Opinion: Improvements needed at STHS softball field



Boards make it hard to see the action at South Tahoe High's softball field from behind home plate. Photo/Provided

Publisher's note: ***This letter was sent to Sheri Schimmel with High Sierra ASA. It is reprinted here with permission. It was also read earlier this month by Schimmel to the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board.***

Dear Sheri,

Thank you for doing such a great job on the fields at the SLT high school (July 6). ASA is fortunate having you on their staff for their tournaments. You and your colleagues really worked hard.

The powers that be have made a lot of improvements on the field since we last played there. I do have a suggestion however. Is it possible to remove the top two boards behind home plate? I tried to set up a video camera but was able to get a good angle because of the height of the boards.

I also realized that if someone in a wheelchair wanted to sit behind the backstop they would not be able to see. It appears

there is room behind the backstop for a row or two of seating and would be perfect for the elderly and handicapped.

I would appreciate it if you would forward a copy of this letter to the appropriate decision-makers regarding these suggestions.

Thanks again for your hard work regarding the tournament. We, at Scholars and Champions and Nevada Wildcats, look forward to participating in future tournaments on your fields.

Sincerely,

Joyce Herceg, Scholars and Champions board secretary

Former Tahoe reporter dies in Hawaii



Michael Taugher

A former *Tahoe Daily Tribune* and *North Lake Tahoe Bonanza* reporter died Saturday while snorkeling in Maui.

Michael Taugher, 50, worked for the Tahoe newspapers from 1989

to 1992.

Most recently Taugher was a spokesman for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

According to the *Maui News*, foul play is not suspected in the July 27 death. The Hawaii paper reported Taugher had been snorkeling off Black Rock in Kaanapali when he was discovered floating. Officials were unable to revive him.

— Lake Tahoe News staff report

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• On Aug. 6-7 Caltrans will be conducting roadwork from Monitor Junction on Highway 89 to Woodfords Junction on Highway 88, which means there will be delays.

• Here is this week's Sierra roadwork schedule from Caltrans.

• Loryn Kasten is leading the communications team at Northstar ski resort.

• *Sacramento Business Journal* has named Lake Tahoe's Rhonda McFarlane as the 2013 Large Public Agency Chief Financial Officer of the Year. She is CFO at the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District.

Sandoval spins Nevada's economic message

By Anjeanette Damon, Las Vegas Sun

If you received all of your economic news from Gov. Brian Sandoval's campaign Twitter feed, you'd be exuberantly optimistic about the jobs outlook and overall business climate.

As the Republican governor prepares to run for re-election on the strength of his economic record, you won't see him tweet that Nevada has the highest unemployment rate in the nation.

Instead, you'll see that Nevada has had "non-stop job growth" and that the state's unemployment rate is falling faster than almost anywhere else in the country.

You won't see that Nevada continues to have the highest foreclosure rate in the nation.

Instead, you'll see that Nevada is in "the top three performers of overall economic performance and growth" – as measured by a U.S. Chamber of Commerce report focused on tax burdens, tort reform policies and business lending.

Read the whole story

USFS launches new fire safety

campaign

The U.S. Forest Service and other land management agencies have a new fire safety campaign in California. The One Less Spark, One Less Wildfire campaign is designed to provide constant reminders during this fire season to reduce the numbers of human-caused vehicle and equipment wildfires throughout the state.

“All the stories we hear about sparks starting wildland fires are true, especially during this hot, dry summer,” said Joe Aragon, U.S. Forest Service Region 5 Interagency Fire Prevention Action Team coordinator, said in a statement. “With the low precipitation winter brought, conditions are ideal for fire starts. We’re here to coordinate with communities, agencies, organizations and schools to heighten awareness and ultimately protect the public from damaging fires in order to create more fire-adapted communities.”

The campaign features posters, bumper stickers, informational cards and public service announcements which give safety messages about equipment such as lawn mowers igniting fires, tow chains sparking fires along roadways, and safe handling of campfires.

Partner agencies include: National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, CalFire, Caltrans, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation and many others.

Fire season in California has technically just begun, and already campfires have been blamed for 45 fires on national forest land. Thirteen fires have been sparked by equipment such as string trimmers, chain saws and mowers. An abandoned campfire started the 1,708 acre Carstens Fire on the Sierra National Forest near Yosemite, costing millions of dollars.

Helicopter airlifts injured dog from Mt. Tallac



Janet Field follows her dog's rescuers off the peak of Mount Tallac on July 28. Photo/Provided

A CHP helicopter had to airlift a Meyers woman and her dog off Mount Tallac on Sunday.

Janet Field called El Dorado County sheriff's deputies from the top of the South Shore peak about 3pm July 28 to alert them she could not make it down because her dog, Samson, had raw pads and could not walk any farther.

