High aspirations for Tahoe hockey players

By Jessie Marchesseau

Hockey isn’t about slamming people into walls, starting fights or broken teeth. It’s not even about scoring goals, blocking the puck or being able to move around on a 3mm wide slice of metal. For South Lake Tahoe’s junior hockey players, the sport is really about hard work, dedication, teamwork and friendship.

“It’s a commitment, and it makes you feel connected when you’re with other kids that do the same thing,” said 14-year-old Katie Sonntag, who met her best friend Leah Marino at hockey practice.



Tucker Cannon, center, maneuvers around defenders. Photo/Provided

Being part of a team is one of Sonntag’s favorite things about the sport. As a hockey player, she spends a lot of time training, and consequently a lot of time with her teammates.

The season goes from August to April, and sometimes includes post-season tournaments and summer camps, making it a year-round activity for many of the players. Tahoe teams have practice twice per week, consisting mainly of passing drills,

skating practice, conditioning and shooting. But players don’t necessarily stop there.

Tucker Cannon, 12, has been playing for five years and is a center for the Tahoe Grizzlies. In addition to twice-weekly practices and weekend games, he gets on the ice for some skate time two more days per week. Marino, 13, plays defense for the Grizzlies. She has been on the team since she was 6 and spends extra time off the ice working on her stick handling and shooting skills, plus doing basic core and leg workouts.

Sonntag has transitioned from the Grizzlies to playing center for the San Jose Junior Sharks girls’ team. As a member of this team, she has practice and/or games six days per week and still puts in workout time outside the rink. She practices in Tahoe during the week, then travels to either San Jose or another game location every weekend.

Without many nearby hockey communities, players and their families generally travel to the Bay Area or even farther for weekend games and tournaments. This requires a big commitment on the part of parents as well.

“The logistics can be challenging,” said Pete Sonntag, Katie’s father, “but I wouldn’t do anything but support them to the fullest extent possible.”

Even with so much time and energy dedicated to hockey, these players still find time to participate in other organized sports. Sonntag is on a track and field team, Marino plays soccer, and Cannon plays baseball and soccer but says hockey is the hardest.

“It’s one of those sports that makes them better athletes for every other sport,” Tyler Cannon, Tucker’s father, told *Lake Tahoe News*. He describes it as requiring the hand-eye coordination of baseball and the foot speed of soccer.



Katie Sonntag, who is about to score, wants to be on the U.S. hockey team one day. Photo/Provided

But athleticism isn't the only aspect of playing hockey that carries over into other parts of their lives. All three players agree hockey has taught them even more important lessons such as the benefits of hard work and dedication, and it has also instilled a sense of self-confidence.

"The more confidence you have in yourself, the better you play," Marino told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It's the same in the world, too."

As they move forward, these players are all looking forward to new experiences in hockey. Cannon had the opportunity to play AAA elite hockey with the Bay Area Blazers in the spring post-season which took him to tournaments as far away as Chicago, the heart of hockey country. Marino has been invited to try out for the San Jose Junior Sharks girls' team. And Sonntag is considering the idea of a hockey prep school.

While Cannon seems content to just see where hockey takes him, the girls, on the other hand, have lined out some pretty specific hockey goals. Both have set their sights on the Olympics, along with stints playing Division I college hockey and on the U.S. Women's National team. Not even in high school yet, they are already talking about what college teams they want to play for and the benefits of attending hockey prep

schools for a better chance of getting recruited.

All of this may seem like a lot for the kids and their families, but Pete Sonntag said it is all worth it to see his daughter doing something she loves so much and living out her dreams.

He has already made a significant commitment to his daughter's hockey aspirations and said he will continue to support her as much as possible. "If she has a dream she wants to pursue," he said, "I can't think of something better for a kid to go after."

Opinion: Dads need to be engaged on a global level

By John Friedrich

I became a father eight years ago on the eve of Father's Day. The love that filled me when I first gazed into my daughter's eyes was immense. I thought then of how universal that experience is, and how the depth of love of our children is surely greater than all that divides us.

If we joined forces for the good of our kids, I imagined what we could do. As Jimi Hendrix once said, "When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace."

We fathers often express the love for our children by doing our best to provide for them, and to protect them from harm. We'd jump in front of a speeding train or wrestle a grizzly in a heartbeat to save our kids.



