S. Tahoe nonprofits to share nearly $70,000

The El Dorado Community Foundation received 72 requests for grant funding from South Lake Tahoe.

The South Lake Tahoe Endowment consists of the Joan Rochelle Fund and the South Lake Tahoe Area Fund.

The recipients are:

South Tahoe Middle School, South Tahoe High School, Sierra House, Tahoe Valley Elementary, Bijou Community School, Tahoe Youth & Family Services, Tahoe Arts Project, H.E.R.O., Lake Tahoe Historical Society, Choices for Children, Between Horses & Humans, Live Violence Free, South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center, Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe, Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation, Heavenly Ski & Snowboard Foundation, Lake Tahoe Reading Council, Kiwanis Club of Lake Tahoe, American Youth Soccer Organization, Loyal Order of the Moose, Marine Research & Education Inc., Lake Tahoe Shining Stars and Sierra Tahoe Children’s Theater.

They will share $69,881.

Study: Illegal drug use declines at work, Rx drugs

increase

By Lauren Weber, Wall Street Journal

More workers are just saying no, at least by one measure.

The share of U.S. workers testing positive for drugs has dropped sharply since 1988, according to an analysis of millions of drug tests being released Monday by medical-testing company Quest Diagnostics Inc.

Positive workplace tests for cocaine and marijuana have gone down sharply over the past two decades. Workers may have gotten more sophisticated when it comes to passing drug tests, however, especially for marijuana, as government studies show that its use is rising.

Meanwhile, data suggest that abuse of prescription drugs is a growing worry for employers.

Read the whole story

South Shore to host restaurant week in January

California has been doing a restaurant week in January for a handful of years and the South Shore is going to participate in 2014 for the first time.

Tahoe South Restaurant Week will be Jan. 10-17.

Restaurants wanting to know more about this event are asked to

attend an informational meeting Nov. 20 at 4:30pm at Riva Grill.

Thirty-three areas in California participated this year. The goal is to drive business to restaurants. The consumer benefits by receiving deals throughout the week.

Motorist seriously injures cyclist on Hwy. 28

A 23-year-old Colorado man remains in serious condition this afternoon at Renown Medical Center in Reno after being thrown from his bicycle Nov. 15.

California Highway Patrol officers said James Hulett of Boulder was on his bike on Highway 28 going up Dollar Hill just after 5pm Friday when he was struck from behind by a vehicle driven by Vicente Araujo.

The 53-year-old Kings Beach man initially fled the scene. Two and half hours later he turned himself in at the Placer County Sheriff's Office in Tahoe City. He faces felon hit and run charges.

Alcohol and drugs do not appear to be contributing factors in the accident. But California Highway Patrol officers also don't know what led Araujo to drift to his right.

No helmet was found at the scene of the accident. Hulett sustained major head trauma, according to officers.

Anyone with information about the accident should call the CHP

at (530) 582.7570.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Nevada casino mogul wants ban on Internet gaming

By Peter Wallsten and Tom Hamburger, Washington Post

Billionaire casino magnate Sheldon Adelson, whose record-breaking campaign spending in 2012 made him an icon of the new super-donor era, is leveraging that newfound status in an escalating feud with industry rivals over the future of gambling.

Adelson, best known for building upscale casino resorts in Nevada and more recently in Asia, wants to persuade Congress to ban Internet betting. He says the practice is a danger to society and could tarnish the industry's traditional business model.

Nearly all of his competitors, including Caesars Entertainment and MGM Resorts, disagree. They say regulated Internet gambling can be done safely and can boost the industry.

To make his point, Adelson is preparing a public campaign to portray online gambling as a danger to children, the poor and others who could be exploited by easy access to Internet betting.

Three states have moved to legalize online gambling, with New Jersey scheduled to go live this month. At least a dozen others are expected to consider it next year.

