Take time to reinvent yourself with second career

By Betty Hechtman

They’re called second acts, encore careers or reinventing yourself – they’re the completely new and different jobs people take in midlife or later.

Today, making that jump is more likely to be a matter of following the heart than it was during the throes of the economic recession, when professionals caught up in corporate layoffs discovered they were too old to find jobs in a poor market and too young to retire. They started second careers not to follow a vocation but to pay the bills.

I’m glad to see the tide turning again – especially for all the baby boomers who don’t want to retire but do want to do something gratifying.

I’ve had a lot of practice reinventing myself. I volunteered as a farmworker on a kibbutz in Israel, waitressed and worked in retail sales, and made connections as a telephone operator, among a host of jobs.

I’ve held jobs just for the paycheck and I’ve pursued my passions, so I know how profoundly different it is to do one versus the other. No matter what age you are, if there’s work you feel called to, you should most definitely give it a try – you may well experience a joy unlike any you’ve ever known.

Here are tips for people considering an encore:

• Do your homework. There’s nothing more disappointing them jumping in to something new only to become disillusioned and frustrated because you didn’t take the time to prepare. If your dream is to open a particular business, research the

market. Is there a demand for what you hope to sell? Should you give it a trial run as an online business before investing in shop space and other overhead? Start by checking the resources at Score.org, a nonprofit supported by more than 12,000 volunteers dedicated to helping small businesses off the ground. For other encore pursuits, you might take classes or spend a few hours a week working as a volunteer to learn the ropes.

• Join a group of like-minded people. This is particularly helpful for aspiring artists who want to paint, play music, write a book or indulge some other creative talent. You can brush up on your skills and make valuable contacts by becoming a part of a community theater, joining a writers circle, or finding a group of hobbyists. You may find your skills develop much more quickly with the support and guidance of collegial peers who are all helping one another achieve a dream.

• Consider working in one of the five most popular encore fields. Most people seek second their careers in health, education, government, environment and non-profits – all fields expected to provide abundant job opportunities in the next couple of years, according to Encore.org, a non-profit that supports second careers "for the greater good." If you need training to qualify, now is the time to get it. Invest now in the education, and you can soon have a job that feeds the heart, the mind – and the body.

Betty Hechtman is the author of "Yarn to Go," the first book in the Berkley Prime Crime Yarn Retreat mystery series, as well as the author of the best-selling Berkley Prime Crime Crochet mystery series. The eighth book, "For Better or Worsted," comes out in November.

Number of prisoners declining in U.S.

By Erica Goode, New York Times

The prison population in the United States dropped in 2012 for the third consecutive year, according to federal statistics released on Thursday, in what criminal justice experts said was the biggest decline in the nation's recent history, signaling a shift away from an almost four-decade policy of mass imprisonment.

The number of inmates in state and federal prisons decreased by 1.7 percent, to an estimated 1,571,013 in 2012 from 1,598,783 in 2011, according to figures released by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, an arm of the Justice Department. Although the percentage decline appeared small, the fact that it followed decreases in 2011 and 2010 offers persuasive evidence of what some experts say is a "sea change" in America's approach to criminal punishment.

About half the 2012 decline — 15,035 prisoners — occurred in California, which has decreased its prison population in response to a Supreme Court order to relieve prison overcrowding. But eight other states, including New York, Florida, Virginia and North Carolina, showed substantial decreases, of more than 1,000 inmates, and more than half the states reported some drop in the number of prisoners. (Figures for three states were estimated because they had not submitted data in time for the report.) The population of federal prisons increased slightly, but at a slower rate than in previous years, the report found.

Read the whole story

Southwest Gas wants to raise El Dorado County rates

Southwest Gas wants to raise rates effective Jan. 1.

A residential customer in South Lake Tahoe using 73 therms a month now pays $66.20. A rate increase would put that monthly bill at $73.41.

The California Public Utilities Commission is having evidentiary hearings from Aug. 12-16 at 10am in San Francisco.

Southwest Gas in December applied for the rate increate to up its operating margin for natural gas service in El Dorado County. The company wants to make $2.8 million more or 13.6 percent.

Southwest says the increase is to “recover the reasonable costs the company will incur to own and operate the facilities used to maintain and provide safe and reliable natural gas service to it California customers.”

For more info, email public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov or call (415) 703.2074.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• The El Dorado County Air Quality Management District is expanding office hours beginning Aug. 12 to Mondays-Thursdays from 7:30am to 5:30pm and Fridays 8am to 5pm. And the office will open during lunch.

