Truckee looking for name for K-9 officer

The Truckee Police Department is launching a new canine unit featuring a black Labrador narcotics detection dog.

The department is in the process of selecting a dog and needs to have a name ready when the time comes. And the public is being asked to help name the new officer.

Submit ideas to the Truckee Police Department at the front counter (10183 Truckee Airport Road), or email name submissions to TPD canine handler Andrew Holbrook at aholbrook@townoftruckee.com, with “Dog Tag” in the subject line.

SnowGlobe returning to S. Tahoe in December

By Kathryn Reed

SnowGlobe, the three-day outdoor music festival in South Lake Tahoe, is coming back.

The City Council on Tuesday approved the agreement for the event to return Dec. 29-31. But this third year is most likely the last time it will be at the ball fields next to Lake Tahoe Community College.

While Chad Donnelly, who produces the event, is going to put heavy mats on the high-traffic areas, he said it’s cost-prohibitive ($800,000) to cover the entire field. That field

was paid for by taxpayer dollars through Measure S/R. And with the city wanting to preserve the integrity of the field as long as possible, City Manager Nancy Kerry is recommending “it never come back to this location.”



SnowGlobe will return to South Lake Tahoe for the third year over New Year’s Eve weekend. Photo/LTN file

The thinking is that by telling Donnelly now that he has to find a new location for 2014, that a location on the South Shore will be found.

Horizon had considered having it. The North Shore expressed strong interest when Donnelly started fishing around for cash to come back. But the South Shore always wanted it. It’s all about money.

The Aug. 6 staff report says, “An overall economic impact analysis was provided by a consultant contracted by SnowGlobe, which estimated the direct economic benefits to South Lake Tahoe community at $5.8 million.” Strategic Marketing Group then analyzed those findings, saying the consultant should have included indirect economic impacts, too, which would bring the financial benefit of SnowGlobe to between $11 million and $14 million.

Jack Fisher, general manager at MontBleu casino, told the council he thought $10 million was “a little light”. His

casino has had multiple after parties that have been popular with SnowGlobe attendees.

He broached the possibility of having SnowGlobe at multiple locations in the future.

On the Aug. 8 Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority board meeting agenda is an item to allocate up to $75,000 to the producer of SnowGlobe. The board opted earlier not to vote on the funding until a location on the South Shore had been secured.

Lake Tahoe Community College in April had directed staff to negotiate a multiyear contract with Donnelly. But that won't be necessary with the city's not wanting to subject the field to an event like SnowGlobe. The college board, though, will have an item about SnowGlobe on its Aug. 13 agenda.

Donnelly will be responsible for cleaning the field once the snow melts. Under consideration is adding warming huts by the line for buses and near food vendors.

He must put up a $25,000 deposit.

The city is going to absorb about $25,000 in soft costs, which includes time for police and parks and rec staff.

The city believes that $25,000 is an investment in the event with a return many times over via hotel and sales tax revenue generated from concert-goers.

'Get Out of My Crotch' tells

it like it is

By Kathryn Reed

Disturbing. Enlightening. Thought provoking. Gripping. Gritty. Sad. Troubling.

Those are some of the words that come to mind when describing “Get Out of My Crotch”, a book published by Cherry Bomb Books, an imprint of Bona Fide Books in Meyers.

It’s one of those books that can’t be read all at once. It’s too powerful and disturbing. There’s too much to think about and process.



It’s one of those books that probably won’t be read by the people who should and need to read it. They would be all the politicians who want to regulate women’s reproductive rights.

“Crotch” is a collection of 21 essays from 20 women and one man about life today in the United States when it comes to women’s reproductive issues.

If you think all women have access to safe abortions because of Roe v. Wade, well, you clearly don’t pay attention to the news.

We have politicians who think a woman who is raped has the power to control whether she gets pregnant. We have politicians who think there is never a valid reason for an abortion. Why they even think the government should have a say in what a woman chooses to do is mindboggling.

But “Crotch” isn’t a book about abortion, though it starts out

that way. (Just keep reading the book.)

The stories are not unique. That is largely what is so sad about them. If they were isolated cases, the book probably wouldn't have been published. It's because these stories are the same stories your sisters, your friends, and your neighbors' could tell you, but probably choose not to, that the words are so powerful. If you can't hear it from them, maybe you can read what a stranger has to say.

These are stories involving discrimination, access to birth control, how race plays a part in how people are treated, what Congress is trying to do and has done. They are stories about women wanting to decide what's right for them without interference from others.

It's a book I sent to my two nieces earlier this year when they were 17 and 24. It's a book that people need to read. It's also a book you won't want to read.

Letter: 8th-grader sponsors Bread & Broth night

To the community,

Patricia Ann Frega, an eighth-grade student at South Tahoe Middle School, was Bread & Broth's Adopt A Day of Nourishment sponsor for the evening meal served on July 29.

This young sponsor is a beacon in the community for stepping up in service to feed the hungry of South Lake Tahoe. Patricia Ann provided the funds and a crew to assist the B&B volunteers

to put a hot, nutritious meal of roasted chicken, stuffing, veggie medley, green salad and lots of fresh fruit together.