Read the whole story

USFS hotshot run over, killed by vehicle

By Bill Lindelof , Sacramento Bee

The California Highway Patrol is investigating the death of a U.S. Forest Service firefighter who appears to have been run over by a car filled with his colleagues on a road in Yuba County over the weekend.

Michael Patrick Kelly II, 32, who served as a squad boss on the Tahoe Hotshots Crew, died about 1:10 a.m. Saturday after being hit on Marysville Road, west of Old Toll Road, not far from Camptonville, the small town where the crew is based, about 36 miles northeast of Marysville.

“This is a tragic loss for Mike’s family, for Tahoe National Forest and for the firefighting community,” said Tahoe Forest Supervisor Tom Quinn in a statement.

A news release from the CHP states that the crash occurred when seven members of the “hot shots” crew were in a 2002 Hyundai Accent sedan traveling westbound on Marysville Road.

At the same time, another vehicle was traveling eastbound toward the crowded Hyundai. The driver of that car saw a pedestrian lying down in the westbound lane.

The driver came to a stop and tried to alert the oncoming Hyundai by flashing the vehicles’s high-beam headlights. The Hyundai, driven by firefighter Andrew Gruenberg, 26, did not stop and ran over Kelly, the CHP statement said.

Read the whole story

Soroptimist hosting shopping bazaar

Soroptimist International Tahoe Sierra is celebrating the season with local vendors and artisans.

In the loft at Blue Angel Cafe in South Lake Tahoe there will be gifts available for purchase that range form beauty products to jewelery to apparel to spices to books.

The event is Dec. 3 from 4-8pm.

There will also be food, wine and music.

Recovery widens income gap in U.S.

By Niraj Chokshi, Washington Post

The income gap in America has been widening for decades and the modest three-year recovery did little to change that, according to Census data.

The new data suggest that despite modest recoveries in many states, the middle class has been shrinking while households have been added in the lowest and highest income brackets. In many states and nationally, the highest income brackets saw more growth than the lowest, but households in the middle brackets continued to decline. The state-by-state data compare incomes from a pair of three-year periods: 2007 through 2009, a span that included the Great Recession, and 2010 through 2012, a period that included the ongoing and modest recovery.

For years, the wealthiest 1 percent have amassed income more quickly than the rest. From 1979 through 2007, for example, the top 1 percent of households saw income grow by 275 percent, according to a nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office study.

Compare that to the bottom fifth of households, which saw income gains of only 18 percent over that time. Recent Nobel Prize winner for economics Robert Shiller, who is known for creating a closely tracked home-price index, last month called income inequality “the most important problem that we are facing now today.” And just last week, President Obama’s nominee to lead the Federal Reserve, Janet Yellen, called income inequality “an extremely difficult and to my mind very worrisome problem.”

Read the whole story

Deputy DA running for El Dorado County judge

By Kathryn Reed

Prosecuting bad guys is what Vicki Ashworth has been doing for the last 16 years. Now she wants to be the judge in those cases.

Ashworth is running for the El Dorado County Superior Court judgeship being vacated by Doug Phimister.

For the past 14 years Ashworth has worked in the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office, and was with the Amador County DA's Office the previous two years. She has spent her time in Placerville handling every type of case possible – from homicides to domestic violence to fraud to sexual assault to general felonies.



Vicki Ashworth

"My career has been devoted to serving the community where I lived, where I raised my children. Being a judge allows me to continue serving my community, but in a different fashion," Ashworth told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Ashworth believes she would be able to easily make the transition from being an advocate for a client to being impartial on the bench.

"What a lot of people don't realize is you do that a lot as a prosecutor. Honestly, before I file a case or settle or decide to go forward to trial, you really do have to look at all the facts," Ashworth said.

She believes her boss, Vern Pierson, is doing a good job and

has no desire to run for his seat.

Ashworth would not be the first El Dorado County judge to come from the DA's office. Judges Suzanne Kingsbury and James Wagoner are two who have.

