Time to audition for LTCC's fall production

The Lake Tahoe Community College Theater Arts Department is having auditions for its fall production of "The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later" on Sept. 24 at 7pm in the college's Duke Theatre.

This production commemorates the 15th anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death.

Several events will be presented at the college in association with this production, including a screening of the new documentary film, "Matthew Shepard is a Friend of Mine."

Shepard was a gay college student who was tortured and left for dead while tied to a fence in Laramie, Wyo., in October 1998. He died a few days later. The crime and how the community dealt with it was the focus of "The Laramie Project," a theatrical production that came to LTCC in 2010.

In the years since the play's creators first interviewed townspeople about their feelings, Shepard became an important icon in the fight for gay rights – a fight that has led to remarkable change in recent months. But how did the passing of time affect the town where the murder took place? And what of the two men found responsible for Shepard's death? That's the premise behind "The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later," a play that explores how a tragic event that became international news still haunts and shapes Laramie today.

Rehearsals will be Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings near the beginning and increasing.

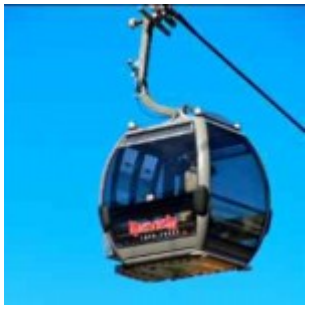
Performances are the evenings of Nov. 15, 16, 21, 22 adn 23 and matinees on Nov. 7 and Nov. 24.

Five men and five women are needed to play multiple characters ranging in age from 18-65.

Scripts of the play are available in the LTCC Library for 48-hour checkouts.

For more information about auditions, contact Susan Boulanger at (530) 541.4660, ext. 240 or Boulanger@ltcc.edu.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Sally Gunter is taking over as Heavenly Mountain Resort's communications manager since Russ Pecoraro has been promoted to Vail Resorts' director of communications for the Mountain Division.

• Cara Whitley has been hired to be Squaw Valley Ski Holding's chief marketing officer.

• Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce's last Business After Hours Mixer of the summer is Sept. 18 from 5:30-7:30pm at Picchetti Winery in South Lake Tahoe. Tickets are $10 for chamber members and $20 for nonmembers. For more info, call (775) 588.1728, ext. 303 or email Emily@TahoeChamber.org.

• Lake Tahoe Community College is inviting community members, college employees, and students to attend a 2020 Vision session on Sept. 20 from 10am-3pm in the college's Aspen Room. RSVP to Julie Booth at (530) 541.4660, ext. 210 or Booth@ltcc.edu.

• Saint Joseph Community Land Trust is having a fundraiser Sept. 15 from 5-7pm at Chevy's in South Lake Tahoe. Taco Bar

Buffet tickets are $10. Reserve tickets by emailing contact@saintjosephclt.org with your name and number of tickets desired.

Meyers on road to revitalize community

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS – Make it look pretty and be functional were the overwhelming sentiments of people who want to make Meyers be more than it is today.

Since the last meeting in February about the future of this South Shore enclave the advisory board has come up with a draft area plan for Meyers. Comments about the document were sought Sept. 11. The deadline to comment is Oct. 11.

The five main areas are: land use, environmental conservation, implementation, transportation and recreation. Twenty-five projects have been indentified. On Wednesday people were asked to pick their top three.



Jennifer Quashnick writes a comment Sept. 11 about the

Meyers Area Plan while talking to Lyn Barnett. Photo/Kathryn Reed

One item that keeps coming up is having some sort of sign to let people know they are entering Meyers. It could be placed at the bottom of Echo Summit headed west or possibly at the corner of highways 50 and 89 to capture more people.

Making the sign interactive would also embrace Meyers' theme of being the gateway to all things recreation. A swing could part of it and definitely the ability to climb on it.

Others suggested the sign be made out of old skis or have something to do with Snowshoe Thompson.

When it comes to deciding what to do with the area, many want to remove the bug station and make the rights-of-way along the highway narrower so the area looks more inviting for people to stop instead of speed through.

