Annual Mutt Strutt raises money for spay-neuter services

The 8th annual Animal Coalition of Tahoe Mutt Strut Poker Run is Oct. 14.

Register from 11-11:30am at Regan Beach near the snack shack (Lakeview Avenue at Sacramento Street, South Lake Tahoe). The 1.2-mile lakefront walk with your dog involves building a poker hand along the way. No experience needed.

Party at the marina afterward includes music, raffle drawings, games, and prizes for the best poker hands.

Cost is $10 per hand or three hands for $25. Proceeds benefit ACT's spay-neuter program and the El Dorado County Animal Shelter.

For more information, call (530) 400.4766.

Kahle looking for youth to fill basketball teams

Douglas County Parks & Recreation has opened registration for the upcoming youth basketball leagues at Kahle Community Center.

Divisions offered:

3-4 grade

5-6 grade

7-8 grade.

Cost is$70 for 3-4 grades, and $80 for 5-6 and 7-8.

Grades 3-4 play on Tuesday evenings, 5-6 grade on Thursday evenings and 7-8 on Wednesday evenings.

Games are between 5:30 and 8:30pm at Kahle Community Center in Stateline.

The season for grades 3-6 is November–March and 7-8 from January–March.

Teams usually will have one practice and one game per week.

Spaces are limited, so register early.

For more information, call at (775) 586.7271.

Emails between Reid, Heller reveal how poker efforts deteriorated

By Karoun Demirjian, Las Vegas Sun

WASHINGTON – The online poker bill-making process has never been pretty. But a collection of emails released by Senate

Majority Leader Harry Reid’s chief of staff Friday reveals an especially brambled picture of what has kept legislation crucial for Nevada’s biggest industry on ice for so long.

The story framed by the emails is one of missed opportunities and broken promises. At its heart, it’s also a story of a tenuous partnership between the Senate’s top dog and its freshest pup, Reid and Republican Sen. Dean Heller.

The pair also are at each other’s throats over a Nevada election that could determine who controls the Senate next year.

Reid’s adversaries contend the account Reid’s staff has put forward is at best incomplete and designed to be politically misleading.

The emails were released Friday when Reid’s chief of staff, David Krone, summoned Las Vegas media to his office in the Capitol to, as he put it, show them what is really going on with the long-stalled legislation that would both legalize online poker and halt a proliferation of other kinds of Internet gambling being considered by other states.

Krone’s decision to share the emails comes during an increasingly bitter finger-pointing feud in which Reid has accused Heller of failing to deliver Republican votes he had promised and Heller has accused Reid of contorting facts and irresponsibly politicizing an issue of vital importance to Nevada.

“I am not going to let Dean Heller go out there and call Harry Reid a liar,” said Krone, who has never spoken about poker publicly. “I want to tell my side of the story.”

To make his case, Krone shared a raft of emails detailing exchanges between him and Mac Abrams, Heller’s former chief of staff, who has been running Heller’s Senate campaign since May 1. The emails were sent between May and September.

Read the whole story

Asian clams winning at Lake George

By Brian Nearing, Times Union

LAKE GEORGE – Two years and $1.5 million later, efforts to rid the Queen of American Lakes of a harmful invasive clam seem to have failed. With fast-breeding Asian clams now spreading, the best hope is to keep their numbers in check – a costly fight that could last for years – and wait for a breakthrough eradication technique.

That was the grim assessment last week by the lake's Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force, a group of state, municipal, civic and environmental groups that has spearheaded work to eradicate clam beds by smothering them under weighted underwater mats.

The setback in the battle against the clams comes as the Lake George Park Commission, the state agency in charge of protecting the lake, also is racing to create a plan to reduce the risk of future aquatic invaders being brought in by recreational boaters, who likely transported the Asian clam from other infested water bodies in bilge water or bait wells. Widespread clam infestation in the lake could mean diminished tourism, business and property values. Clams have already caused some of those problems in Lake Tahoe, on the California-Nevada border, where beds now cover several hundred acres.

Thriving in sunlit, shallow, sandy lake bottoms, the tiny

mollusks pose a major threat to the lake’s legendary gin-clear waters, which drive vibrant tourism, boating and recreational fishing industries.

Large clam colonies can foul beach waters because their excretions fuel massive algae blooms. Fast-breeding hermaphrodites, clams can quickly multiply into the millions and, when dead, wash up on beaches, where their razor-sharp shells make walking dangerous.