The 43-year-old has had aspirations of being on the bench for at least four years. She went through the Jenny Commission process that scrutinizes judges for possible gubernatorial appointment. She made it through, but then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger picked Curt Stracener.

Kingsbury is the only female judge in the county. Ashworth doesn't fret about going into a male-dominated environment because that's all she's known throughout her professional life.

And she said she is already good at not talking to her husband about work. He's a captain in the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department.

"The most important thing to me is my ethics and my integrity. It's something I've taken very seriously my entire career. It's not something I would jeopardize or put into question," Ashworth said.

Opinion: Tahoe's progress is infectious

By Joanne Marchetta

It's been almost a year since the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency adopted a new blueprint for the future of Lake Tahoe. That day we came together around a common vision and the

adoption of the new Lake Tahoe Regional Plan propelled us past planning and finally to action.

Whether your passion for Tahoe is a better environment, a better economy, or better social conditions in our communities – or all of it together – that common vision has something that'll work for everyone.



Joanne Marchetta

So let's pause for a moment and take stock on our progress since a year ago:

• New bike and pedestrian trail connections are being completed all around the lake. You can now ride or stroll from Nevada Beach to Round Hill Pines Beach or all the way from Sugar Pine Point State Park to Dollar Hill.

• A new community house is coming on-line in Kings Beach – a rehabilitated motel is now a beautiful new nonprofit social services center for anyone in need.

• The Aspens, a $9.5 million, 48-unit affordable housing project in South Lake Tahoe is finishing construction and is companion to the Domus affordable housing units completed in Kings Beach last year.

• Engaged citizens in the city of South Lake Tahoe with a passion for sustainability helped pass a new law limiting plastic bag use.

• Local residents championed new business and arts initiatives

to benefit the community at a recent South Shore economic forum.

• The long-planned $18 million Highway 89 Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization project in Tahoe City is now fully funded and construction plans are expected out next year.

• Along Highway 50, old dirt paths are now new sidewalks with curbs, gutters, bus shelters, and street lighting and more areas of this historic road are slated for the same.

The lessons of sustainability have taught us that all of these things are connected. Each of them is important for Lake Tahoe's health and they were made to happen by people who stepped in and got involved. Restoring our ecosystem and our communities together relies on new ideas coming equally from grassroots organizations, individuals, business groups, and agencies. The Regional Plan brought together the broadest coalition of supporters that the basin has seen in decades and today even more people are showing they are willing to step in, participate, and even lead Lake Tahoe's communities forward.

Local governments are stepping in to work within their communities to create area plans that will direct environmental improvements and future redevelopment efforts in town centers around the lake. Lake Tahoe Community College is stepping in to create new education plans for students and the community. The city of South Lake Tahoe is contributing updated recreation strategies, and the Tahoe Prosperity Center is working to upgrade the basin's digital signal capacity to serve visitors and make business connections reliable. Whatever your interest or passion, there is a place for you to get involved.

Positive progress in Tahoe is catching. We are also hearing from other communities that they want to learn from us. Lake

Tahoe is often looked to as a leader in environmental protection from areas like the Adirondacks in New York and Lake Atitlan in Guatemala, and we are growing our reputation as a model for sustainability. At the 2013 Lake Tahoe Summit this August at Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park at Sand Harbor, Al Gore returned to our mountain lake for the first time since 1997 when he and then-President Bill Clinton convened the first summit. Gore delivered a call to action for all of us. He challenged us to make Lake Tahoe a place known not only for its awe-inspiring beauty, but also for the commitment we share to advancing sustainability and becoming a model for the globe.

These positive changes are coming at a critical time for Lake Tahoe. Water quality improvements that have resulted from earlier plans are proving to have a beneficial effect on the lake's clarity. Science is showing that increased investment in infrastructure is a key driver of environmental gains. Now more than ever we need to choose to step in, to work together, and to look ahead. There will be those that encourage us to stop and look only backward. I encourage you to look around, find a place where you can get involved, and join us in moving forward.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.