• Sierra Cosmetic Laser in downtown Truckee has hired aesthetic nurse Abigail Rockey-Scott.

• Lake Tahoe author Todd Borg's next writers' workshop is Nov. 16-18 at the Sacramento Fine Arts Center. All the details are online.

• Volunteers are needed for the Aug. 24 Lake in the Sky Air at Lake Tahoe Airport. A volunteer open house/training will be Aug. 15 from 4:30-7pm at the airport.

• There will be a free self-directed IRA seminar July 31 at 9:30am at Edgewood Tahoe. Register online.

Recreation dollars being spent on fields, bike trails

By Kathryn Reed

Improvements to South Lake Tahoe ball fields and bike trails will be in the ground by the time the building season is over in the fall.

The upgrades all have to do with the transformation of Measure S into Measure R. South Shore voters on the California side

decided the recreation measure was too limiting and that by changing the language more money could be spent on some critical items.

An update on what the fields and bicycle advisory committees are doing was given at Friday's South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority board meeting.



Crews work July 26 on Sierra House Elementary School's field. Photo/LTN

John Dalton, chair of the fields committee, explained how the revamping of Sierra House Elementary School's field is the big project this summer. It looks a bit like a construction site now with all of the heavy equipment moving dirt.

Before work began the field was full of holes and seemed dangerous when running on it.

It was also a field, like Bijou Community School, that when designed had its first priority be about Tahoe Regional Planning Agency erosion control mandates and not the functionality of a play field. This meant there was a slope to the field to catch runoff from the hard surfaces. That much water on turf is not a good thing.

This project is coming in under bid, with the expectation there could be a savings of $5,000. The field committee recommended the JPA board dedicates any leftover money to help

fix the Babe Ruth field.

“It was vandalized in the spring and needs repairs on the field,” Dalton told the board July 26.

He said kids broke into the shack and trashed the place by using baseball bats on equipment. Babe Ruth officials have taken care of the snack shack vandalism, but need help with the field.

The board voted 3-0 to give any “extra” Sierra House money to Babe Ruth.

The JPA board is chaired by Norma Santiago representing El Dorado County, JoAnn Conner from South Lake Tahoe, and Judy Clot from Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District.

The fields committee is also in the process of planning improvement for the Al Tahoe fields. The goal is to add a field that youth baseball and softball could play on.

Shay Navarro, who heads the bike committee, told the board how next week the city is expected to go out to bid on the trail improvements. The goal is that they would be in the ground before the grading season is over.

The sections of trails will be pulverized, with that material becoming the base. Then new asphalt will be laid over that. This should prevent the monstrous cracks that have developed.

Portions to be upgraded are the trail behind McDonald’s at the Y, part of the area behind Motel 6, behind Meek’s in the city, and from Tulare Avenue to Los Angeles Avenue.

Also to be replaced are the bridges over Trout Creek and Upper Truckee River where the bike route parallels Highway 50.

The bike committee has $17,000 left to spend and asked the JPA board to keep that in case there are cost overruns with the projects the city will be in charge of. The board agreed to

this.

The bike committee is also working with the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition to provide informational signs so cyclists know where they are and where they could go.

In other news:

• The JPA board in January will make two appointments to the field committee, and probably three to the bike. Applications will be available in December.

• The state is now considering the JPA a special district, which requires more audits be done. The county auditor-controller will be tasked with that job.

Area authors to be featured on TV show about books

Regional authors Conrad Buedel and Steve Achard will appear on Book TV airing on C-SPAN2 starting Aug. 3 at 9am.

The program is called “Carson City Weekend” and features the history of Carson Valley, Carson City and Virginia City from the 1800s as told by regional authors. Tiffany Rocque, a video journalist for C-SPAN, filmed the interviews on July 8 at the Dangberg Home Ranch Historic Park in Minden.

C-SPAN created Book TV to showcase top nonfiction books and authors. Book TV features 48 hours of nonfiction books on C-SPAN2 every weekend from Saturday at 5am to Monday at 5am.

Buedel and Achard wrote “Lost Legacy of Carson Valley, The Rise and Fall of the H.F. Dangberg Ranching Empire”. It is the

first comprehensive book about the history of Henry Fred Dangberg and his family. It details the exhilarating rise and the devastating fall of one of Nevada's most prominent pioneer families. The book contains hundreds of personal family photographs along with rare documents and letters never seen before. It reveals the private lives of the legendary Dangberg family and the secrets that were kept quiet for generations.

