Tickets on sale for St. Theresa's crab feed

The 18th annual St. Theresa School Crab Dinner is Feb. 3.

Doors open at 6pm for this adults-only event. Childcare is available with advance reservations. Dinner starts at 7pm.

Tickets are $50 per person. A table for 10 can be reserved for an additional $100. Tickets available at 1081 Lyons Ave., South Lake Tahoe, or call (530) 544.8944 or email sttheresacrabdinner@yahoo.com.

K's Kitchen: Ringing in the Chinese New Year

By Kathryn Reed

The Chinese New Year, or Lunar New Year as it's now called in some circles, begins today. In anticipation of the commencement of the Year of the Dragon, I thought it appropriate to try a new recipe this past weekend.



Oh my, it's a definite keeper. The flavors and textures are outstanding and complementary.

Ironically, I have given up my subscription to *Sunset* magazine and the recipe is from the January issue. Good thing my

sister, Pam, still gets it because I was able to make a copy of the recipe when I was at her house earlier this month.

In the past I would have skipped it because it calls for Brussels sprouts, but now those mini-cabbage looking morsels are a new favorite veggie.

The Chinese New Year is huge, though not so much in Tahoe. The start is on the second new moon after the winter solstice – so it's never on the same date like the Gregorian calendar we use that starts on Jan. 1 year in and year out.

The recipe calls for mung bean sprouts. I bought what Safeway had. Mung wasn't in the name. Drizzling soy sauce is recommended.

I recently discovered there is an Asian grocery store in the Town and Country Center (where Whiskey Dicks is) in South Lake Tahoe. It's been there nearly a year. While small, it does have items the major grocery stores don't have and the prices are great.

The recipe says it serves six. I disagree. When it's just the two of us, we often have an Asian dish standalone. With this recipe, Sue and I each had two helpings. We were left with one serving to fight over. So, had we invited people over, we either would have needed other dishes or been hungry.

Brussels Spouts and Shiitake Lo Mein

1 oz. dried shiitake mushrooms

4 oz. dried thin egg noodles

¼ C vegetable oil, divided

1 pound Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved

½ small yellow onion, sliced

1 T minced garlic

½ tsp each white pepper, sugar, and kosher salt

½ C vegetable broth

2 C mung bean sprouts, rinsed

2 green onions, sliced diagonally

Soy sauce

Put mushrooms in a heat-proof bowl. Bring a medium saucepan filled with water to a boil. Ladle 2 cups water over mushrooms and let sit until very soft, 15 to 20 minutes.

Add noodles to pan and cook until tender, about 6 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Heat 2 T oil in a wok or large frying pan over high heat. Add Brussels sprouts and onion and cook 3 minutes. Drain mushrooms and squeeze out any excess liquid, then add to wok. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onion starts to soften and Brussels sprouts are bright green, about 3 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Stir in seasonings and broth and cook until most of liquid is gone, about 3 minutes.

Add reaming 2 T oil and the noodles, tossing to coat, and cook until hot, about 2 minutes. Add bean sprouts and cook until warm.

Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle with green onions.

Serve with soy sauce.

Lose the word ‘diet’ and still lose weight

By Mandy Kendall

So, the new year is up and running and you may have noticed that a few extra pounds crept on over the holiday season. And they may even have been added to the extra pounds from last year.

If you’re anything like me, just thinking the word “diet” makes your body go into fat storing, starvation mode before you’ve even started. Diets can make us focus on the foods we have denied ourselves even more than when we aren’t on a diet. Before the diet you could take or leave an Oreo cookie, but now that you’re on a diet you could kill for one.



Mandy Kendall

I remind myself to remember the advice I used to give to my patients during my time as a chiropractor in England. Don’t try to lose too much weight too soon and make changes to your diet and lifestyle gradually.

Here are some quick and easy *Qwik-e* tips to help shift those unwanted pounds without too much upheaval:

Change your diet gradually: If willpower is not your strongest

trait, and denying yourself something makes you want it even more, then try weaning yourself off those not-so-good-for-you foods (you know which ones I mean!) bit by bit. Reducing the number of times a day/week you eat them, or the amount of them you eat at one time, will help stop the cravings that can come with stopping cold turkey. Also, replacing an unhealthy food or drink with a healthier choice, one at a time, will give you a sense of achievement without overwhelming you with total denial.

