Signs help warn people of oncoming stroke

By Mandy Kendall

I met a lady the other day who, from all appearances, looked very healthy. What's so unusual about that you say? Well, two weeks prior to our meeting she had suffered a fairly major stroke. Fortunately for her she had received prompt medical treatment and made a full recovery.

So what is a stroke?

MedicineNet says, "A stroke, or cerebrovascular accident (CVA), occurs when blood supply to part of the brain is disrupted, causing brain cells to die."

The area of the brain that is affected by a stroke varies and will determine the side effects or symptoms the person experiences, but most commonly there will be some kind of paralysis or loss of function to the physical body, speech, memory, cognitive abilities etc.



Mandy Kendall

Now, there is good news and bad news about strokes.

The bad news is that strokes are the fourth leading cause of death in America and a leading cause of adult disability. The good news is that up to 80 percent of strokes are preventable with changes in lifestyle and health practices. Reducing blood

pressure and cholesterol levels are believed to be highly contributing factors in the reduction of deaths from strokes in the last decade.

Potential risk factors include: high blood pressure, cigarette smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke, high cholesterol, diabetes, being overweight or obese, physical inactivity, obstructive sleep apnea (a sleep disorder in which the oxygen level intermittently drops during the night), cardiovascular disease, use of some birth control pills or hormone therapies that include estrogen, heavy or binge drinking and use of illicit drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines.

The bad news is that strokes are anything but rare with more than 500,000 people a year in America experiencing their first or even a recurring episode. The good news is that with today's medical care and technology a stroke's paralyzing and disabling effects don't have to be permanent, however the extent of recovery is hugely influenced by how quickly the stroke victim receives treatment and the first few hours are critical.

The bad news is that only 20 percent of U.S. hospitals are "stroke certified". The good news for those of us in Lake Tahoe and the surrounding area is that Renown Medical Center in Reno was one of the first hospitals in the country to receive this certification.

So, how do you recognize a stroke and what can you do about it?

Some of the classic symptoms include: sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially if it occurs on one side of the body; sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding speech; sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes, or double vision; sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance, or coordination; sudden severe headache with no known cause, drowsiness, nausea, or vomiting.

However stroke symptoms can also be less obvious than these and are often mistaken for something less serious.

So here are three *Qwik-e* tips on how to spot a potential stroke: (they use the acronym STR – as in STRoke)

S: Ask the person to SMILE.

T: Ask them to TALK and form a simple sentence (for example get them to tell you what day of the week and date it is) .

R: Ask them to RAISE both arms.

If a person has any difficulty in doing any of these three things, then it is time to call 911.

Until next time.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe, which aligns wellness seekers with their ideal wellness provider. If you have questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and well-being topic, drop her an email at connect@healthconnective.com or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.

South Lake Tahoe looking to fill commissions

South Lake Tahoe is soliciting for applications for the Airport Land Use Commission, Building-ADA Board of Appeals and Planning Commission.

Applications may be obtained at the City Clerk’s Office at 1901 Airport Road, South Lake Tahoe between 8am and 5pm Monday through Friday. They are due Dec. 14.

The City Council will be making the appointments at the second meeting in January.

Opinion: TRPA Regional Plan update all but done

By Joanne Marchetta

How humans reckon the passage of time stands in stark contrast to Lake Tahoe’s timescale. Standing on the lake’s shore, most of us have pondered at one time or another the incredible age of these prehistoric waters and scoured peaks. This is an ecosystem that prefers to respond in centuries, ages and epochs, a far cry from the quarterly reports and stock-ticker pace that currently shape our perception and expectations of progress. So the period in which the Regional Plan update has taken shape may be nothing more than the splash of a pebble to Lake Tahoe, but I know it was a painstakingly long time for some of us mere mortals.



Joanne Marchetta

So many of you have given your time and input or followed the progress of the Regional Plan update in the past few years. Whether you cheered or jeered the forward-thinking changes TRPA has proposed to Lake Tahoe's regulatory system, you can look forward to the next two months as the culmination of your ideas and contributions to the visioning, the workshops, the meetings, and the drafts. On Oct. 24, TRPA will release a final draft of the plan and associated documents, rounding out the latest year of work to make focused updates to the Regional Plan that was first adopted in 1987.

