Opinion: Weekly meal should be a community event

By Kathryn Reed

It's called a community dinner, but it doesn't really meet the definition of a community dinner. I want to change that.

Earlier this year I started volunteering at Bread & Broth one day a month. (My first experience was the Thanksgiving meal last year.)

Each Monday from 4-5:30pm anyone may drop by Grace Hall in South Lake Tahoe to receive a free hot meal. It doesn't matter your age or income or if you are a family or single or a couple. No questions are asked.



John Mauriello makes garlic bread for Bread & Broth diners. Photo/Kathryn Reed

It's evident most of the people *need* this meal. A few appear to be there for the camaraderie as well.

These people are so incredibly grateful. The smiles of gratitude – it can bring tears to your eyes. And they look you in the eye. They say thank you.

I’m the one who has had to work at looking them in the eye. I’m the one saying thank you. They probably don’t know this, but they give me so much more than I am giving them.

I wish I could do more.

Part of the more is to make these Monday night gatherings a true community dinner. The reasons to do so are plentiful.

I have questions for the people who aren’t at this meal. Where are you?

Where is the City Council, city staff, Douglas County commissioners, El Dorado County supervisors, Lake Tahoe Unified staff and board, Lake Tahoe Community College staff and board, Douglas County School District staff and board, people working in social services, people working in food service, the people who call the South Shore home? So, everybody, where are you?

If the people in position of power could see the needs of the other half (three-quarters?), it would perhaps shed some light on why Lake Tahoe continues to be called “poverty with a view”. Imagine a city councilmember at each of the tables, but not able to talk to one another. Just eating, listening, breaking bread with their constituents.

Would the real issues of the city become clear? Would they figure out a sandwich board sign really isn’t that important? Would they figure out people are what’s important?

Then imagine interspersed with the regulars at Bread & Broth are you and your neighbors. Because, after all, the B&B regulars are your neighbors even if they don’t live on your street.

Would you then think twice about the person on your street who doesn’t use a bear proof can – is it that they don’t care or that $100 to buy one is a month’s or more worth of food to

them? Would you help your neighbor more if you knew them better?

Bread & Broth doesn't have the resources to feed a huge influx of people. So, to pay for this, I challenge businesses to individually or collectively sponsor an Adopt-A-Day. For $250 (tax deductible) this feeds more than 100 people. *Lake Tahoe News* is sponsoring tonight's meal.

And I have suggested to some of my team members that a donation jar be put out each night. (This was really my mom's idea because it's what they do where she volunteers.) A $5 donation would pay for you and the person next to you to eat.

Besides getting a healthy meal and giving back, you would get to meet new people. People whom also call Lake Tahoe home.

Lake Tahoe has plenty of things wrong with it. But it also has plenty of things right with it. But as long there are people who struggle to find a meal each night, there is definitely something wrong. We can all help to make each Monday night evolve into a place people *want* to be instead of *need* to be.

Room available for riders in Tahoe Sierra Century

The Tahoe Sierra Century is a local fund-raiser with all proceeds benefiting the music programs at North Tahoe Middle

and High Schools.

The Sept. 22 7am bike ride has three routes – 30-, 60- and 100-miles in length. Expect plenty of scenery and hills.

The event starts and ends in Squaw Valley.

Register online.

Bread & Broth cooks meet weekly need to feed 100+

By Kathryn Reed

Looking at what little is left on plates and the fact many want seconds indicates two things – the food is good and the people are hungry.

Each Monday a cadre of volunteers puts together a nutritious, well-balanced meal for more than a 100 people. It's free – free to eat – not free to produce. Bread & Broth has no requirements when it comes to who dines. It's called a community meal.



Wendy David chops up melons for the Bread & Broth meal.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

Wendy David has been one of the cooks since the program started in 1989. The disadvantage she and other cooks have compared to restaurants is not being able to order what they want. Unlike restaurant chefs, they have to scramble and be creative with whatever is in the pantry and refrigerator or freezer.

It's a bit like "Chopped" on the Food Network where you don't know what is in the box, but you have a limited amount of time to create something edible from the mystery ingredients.

The judges in this case are the diners. Their thank yous and smiles are the reward for all the volunteers associated with Bread & Broth.