Read the whole story

Presidio Brass to play at STHS theater

Tahoe Arts Project kicks off its 26th season with Presidio Brass performing on Oct. 5 at the South Tahoe High School theater at 7pm.

Special guest will be the South Tahoe High School Brass Ensemble.

Presidio Brass is a dynamic force in American brass chamber music. With a unique and exciting repertoire written specifically for the ensemble, Presidio Brass is committed to providing engaging musical programs as well as developing close ties to their audiences.

Presidio Brass will be performing for more than 5,000 K-12 students Oct.1-5 as part of Tahoe Arts Project’s annual performing arts in the schools program.

Tickets for the STHS performance are $15 for adults, $5 for children and $10 for seniors. They may be purchased in advance

at the California or Nevada visitors center. To charge tickets by phone, call (530) 542.3632. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Taking care of teeth has other health benefits

By Mandy Kendall

I have been staying with a girlfriend recently and, like many families, they have certain routines that help with the day-to-day flow of things, and help make sure my friend doesn't lose her mind in the process of running a busy household.

The evening routine is particularly regimented to ensure that books and clothes are ready for school, homework is finished and dishes are all cleared away before anyone gets to watch TV. All of this seems to happen easily and without fuss, that is until it's time to brush teeth. What is it about cleaning teeth when we are young that causes such stubbornness? I remember causing my poor mother so much trouble about teeth cleaning.



Mandy Kendall

None of us particularly likes going to the dentist, so you'd

think we would do all we could to make sure we had to make as few visits as possible.

Now research and studies are also showing that cleaning your teeth is not just about reducing cavities and having fresh breath.

A recent study from the University of California showed a correlation between daily brushing and a reduced risk of developing dementia later in life. Also, the Journal of American Geriatrics Society conducted a long-term study of elderly subjects and concluded that the female subjects who didn't practice daily brushing had a 65 percent greater chance of developing dementia.

A study by the American Journal of Medicine found that adults who had regular thorough dental cleanings have a lowered risk of heart attacks compared to those adults who pay less attention to their oral health. The same study also found a link between regular scaling (having your teeth scraped) and a reduced incidence of strokes.

The Journal of Periodontology published a study that showed that oral infections could raise the risk of respiratory diseases, including Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and pneumonia, due to bacteria getting into the respiratory tract and infecting the lungs. The same journal also published another study showing a link between poor dental health and pre-term and low birth weight amongst pregnant women.

So it seems that cleaning your teeth is not just about having a dazzling smile and reducing the number of visits to the dentist.

So here are a few *Qwik-e* tips about how to make the best job of keeping your pearly whites, well, pearly white and keeping the rest of you healthy at the same time.

After every meal – If it's not possible or practical to clean

your teeth after every meal, try to at least rinse your mouth vigorously with warm water to shift food particles in between your teeth that otherwise will encourage bacteria growth. Brushing is also a great indicator to your brain that mealtime is over and will also make you less likely to reach for something sweet too. Brushing should happen at least every morning and evening.

Floss – I know, everyone knows they should floss but how many of us do? Tie a piece of floss around your toothbrush to remind you of what you should be doing. Ask your dentist whether you should be using floss or interdental brushes and what thickness and type would be best for your teeth. It doesn't take long and you can even do it watching the TV.

Brush your tongue – Why do a great job on your teeth only to have your tongue wipe bacteria all over them again?

Mouthwash – Can be very effective for dislodging any small bits of food or bacteria you may have missed with your toothbrush. Just be aware that a lot of mouthwashes contain alcohol so these are not suitable for children and may also make your mouth and lips dry out, too. There are alcohol free mouthwashes available.

Change your toothbrush regularly – Most brushes have a color on the bristles that indicates, when the color has faded, that you need to get a new one.

Manual or powered? – Studies show that one is not necessarily better than the other, but people tend not to spend as long as they should cleaning their teeth so they have a better chance with a powered toothbrush that works faster (and also will usually have a timer inbuilt to let you know how long to brush for).

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.

Opinion: Caltrans survey doesn’t include loop road and TTD not including Caltrans

To the community,

At 5pm on Sept. 19, the phone rang. I picked up. A pleasant female voice said she was conducting a survey for Caltrans in El Dorado County. I was skeptical. I said I don’t do surveys on the phone. I asked how did she get my phone number and street address. She said she didn’t know. I said goodbye.

