A Tahoe history lesson from locals who lived it



Bill Kingman, from left, Dave Wakeman, Betty Mitchell, Patty Olson, Tom Celio and Margie Daum Photo/Denise Haerr

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – For an area that judges its residents based on the number of years they've lived here, the six panelists who retold stories Tuesday night of days gone by more than passed the test of being a local.

Bill Kingman, Dave Wakeman, Betty Mitchell, Patty Olson, Tom Celio and Margie Daum regaled more than 70 people who crammed together at the Camp Richardson Lodge. The six spoke of the infamous winter of 1951-52, how the Lake Valley schoolhouse was where T.J. Maxx is now, two-lane dirt roads, cattle drives

through the middle of town and more.

South Lake Tahoe in some ways was about 100 years behind some parts of the country when it came to infrastructure in the 1950s. The city wasn't incorporated until 1965. Before then people said they were from one of five areas like Bijou or Lake Valley or Al Tahoe. Dirt roads were not unusual. And few people lived year-round in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Many in the audience had their own stories to tell. After all, from a show of hands about two dozen of them have lived here for more than 40 years.

Kingman started his journey to Tahoe in the 1940s with his parents, and then moved to the South Shore permanently in 1961. He has been a disc jockey and chief engineer at every Lake Tahoe radio station. Today he writes the "Then and Now" feature for *Lake Tahoe News* each Sunday and broadcasts the fireworks show for KRLT.

He brought old black and white photos to share with the crowd – including cows on Highway 50 in front of the old Harrahs Club.

Kingman spoke of Highway 50 not becoming four lanes until 1957. The Y really was a Y until 1961-62 when Lake Tahoe Boulevard was extended.

Wakeman, a 1959 graduate of South Tahoe High School, grew up in what is now Alpina Café on Emerald Bay Road.

He said the Camp Rich area used to be a busy community. There was a fish hatchery near Taylor Creek. From there people would walk to the lodge to play cards and drink.

A house used to sit down the road from the lodge. It's now a vacant lot used for parking. But Wakeman remembers it being where the telephone operator lived and worked. There were 20 party lines. If someone wasn't home, the operator took a

message.

No building department existed at the time – well, one did in Placerville, but no one bothered to come to the lake to see what was being built.

Wakeman remembers buildings collapsing after the snow melted from the record-setting winter of 1951-52. The snow held them up during the winter, but with the thaw they came down. He said the 149¾ inches that fell in 72 hours on Donner Summit still holds the record for snowfall in the United States. And that was just one of many storms that winter.

The one snowplow broke that winter. Tahoe was cut off from the rest of the world when it came to traveling by vehicle.

Daum was about 13 in that monster winter. She remembers people going to the Olsons' store to get red Kool-Aid and Jell-O that they used to make an X in the meadow so the plow part could be air dropped.

"Just like the Angora Fire, the community pulled together. Everyone helped everyone," Daum said.

Olson said with the winter being not long after the end of World War II, people knew how to deal with rationing and hard times.

The house she lives in today is 165 years old. It used to be Young's Market.

She and her husband were instrumental in getting Barton Memorial Hospital built. To do so, the community had to raise $400,000. The Barton's gave the land, Harrah's gave $24,000 and others donated what they could.

While Mitchell didn't move here until 1958, she remembers plenty of trying times – like the summer of 1960. A fire on the North Shore cut power to this end of the lake. It meant no showers. And the weather was cold, so dipping into Lake Tahoe

was not happening.

She was a substitute teacher at the Lake Valley school, which went up to grade four. There was only one teacher, which Mitchell said was awkward at times.

Mitchell is credited with starting the Lake Tahoe Historical Society.

While Celio's family's roots run the deepest of the six (150 years ago they created what is now Meyers), he is the newest permanent resident of the basin. He took over the old family ranch three years ago. But he spent the better part of each summer at the ranch, spending much of his time on cattle drives.

The Lake Tahoe Historical Society, which coordinated the event, hopes to have a similar gathering in the spring with different speakers. The Nov. 12 event was videotaped, with copies of the DVDs available for purchase at the Lake Tahoe Museum starting Dec. 5.

Letter: Bijou playground becoming a reality

To the community,

Bijou Community School PTA is building a huge new playground for both the school and community. As the only playground between Rufus Allen and Kingsbury Grade, this is a much needed improvement to South Lake Tahoe.

And the generosity of this community has been amazing! Thank you so much to all of you who have contributed to this

project:

Bijou Students and Families (PTA)

Edgewood Co.

American Centuries

Vail Resorts (ECHO)

Marcus Ashley Galleries

Anonymous Donors

Jon Hetherton Insurance-Farmers

Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel

El Dorado Community Foundation

Village Center Shopping Center

Wulstein Financial Services and Company

The Dameral Family

Biospirit Day Spa

Environmental Incentives

Jim and Paula Gansinger

Environmental Inspection & Construction

The Bridge Language Academy

Brian & Michelle Hogan

Corporate Nevada

Winters Electric

Tahoe Pool Services

Riva Homes

CTL Forest Management Inc.

David and Terri Jinkens

Lakeside Inn

Dooley Riva – G + W Engineers

Cardinale Way Toyota

South Tahoe Crossfit

Alpine Carpet One

Blue Angel Cafe

Boulder Exterminators

Thank you LTUSD for loaning us money to get the project started. We will repay you ASAP.

If you are interested in helping us complete this playground, please email khaven@gmail.com. We have already raised $93,000 of the $102,000 that we need. We only have a few thousand of this project to go.

The playground will be installed in the spring/summer 2014. Help out if you can.

Kathy Haven, Bijou PTA

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2 charged with illegal bear

killing

Two men have been accused of illegally killing a bear in El Dorado County.