Excitement surrounds this rollout in large part because this is the community's plan. From its roots in 2004 and 2005 when visioning workshops and place-based planning captured the input of thousands of citizens, the update has consistently been about the Lake and our communities. If you have ever wondered whether we could coalesce around a collective vision for Tahoe, then this final draft is your plan. Above all, if you would like a clearer, healthier Lake Tahoe and more bikeable, walkable communities, then this is your plan. We also heard from scores of residents that you wanted more sensible ways to manage land coverage, and it's in the plan. And it's also your plan if you want greater restoration of sensitive areas or more opportunities for a recreation-based economy.

Although it took many millennia to create the breathtaking beauty of this watershed, we learned the hard way that Lake Tahoe's pristine environment is not immune to rapid change. A

poorly-planned building boom that lasted only a few decades in the mid-1900s produced grave changes including a seemingly unstoppable loss of the Lake's world-renowned clarity. Over the ensuing 30 years, an average of one foot of lake clarity disappeared every year—a repercussion to Lake Tahoe far more significant than mere ripples. Under the 1987 Regional Plan and later the Environmental Improvement Program, the concerted actions of strong partnerships and advanced science halted the loss in lake clarity. The policies being released this month have been designed to provide the next quantum leap in Lake Tahoe's restoration and to ultimately reverse that loss in lake clarity while supporting our communities.

It has never been more important for your voice to be heard and for you to engage in the close of this process. Whether it is your first or your 40th TRPA meeting, plan on attending one of the public hearings below. Your vision is one step closer to becoming reality. More detail on these meetings and the easy-to-follow fact sheets on the plan updates are available online.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

<table>
<tr><th>DATE</th><th>AGENDA</th><th>LOCATION</th><th>PUBLIC COMMENT</th></tr>
<tr><td>Oct. 24
9:30am</td><td rowspan="2">Rollout of Final Draft Plans, response to comments received and supporting documents.</td><td>The North Tahoe Events Center
Kings Beach, CA</td><td>Yes</td></tr>
<tr><td>Oct. 25
9:30am</td><td>Harveys Lake Tahoe
Stateline, NV</td><td>Yes</td></tr>
<tr><td>Nov. 14</td><td rowspan="2">Discussion and deliberation</td><td>The Chateau
Incline Village, NV</td><td>Yes</td></tr>
</table>

Nov. 15		Harveys Lake Tahoe Stateline, NV	Yes
Dec. 12	Final discussion, public comment and decision requested	Harveys Lake Tahoe Stateline, NV	Yes

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Tahoe doc knows what 'you have breast cancer' means

Publisher's note: ***October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. People are affected by cancer in all sorts of ways and communities do various things to shine a spotlight on various cancers. This is the second of four stories about cancer.***

By Kelly Shanahan

You have breast cancer. Four small words that can change a life. Usually I am the one saying those words, but in April 2008, I was on the receiving end.

Actually, I was looking at the mammogram with Dr. Betsy Card at Great Basin Imaging and she didn't really have to say the words. I could see the ugly white tangle for myself. My first words were not fit for publication. "Can you biopsy it now?" I asked, and minutes later a large needle was boring into the center of the mass.



Kelly Shanahan

I didn’t wait for confirmation that it was indeed cancer before I arranged to be seen at the Carol F. Buck Breast Cancer Center at UC San Francisco. My husband told me to be optimistic, that it might not be cancer. But he’s a glass half full person and I knew in my heart I wasn’t that lucky. I also already knew what I would do – bilateral mastectomy. I didn’t have time to have post-lumpectomy radiation and I didn’t want the sword of Damocles hanging over my head, worrying about a recurrence.

My mind made up before I even saw the breast cancer specialist at UCSF, I had only one difficult chore: telling our then 9-year-old daughter. That was the hardest thing I’ve ever done. She looked me straight in the eye and asked if I was going to die. I told her yes, eventually, but not from breast cancer because I was going to kick its ass. That got a little smile, and a request for 25 cents for swearing.

There is nothing like having a child to make one fight – nothing, not breast cancer for sure – was going to keep me from seeing my daughter grow up.

Surgery wasn’t scary for me, probably because I am a surgeon myself and cutting bad stuff out was natural for me. I didn’t, however, plan on having a positive lymph node and having to go through chemo. I planned on having the surgery and getting back to my life four weeks later.

