Competitive cheerleading group seeks participants

A year-round all-star cheerleading squad is being formed on the South Shore.

Sarah Guzman, who is forming the Tahoe blue Elite Cheer, has more than 20 years of competitive dance and cheerleading experience. She also worked as Whittell High School's cheer coach in 2010 and has taught at two local studios for nearly seven years.

Tryouts are June 24 and July 1 at Reagan Beach in South Lake Tahoe from 9-10am for boys and girls ages 5-18. Practices continue every Tuesday morning until fall.

The focus would include: tumbling/gymnastics, extreme jumps, stunts, and choreography. The team will likely attend two to three local competitions and provide entertainment at local events upon request..

For more info, email tahoebluecheer@outlook.com.

Green Thumb workshops in Tahoe City

Tahoe City-UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center, in collaboration with the Lake Tahoe Master Gardeners, is hosting the Green Thumb gardening workshop series at the Tahoe City Field Station.

These free classes on gardening in Tahoe are open to all

community members on Tuesdays at 5:30pm from June 24 to July 29.

Gardening in Tahoe’s high elevation and short growing season can be challenging, and the Green Thumb series is designed to help local gardeners succeed. Each workshop features a different topic and is led by a master gardener. Participants are encouraged to bring questions and samples from their garden for advice from these Tahoe gardening experts.

The workshop schedule is:

June 24: Know Your Site-Plant it Right

July 1: Container Planting: Make your own Fourth of July bowl

July 8: Invasive Weed Identification with the Tahoe Resource Conservation District

July 15: The Smiling Tree Symposium

July 22: Natives and Adapted Natives: Why? What? Where?

July 29: Vermicomposting: Worms + Kitchen Scraps = Gold!

The Tahoe City Field Station is located at 2400 Lake Forest Rd in Tahoe City.

For more information, contact Kelsey Poole at 775.881.7560, ext. 7402 or klpoole@ucdavis.edu.

Kayak/SUP demo day in South

Lake Tahoe

Kayak Tahoe is sponsoring a free kayak/standup paddleboard demo day from 10am-2pm on June 22.

Test drive all the kayaks and paddleboards they have in stock. Staff will be on the beach ready to answer any questions.

If you choose to bring your dog, Kayak Tahoe will have some dog life jackets for you to test, too.

Suggested donation to ACT (Animal Coalition of Tahoe) is $10.

Kayak Tahoe is located at Timber Cove Marina, across from Safeway in South Lake Tahoe.

Drought conditions worsen in California

By Caitlin Owens, Los Angeles Times

California's drought conditions have worsened over the past week with the percentage of the state suffering from the highest category increasing, the National Weather Service said Thursday.

"Exceptional" drought conditions have spread in Central California since a week ago, weather officials said. Areas in Northern California have also moved into this category since last week, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Almost 33 percent of the state faces exceptional conditions.

About 25 percent of the state faced those conditions last week.

Every part of California remains in what is considered severe drought.

A year ago, no part of the state was in exceptional drought conditions, the weather service said.

Read the whole story

Nevada Indian tribes denounce ‘Redskins’

By KOLO-TV

People across the country are calling on the Washington Redskins to change their name to something less offensive. The latest blow came from the U.S. Trademark office, which revoked their trademark Wednesday morning.

Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., has long protested the name, saying he won’t attend any Redskins games. Then, following the announcement on Wednesday, he commented, the team name reminds natives of a long history of racism and bigotry.

Local colonies agree with Reid. Saying whenever they hear the term “redskins”, it reminds them of the dark time in history when they were killed, had their land stolen, and their children taken away because they were different.

At the Reno-Sparks Tribal Health center on Thursday, Victoria Kane discussed how her family has a history of fighting offensive sports mascots.

Read the whole story

Weekly track meet at STMS for all ages

The Tuesday Night All Comer Track & Field Meet returns starting June 24.

The event is each Tuesday from 5-8:30pm at the South Tahoe Middle School track. Registration starts at 4:30pm.

It is for ages 2 to 90-plus.

For those who donate $20, they will receive a souvenir T-shirt.