Rosie and John Friedrich

Yet there is a present and growing danger to our kids that we have failed to confront – the denigration of the life support systems of the planet caused by our disruption of the climate. Unless we're OK with the prospect of leaving our kids an inheritance of increasingly violent storms, severe droughts, extreme heat, terrorizing wildfires and rising oceans, we need to put the love of our children into action to turn the tide on climate change.

If 97 out of 100 doctors told you your child is in critical condition, and that you must take immediate action to save her life, and the other three said "don't worry about it," what would you do? The answer is obvious, yet we together have ignored the warning of the 97 percent of credentialed scientists who tell us in no uncertain terms that burning fossil fuels is altering our climate and damaging the health and well-being of our kids; and that it's going to get a whole lot worse if we don't change our collective ways.

The good news is that a wave of parents is waking up to the stakes for our kids. Much of this is being led by moms groups, but dads are increasingly stepping up to the plate. Fathers like author Mark Hertsgaard who together with mom Lisa Hoyos co-founded Climate Parents to mobilize parents and grandparents to take action on climate change and clean energy. Dads like Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club, who says, "Our kids will grow up in a world where clean energy is cheaper that dirty fuels. A 100 percent clean

energy society is within our grasp."

As Iowa state senator and father of Rob Hogg puts it, "because we care about our children, we must care about climate change. It's the defining issue of our generation."

So fellow dads – enjoy that barbecue today and the time with your families. Take a moment to look your kids in the eye and commit to joining together with other parents to create a world that is worthy of all of our children.

John Friedrich works with Climate Parents, lives in Meyers and is the proud father of Rosie.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Discounted tickets to the 25th American Century Championship on July 15-20 at Edgewood Tahoe are on sale at Raley's, Nob Hill and Bel Air locations throughout Northern California and Nevada.

• Little Philly Cheesesteaks recently opened next to Sushi Pier in Stateline.

• Angela and Brian Luke are opening their second Artemis Mediterranean Grill at Ski Run Marina in South Lake Tahoe on June 17.

• Wanderlust Squaw Valley Festival will return July 17-20.

• To volunteer to cleanup a beach in Tahoe this summer, contact Marilee Movius at marilee@keeptahoeblue.org or 530.541.5388.

Star gazing event at Spooner Lake

There will be a laser-guided tour of starry wonders with professional stargazer and astronomy instructor Gigi Giles at Spooner Lake State Park on June 20.

People will have a chance to peer through high-powered telescopes and astronomical binoculars at an elevation of 7,000 feet and learn various aspects of astronomy and space science.

The event is from 8:30-10pm. Meet in the upper parking lot. Spooner Lake is located at the intersection of highways 28 and 50.

Wear comfortable shoes and bring a warm jacket and flashlight.

There is a per vehicle entry fee of $10; Nevada residents receive a $2 discount.

For more info, call 775.831.0494, ext. 224.

McP’s disappears from S. Tahoe’s landscape



Longtime locals' spot – McP's Pub in South Lake Tahoe. Photos/Bill Kingman



The building came down June 14.

McP's Pub no longer exists in South Lake Tahoe – at least for now.

Pete Joseph's place closed for business last month in anticipation of the building being razed. This took place on June 14.

Next up will be the grand opening this summer of the much larger McP's at the corner of Highway 50 and Stateline Avenue. It is going to be a restaurant, bar and nightclub on the north end of the Chateau project in the round building.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

El Dorado County boy drowns in American River

An El Dorado County teenager drowned in the American River on Friday.

Ronald Stewart, 15, of Garden Valley was pulled from the Middle Fork of the river near Cherokee Bar about 11am June 13. He was not about to be resuscitated.

He had been swimming in that area earlier.

An autopsy is pending.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Men struggling to have it all – family, work

By Lauren Weber and Joann S. Lublin, Wall Street Journal

Can working fathers have it all? Some of them are giving it a shot.

A new generation of fathers with corporate jobs is joining the debate about balancing work and family, a conversation long driven by working women. As the number of dual-earner couples grows and more men make sacrifices to support their wives'

careers, some fathers are asking employers for guidance and action or tapping flexible-workplace policies originally designed for working mothers. Others are curbing their career goals to spend more time at home.