Well, four months of chemo intervened, with the stereotypical hair loss and vomiting, but heck, there was a silver lining –

didn’t have to shave my legs all summer and I lost 50 pounds pretty darn quick. You have to have a sense of humor and find some good in order to survive chemo.

It has been four years now and sometimes I forget I have had breast cancer. The scars are long healed, and my surgeons did such a good job that I look normal. But in the back of my mind there is always that reminder of my mortality, that if my cancer had gone undetected much longer, the outcome would not nearly be so good, that I might not be arguing with my now almost 14 year old about the length of her shorts or the need to do homework.

October is breast cancer awareness month, a time when cereal boxes wear pink ribbons. If this helps to raise more money for research in how to fight this disease, then I will happily eat pink cornflakes. If one woman gets a mammo because of reading this article, then everything I went through is worth it.

Kelly Shanahan is a South Lake Tahoe medical doctor, gynecologist, mom, and breast cancer survivor.

Deadline to enter radon poster contest extended

The deadline to submit entries to the 2013 Nevada radon poster contest has been extended to Oct. 30.

It is open to all children ages 9-14 who are enrolled in a public, private, territorial, tribal, Department of Defense,

and home school. Children can also enter through a sponsoring club, such as an art, computer, reading, science, scouting organization, or 4-H club. Entries are free, but are limited to one per child.

Posters should follow these five topics: 1) What is radon? 2) Where does radon come from? 3) How does radon get into our homes? 4) Radon can cause lung cancer, and 4) Test your home for radon.

For contest rules, call 888.723.6610.

Opinion: High school was wrong to ban Stephen King book

By Alexander Nazaryan, New York Daily News

Banning books is a dumb idea, but that hasn't stopped people from trying. On the heels of Banned Books Week comes the news that a high school in Rocklin is considering a ban on a Stephen King book because it contains a passage in which a woman is raped with a sex object.

The news was first reported by a Sacramento CBS affiliate.

The school in question, Rocklin High School, removed King's story collection "Different Seasons" from shelves after a parent complained about "Art Pupil." In that story – which was made into a 1998 film starring the late Brad Renfro and Ian McKellen – Todd Bowden, a young man in California befriends an elderly man, Kurt Dussander, who is a Nazi war criminal. In the supposedly offensive passage, Dussander watches as Todd

cruelly rapes a woman. The rape is graphically described in a passage of one-and-a-half pages. The book also contains well-known stories like “Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption” and “The Body,” which became the film “Stand by Me.”

According to CBS, Rocklin school officials removed the book from the library after the complaint. However, one level-headed student, Amanda Wong, raised an objection to the committee in question.

Here’s the kicker: “Wong was also on that committee, and was the only one opposed to pulling the book. She was outnumbered, but it didn’t stop her from being outspoken, especially because she’s the only one who read the entire thing.”

Well, then. If you’re going to ban a book, then you should at least read it. Otherwise, you risk looking like a self-righteous fool.

As a former English teacher, I would probably not give “Art Pupil” to my students – but only because I don’t think it’s good literature, not because it contains a rape scene. Rape does happen. Cruelty does happen. Nazis happened. If you don’t want your kids to know these things exist, buy an island in the South Pacific. Or, at least, get rid of your television and Internet.

At the very least, read the book in question. After the rape, Todd has the following realization: “There was only one way he coud get himself back again. He would have to kill Dussander. It was the only way. Games were done; storytime was over. This was survival.”

Again, I think this is heavy-handed, clumsy prose. But it is clear that King is trying to make a moral point, with Todd at least wanting (if not achieving) redemption. I am fairly confident a seventh-grader would recognize that King is not glorifying rape or any other aspect of Dussander’s revolting character.

Over in Rocklin, though, the fate of King's book hangs in the balance. After the school committee voted to pull the book, Wong went to the local school board, where her argument convinced the district to rethink the ban. According to CBS, the book is available at Rocklin High School again while the district weighs what to do.

Either way, we commend Amanda Wong for having a mind of her own.

Victim in South Tahoe fight dies; no arrests ever made

By Kathryn Reed

The man involved in a South Lake Tahoe bar fight in May has died and still there has never been a single arrest stemming from the now fatal incident.

"Zippy passed away last night. His gramma Rose, my wife Debbie and myself were with him," Wayne Penaranda told *Lake Tahoe News*. He died Oct. 17, about four hours after the trach was removed.