"We are always able to put something together. It may not be A-plus, but it's always B-plus," David said of the quality of meals. "My theory is if I didn't want to eat it at home, why would I serve it to someone else?"



Linda Malzone has been volunteering at B&B for six

years.

The head cooks for each Monday come in the Friday before to see what fresh food has been donated. Then they look in the freezer to see what should be pulled out to thaw.

For David’s August meal a ton of summer squash was in the fridge so she came up with a pasta primavera. It meant cutting squash from 12:30-2:30pm that day.

Recipes aren’t possible because all the ingredients aren’t likely to be on hand. David, like most of the cooks, doesn’t have a culinary background. Her experience comes from raising four children and having a love for being in the kitchen.

Usually four cooks are assigned to each Monday, with other volunteers helping with setup, serving, cleanup, drinks, assembling take-home bags and whatever else is asked of them.

Claire Neville works alongside David in the kitchen. She believes it’s important not to have stress in the kitchen, and to embrace the team approach.

“If we feed everyone and no one leaves hungry, we have accomplished our task,” Neville said.

John Mauriello started as a sub for Bread & Broth and now works the first and fifth Mondays. He will do whatever is asked of him, but cooking is what he likes best.

Linda Malzone is cutting fresh melons on this particular Monday. She’s been volunteering at Bread & Broth for the last six years. She told her husband, Earl Scilingo, how rewarding and fun it is. He’s been working there for the last two years.



Nora Jones is happy to do anything but cook.

The cooks arrive at 12:30pm, the rest of the volunteers at 3pm, and diners at 4pm. Food is served until 5:30pm at Grace Hall at St. Theresa Church (1401 Lyons Ave., South Lake Tahoe). Cleanup is done by 6pm.

Usually it's Nora Jones, coordinator for the first Monday, who stays until every pot and pan is put in its place.

"Some of the patrons I've seen for 17 years. I just love them," Jones said. "There are a lot of dedicated people," she says of the volunteers.

In the past 23 years, the need for Bread & Broth has remained strong. The number of people coming this summer parallels that of 2011.

It is through donations that Bread & Broth is able to keep serving the weekly meals. Donations come in the form of money and food.

For $250 people or companies may sponsor an Adopt-a-Day for $250. This feeds more than 100 people. Then the company can bring up to five people to volunteer on that particular day. Tonight, *Lake Tahoe News* is sponsoring the Adopt-a-Day.

For more information about getting involved with Bread & Broth or to donate, contact Carol Gerard at (530) 542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

California no longer sure how much state parks money was hidden

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

The amount of money hidden by California state parks officials in one of two special funds has suddenly become unclear, preventing the Legislature from spending the money to repair and reopen parks.

A dedicated pot of money known as the Off Highway Vehicle Trust Fund holds the majority of the “hidden assets” that officials at the state Department of Parks and Recreation kept off the books when they filed annual reports with the Department of Finance.

When the scandal was first reported by The Bee on July 20, officials in the administration of Gov. Jerry Brown reported that the hidden assets totaled $54 million. The OHV fund held about $34 million, and the balance of $20 million was in the

State Parks and Recreation Fund.

Unlike general government spending for basics such as payroll and paper clips that are covered by the state's general fund, these special funds collect revenue generated at the parks themselves, through entrance fees, souvenir sales and other site-specific sources. The OHV fund serves the state's eight parks dedicated to off-road vehicle enthusiasts, as well as grants for trail projects elsewhere. The State Parks and Recreation Fund helps cover operating costs at the state's 270 other parks.

For reasons still unclear, parks leaders squirreled away the $54 million for as long as 12 years, according to a preliminary investigation by the Natural Resources Agency and the Finance Department. This continued even as parks officials moved last year to close 70 parks to comply with cuts to the state's general fund.

Parks director Ruth Coleman resigned as the scandal broke. Separate investigations are under way by the attorney general, the state auditor and the Legislature.

Late last week, Finance Department chief deputy director Michael Cohen told the Senate Budget Committee that his agency is no longer sure how much money was hidden in the OHV fund, and that clear answers would have to await the outcome of the investigations, expected to last the rest of the year.