Nev. mental hospital not appealing accreditation loss

By Phillip Reese and Cynthia Hubert, Sacramento Bee

A Nevada state psychiatric hospital under fire for busing hundreds of mentally ill patients to cities across the nation over the past five years will not appeal a decision stripping it of its accreditation.

A committee of the Joint Commission, an independent agency that accredits hospitals nationwide, last week issued a preliminary denial of accreditation for Rawson-Neal Psychiatric Hospital in Las Vegas, citing multiple violations of quality care standards, many related to patient safety.

The hospital had the option to appeal, and keep its accreditation during the process, but officials announced late Thursday they would waive that right and that the hospital and affiliated programs would lose accreditation as of today.

Read the whole story

Pilot writes book all about planes

Veteran Reno pilot Gus Pappas has written “If Airplanes Could Talk II”.

This book is the continuance of his first book “If Airplanes Could Talk.”

Pappas retired from the air National Guard after serving for 36 years, during which time he introduced many of the air technician programs still in use today. After retiring he entered the civilian aviation industry as a flight engineer for Southern Air Transport. He helped to improve their pilot-upgrading program by writing system-knowledge texts and quick reference handbooks of the L-100 and L-382, the civilian versions of the military C-130 airplane.

“If Airplanes Could Talk II” is a 84-page paperback with a retail price of $20.

Sex offender trying to interact with kids in S. Tahoe



Police are warning people about sex offender Wesley Goetz. Photos/Provided

Updated July 27 6:45am:

South Lake Tahoe police are recanting some of the information released about registered sex offender Wesley Goetz.

Goetz is on lifetime supervision, but he is not on active parole in Nevada. He is permitted to travel into California.

Police say Goetz's desire to obtain a business license in South Lake Tahoe do not amount a parole violation or any other criminal violation.

Goetz must still adhere to several special conditions including staying away from areas or businesses which children frequent, and not accessing the Internet without permission.

Goetz is not wanted by law enforcement officials. Goetz is currently in compliance the terms of his supervision.

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A registered sex offender from Nevada has been trying to start a business in South Lake Tahoe that involves children.

Wesley Goetz, 55, lives in Incline Village is a Tier II sex offender out of Nevada. He was convicted in 1998 for felony lewdness with a child under 14, and is on lifetime supervision for his crimes.

Coming into the city limits is a violation of his parole.

South Lake Tahoe officials said Goetz applied – and was denied – a license for an Internet-based business. He also tried to obtain a business license to be a photographer at children's birthday parties, a handyman and a traveling salesman. He was also denied licenses for those businesses.

Part of Goetz's parole conditions is that he must stay away from areas and businesses which children frequent, and not access the Internet without permission.

South Lake Tahoe police detectives say Goetz has falsely claimed that he has permission to be near children, and that he has permission to leave Nevada. Authorities say he has also lied to El Dorado and Placer counties deputies.

Goetz has a valid Nevada driver's license and two vehicles registered in his name; a 1991 Ford Aerostar van bearing NV/805WXK and a 1995 Honda motorcycle bearing NV/177782.

Anyone seeing Goetz near children or in California should call authorities. He is a white male, brown hair, blue eyes, 5-feet-4-inches, and 140 pounds.

Officers have provided the following information:

• Registered sex offenders in California are listed online.

• Registered sex offenders in Nevada are online.

• The offender registry includes only people who have been required by law to register and who are in compliance with the offender registration laws.

• The information contained in the registry is provided as a public service and may not be current or accurate.

• Persons should not rely solely on the offender registry as a safeguard against offenses in their communities.

• The crime for which a person is convicted may not accurately reflect the level of risk.

• Anyone who uses information contained in the registry to harass registrants or commit any crime may be subject to criminal prosecution.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Free landscaping workshop in Truckee

The Truckee River Watershed Council is offering homeowners a free workshop on river-friendly landscaping and weed warriors programs.

The workshop will be at the Truckee Community Garden at the Truckee River Regional Park on July 30 from 5:30-7:30pm.

The workshop is for homeowners, but anyone is welcome to attend, including landscape architects, landscapers, nursery, and maintenance personnel. Learn how RFL helps homeowners prevent or reduce soil erosion from area residential properties, a major source of pollution in our area streams and the Truckee River. There will also be a weed warriors weed identification workshop where participants can learn about identification, management and reporting of non-native, invasive plants in the watershed.

RSVP to Kathy Whitlow at (530) 550.8760, ext.5 to reserve a spot.