Jason Wilkison, 43, of Grass Valley and Christoppher Nunley, 54, of North San Juan in April allegedly used bait to lure a bear to a house near Grizzly Flats where it was shot.

They face felony weapons charges and misdemeanor charge of unlawful possession and killing of a bear.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

States not waiting for feds to raise minimum wage

By William Selway & Jim Efstathiou Jr., Bloomberg

President Obama is pushing to raise the U.S. minimum wage higher than $7.25 an hour – the rate it's been for four years.

Half of the U.S. population won't have to wait: They live in places where the bottom rate is already higher than that.

Twenty-one states and Washington, D.C., have raised the lowest legal hourly wage above the rate set by Congress, with New Jersey voters joining the list last week and campaigns under way to do the same in at least five other states.

It marks a shift of power to state and local officials, who have seized control from a deadlocked Congress that's under pressure not to raise costs from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

and National Restaurant Association, whose members include Yum! Brands Inc., the operator of the Taco Bell and Kentucky Fried Chicken chains.

“It would be best if you could just raise the minimum wage in Congress and in one fell swoop lift the income of millions of low-paid workers,” said Dean Baker, the co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, a Washington-based group that tracks inequality and poverty issues. “But if that avenue is blocked – and it appears to be – it only makes sense for those looking to increase it to turn to the state and local level.”

The changes are pushing up costs for retailers, fast-food chains and other service-industry businesses that say higher wages cut into hiring, profits and expansion. Congress hasn’t passed an increase in the minimum wage – which was first set at 25 cents in 1938 – since 2007, when it approved an increase that brought the level to $7.25 an hour by 2009.

Read the whole story

College grads lack soft skills to get, keep a job

By Martha C. White, Time

It’s because college kids today can’t do math, one line of reasoning goes. Or they don’t know science. Or they’re clueless about technology, aside from their myriad social-media profiles.

These are all good theories, but the problem with the

unemployability of these young adults goes way beyond a lack of STEM skills. As it turns out, they can't even show up on time in a button-down shirt and organize a team project.

The technical term for navigating a workplace effectively might be soft skills, but employers are facing some hard facts: the entry-level candidates who are on tap to join the ranks of full-time work are clueless about the fundamentals of office life.

A survey by the Workforce Solutions Group at St. Louis Community College finds that more than 60 percent of employers say applicants lack "communication and interpersonal skills" – a jump of about 10 percentage points in just two years. A wide margin of managers also say today's applicants can't think critically and creatively, solve problems or write well.

Another employer survey, this one by staffing company Adecco, turns up similar results. The company says in a statement, "44 percent of respondents cited soft skills, such as communication, critical thinking, creativity and collaboration, as the area with the biggest gap." Only half as many say a lack of technical skills is the pain point.

Read the whole story

Time to count birds in South Lake Tahoe

The Christmas Bird Count in South Lake Tahoe is Dec. 14.

Each year tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the country count birds for a day.

Meet at Alpina Coffee Cafe on Emerald Bay Road at 8am.

More info is online.

Talk to focus on future building challenges

There will be a presentation Nov. 14 about the long-term solution to future building challenges.

The talk will be at Lake Tahoe Community College, Room F-120 from 6-7:30pm.

For more info, contact Scott Terrell at scott.terrell57@gmail.com.

Food needed for Bread & Broth's Turkey Day dinner

Thanksgiving dinner – always the Monday of the holiday week – marks Bread & Broth's 25th year of serving the community meal.

The Nov. 25 feast at St. Theresa Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe is from 4-5:30pm in Grace Hall. Everyone is welcome.

Food donations are being sought. Needed items include: celery, carrots, onions, oranges, fresh cranberries, fried onion topping, sausage, canned sweet potatoes, marshmallows, and butter.

Cash donations are also accepted.

Arrange to drop off contributions by Nov. 22 by calling Kathi at (530) 541.2551 or leaving donations at the church office on weekdays between 9am-noon and 1-4pm. More than 300 are expected at the Thanksgiving meal.

For more info, contact Diane Weidinger at (775) 588.3993 or dianeweidinger@yahoo.com.

‘Natural’ disappearing from food labels

By Mike Esterl, Wall Street Journal

Now you see them. Now you don’t. Food products labeled as “natural” are starting to disappear.

A growing number of food and drink companies are quietly removing “all natural” claims from packages amid lawsuits challenging the “naturalness” of everything. Mike Esterl reports on the News Hub. Photo: Naked Juice.

“Natural” Goldfish crackers will soon be just Goldfish. “All Natural” Naked juice is going stark Naked. “All Natural” Puffins cereal is turning into plain old Puffins.

A growing number of food and drink companies including PepsiCo Inc. are quietly removing these claims from packages amid lawsuits challenging the “naturalness” of everything from potato chips to ice cream to granola bars.

Food labeled “natural” raked in more than $40 billion in U.S. retail sales over the past 12 months. That is second only to food claiming to be low in fat, according to Nielsen. A survey last year by Mintel, another market research company, found 51% of Americans seek out “all natural” when food shopping.

The problem is, “natural” has no clear meaning.

Read the whole story

S. Tahoe man accused of hit and run DUI in Mammoth

By Mammoth Times

A South Lake Tahoe man was arrested Sunday after leaving the scene of a car accident that same afternoon in Mammoth.

Officers found a full size pickup with fresh collision damage, two flat tires and a damaged road sign.

Mammoth Lakes police officers said Brian Bogdanoff, 32, of South Lake Tahoe, fled the scene of the accident. He was found at the U.S. Forest Service compound in Mammoth Lakes.

Read the whole story