Derek Penaranda, better known to his family and friends as Zippy, was in town to celebrate his 30th birthday.



Derek "Zippy" Penaranda and Katie Musselwhite had hoped to one day marry. Photo/Provided

That celebration took a tragic turn when a phone call came in the early hours of May 20 telling Debbie and Wayne Penaranda to get to Barton Memorial Hospital.

Penaranda didn't leave Mo's Place on his own. From Barton he went to Renown Medical Center in Reno. He then was moved to two specialty rehabilitation facilities in the Bay Area. But his insurance stopped covering him because he was not making progress, according to his dad.

Besides all the normal strife that comes with a loved one in such a serious medical state, Penaranda said it was hard on the family, who lives in Ripon in the Central family, to be more than 100 miles from Zippy. Eventually the younger Penaranda was at Rossmoor Care Facility in Walnut Creek – still 100 miles away.

On Aug. 20 he was "neurologically classified as permanently vegetative state," Pernaranda said of his son.

Pernaranda said he spoke with El Dorado County Assistant District Attorney Joe Alexander on Sept. 28 "to cover some issues, including the possibility of this case turning into a

homicide.”

South Lake Tahoe police when questioned Thursday morning about why no arrests have been made, issued a press that says, “The circumstances surrounding Penaranda’s death are still under investigation by the South Lake Tahoe Police Department. There is no information being released at this time concerning the possibility of criminal charges being filed, what those charges would be, or when they would be filed.”

Live Violence Free’s gala just days away

Live Violence Free’s 35th Sunset Gala is Oct. 21 from 5-8pm at Edgewood Tahoe in Stateline.

The event will feature dishes from the Harrah’s/Harveys, MontBleu and Lakeside Inn chefs as well as wines from El Dorado County and desserts from Cakes by Grace and Lake Tahoe Chocolate Factory.

There will be silent and live auctions.

All proceeds from the event help keep Live Violence Free’s domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse services running. Tickets are on sale for $50 online.

For more information, contact Scarlet at (530) 544.2118, ext. 7628 or scaldwell@liveviolencefree.org.

Mountain bikers to work on Whites Creek trail

TAMBA will be finishing off the season Oct. 20 with a trail day on Whites Creek. This is the first organized trail day on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

Meet at 9am at the Whites Creek Day Use parking lot off of Timberline Drive.

Lunch will be provided for all those who RSVP. There will also be ice cold refreshments at the end of the day.

Work will consist of repairing trail tread in sections seeing erosion above the creek, removal of some of the pedal catching brush stumps, general pruning, and revegetation of some areas along the trail.

Wear long pants, long sleeves and sturdy shoes.

Contentious battle for El Dorado County judgeship

By Loretta Kalb, Sacramento Bee

As judicial races go, the contest in El Dorado County is remarkable – particularly because a sitting judge's competency has been called into question by a colleague on the bench.

Superior Court Judge Warren C. Stracener was appointed to the bench in December 2010 and is campaigning in the Nov. 6 runoff election to retain the post for a six-year term. His assignment: juvenile criminal and dependency law.

Joseph Hoffman, an attorney with experience as a judge pro tem for El Dorado Superior Court, is campaigning to wrest the bench from the incumbent.

Beyond those bare facts, the race for the Superior Court judgeship bears little resemblance to the typical judicial race. Those tend to be nondescript affairs with minimal controversy.

Election angst in this race, by contrast, has swept El Dorado County's legal leadership, and much of it is directed at the incumbent.

Four sitting judges have taken sides, evenly split between Stracener and Hoffman. One judge openly criticized Stracener at a meeting of leaders in the legal community.

"I have never seen such opposition to a sitting judge the entire time I have been here, since 1979," observed Ron Dosh, an attorney in private practice who said he wants change on the bench.

There are public criticisms leveled at incumbent Stracener about his competency and slow pace of handling cases — complaints rarely voiced publicly in the judicial realm.

And with El Dorado County's small-town chemistry that dust-up is magnified.

Superior Court Judge Doug Phimister gave the *Bee* a particularly brutal assessment of Stracener.

"He doesn't know the law. At all. None," he said. "That's pretty scary."

Stracener countered that Phimister is wrong.