Deputies' instructions on how to bandage the dog's paws did not work. And the dog was too big be carried out by its owner.

Field was not in a position to stay the night or hike out in the dark because of the light clothing she was wearing and the lack of food and water.

At 6pm the California Highway Patrol helicopter was able to get Field and her dog off the mountain.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

West Slope fire department nearly out of money

By Richard Chang, Sacramento Bee

The El Dorado County Fire Protection District is teetering on the verge of insolvency after running deficits for years, according to documents obtained by the *Bee*.

The district's reserve fund is down to $130,000, from a peak of $1.4 million in 2008. The department serves 74,000 residents spread over 281 square miles, including the communities of Placerville and Shingle Springs.

"We've been using our reserves to balance our budget," said Michael Hardy, the fire chief who was appointed in June.

Read the whole story

Kitchens may be a pollution hazard

By Peter Andrey Smith, New York Times

By midmorning, the smell of hot peanut oil dissipated and inside the tightly sealed laboratory known as Building 51F, a pink hamburger sizzled in a pan over a raging gas flame.

Overhead, fans whirred, whisking caustic smoke up through a metallic esophagus of ductwork.

Woody Delp, 49, a longhaired engineer in glasses – the Willie Nelson of HVAC – supervised the green bean and hamburger experiments. He sat at a computer inside a kitchen simulator, rows upon rows of numeric data appearing on his screen, ticking off the constituents of the plume sucked up the flue. A seared hamburger patty, as he sees it, is just a reliable source for indoor pollution.



Veronica, Pam and Cleo cook several dishes. Photo/LTN file

“I can claim Alice Waters’ influenced the recipe,” he said. “It’s all fresh and local.”

But Delp and his colleagues aren’t really interested in testing recipes. They are scientists at the Energy Department’s Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and the morning’s experiment concerned another kitchen conundrum, a fight against physics: how to remove harmful contaminants caused by cooking.

Simply put, cooking is an act of controlled combustion – you set oil, fat, and carbohydrates on fire. As a health hazard, incinerating hamburgers and green beans may pale in comparison with lighting wood or coal fires indoors, the leading environmental cause of death and disability around the world.

Yet frying, grilling or toasting foods with gas and electric appliances creates particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, and volatile organic compounds. (Acrolein, which most cooks recognize as the smell of burnt fats or oils, was used in grenades in World War I because it causes irritation to the lungs and eyes.)

Read the whole story

Medical experts trying to level the cost of care

By Ketaki Gokhale, Bloomberg

Devi Shetty is obsessed with making heart surgery affordable for millions of Indians. On his office desk are photographs of two of his heroes: Mother Teresa and Mahatma Gandhi.

Shetty is not a public health official motivated by charity. He's a heart surgeon turned businessman who has started a chain of 21 medical centers around India. By trimming costs with such measures as buying cheaper scrubs and spurning air-conditioning, he has cut the price of artery-clearing coronary bypass surgery to 95,000 rupees ($1,583), half of what it was 20 years ago, and wants to get the price down to $800 within a decade. The same procedure costs $106,385 at Ohio's Cleveland Clinic, according to data from the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

"It shows that costs can be substantially contained," said Srinath Reddy, president of the Geneva-based World Heart Federation, of Shetty's approach. "It's possible to deliver very high quality cardiac care at a relatively low cost."

Medical experts like Reddy are watching closely, eager to see if Shetty's driven cost-cutting can point the way for hospitals to boost revenue on a wider scale by making life-saving heart operations more accessible to potentially millions of people in India and other developing countries.

Read the whole story

Teen at Camp Sacramento died from allergic reaction

By Suzanne Phan, News 10

It was supposed to be the last day of a family vacation at a popular summer camp, but it ended in tragedy for one Sacramento area family when a loved one had a fatal allergic reaction.

Relatives says 13-year-old Natalie Giorgi died from a severe allergic reaction to peanut butter while she was attending Camp Sacramento off Highway 50 in El Dorado County. Now, the family says it really wants to get the message out about how dangerous and deadly food allergies can be.



Natalie Giorgi

Giorgi was very careful about what she ate and always made

sure her food did not have nuts according to family and friends.

But, she had unknowingly eaten a Rice Krispies-type snack with peanut butter.

On Friday night, the final night of camp, there was entertainment and refreshments. A dessert tray was put out in a dark area of the camp. Giorgi reached for a treat and took a bite out of it. She knew something wasn’t right, spit it out and told tell her mother, who also tasted the treat. They later realized the treat contained peanut butter. Natalie felt fine for about 20 minutes, but then began vomiting, had trouble breathing and went into cardiac arrest.

Read the whole story