After I hung up, I phoned the city manager and asked her if she knew Caltrans was conducting a phone survey in El Dorado County. She said, no. I said it seems strange. She seemed to agree.



Bill Crawford

On Sept. 20, I phoned the public information office for Caltrans. A female answered. I asked if Caltrans was conducting a survey in El Dorado County. She said, yes. I asked, what's the purpose. She said, Caltrans was trying to get to know people's driving habits, which would help Caltans in its future planning.

I asked, does this involve the loop road. She said, no. I said, if the loop road is built, wouldn't that involved Caltrans planning. She said, Caltrans would have to approve the road. I said , you have been very helpful and hung up.

So, when will the Tahoe Transportation District seek Caltrans' approval of the loop road? How much time, money, and energy will be spent before the powers that be (the city, etc.) call it quits? The TTD is another layer of nonsense that's working for the private interest rather than the public interest. The TTD produces nothing but hot air. And it's time that Councilmember Angela Swanson stops bending over backward for the TTD's interest. It's clear for whom she serves.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

Candlelight vigil to honor victims of domestic violence

Live Violence Free, formerly the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center, is having a Candlelight Vigil in honor of the victims of the community and beyond who have lost their lives to domestic violence.

Meet at Live Violence Free, 2941 Lake Tahoe Blvd., on Oct. 1 at 7pm to assemble and light candles. Then the group will walk up the highway to Lakeview Commons.

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3 Tahoe half marathons help runner complete 52 in a year

By Jessie Marchesseau

Aurora De Lucia will be running the Tahoe Trifecta starting today. That is three different half marathons in three days.

What makes De Lucia different than the dozens of other people she will be running with this weekend? Oh, just that she is 22, had open heart surgery 2½ years ago, is on a quest to run 52 half marathons in 52 weeks and is raising money for the charity Broadway Impact in the process.



Aurora De Lucia will run three half marathons in Lake Tahoe on Sept. 28-30.
Photo/Provided

Bubbly, giggly, talkative and undeniably motivated, De Lucia originally came up with this challenge just to prove to herself that she could do it. She ran her first half marathon in 2009 and calls it “pretty much one of the most amazing day of my life.”

That was before she got sick.

Until about three years ago, De Lucia had no idea she suffered from a congenital heart condition known as Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome. Essentially, her heart had an extra electrical pathway, something that can lead to an excessively rapid heart rate.

Doctors said she was lucky they found it. Usually it’s something they find in an autopsy.

During the next six months the Los Angeles resident had four failed ablation procedures on her heart, complications caused by the procedures and finally, open heart surgery. Then in

June 2010, the extra pathway was declared gone, and De Lucia was set free.

After a year of getting her life back together, she decided it was time to focus on her goal of running another half marathon or 13.1 miles. But it was no easy task. She could not go very far or very fast. On a whim, De Lucia signed up for a 5K as a way to encourage herself. Then she signed up for one the next weekend, and the next, and the next, progressing up to the 10K. That's when she got the idea: she could do one race every week, 52 half marathons in 52 weeks.

"Fifty-two should be pretty sufficient to prove to me that I can do it," she said of her plan.

So in January 2012, the challenge began. Along the way she has seen old friends, made new friends, travelled all over the U.S. and even ran a half-marathon with her father – the highlight of the year so far.

This weekend's races will be numbers 31, 32 and 33; putting her well past the half way mark. Today is the Emerald Bay Marathon (Emerald Bay to Lakeside Beach), Saturday is the Tahoe Nevada Half Marathon (Spooner Summit to Incline Village), and Sunday is the Lake Tahoe Half Marathon (Rubicon to Pope Beach).

"I'm a marathon runner myself, and I can't see how she's going to do it," John Bernard, a long-time friend of De Lucia's, said, "but I know she's going to do it."

Bernard will be joining her in the Columbus, Ohio, race next month, as will her father.

Part way through the year, De Lucia decided that running for herself was not enough, she wanted to do it for a cause. Choosing Broadway Impact, a national organization supporting marriage equality, was a no-brainer for her.

“I couldn’t think of anything that was more important to me than human beings and treating human beings equally,” she said.

