# Talk to focus on health of Tahoe’s water

Geoff Schladow will present the most important factors that affect lake health at a public presentation on changes in Lake Tahoe’s water quality and ecology over the past year, as well as updates on research projects.

The talk is Aug. 14 from 5:30-7pm at the Tahoe Environmental Research Center on the Sierra Nevada College campus in Incline Village.

The cost is $5.

---

# Youngsters take over the courts at Zephyr Cove



Rob Wheatley watches Jordan Berry hit a volley, as Drew

Fehskens and Ryder Tannaci
look on. Photo/Provided

Zephyr Cove Tennis Club provided an opportunity for Tahoe youth to pick up a racket for the first time and to receive formal instruction.

The annual Kids Tennis Clinic on June 14-15 was led by Rob Wheatley, Bob Beutenmiller and Ross Rittiman, who were assisted by many volunteers from the club.

“We were amazed at the kids’ talent and enthusiasm, and encourage them to continue to play,” Wheatley, who is the teaching pro at the club, said in a press release.

Hannah Trew, one of the participants, especially “liked the volleying.” MaKenna Abel shared that “my favorite part was learning how to serve.” Many of the children agreed and added, “It was fun!”

The free event was a product of the Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with Zephyr Cove Tennis Club.

---

# Calif. lawmakers pass $156 billion budget

**By David Siders and Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee**

California lawmakers approved a $156.4 billion state budget Sunday, rushing to pass legislation less than six hours before the constitutional deadline.

The spending plan, a compromise between Gov. Jerry Brown and

the Legislature's Democratic majority, includes more money for high-speed rail, Medi-Cal and welfare-to-work, and an expansion of child care and preschool for poor children.

It also begins to pay down an estimated shortfall of more than $74 billion in the teachers' pension fund and puts about $1.6 billion into a special rainy-day account.

The budget's passage resolves months of budget negotiations at the Capitol, a process that has become less rancorous as the state's financial condition has improved. The Father's Day vote came just before the midnight deadline by which lawmakers must pass a budget to avoid losing pay.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Pressure, potential for federal shield law

**By Cora Currier, Columbia Journalism Review**

Though earlier this month the Supreme Court refused *New York Times* journalist James Risen's appeal that he should not be made to testify in a government leak prosecution, efforts to pass a federal media shield law are gathering steam.

On Wednesday, more than 70 media organizations sent a letter to Senate leadership demanding a vote on a law that's been sitting around since it passed the Judiciary Committee since last September. And late last month, the House approved an amendment proposed by Rep. Alan Grayson of Florida that forbids the Justice Department from spending money to force a journalist to testify about a source.

“I think we’re really close, and the Risen situation really highlights the need for the law,” said David Cuillier, president of the Society of Professional Journalists, one of the signatories on the letter to the Senate. “There might be some senators who are still undecided and still on the fence, but I hope that they’ll now realize this is long overdue.”

There is still contention over the definition of the word journalist, and concerns that any attempt to enshrine reporters’ privilege could make those that don’t fit precisely even more vulnerable. Republican Sen. John Cornyn and many conservative pundits have opposed the bill on the basis it could disadvantage bloggers and other non-traditional journalists. It also has an exception for situations involving future threats to national security.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Discounts available for seniors at farmers’ markets

El Dorado County Area Agency on Aging has a limited supply of senior farmers’ market check booklets available for qualified El Dorado County seniors. Booklets will be distributed on first come, first served basis to seniors who are at least 60 years of age and meet income guidelines (one-person household with annual income less than $21,590 or two-person household with income less than $29,101). Each eligible senior will receive one booklet that includes 10 checks redeemable for $2 each to be used at certified farmers’ markets for the purchase of fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, cut herbs and raw unprocessed honey.

Distribution of the Farmers' Market check booklets will take place on the following dates:

July 9 from 8am to noon at the Cameron Park Farmers' Market, located at Coach Lane and Strolling Hills Road in Cameron Park.

July 15 from 8am to 1pm at the South Lake Tahoe Farmers' Market, American Legion parking area, located at 2748 Lake Tahoe Blvd in South Lake Tahoe.

July 19 from 8am-noon at the Ivy House Parking Area, located at Cedar Ravine and Main Street in Placerville.

Quantities of the booklets are limited.