Read the whole story

Literary Lollapalooza in Incline Village

Sierra Nevada College’s Literary Lollapalooza is Sept. 7 at 7pm.

It will feature:

Suzanne Roberts: Award-winning poet, memoirist, and travel/nature writer.

Shaun Griffin: Rosemary McMillan Lifetime Achievement in Art recipient.

Sierra Nevada Review: Celebrating the annual, student-edited review.

Bona Fide Books: A press based in Meyers.

For more information, go online.

Sewer project forces Kings Beach boat launch to close early

The Coon Street boat launch in Kings Beach will be open normal hours through the Labor Day weekend and then will close for the remainder of the season to accommodate the Brook Avenue sewer line replacement project.

Tahoe Vista Recreation Area boat launch will remain open seven days a week from 7am-7pm until weather or lake level forces

its closure.

The Brook Avenue project will replace the existing sewer mains and service laterals in Brook Avenue and in Coon Street between Brook Avenue and Brockway Vista Avenue. A new sewer main, manholes, and service laterals will also be installed in Highway 28 between Coon Street and Bear Street in order to abandon a mid-block sewer main in which the District does not have adequate access. It is necessary to complete this project prior start of construction of the Kings Beach commercial core improvement project.

Lecture focuses on Sierra geology

Modern space geodesy has recently enabled the direct observation of slow geological processes that move and shape Earth’s surface, including plate tectonics and crustal strain accumulation that leads to earthquakes. More elusive has been the direct observation of active mountain growth because GPS measurements have larger uncertainties in the vertical direction and mountain growth is typically very slow.

The latest research using high-precision technologies indicates a relatively high vertical uplift rate for the Sierra Nevada, between 1 and 2 mm per year. Thus the modern Sierra Nevada uplift is still very active and consistent with theories that call for a relatively young mountain range.

Bill Hammond, associate professor at UNR who studies active deformation and dynamics of the Earth using space-based

geodetic techniques, will talk about all of this on Sept. 11 at 6pm at the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village.

For more information, contact Heather Segale at (775) 881.7562 or hmsegale@ucdavis.edu.

El Dorado County forming committee to coordinate with feds

El Dorado County is accepting applications for its new Federal Coordination Advisory Committee.

Various provisions of federal law mandate federal agencies "coordinate" certain activities with local agencies before making decisions which may impact local government.

The primary purpose of the Coordination Advisory Committee is to help keep the Board of Supervisors informed about federal plans and actions. The committee will examine the appropriateness and necessity of coordination on identified federal issues, and advise the Board of Supervisors on actions the county should consider as a result.

Members of the 14-person Coordination Advisory Committee will serve without compensation for staggered four-year terms. Volunteers from the following specialties are encouraged to apply:

Residential home ownership within proximity of public lands;

Watershed management;

Wildlife biology;

The timber industry;

The hunting/fishing industry;

The farming industry;

The mineral industry (including rock hounding and mining);

The grazing industry:

Off-highway vehicle interests;

Equestrian interests;

Forestry;

County law enforcement;

Rafting industry;

Skiing industry.

All appointments are subject to the approval of the Board of Supervisors.

Additional information and applications are available online. Applications are due Sept. 21.

Time to cleanup beaches on the South Shore

The Great Sierra River Cleanup is a day to clean up beaches and streams in South Lake Tahoe as part of a larger effort throughout the Sierra Nevada and the rest of California.

It is being organized in conjunction with California Coastal Cleanup Day on Sept. 15. The local event if from 9am-noon.

Last year, 158 volunteers from Tahoe communities picked up about 1,600 pounds of trash from beaches and streams all around the South Shore.

Sign up online or drop in the day of the event at Regan Beach.

K9 Trials coming to South Lake Tahoe

The South Lake Tahoe Police Canine Association will be hosting the 5th annual K9 Trials Sept. 21-22.

The narcotics trials are that Friday are not open to the public.

The patrol dog competition will be at the Babe Ruth Little League Field on the Saturday beginning at 8am.

Contact Sgt. Josh Adler at (530) 208.6243 or at jadler@cityofslt.us to advertise in the event program or if you have questions questions.