Caretaker accused of using client’s credit card

A Placerville woman working as a caretaker at an Auburn residential recovery center was arrested June 18 for allegedly using a resident’s bank card to make purchases at local stores.



Amanda Marie Sinnott

Amanda Marie Sinnott, 29, was an employee at Westview Healthcare. A 69-year-old man discovered his bank card missing and about $1,300 had been charged at two Auburn stores.

Authorities said Sinnott is on store video using the credit card.

Sinnott faces charges of burglary, committing a financial crime against the elderly, fraudulent use of a bank access card and possession of stolen property.

Her bail was set at $50,000.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Grand jury: El Dorado County is dysfunctional

By Kathryn Reed

A year after the El Dorado County Grand Jury was disbanded mid-session, the next group investigated 20 issues.

The county is dysfunctional in many aspects was the

conclusion. The final report was released Thursday.

The report says, “Early in its term, the grand jury began to see a thread of dysfunction running through El Dorado County government. The grand jury heard repeated testimony of three practices, which would seriously jeopardize efficiency in any organization and are especially troublesome in an organization with the complexity, varied duties and size of El Dorado County government:

1. Elected officials can refuse to cooperate with both the Board of Supervisors and the county’s chief administrative officer.

2. Department heads both elected and appointed went around the CAO directly to the Board of Supervisors in support of their own positions to the detriment of the county as a whole.

3. Individual members of the Board of Supervisors interfered in the day to day administration of the county.”

All of this, according to the report, came at the expense of taxpayer dollars, wasted time and work not getting done.

The jury found that the county’s Charter is in part to blame because it allows elected officials beyond the Board of Supervisors to have power that an ordinary employee would not likely have. The recommendation is to only have the elected positions that are required by the state Constitution — district attorney, sheriff, assessor and Board of Supervisors.

“We are going to seriously consider the contents of the grand jury report regarding the dysfunction of the county and we do plan to respond,” Stephanie McCorkle told *Lake Tahoe News*. McCorkle’s firm has been hired by the county to do public relations work.

She added that much of what the grand jury found the county had earlier uncovered in a survey it did.

The county has to review the Charter every five years and started to do so last week by a committee. Those meetings are open to the public. The supervisors would have to approve changes to the Charter and then the voters would make the final decision.

Other key grand jury investigations:

• Sixteen employees of the South Lake Tahoe Probation Office were questioned. “The employees interviewed are intelligent, well spoken, and dedicated. They have college degrees and many years of probation experience. Yet, most described the work place environment as **toxic**. Supervisors and managers micromanage employees; fostering and allowing a *clique* system that identifies employees as either favored, or shunned, by management.” (The emphasis was written by the grand jury.)

The recommendation is the new chief needs to make eliminating the cliques a priority.

“The cumulative result, described by employees and some managers, is poor morale in and dysfunction of the SLT Probation office as a whole, detracting from their overall mission to enforce court orders.”

The recommendation is for the skills of managers and supervisors to be reviewed, as well as looking at the worker to manager ratio.

“El Dorado County hired a new chief probation officer on Dec. 2, 2013. A week after beginning his duties, the grand jury disclosed its findings about the working environment in the South Lake Tahoe office to him. Four months later the new chief reported back that he had not found the toxic work environment and had made no substantive change to personnel or policies. The grand jury then re-interviewed SLT personnel who reported that, in fact, the same toxic environment continues.”

• The grand jury found that when the county waived the permit

fees for property owners in the Angora Fire burn area, this was a gift of public funds. The same goes for other times the Board of Supervisors waived fees.

“The grand jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors no longer waive or reimburse permit fees unless they are specifically allowed by a board policy, California Constitution or state statute. Waving fees in an ad hoc manner gives the impression of collusion and favoritism.”

• The animal shelter in Placerville came under scrutiny for how the county deals with real estate acquisitions and leasing protocols. Environmental report, architectural studies and leasing temporary property cost the county hundreds of thousands of dollars.

“The Grand Jury recommends the Facilities Investment Team concept be kept active, but reviewed by the CAO on a regular basis for its effectiveness. Although we found no evidence of improprieties, the same individual was used in each of the four projects where a real estate broker was utilized.”