For more information, call 530.621.6251.

---

# Taste of Gold benefits LTCC Foundation

Lake Tahoe Community College Foundation's annual Taste of Gold – the college's biggest fundraiser of the year – is July 12.

The eight-piece big band jazz stylings of the Josh Pfeiffer Band will provide the entertainment at the Ledbetter Terrace.

The event is from 6-9pm.

Food will be provided from local restaurants, with drink from El Dorado County wineries and small-batch liquor producers.

Tickets are $75 per person, with proceeds going to student scholarships and academic programs at LTCC. They may be purchased online.

---

# Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Marbles

Marbles is a young cat (about a year old) who has unusual fur – beautiful shades of orange.

He is a nice boy, very playful and full of personality. He will do well in just about any home.

Marbles is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

*– Karen Kuentz*

---

# Pioneer spirit rests in El Dorado County




An entire family is buried next to each other at the Placerville Union Cemetery. Photos/Joann Eisenbrandt

**Publisher's note:** ***This is the first of two stories about El Dorado County's pioneer cemeteries.***

*I first moved to South Lake Tahoe in 1979, and lived there off and on for more than three decades. Seven months ago, I moved to Placerville, where I now live near the top of Sacramento Hill, which rises steeply up from Main Street. For a month or so, I drove carefully up and down my narrow, winding driveway that dead ends onto Chamberlain Street, focused only on not sliding off. One day, as I stopped to get the mail out of my box on Chamberlain, I looked across the street and realized there was a cemetery there. I'd driven past Happy Homestead in South Lake Tahoe thousands of times, but never had the occasion to go in. From Johnson Boulevard it seemed neat and well tended, with cropped green grass in summer and tidy flowers at the gravesites. This cemetery was different. There was a wooden fence across the front and an arched wrought iron sign with the words "Old City Cemetery" in delicate capital letters. I walked across the street and looked over a low part of the fence. There was a weather-beaten gravestone carved from variegated white marble just two feet away. I went inside the open gate and saw the burial date on it – 1856. I had to know more.*

*– Joann Eisenbrandt*

**By Joann Eisenbrandt**

PLACERVILLE – Those who live in Placerville and the Sierra foothills of El Dorado County are surrounded by reminders of Gold Rush history, often without knowing it. The area is dotted with more than 100, some say closer to 200, Pioneer Cemeteries dating back to the 1850s. Eighteen of these cemeteries are formally operated by El Dorado County, two by the city of Placerville, and others by family or nonprofit groups or rural cemetery associations. Some have been lost to history, with older graves buried over, unmarked, or partially hidden under modern parking lots or buildings. Some are well cared for. Others have been severely vandalized or remain largely untended and overgrown with weeds and broken gravestones.

These pioneer cemeteries tell the history of Placerville and El Dorado County.

**The rush to find fortune**

After the discovery of gold in 1848 at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, estimates say that from 100,000 to 200,000 gold seekers rushed to what is now El Dorado County in hopes of making their fortunes. Early on, gold was plentiful, much of it right on the surface. Mining camps formed their own basic laws. There was little conflict, as there was enough gold to go around.

Miners staked claims, each about 15 square feet, and when one was depleted they simply moved on to another. By 1849, most of the surface gold had been mined.

Women and children began arriving and larger settlements were built. The more labor-intensive "Placer Mining" began – digging gold out of the dirt and bedrock deposited at the bottom of streams and then washing it out.

El Dorado County was created by the Legislature in 1850, and by 1852 had a population of 40,000. The first county seat was in Coloma, and later transferred to Placerville in 1857. There were two main roads into the area, from Sacramento to Coloma and from Sacramento to Placerville. Roadhouses, small settlements and churches sprung up along these



**Who are some of the people buried at the pioneer cemeteries?**

**Lizzie Baldwin**: Buried in Old City Cemetery, she died in 1866 at 15. The *Mountain Democrat* obituary says, "Deceased was a resident of Georgetown, but had been for a considerable time, an attendant of the Placerville Academy, and during her sojourn here, by her gentle disposition and winning manners, made for herself a circle of warm

roads. As there became more miners but less gold, the increasingly frantic search for what remained brought crime, fighting, excessive drinking, sickness and death.