“This statement that I don’t know the law is absolutely false,” Stracener said. In exchanges with the judge, he said, “I primarily spoke with him about process and procedures and only occasionally about the law.”

Stracener said it’s not uncommon for a judge to have a learning curve when new to the job. And if cases don’t move forward as quickly as some would like, he said, it is because he is diligent and committed to making the best possible decisions.

And Stracener has many backers.

“He’s a good judge,” said El Dorado County Supervisor Ron Briggs. “He has the credentials and the demeanor and the maturity. I think he’s proven himself.”

Stracener has support from sitting Judge Kenneth Melikian.

Steven Bailey, the presiding juvenile court judge in El Dorado County, calls Stracener eminently qualified.

“He may be the brightest judge we have on the bench and the most qualified in terms of experience and capability,” Bailey said. “He is extremely deliberative, making sure that he is giving the right answer in cases that are difficult. Judge Stracener is the perfect fit for that.”

Hoffman, on the other side of the contest, has faced criticisms from the Stracener camp about his legal role on behalf of a former business client later accused of loan fraud.

Hoffman’s former client, El Dorado Hills resident Daniel Chartraw, is under indictment for allegedly defrauding investors and at one time had his funds in the attorney’s trust account.

Hoffman has not been accused of any wrongdoing by prosecutors. Attorneys are required to maintain trust accounts registered with the State Bar for their clients.

Hoffman calls the complaint bogus.

“The bottom line is that it’s very frustrating that the Stracener camp, which should know better, attacks me on a bogus issue they know I can’t possibly discuss because of attorney-client privilege, even for a former client,” Hoffman said.

During the year, the schism between camps has been intense.

The fray has put fear into some lawyers who have privately chosen sides but are afraid to go public – lest they pay the price when they appear in court before the winning candidate after the election.

Stracener was the top vote-getter in a three-way race in the June 5 primary, receiving 42 percent of the vote. He needed a majority to avoid a runoff. Hoffman placed second with 37 percent.

Hoffman has been an attorney for 18 years and has experience in family law, business litigation, business formation and succession and real estate litigation. He co-founded a law firm that now has seven members.

He has served as an El Dorado Superior Court judge pro tem since 2001. And he has served as a private judge – meaning that he is hired by opposing sides to resolve their case.

Stracener lists his experience as an attorney in labor employment law, as a senior litigator for the state, as a legal adviser to the Public Employment Relations Board and in private practice, which included education law. He served as a small claims court judge pro tem in 1997 and 1998.

Stracener supporter John Stelzmiller, former chairman of the

county’s Republican Central Committee, describes the incumbent as meticulous, someone who is concerned about each case that comes before him.

“He was told to ask questions of the other judges whenever in doubt, which is a common practice for a new judge,” Stelzmiller said. “So he did that.”

Stelzmiller said he was dismayed when Judge Phimister went public in his criticism of Stracener.

Phimister headed a meeting in the backroom of the Tortilla Flats restaurant on Main Street last spring in which he detailed a list of his concerns with the incumbent.

“In my estimation, it was a low point in Judge Phimister’s background and history,” said Stelzmiller.

Phimister makes no apologies.

“I was trying to energize people, that this guy doesn’t know what he’s doing,” Phimister said. “He’s coming up for re-election, and we need to either get him trained or he must go.”

Also opposing Stracener is Judge Daniel Proud.

Even the district attorney has entered the discourse.

“Given that Judge Stracener was an incumbent judge, I had initially decided to stay out of the race,” said District Attorney Vern Pierson.

“But after a significant percentage of the deputy DAs in our office approached me and expressed great concerns about Stracener’s competency and ability to get through a calendar, I decided to get involved at that point and oppose the incumbent,” Pierson said.

Stracener said he views his opponents as part of the county’s

good-old-boy network.

“It’s unfortunate, but it has become political because I am viewed as an outsider in the community,” said Stracener.

“It’s the old-school politics. When (Gov. Arnold) Schwarzenegger appointed me, he didn’t consult with any of the political officials,” he told the *Bee* in an interview. “Apparently he passed over several others.”

Pierson, who has resided in the county eight years and has been its top prosecutor for 5 1/2 of those, doesn’t buy it.

“The outsider being picked on by the old-boy network is a joke,” Pierson said. “It’s silly. I can’t think of a better way to say that.”