Caltrans is supposed to put in two sidewalks on Highway 50 next summer – one by Pioneer Trail and the other near the bug station. This will be the first step in linking both sides of the highway in a safer manner.

Cluster parking that would tie into the trails is another idea.

Putting in bike paths that connect to Washoe Meadow State Park and Tahoe Paradise Park as well as the commercial core have been repeatedly mentioned.

Doing more with the community park was talked about. Making it more inviting, less dumpy and turning it into an area to have community events are suggestions.

Letting people know about the trails – where they are and where they go – was encouraged.

Tapping into the history of the area was broached, especially with the Celio ranch having just celebrated its 150 anniversary.

Putting in low level bollard lights to make the area more friendly in the dark, adding landscaping, and possibly putting in stampede concrete in the center of the highway are other ideas.

Once all of the comments are submitted and environmental review is done the final plan will come out. The goal is for the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board to take action on the Meyers Area Plan in the first quarter of 2014.

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Notes:

• The draft Meyers Area Plan is online.

• Comments may be submitted online via the above website or to Adam Lewandowski at alewandowski@trpa.org or P.O. Box 5310, Stateline, NV 89449.

• The deadline to submit comments is Oct. 11.

Opinion: Don’t trust Lahontan, CTC

Publisher’s note: ***This letter was sent Sept. 9 to the California Senate president pro tem and speaker of the***

California Assembly.

Dear Senator Steinberg and Speaker Perez,

On Sept. 3, 2013, amendments were made to SB630 which establish a new general fund account, the Lake Tahoe Science and Lake Improvement Account. Earlier amendments were focused on the need for a scientifically objective, neutral regime to monitor critical water and air quality indicators for the legislature.

The secretary of Resources is authorized to administer the account, the use of funds has expanded to include aquatic invasive species projects, projects improving public access, reconstruction projects, land acquisitions, and finally monitoring the near-shore.

The California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) and the state Water Quality Control Board – Lahontan Region (Lahontan) are the two agencies designated to use this new funding if the agencies produce matching funds. The problem is that these two agencies, for different reasons, have direct conflicts of interest for any near-shore monitoring.

The CTC and Lahontan both have a direct interest in not objectively monitoring the near shore, as this area is showing the most serious and sustained degradation. Instead of wanting to prove the value of their programs by monitoring, both agencies appear to want to conceal unbiased measure consistent with established scientific protocols.

Some have suggested a monitoring regime for critical water quality pollutants much like the San Francisco Estuary Institute. Their operational creed is:

> *We provide impartial scientific interpretations and neither take sides on environmental issues nor have any political or financial interest in the outcomes of research and monitoring data.*

The only legitimate urban stormwater regulation is based on volume reduction through infiltration.

Lahontan's strategy is to clean stormwater through various actions, e.g. street sweeping, shoulder treatment, and filters, which lack scientific protocols to assess whether their methods are sound. These actions are expensive, capital intensive, and obligate high long-term maintenance costs. The results do not meet with the same level of certainty as infiltration or urban stormwater where the science is sound and not disputed.

It is not in the interest of Lahontan to objectively monitor near-shore water quality, as it would reveal degradation so severe and sources so obvious that the scientific validity of the TMDL would be at risk, raising additional questions about expenditure of prior funding. Models do not necessarily correspond to reality, and the TMDL rewards modeled results, not objective measurements.

The CTC has strayed, since about 2006, from its original intent to buy property in the Tahoe Basin to retire development rights and potential coverage. The CTC was successful doing this for many years, and California taxpayers have spent $108 million through the CTC to purchase 4400+ parcels to "reduce development."

The CTC has monetized development rights for all parcels purchased with public funds, and as bond funding declines the CTC sees self-preservation value in converting rights into money. About 400 parcels have been classified as "Asset Lands" to potentially sell back to the private sector. The CTC leadership justifies certain public/private partnerships, "to recoup a portion of the public's capital investment in these acquisitions for future high-priority projects through the sale of the banked development rights."