Employers have been slow to recognize men's role as caregivers, fathers and researchers say. And, as a younger generation brings new expectations for fatherhood into the office, they will have to challenge an assumption their female colleagues have faced for years: It is impossible to be both an involved parent and a star performer.

The shift comes at a time when more women are out-earning their husbands—a percentage that has risen steadily from 3.5 percent of families in 1960 to 15 percent of families in 2011, according to the Pew Research Center—and men are redefining what it means to be a dad. A study by the Boston College Center for Work & Family found that a majority of fathers, especially those under 40, are moving away from the traditional "breadwinner" role and see themselves as responsible for both the emotional and financial needs of their children.

Read the whole story

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4 days of TOCCATA summer concerts

TOCCATA – Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – kicks off its 9th Summer MusicFest with the Summer Solstice Serenade concert series June 19-24.

The program opens with Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Flutes in C

major, RV 533, with Josue Casillas and Carmella Cao as soloists, and continues with Mr. Casillas performing Vivaldi's Concerto for Piccolo No. 443.

Organist David Brock will interpret Leo Sowerby's Classic Concerto for Organ and Strings, and performs as continuo player for all other pieces. The concert concludes with J.S. Bach's Cantata BWV 9 Es ist das Heil, featuring Anna Helwing and Jennie Tibben, sopranos and Stuart Duke, baritone, with Mike O'neill as concertmaster.

Maestro James Rawie will conduct all performances.

The performances are June 19 at 7pm at St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in Incline Village; June 21 at 7pm at Shepherd of the Sierra Lutheran Church in Carson City; June 23 at 7pm at St. Theresa Church in South Lake Tahoe; and June 24, 7pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Reno.

Tickets are available at the door, online and the visitors' center in Tahoe City. General admission is $25 adults, $20 seniors.

Docents needed for Tahoe science programs

Lake Tahoe residents who would like to help people learn about the region's environmental assets and challenges are needed to serve as volunteer docents at the UC Davis Tahoe Science Center in Incline Village and the Eriksson Education Center in Tahoe City.

Docent training will take place June 17, 19, and 21.

Attendance at all three training sessions is strongly recommended.

A three-day training is in all things Tahoe: history, geology, ecology, and an introduction to the research being conducted at the lake.

No science experience is necessary.

To RSVP for these training dates, contact Kristen Reichardt at 775.881.7560, ext. 7474 or kereichardt@ucdavis.edu.

Long history of select Lake Tahoe Basin gas stations contaminating soil, groundwater

By Lauri Kemper

The Lahontan Water Board is considering closing a groundwater pollution cleanup case at the USA gas station in South Lake Tahoe after years of cleanup work following fuel spills and leaks at the site. The site is now considered a low threat to the environment and drinking water supplies.

The USA gas station is one of five Lake Tahoe Basin gas stations named in a recent lawsuit filed by the attorney general on behalf of the State Water Resources Control Board. In the past, the five sites all caused significant groundwater contamination and threatened or shut down community water

supplies.

The lawsuit filed in May, alleges that Azad Amiri, Sarbjit S. Kang, and their affiliates committed numerous leak prevention violations at 10 underground storage tank facilities in Contra Costa, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties. The facilities are fueling and convenience stores that operate under several brand names. The lawsuit addresses current and ongoing violations at the sites.

Lahontan Water Board staff efforts have resulted in the restoration of water quality and protection of drinking water at the five locations in the Tahoe basin that are named in the lawsuit.

Below is a summary of the Lahontan Board's regulatory activities at those five stations:

Former USA Gas Station No. 7, 1140 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe

In 1983, fuel was observed leaking from an underground storage tank following excavation work at the site. The tanks and some contaminated soil were removed and new tanks installed. From 1986 through 1993, some groundwater monitoring was conducted, but the responsible party failed to meet Water Board orders.

By 1996, Water Board staff determined an additional release of petroleum occurred at the site based on high concentrations of MTBE in groundwater. In 1997, the Water Board issued its third cleanup and abatement order to the owners.

From 1997-2013 significant cleanup efforts were conducted. At its maximum, the contaminated groundwater plume extended approximately 2,000 feet north, west, and northwest of the source area, and affected or threatened private and community drinking water supply wells in the area. Currently, the residual petroleum plume is about 150 feet long, and MTBE has been removed except for a small area surrounding one

monitoring well.