Jenny Kanelos, executive director of Broadway Impact, said they are proud to have De Lucia representing their cause because she embodies everything they hope people will get out of their foundation.

“What she’s doing is exactly what our organization was founded on: get inspired, and take action,” Kanelos said.

She also added, “I think anyone who takes on 52 marathons in 52 weeks has got to be pretty incredible.”

If you happen by one of the half marathons this weekend, look for De Lucia in her trademark red “Who’s Bad” baseball cap, or follow her on her quest online.

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Notes: Expect traffic delays Sept. 28-30 during the Lake Tahoe Marathon events. This website has more details.

Tahoe National Forest about

to be a wonderland of fall color

Fall is an exceptionally pretty time to explore the Tahoe National Forest. Warm days and crisp, cold nights make forest outings especially enjoyable.

At the lower elevations (2,500–4,000 feet), autumn colors are at their best in mid-October through early November, while in the higher elevations (4,000–9,000 feet), colors peak from early to mid-October.

Although most trails are open year-round, many of the campgrounds will begin to shut down in preparation for winter weather. Some campgrounds, however, can be used (without services) all year. Also, campfire restrictions are still in effect limiting campfires to developed recreation sites. These will stay in effect until there is significant rain or an increase in humidity levels.

Scenic drives:

Highway 49 – A beautiful drive along Highway 49 from Nevada City through Downieville to Sierra City features big leaf maple, oak, locust and dogwood foliage. As you wind through the North Yuba River canyon, dogwoods and oak trees start to change colors in early October. The colors are often reflected in the river, doubling the intensity of color.

Campgrounds along Highway 49 will be open through the weekend of Oct. 27 except for those in higher elevations which may close sooner.

Campgrounds at Bullards Bar Reservoir will close Oct. 15.

Gold Lake Road – In the Sierra Buttes vicinity, color peaks in early to mid October with the yellow and gold of aspen and

maple trees in this beautiful alpine area. Views of and from the Sierra Buttes are outstanding.

Campgrounds in the Sierra Buttes area are open through Oct. 27.

Highway 89 – Fall colors extend from late September though the month of October. The drive along Highway 89 from Lake Tahoe through Truckee and on to Sierraville is especially picturesque with aspens, willows and cottonwoods painting the landscape with brilliant yellows. Expanding the drive from Sierraville west via Highway 49 up to Yuba Pass provides spectacular views of the Sierra Valley. The drive from Highway 89 through Kybuz Flat and Sardine Valley is also especially nice with grasses, willows, cottonwoods, and aspens.

East of Highway 89 and north of Boca Reservoir, cottonwoods, aspen, and willows follow the Little Truckee River.

Campgrounds along Highway 89 and northeast of Truckee are open until early October to late October, depending on conditions. Contact the district office for more information.

Highway 267 – From Truckee south toward Lake Tahoe through Martis Valley, the gold and browns of willows and grasses contrast with the deep green of the pines.

Highway 20 – East of Nevada City, the landscape comes alive with crimson hues of dogwood and bright yellows of the big leaf maples. Bear Valley is especially pretty as the grasses, willows and cottonwoods turn gold.

Campgrounds along Highway 20 will close Oct. 1. Campgrounds in the Bowman Lake/Grouse Lakes area close when access is eliminated due to snow.

Mosquito Ridge Road – Mid-September to mid-October is a great time to drive Mosquito Ridge Road, east of Foresthill, which passes through beautiful canyons and forests of oaks, maples,

dogwoods, and evergreens providing an array of fall colors. A cautionary sign reduces the road to one lane for a short distance where a slide damaged the road. The Big Trees Picnic Area is an excellent stop to view the northernmost stand of Giant Sequoia interspersed with the ruby red of the dogwoods. Mosquito Ridge Road also leads to French Meadows Reservoir and the Granite Chief Wilderness where fall color can be outstanding.

Campgrounds on the American River Ranger District – The group sites are all currently closed. Regular campgrounds will close between Sept. 30-Oct. 21.

Old Highway 40 and I-80 – Another scenic drive follows old Highway 40, parallel to Interstate 80 along the rocky South Yuba River lined with aspens and cottonwoods. When the leaves turn, the vibrant yellows and golds are duplicated in the reflections of the river. These colors are usually best in early to mid-October.

Campgrounds along I-80 will close Oct. 1.

– Ann Westling, Tahoe National Forest