The CTC is "reinventing itself," as an advocate for devoting

public resources to an unsustainable redevelopment vision, rather than staying on track as a Conservancy. The public should be informed, and be subject to public debate.

This video link shows what is being ignored by these two agencies.

We believe this amendment should be withdrawn, and the issue of monitoring Lake Tahoe's vital signs be referred to interim study.

Sincerely,

David McClure, president North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance

Roger Patching, president Friends of Lake Tahoe

Ann Nichols, president North Tahoe Preservation Alliance

CDC: Vaccination rates high, but measles outbreak a concern

By Eryn Brown, Los Angeles Times

Overall, young children in the U.S. maintained high vaccination rates in 2012, officials at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday.

But researchers also said there were 159 reported cases of measles between Jan. 1 and Aug. 24 this year – a higher number than usual – and gaps in immunization appear to be to blame.

The new data were published in two reports included in the

latest edition of the health agency's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

In the first of the two papers, CDC researchers analyzed responses from the National Immunization Survey, which monitors vaccine coverage among children 19 to 35 months of age. The federal government targets 90% childhood vaccination rates. Nationwide, Americans are hitting or exceeding that goal for measles, mumps and rubella; for polio; for hepatitis B; and for varicella (the virus that causes chicken pox). Americans missed targets for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, and for Hib and PCV vaccines.

Read the whole story

Wildfires can happen anywhere – be ready

By Teri Mizuhara

Even professionals can find it difficult to comprehend the speed at which a wildfire can move, so for the public it can be tough to understand it unless you have witnessed it firsthand.

With any luck, you may never have such a life changing experience.

Trying to predict what causes a small wildland fire in the neighborhood to grow to one of the largest wildland fires in the state's history is challenging. The Rim Fire is burning in terrain similar to what we find in Amador and El Dorado counties, so it is a short leap to think, it could happen

here.

CalFrie Unit Chief Kelly Keenan of the Amador-El Dorado-Sacramento Unit emphasizes that, “I imagine the residents of Tuolumne County never thought it could really happen to them, or that the Rim Fire could have burned 255,858 acres (400 square miles) in 28 days, but it has with ferocity that one seldom sees. With 80 percent of the fire contained, the third largest wildfire in the state’s history is still spotting ahead of itself and causing Yosemite National Park to close four of its campgrounds and the Stanislaus National Forest to close two of its ranger districts not to mention the road closures in the area.”

The Rim Fire illustrates the intensity of a wildland fire and how quickly it can increase in size. At its height, between Aug. 22-23, it was burning an average of 36 acres every single minute for a total of 51,754 acres in 24 hours.

These type fires can create their own weather, consume all the vegetation in their path and, when hot enough, create a water repellent or hydrophobic condition in the soils that can impede the re growth of the forest.

To illustrate just how quickly a wildfire can move, take a look at the Rim Fire stats:

Aug. 17 at 3:25pm the fire is reported.

Aug. 18 about 15 hours after the first report the fire is 200 acres and zero percent contained.

Aug. 19 at 7am the fire has quadrupled in size to 800 acres.

Aug. 20 at 7am the fire grew nearly 13 times its size in 24 hours to 10,170 acres.

Aug. 21 at 7am the fire has grown over 50 percent and is 16,228 acres.

Aug. 22 at 7am the fire more than tripled in size in 24 hours for a total of 53,866 acres.

Aug. 23 at 7am the fire nearly doubled in size again to 105,620 acres and 2 percent containment

Aug. 24 at 7pm the fire grew another 24,000 acres to 129,620 and 7 percent containment.

Sept. 13 at 7am the fire is now 255,858 acres (400 square miles) and 80 percent contained and has become the third largest wildland fire in the history of California since 1932, it is still not 100 percent contained.