Patricia Ann and her friend Gail Dulay helped wrap utensils and served the large variety of delicious desserts. Also on Patricia Ann's crew were her mother and father, Patricia and Pat Frega. Her mom and dad helped with "give away" bags and serving the dinner. "We enjoyed serving the community," said Patricia Ann. "There is so much we can do to help the community."

With Patricia Ann's sponsorship, over 125 meals were served and according to Kathi Olsen, the B&B volunteer coordinator and one of the evening's cooks, fun was had by all. Bread & Broth is very honored to have been chosen by Patricia Ann to help her serve the less fortunate. B&B would like to thank Patricia Ann for her donation of time and funding and salute her for her generous spirit and concern for her community.

If you would like to support Bread & Broth's program, please contact me at (530) 542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

S. Tahoe woman clinging to life at Reno hospital

A South Lake Tahoe woman in her mid-30s was found unresponsive and covered with bruises when two people arrived about 5pm Tuesday to issue her an eviction notice.

Instead, they called 911.

When paramedics arrived at the South Shore Avenue house they

thought the injuries were suspicious so they called police.

Officers as of 8:30pm Aug. 6 were still at the residence looking for evidence that might answer questions as to what happened to the woman. Police are also waiting to hear from medical personnel at Renown Medical Center in Reno.

The woman was initially taken to Barton Memorial Hospital, but was taken by Calstar to Reno based on her life-threatening injuries.

Police Lt. Brian Williams told *Lake Tahoe News* it's too soon to know if a medical condition led to the injuries or if foul play was involved. Neighbors have told officers they last saw the woman on Monday.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. leaders vow to revamp state parks

By KCRA-TV

A group of California business, education and nonprofit leaders – including Monterey Bay Aquarium founding director Julie Packard – have agreed to help revamp the state parks system in an effort to restore confidence and financial stability to an institution rocked by scandal.

The dozen volunteers will spend the next 18 months addressing the problems that led to the state threatening to close 70 of the 280 parks in the system after long years of funding shortages – and more recent revelations that now-departed leaders socked money in a secret fund.

The Parks Forward Commission will design a blueprint to make the park system financially viable by studying everything from potential revenue sources to whether a lack of innovation at the top is tied to the practice of promoting only law enforcement rangers to leadership positions.

“Under the weight of budget cuts, added acreage and outmoded systems, our parks are struggling to meet the needs of Californians, and visitors from around the country and world,” said John Laird, secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. “This is a top-notch panel that will roll up its sleeves to craft a long-term plan for a financially sustainable and functionally relevant state parks system that meets the needs of a changing population.”

Read the whole story

Tom Wendell – 1951-2013



Tom Wendell will be remembered as a voice for recreation.

Long before economics dictated that recreation must be the

focal point of the Lake Tahoe Basin, there was a man shouting from the mountaintops, the bike trails, the lake and everywhere he went that recreation is what Tahoe is all about.

That message will be carried on even though the original voice has been silenced.

Tom Wendell died Aug. 5. He was 62.

Mr. Wendell had been associated with recreation and environmental stewardship for most of the quarter century he called South Lake Tahoe home.

Born in Montreal on April 13, 1951, Mr. Wendell soon moved with his family to Southern California. He grew up in Los Angeles. The family started spending vacations in Lake Tahoe in the mid-1950s. They all fell in love with the Sierra.

Mr. Wendell's environmental influence came in large part from his mother, Inge, who was from Germany. Besides being fluent in the language, Mr. Wendell learned about that country's efficiencies when it came to transportation, cycling and recycling. He brought what he learned during his travels back to Tahoe.

It was rare to see Mr. Wendell on anything but his bicycle. And he had the scars to prove it. When he was a bicycle courier in the mid-1970s while attending Santa Barbara Community College he was in an accident that resulted in his first knee surgery.

That surgery is what led him to learn how to maneuver a mono ski. It was much easier on Mr. Wendell's knees than the traditional two planks. And this was at a time when fat skis were not available.

Mr. Wendell was often seen skiing at Heavenly Mountain Resort on that mono ski. Within the small community of mono skiers, his abilities were praised.

When Mr. Wendell first moved to South Lake Tahoe full time in 1987 he worked as a certified massage therapist at Lakeside Nautilus, where Sierra Athletic Club is now. He worked at Ridge Tahoe and other places as a CMT, but mostly had private clients.

He perfected an original massage move that with his long arm span went from the client's toes to head in one fell swoop. And for those who experienced it, they remember it still today.

Mr. Wendell also worked for Sports Ltd. starting in 1992 and continued until 2012. He took some time off to care for his ill mother and when the store at the Y closed.

In the early 1990s, Mr. Wendell was the recycling coordinator for El Dorado County. A state law had been passed that required jurisdictions to reduce the waste being taken to landfills.

Mr. Wendell was proud to see people recycle in earnest. He was instrumental in removing the waxy, nonrecyclable material from phonebook covers.