**Life and death**

Basic staples and necessities were in short supply. Fresh vegetables, fruit and meat were scarce. Lack of vitamin C led to scurvy. Many emigrants had arrived exhausted or ill from the long trip west. That and overindulgence in alcohol made the miners vulnerable to opportunistic diseases. Many of them lived in canvas tents with little protection from the elements.

Only a small number of the gold seekers actually "made their fortunes" from the often brutal work. Many remained poor and couldn't afford medical care at the few existing medical facilities, or were fearful of entering hospitals and never leaving. Many people were dying all at once. Some reports indicate as many as 20 percent of those who came died within the first five years, often in remote locations near their mining claims.

Burying the dead in formally dedicated consecrated ground was

friends. The loss of one so suddenly stricken down in the bloom of youth, is sincerely mourned by her class-mates and companions, who paid their last tribute of respect by following the body in procession to its final resting place."

**Joseph Brindley:** Came over from England, was living in Greenwood, but had been a Placerville blacksmith with a shop on Sacramento Street. He was one of many pioneers who were termed in their obituaries to have "died suddenly." The February 1877 *Mountain Democrat* obituary goes on, "For some time his health had been in a precarious condition, and last Wednesday he came over on the Auburn stage to see if he could not have something done to improve his physical condition. When the stage drew up to the Ohio House and he had to get out of it, he fell forward upon the sidewalk, blood gushing from his mouth, and died in a few minutes." He is buried in Old City Cemetery.

often unworkable. Those who expired from diseases like cholera or smallpox were buried quickly, close to where they died.

Small cemeteries emerged on private property, or on hilltops near clusters of claims – "Boot Hills" – often without the knowledge of or permission from the landowner. One burial followed another and such sites soon became known as "public cemeteries."

Coffins and grave markers, if they existed, were crude, often made of wood. The burial areas were rarely fenced off. Roadhouses and the small communities surrounding them along the main routes into gold country also had their own close-by cemeteries, watched over by local citizens or churches.

**Formal cemeteries emerge**

As easily accessible gold reserves dried up, many of the original claims and small encampments around the mining sites or roadhouses were abandoned and the local cemeteries that had served them became overgrown.

By the late 1850s, Placerville sought to centralize burials into two designated locations. An ordinance of the Placerville City

**W.H. Bailey**: Buried in an unmarked grave at Old City Cemetery, Bailey died in June of 1900 at the "advanced age" of 75. "W.H. Bailey arrived at the Ohio House Thursday noon from Amador," the *Mountain Democrat* obituary of June 2, 1900, begins, "He ate lunch and took a seat on the porch in the shade and apparently fell asleep. Several hours passed and as he showed no sign of awakening, an attempt was made to arouse him when it was found that the man was paralyzed. Dr. Rantz was called in and everything possible done for the relief of the unfortunate man, but death ensued early the next morning."

**Peter Finsterwalter**: A native of Germany, Finsterwalter, a railroad laborer, died at around age 30 in 1890 and is buried in Old City Cemetery, the victim of a runaway train accident. The Feb. 15, 1890, *Mountain Democrat* article entitled "A Ride To Death – A Wild Engine's Awful Plunge," spares no

Common Council from Feb. 12, 1859, states, “It shall be unlawful for any person or persons, to bury any corpse, or dead body of any human being, at any point or place within the corporate limits of the city of Placerville other than in the burial grounds now enclosed and used as such on the hill near the west line of said city, or in the burial grounds on Cedar Ravine, near the Methodist Church.”

The city created the office of city sexton to, “enter upon and take possession of the city burying ground, situated on the hill at the West end of said city, which ground shall hereafter be known as the City Cemetery. He shall keep the fence around the same in good repair and order, so as to exclude therefrom all domestic animals of every description. He shall keep and maintain the said ground in a good order, condition and repair as the same now are or may hereafter be put into.”

City Cemetery, now known as Old City Cemetery, is located on Rector and Chamberlain streets on Sacramento Hill just above Main Street and downtown Placerville.