• It was determined that toxic limestone waste continues to flow into Webber Creek from the former Diamond Lime Plant site, and that no one is doing anything about it. “It would be completely irresponsible of the county to allow the Diamond Dorado Parkway project to proceed without ensuring that all environmental issues and mitigations have been resolved.”

• The grand jury received multiple complaints about improper grading on private property that affected other properties. Investigation led the jury to conclude that there “was a pattern and practice of failing to comply with the county Grading Ordinance.”

The ultimate finding was, “The county’s failure to enforce its Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance encourages illegal grading to the detriment of other property owners and residents.”

Some things the grand jury looks into are mandated by the state – like checking on the management and conditions of the county jails each year, as well as the juvenile detention facilities.

The South Lake Tahoe and Placerville jails have a difficult time hiring women, have been impacted by the state sending prisoners to the county jails, and mental illness is a growing problem among inmates.

The jury recommends because of the age of both facilities replacement of them should be considered, and that management should look into why there is high staff turnover.

Concerned citizens initiate other investigations. In the case of the probation department, it was an article in *Lake Tahoe News* that prompted the probe.

In the final report released June 19, grand jury foreman Neil Cunningham said if the county adheres to the recommendations, "El Dorado County will follow the lead of many other California counties and step in to the 21st century."

Public agencies have 90 days to file a written response to the grand jury's findings, while elected officials or department heads have 60 days.

Opinion: Californians want access to public records

By Joyce Terhaar, Sacramento Bee

Voters in El Dorado County said “no.” So did those in Amador, Sutter and Calaveras counties.

But voters throughout most of this region – Sacramento, Placer, Yolo, Yuba and Nevada counties – said “yes” to Proposition 42 on June 3, making it clear they want local governments to provide public access to meetings and records. Statewide, 61.9 percent of voters approved Proposition 42, compared with 38.1 percent opposed.

It’s been a little hairy watching public access to records and local government meetings get caught up in a fight between state and local officials over who, exactly, would pay for such access. Judging from many of you who contact the Bee, Californians want information and they want access. And when it directly affects their lives, they want both passionately.

Read the whole story

K’s Kitchen: The original bloody Mary



A round of bloody Marys for the Reed clan in New York.

By Kathryn Reed

NEW YORK – Bloody Marys have long been part of my travel plans. It all started when my sister, Pam, and I missed a flight years ago when we were off to see our grandparents. We spent our “extra” time drinking a bloody Mary.

From that point on we found ourselves at an airport bar before each flight – coming and going. A bloody Mary is always the drink of choice.

Then we got our significant others involved in this ritual.

And now our mom is part of the tradition. Sometimes she gets hers without vodka, but that doesn’t matter.

So, when it came to planning our trip to New York, mom came across the ultimate in bloody Mary destinations – The King Cole Bar and Salon inside the St. Regis Hotel. It is the birthplace of the bloody Mary.

Many in our group of 12 who were in the Big Apple earlier this month for an early 80th birthday celebration for mom had a bloody Mary for lunch.

We had choices – Red Snapper, Bloody Smoke, Harry’s Texas Bloody Mary, Agave Maria and The Mary Terranean. Scotch, gin and tequila were in some of the concoctions instead of the traditional vodka.

Here is the history of the drink provided by the bar: “With the end of Prohibition in 1933, Fernand Petiot arrived from Harry’s New York Bar in Paris to preside over the St. Regis Hotel’s new King Cole Bar. The name came from Maxfield Parrish’s 15 foot long King Cole mural, and the combination of Parrish and Petiot quickly made the King Cole one of the liveliest places in a lively town. It became the regular haunt for a fabled coterie of wild and colorful characters, and Petiot began to serve them the drink that he called the Red Snapper – soon to be known the world over as the Bloody Mary.”



Fernand Petiot’s Red Snapper (The Original Bloody Mary)

2 ounces tomato juice

2 ounces vodka

½ tsp Worcestershire sauce

1 pinch salt

1 pinch cayenne pepper

1 dash lemon juice

Shake well with ice and serve in a Delmonico glass.