In 2001, with the help of Bob Kingman, Karen Fink, Peter Fink, Jeff Miner and Gary Bell, TRAC – or Tahoe Region Advocates for Cycling – was formed. The goal of Mr. Wendell and others was to promote on- and off-road cycling, along with safety. Grants were secured to help with bike trail improvements.

This group eventually morphed into the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition, of which Mr. Wendell was part.

Mr. Wendell was usually seen commuting to work and any destination on his hybrid bike. It was more of a road bike, but could handle dirt trails. Weeks would go by without him driving his car.

He had a separate mountain bike he used when he didn't want to

be around the masses and especially vehicles. Anywhere in the Cold Creek-Powerline area was a favorite of his.

Kayaking was another big part of Mr. Wendell's life. In the last year he had also learned how to commandeer a standup paddleboard.

Mr. Wendell was on the South Lake Tahoe Sustainability Commission until the City Council's recent disbanding of it. He also helped form Compost Tahoe.

At meetings around the basin he lobbied for more recreation opportunities, more and better bike trails, and for people to live a sustainable lifestyle.

Mr. Wendell's voice of advocacy has finally been heard based on the direction the basin leaders say they want move. Perhaps one day there will be a bike trail named after Mr. Wendell and a plaque to acknowledge the efforts of this man who never stopped fighting for the words "recreation" and "Tahoe" to be synonymous.

Mr. Wendell is survived by his brother, Ted Wendell, of South Lake Tahoe and an army of friends.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to Sustainable Tahoe, Barton Hospice, Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition or TAMBA .

Services are pending.

CalFire: Don’t transport firewood

The Buy It Where You Burn It campaign is reminding everyone to cut or buy firewood locally and use it locally.

Additionally, CalFire says if you plan on camping and traveling outside the area, get your firewood from the area you are going too, do not transport wood from your backyard because of the potential to spread diseases and pests. Also, leave unburned firewood where you bought it.

Examples of insects and diseases that have affected California include:

The Goldspotted Oak Borer (an invasive beetle in San Diego County likely brought into the state on firewood) has killed tens of thousands of oak trees all over San Diego County since 2004 when it was first found.

Sudden Oak Death is a disease found on the California coast and as far east as Solano County and has killed tanoaks and other oak species from British Columbia, Canada to Monterey County.

Pine Pitch Canker is a disease (fungus) affecting Monterey and Bishop pine trees. However, most western pine species including commercial species such as sugar pine and ponderosa pine are susceptible. Pitch Canker has been found along most of the California coast encompassing an area over 23 million acres.

North Shore peak to honor fallen soldiers

With the assistance of the U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit and others, an unnamed peak on the North Shore has been renamed Gold Star Peak in honor of soldiers from the area who died in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

There will be a ceremony to dedicate the peak on Sept. 6 at 11am at Lakeview Commons.

Gold Star Peak is between Mount Watson and Martis Peak. The peak's name, Gold Star, comes from the Gold Star lapel pin that was established by an act of Congress in 1947 to identify next of kin of service members killed in combat.

Gold Star Peak will honor Pfc. Brandon Williams, Sgt. Tim Smith and Spc. Garrett Fant.

A bronze memorial plaque commemorating Gold Star Peak will be unveiled at the ceremony in South Lake Tahoe.

South Tahoe homes sales, median prices rising

By Dan Spano

We are still seeing a lot of action in the South Lake Tahoe real estate market. The July figures were just released and they continue to show that interest in buying a home in Lake Tahoe is still growing.

During the last year we saw homebuyers flock to Lake Tahoe for a few reasons: low interest rates and an increased interest to buy something before they felt it was too late. When we saw more home listings enter the market this summer we saw the sales frenzy subside a bit.

The chart shows sales figures:

	July 2013	July 2012	July 2011
Closed sales	80	68	53
Median sales price	$297,000	$234,050	$235,000
No. of homes for sale	363	422	693
No. of new listings	120	93	126

The month's supply of homes for sale in Lake Tahoe has started to increase. The ideal balance between buyers and sellers is a six-month inventory of homes to get a balanced market between buyers and sellers. Our current month's supply is 5.8 so this is the closest to a balanced market we've seen in months.

The future

Demand for homes in South Lake Tahoe has started to slow down, but we won't see those figures for another two to three months once escrows start to slow. I continue see a lot of clients from Northern California who really want to own a vacation home in Lake Tahoe. This is a great place to own a vacation home and/or a vacation rental.

I see the number of closed sales starting to level off and the interest rates starting to climb slightly. The 3 percent interest rates are now gone and we're seeing rate up to 4.7

percent. For the future I see a more balanced real estate market in Lake Tahoe, more inventory available, the median prices continue to increase and still more good opportunities for buyers.

Many cities are already back to where home values were before the slump of the last few years but that isn’t the case in Lake Tahoe. Since we’re still below our high price point of pre-2007 there is still room to grow and home buyers realize this.

Dan Spano is with Paradise Real Estate.