In the mid-1850s, burials were gruesome details. “It was about one o’clock, and the engineer was returning from Placerville, where it had been to take the crew … to dinner. The engine crew were riding inside of the engine and five of the laborers were riding on the pilot. As the engine reached the top of the grade, near Krahner’s, she began to move faster, and as she started down a steep grade, the engineer lost control of it. Rounding a sharp curve in a deep cut, the engine and its human freight plunged into the caboose of the gravel train, and death came in its most sudden and horrible form to three of the unfortunate laborers in front of the engine. Peter Finsterwalter received the greater blow, as a car wheel seems to have struck him as the track went up. He was thrown to the side of the track, with an arm nearly severed, his breast laid open, and his head cut in two, one half of it just hanging to the trunk by a mere

occurring in what later became Placerville Union Cemetery, located up a steep hill on Bee Street several blocks above and north of Highway 50.

In 1871, a group of four fraternal organizations – the F. & A. Masons, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Independent Order of Red Men, and the California Grove of United Ancient Order of Druids – purchased the land on which the cemetery had developed. Each fraternal organization managed an allotment of gravesites, some selling graves and others giving them to members. Over the years, the cemetery changed hands, eventually falling into disrepair, with the California Cemetery Board threatening to shut it down.

Although the cemetery is within Placerville city limits, the city and county reached an agreement to oversee it together, with the county being responsible for the grounds and maintenance, plus the sale of plots and interments, and the city for providing water and public safety. The land was deeded to the county in October 2006.

shred."

**Bernard Carlson**: Also a native of Germany, Carlson died in November 1900 at around the age of 40. The *Mountain Democrat* obituary of Nov. 10, 1900, terms it "Accidentally Killed." A laborer, Carlson "fell from the loft of his employers barn, Tuesday morning at 6 o'clock, injuring his spine which caused his death. What caused Carlson to fall is unknown. He had been drinking to some extent the night previous, but from appearances not enough to become intoxicated. The Coroner's jury brought in a verdict of accidental death." He was buried in Old City Cemetery.



Jewish Pioneer Cemetery

Old City and Placerville Union cemeteries are two of the larger and best-known Gold Rush era cemeteries in Placerville, but many more exist within and outside the city limits. Some, like Pioneer Cemetery, established about 1850 above the current intersection of Main Street and Cedar Ravine, have been partly or fully-obliterated and lie under pavement. The graves in St. Patrick's Catholic Cemetery on Sacramento Hill above downtown Placerville were built over when a church was constructed in the 1960s, with a marker now commemorating the site. Some, like the Pioneer Jewish Cemetery, are maintained by private groups. It is fenced, locked and inaccessible to the public.

Uppertown Cemetery, also owned by Placerville, was established about 1850 in what was then known as the distinct settlement of Upper Placerville, just east of downtown Main Street. Like the sites of many still existing pioneer cemeteries, its location is not obvious. The oldest marked grave at Uppertown dates to June 1850, although earlier burials may have occurred.

In the unincorporated areas of the county, many more cemeteries still exist at the sites of former roadhouses, rural settlements, churches, on private property, or outside the permanent communities that later took hold there.

**A window into the past**

Those buried in these pioneer cemeteries came from across the United States and the oceans. The death records for Old City Cemetery show burials of emigrants from at least 20 states and foreign countries including England, Ireland, Scotland, Prussia, Wales, Switzerland, Denmark, France, Peru, Italy and Brazil. The obituaries of those who came from America's East Coast via a water route rather than overland, labeled them as "Argonauts."

These obituaries, which appeared in the Mountain Democrat as early as 1854, offer a window into the pioneer past. Most striking is the fact that most of the gold seekers died young, and many of their children, very young. The report of City Sexton John Roy for interments in City Cemetery for 1861, lists 24 burials with ages ranging from 5 months to 47 years, almost half of them for those younger than 11. Those who survived into adulthood often died from what was called "the ravages of advanced age," defined in obituaries as between 60 and 70 years.

A look at the death records from Old City Cemetery bears this out. August Hunger was 35 when he died in 1871. His four children had pre-deceased him, all before their ninth birthdays. Sisters Ella Mae and Fannie Page, buried next to each other at Old City, died in 1864 and 1865, respectively at the ages of 3 years, 9 months, 4 days and 1 year, 11 months and 4 days.

The headstones that do remain from such early family losses reflect the sadness. The parents of Mary Titus, who died in 1865 at age 4 years, 1 month and 11 days, inscribed her tombstone, "Rest our Darling Minnie."