Unfortunately, too often we hear people say, “my neighborhood has never had a fire like that so I don’t have to worry about it” or “I live in a million dollar home with a manicured landscape” somehow trusting that these unfounded beliefs will prevent them from becoming a victim of a wildland fire. But the truth is, every year we witness a neighborhood with “no fire history” subject to a catastrophic fire and million dollar homes with manicured landscaping destroyed in wildland fires.

Ignoring wildland fire potential is not the answer. We have all consciously chosen a lifestyle here in the Sierra, whether it is the rolling grasslands of the front country or the forested timberlands at elevation; we live in an area that is historically prone to wildland fires. We accept these risks but with that risk we also need to accept the responsibility of doing all we can to protect ourselves when a wildfire occurs.

Please go online for more information on what you can do to increase your fire safety, defensible space, and disaster preparedness.

Teri Mizuhara is the public information officer for the El Dorado-Amador CalFire unit.

Second homeowners seek all inclusive planned resorts

By Lauren Schuker Blum and Candace Jackson, Wall Street Journal

What attracts this generation of wealthy second-home buyers: ziplines, kids clubs and grilled cheese.

For decades focused on golf, skiing or hunting, today's master-planned resorts are being reimagined as fancy family camps, a trend that's helping revive a number of struggling high-end second-home communities. Developers say they're aiming to please everyone from toddlers to great-grandparents by merging luxurious trappings with amenities like bowling alleys, soda shops and video arcades. It's all designed to woo wealthy buyers on the hunt for a perfect family vacation.



Martis Camp has evolved into more than a golf course with big homes. Photo/Provided

"These days, you can't just offer a Jack Nicklaus golf course

and instantly be successful," says Chris Fair, president of Resonance Consultancy, which advises developers of destination homes and resort communities.

The shift comes after several difficult years in some second-home markets. Residential resorts made up some of the hardest hit real estate during the downturn: Some residential golf communities sold lots for $1.

At Martis Camp – a 2,177-acre resort in Truckee that developer DMB/Highlands Group started in 2006 – amenities aimed at families have helped to ramp up sales in recent years, says Brian Hull, the club's director of sales. There is a family barn that features a bowling alley, a 44-seat movie theater, a swimming area, soda fountain, indoor basketball courts and an outdoor amphitheater. A soccer field, a softball diamond and a barbecue area are nearby. And for the artistically inclined, there's a "folk school" with classes in photography and pottery.

Last year, the club sold 117 properties for $115 million, a step up from the 73 properties it sold in 2010 for $72 million. So far this year, the developer has sold 103 properties for $128 million.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe parks receive $1 mil. donation

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

The nonprofit Sierra State Parks Foundation has received a $1

million grant from an anonymous donor.

The donor, whose gift came through the San Francisco Foundation, identified specific projects to be funded, all on Lake Tahoe's West Shore.

They include sod roof restoration at Vikingsholm, Hellman-Ehrman estate restoration, D.L. Bliss State Park interpretive signage, human-bear management projects and Olympic Heritage snow trails grooming.

Read the whole story

Incline man convicted in gas station robbery

Jorge Miranda-Rivas of Incline Village was found guilty in Washoe County District Court on Sept. 11 on one count each of robbery with a deadly weapon, discharging a weapon from within a structure, assault with a deadly weapon and grand larceny of an automobile .

The robbery at the Chevron in Incline occurred Jan. 2.

Miranda-Rivas is scheduled to be sentenced on Nov. 7.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Nevada toys with Internet gaming beyond state line

By Cy Ryan and Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

The road to Nevada offering online poker to residents of other states is long and tortuous and gaming regulators took a step in that journey Wednesday when the state Gaming Control Board conducted a workshop meeting on a proposal for companies to offer progressive jackpots across state lines.

The state's largest slot machine manufacturers – International Game Technology and Bally Technologies – petitioned the Nevada Gaming Commission to amend regulations to allow multijurisdictional progressive prizes.

Gaming Control Board Chairman A.G. Burnett concurred that adoption of the amendments to the regulation could be viewed as a first step toward developing online poker across state lines.

"You might say we'd be sticking our toe in the water," Burnett said of the proposal.

Read the whole story