues to please its loyal fan base while attracting new a generation of music lovers.

Leading off the festivalâ€™s 28th season, America is the first of the festivalâ€™s six concerts taking place July 22â€“Aug. 7 at scenic venues throughout North Lake Tahoe and Truckee.

Capable of transcending borders with its uplifting music and positive message, America, who has six gold and/or platinum albums, will fill the summer evening with its best-known tunes like â€œI Need You,â€ â€œVentura Highway,â€ â€œDonâ€™t Cross The River,â€ â€œTin Man,â€ â€œLonely People,â€ and â€œSister Golden Hairâ€ â€“ all staples on the â€™70s Billboard charts.

Attracting first-, second- and third-generation fans, Americaâ€™s extraordinary musical legacy of exceptionally crafted pop and rock songs trademark lush lyrical landscapes that will make for one of the summerâ€™s most spectacular performances.

Tickets are $38.75 for general seating and $50.75 preferred. They go on sale March 15.

Additional concerts for the festivalâ€™s 2010 season highlight R&B, jazz, pop, Broadway, and orchestra. Tickets, ranging from $25-$63, are available for purchase online at www.TahoeMusic.org, by phone at (530) 583.3101 or at the Music Festival office, located at 10775 Pioneer Trail, Suite 210 in Truckee Monday through Friday 8am-5pm.

For more information about the Lake Tahoe Music Festival, click here or call (530) 583.3101.

Safe Place sites provide refuge for youths

Safe Place is the first step to help for any youth in crisis or at risk. This community collaboration program, operated by youth shelters or youth serving agencies make it possible for any youth to access help at locations including fast food restaurants, convenience stores, fire stations, libraries and city buses which display the Safe Place sign.

March 14-20 is National Safe Place Week.

Youth can easily find help at Safe Place sites in their neighborhood whenever they need it. Safe Place connects youth

to immediate help and safety and offers supportive services to both youth and their families.

Tahoe Youth & Family Services salutes the more than 125 Safe Place businesses and organizations in the South Lake Tahoe, Minden, Gardnerville & Alpine County areas. To make your business a Safe Place, contact Julie Franklin at (775) 782.4202 or julie@tahoeyouth.org.

For a complete listing of all TYFS Safe Places, click here.

Buddhist monk at Mountain Yoga

American Buddhist monk Venerable Sumati Marut returns to Mountain Yoga in South Lake Tahoe April 6 from 7-9pm with his talk â€œAspiration and Acceptance: When to Work Hard and When to Relax in the Spiritual Life.â€

Marut has been teaching in the Lake Tahoe area on a regular basis for more than five years. Marut will address the deeply intimate and often difficult relationship between discipline and relaxation in a spiritual practice.

Phone: (530) 542.5050

Contact: David Fishman at davidbfishman@gmail.com

Website: www.mountain-yoga.com.

Cost: By donation only

First Aid for Public Safety Personnel class

Sign-ups are going on now for an American Red Cross class, First Aid for Public Safety Personnel (Title 22) at the South Lake Tahoe Parks & Recreation Swim Pool Complex. This class is required for all California lifeguards and is valid for three years.

The class runs Sundays May 23 and May 30 from 8am-5pm on both days at the recreation complex. Students must be current in CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer.

Cost is $20 for the course – due at sign up, a separate $5 (cash or check) is due to the instructor the first day of class. Course includes worksheets and certificate.

Register for all classes at the South Lake Tahoe Recreation & Swim Pool Complex.

If you have any questions, call (530) 542.6056 or drop by the Swim Pool Complex at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd.

CHP offers teen-parent driving class

Start Smart is aimed at helping newly licensed and future licensed teenage drivers become aware of the responsibilities that accompany the privilege of being a licensed California

driver. The program was created in an effort to preemptively reduce the incidence of teen injuries and deaths resulting from motor vehicle collisions.

Teen drivers and their parents/guardians are cordially invited to attend and participate in a Start Smart class. Recent statistics have shown that in California teenage drivers are injured and are dying in automobile accidents at an alarming rate. Through candid conversations, officers in attendance will address these facts and provide examples of driving tendencies that put young drivers at risk. This program will help you understand that driving is serious and a poor choice behind the wheel of a car can put your life and the lives of others in jeopardy.

The class is March 16 from 6-8pm at the South Tahoe High School Library. All classes are free.

To reserve a space in this Start Smart Class please contact the California Highway Patrol at (530) 577.1001.

Bowl-a-thon supports SLT Women’s Center

2nd annual South Lake Tahoe Womenâ€™s Center Bowl-A-Thon is April 17 from 5-7pm.

Bowl to raise funds for local Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) during Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Adults and children over 12 are invited to participate. No bowling skills are required. All you need is the willingness and enthusiasm to raise money. Team registration ends April 9.

Create and sign up your team of six bowlers by contacting Sarah Sanchez at (530) 544.2118.

Prep sports realignment begins this fall

A decision this week by prep high school officials created a sports league encompassing South Tahoe, Whittell, Truckee, Incline, North Tahoe and Sparks high schools.

The Nevada Interscholastic Activities Associationâ€™s Board of Control on Wednesday approved two aspects of the emergency realignment proposal at the meeting in Reno.

The 2A-3A Northern combination and the ensuing 4A realignment (losing three schools to the 2A-3A) was approved. Other proposed realignments were voted down.

The new alignments will go in to effect in the fall and remain in place for two school years. Tournament formats were not discussed; league/region and state qualifying procedures and post-season tournament brackets will be considered at the June meeting.

Lake Tahoe ski report, March

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Could be fresh powder later this afternoon. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Hands-on science expo for kids

Lake Tahoe School is partnering with UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center to host the 5th Annual Science Expo on March 19 from 4-7pm.

This yearâ€™s Expo has been designed to foster studentsâ€™ excitement for and academic interest in science. There will be 20 â€œhands-onâ€ physical science investigations and experiments that focus specifically on the dynamics of energy and matter.

Admission is free. This is good for elementary-age kids.

Location: Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village, on the Sierra Nevada College campus.

For more information, call Lake Tahoe School at (775) 831.5828.