The responsible party has requested case closure under the State Water Board's Low-threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy. Water Board initiated a 60-day comment period. In response to comments by the South Tahoe Public Utility District, the Water Board has requested additional information from the responsible party to support case closure.

Former Beacon Station, 8070 North Lake Blvd., Kings Beach

In 1998, North Tahoe Public Utility District staff notified the Water Board of gasoline sheen on Lake Tahoe, near its drinking water intake pipeline. Gasoline discovered in monitoring wells between the lake and gas station confirmed leaks in the underground storage tanks.

With the station within 100 feet of the lake, the North Tahoe PUD ceased pumping lake water at Secline Avenue for municipal water supply. Over the next 10 years, the Tesoro Company, which owned the gas station operated by Kang and Amiri, spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to clean up soil and groundwater pollution (funds reimbursed by the State Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund). When cleanup was completed in 2010, the Water Board closed the case. The North Tahoe PUD resumed pumping the Secline Avenue intake pipeline for municipal water supply.

The site now operates as a Mobil Gas Station.

Former Beacon Station, 3208 Highway 50, Meyers

In 1997, South Tahoe Public Utility District shared with the Water Board sampling results of MTBE (a fuel additive) in two municipal supply wells in Meyers. The Lahontan Water Board issued orders to five businesses in Meyers requiring all to conduct groundwater sampling. The results showed extensive contamination at the Beacon station at the west end of Meyers. Further investigations showed gasoline had moved through the

porous granitic soils from leaking pipelines, dispenser pumps, and tank sumps at the gas station.

The station was owned by Tveten Corporation and operated by Sarbjit Singh Kang.

STPUD ceased operating the affected municipal supply wells along with a third supply well located farther away. The loss of these wells created a burden on STPUD to provide enough drinking water to its customers.

Upon the death of the property owner, the Water Board took on cleanup of the site using special State funds earmarked for emergency, abandoned, and recalcitrant sites. A contractor hired by the Water Board spent the next six years investigating the extent of groundwater contamination and conducting cleanup actions. When the drinking water aquifer had been restored in 2005, the Water Board closed the case.

Slightly more than $1 million was spent to investigate and cleanup the contamination. The Water Board issued a fine in 1999 to Kang, the estate of Joe Tveten, and the J.E. Tveten Corporation in the amount of $112,500, which was never paid.

Swiss Mart Gas Station, 913 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe

State mandated tank upgrades resulted in the identification of soil and groundwater contamination at the Swiss Mart gas station in 1998 from leaking tanks, pipelines and dispensers. The business was owned by the Amiri Oil Company and operated by Sarbjit Singh Kang.

Gasoline and diesel impacted one of the Lukins Brothers Water Company’s municipal supply wells located one block away and two private domestic wells two blocks away. The municipal well was taken out of service. Under Water Board orders, some groundwater cleanup, with off and on operations of the system occurred over 10 years. Failure to comply with cleanup and abatement orders resulted in the Water Board levying fines in

1999 and 2009, of which $256,000 are still unpaid.

The Water Board also pursued injunctive relief in El Dorado County Superior Court to require Kang and Amiri to keep operating the remediation system in order to protect nearby water supply wells. The site was cleaned up in 2010 and the case was closed.

Former Beacon 3688, 2304 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe

In 1988, a site assessment by Beacon indicated petroleum vapors in the subsurface. The Water Board required groundwater investigation and by 1991, soil and ground water cleanup began. In 1992, the underground storage tanks were replaced and approximately 1,500 cubic yards of contaminated soil was removed.

In 1998, a leaking gas dispenser was observed, and monitoring showed MTBE in groundwater at previously clean locations. In response to these detections, South Tahoe Public Utility District preemptively shut down their Helen supply wells.

Because of this new release Beacon increased the pumping rate of their groundwater treatment system. By 2002, more than 22 million gallons of contaminated groundwater was pumped and treated at the site. The site was closed in 2004 with groundwater contaminant levels at or near laboratory detection limits.

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board’s mission is to preserve, protect, enhance and restore the quality of California’s water resources for the benefit of present and future generations. For more info about contaminated sites, go online. Here is a link to the gas station maps.

Lauri Kemper is assistant executive officer of Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.