The obituaries, written in a style quite different from those of today, exuded a sense of familiarity and personal sadness, as the one for Lizzie Baldwin who died in 1866 at the age of 15. "By her gentle disposition and winning manners," the Mountain Democrat obituary explains, "(she) made for herself a

circle of warm friends. The loss of one so suddenly stricken down in the bloom of youth, is sincerely mourned by her class-mates and companions….”

Those who didn’t die in childhood often fell victim to the era’s limited medical knowledge. Causes of death from the 1861 City Cemetery interment report include: delirium tremens, consumption, congestion of brain, stillborn, putrid sore throat, diphtheria, inflammation of lungs, disease of heart and whooping cough. Many were said to have “died suddenly” without any further explanation, not because they just keeled over without warning, but more likely because the exact cause of death was not known.



Old City Cemetery

The pioneer lifestyle was hazardous. Those who now rest in the area’s pioneer cemeteries worked hard and often celebrated even harder. The search for gold, especially early on, was done largely by hand with simple tools or machines, as miners hacked the nuggets from beneath streambeds or from the sides of ravines that cut through Placerville. Lacking the safeguards of modern technology, accidents were common, and frequently fatal.

Crime and violence also took their toll, with the victims and

perpetrators sometimes buried in the same cemetery. Joseph Staples, the first El Dorado County peace officer killed in the line of duty while trying to apprehend stage robbers, is buried in Placerville Union Cemetery. A plaque commemorating the event stands outside Placerville City Hall on Main Street.

Isaiah Zumwalt, infamous even in those times for the June 1900 murder of his son, grandson and former wife, is buried in an unmarked grave at Old City Cemetery.

There is also no lack of important local and statewide figures buried at Old City and elsewhere. Benjamin Franklin Keene, a physician and founder and first president of the California Medical Society, who died in 1856 at the age of 43 and is buried in Old City Cemetery.

The lifestyle of Placerville's early pioneers is also revealed by what they left behind. Peyton Wright Benn died in 1896 at the age of 62, and was buried at Old City Cemetery. An inventory of the contents of his miner's cabin included: one shot gun, one rifle, one Colt's pistol, one stove and fixtures, 2 cross-cut saws, 1 hand saw, picks and a shovel, blacksmith tools, 1 Rabbit plane, hoe and sluice fork and one gold scale.

An announcement in the Sept. 10, 1887, Mountain Democrat for the public auction of personal property by the administrator of the estate of Joseph Keespe, also buried in Old City Cemetery, includes: 49 glass candy jars, 41 chairs, 5 children's' high chairs, 1 cider press, 1 cook stove, 1 guitar, 100 old school books, 38 jars of preserves, large lot of marbles, 142 pounds of candy, 118 pounds of peanuts, 26 pounds of almonds, 94 pounds of dried apples, 94 pounds of dried pears, 256 pounds of dried plums, 40 gallons vinegar, 20 empty barrels, 1 shotgun.

# Editorial: Big Food spoiling school lunches

**Publisher's note:** ***This editorial is from the June 7, 2014, Sacramento Bee.***

School lunches shouldn't be a partisan political issue, but congressional efforts to keep kids hooked on pizza and tater tots have turned them into exactly that.

It's a shame, given all the hard work that has gone into fighting childhood obesity and Type 2 diabetes in this country. And it's heartless, given the lifelong health risks that beset the one out of three American teenagers and children who are overweight or obese.

Just four years ago, Congress wisely passed a law requiring stronger federal school-lunch standards – leaner proteins, lower-fat dairy, and more fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

The standards weren't handed down from on high by food Nazis; they were based on recommendations from the Institute of Medicine and imposed by the Department of Agriculture. They made sense.

**Read the whole story**

# El Dorado’s mental health plan up for review

The 2014-15 El Dorado County Mental Health Services Act plan update is out for review.

The draft plan update provides information on current and new MHSA programs and budgets for three fiscal years (FY 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17). MHSA components in the plan update include: Prevention and Early Intervention; Community Services and Supports; Workforce Education and Training; and Capital Facilities and Technology Needs.

Comments will be accepted until July 9 via email to MHSA@edcgov.us or via postal mail to: Health and Human Services Agency, Mental Health Division, MHSA Project Team, 768 Pleasant Valley Road, Suite 201, Diamond Springs, CA 95619.

A public hearing will be conducted after that date..

For more info, call 530.621.6315.