Set realistic weight loss goals: Aim for 1 to 2 pounds a week. Rapid weight loss can upset our body's sense of how much food it can afford to burn as fuel, versus how much it needs to store for later. Our bodies are very adept at protecting us from starvation. If we drastically reduce the amount of calories we consume, then in the short term, yes we may lose weight and inches, but most of this can be attributed to water loss. After a while the body will recalculate how much it can afford to burn as fuel, and then slow things down to be as efficient as possible with what it is fed. It will also start to store as much away as possible, as fat, just in case the food supply is reduced even more.

Eat consciously: In our busy lives it is easy to fit food in around other activities such as watching television, while at our desks working or even on the run. Concentrating on something else and eating too fast doesn't allow our brains the chance to tell us when we are full, or even if what we are eating is what we need. For at least one meal a day try to take some time to sit, chew and savor your food before you swallow. If the food is not that nutritious, chances are it won't taste so good after being chewed repeatedly and really tasted.

You might find by doing this you actually need much less food before your body tells you that it's full.

Eat and drink little and often: This grazing approach to

eating has all kinds of benefits. It helps keep your blood sugar levels balanced, preventing those hunger pangs from tempting you to a sugary quick fix. Your digestion will thank you for not having to deal with large amounts of food all at once and any lapses in willpower will only constitute a small percentage of your daily food intake. Also a glass of water five minutes before you are due to eat will not only ensure that you are actually hungry, and not just thirsty, but also help make sure you don't overeat too.

Finally, my favorite *Qwik-e* tip, try not to think of being on a diet. With all the connotations that this word has, and possibly memories of past failures, it is not likely to put you in the most positive frame of mind. Instead try focusing on the fact that you are doing something wonderful for your body. Think of releasing'the weight rather than losing it. Try focusing on being more active rather than changing too much, too quickly in your eating habits. When you start to feel better about yourself you will be more likely to want to continue and make some more changes.

Until next time!

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe. If you have any questions, feel free to drop me an email at healthconnective@gmail.com, visit us on Facebook, 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.

El Dorado County farmers looking out for fish in nearby streams

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

El Dorado County is adopting Fish Friendly Farming.

The concept has nothing to do with trout farms or other aquaculture.

It’s about growing farm crops and raising cattle in ways that keep surrounding streams and rivers clean.

El Dorado County farmers, the local resource conservation districts and a Napa-based nonprofit have banded together to establish a program in the foothills that – until now – had mostly been used near the wine-growing areas of Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino.

“We saw what they were doing down there,” said Mark Egbert, manager of the El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide Resource Management Districts.

It looked, he said, like a “perfect fit” for El Dorado County.

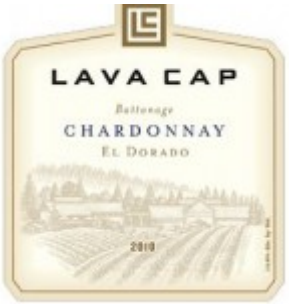
Read the whole story

Lava Cap Winery redesigns

logo, label

Lava Cap Winery of El Dorado County has a new logo and label design, with an updated website coming soon.

“The classic, timeless look and feel of the new brand image not only evokes the winery’s heritage, but also indicates the quality of the wine handcrafted by the Jones family,” Shelley Mitchell, spokeswoman for the winery, said.



The new label for Lava Cap’s premium varietal wines feature an illustration of the winery and highlights the mountainous El Dorado appellation. To create a clear distinction for Lava Cap’s blended wines, another new label design features a colorful, modern illustration of the unique mountain vineyards near the historic American River.

Explaining the thinking behind their new brand image, Tom Jones, Lava Cap’s winemaker since the winery’s inception, in a press release said: “Our wines are a union between classic and modern, casual and elegant. We feel our new brand image showcases our style and passion. The new labels also underscore our winemaking heritage.”

Consumers will begin to see the new labels on shelves and in restaurants this month.

K’s Kitchen: New veggie passes the taste test

By Kathryn Reed

An email arrives asking if I like Brussels sprouts. I don’t know. Next email arrives with a Brussels sprouts recipe. I figure it’s better I try it in my house instead my friend’s. What if I want to spit it out and they have cloth napkins? What if I get sick? What if I love them so much I make a pig of myself?



Better to be at home fretting about those scenarios.

The latter is what happened. Oh, my! I can see why Kim was cooking up batches of Brussels sprouts nearly nightly.

Sue and I don’t know if we had these weird looking vegetables before. I have always passed them up in the store. I don’t see them on menus. Apparently our moms didn’t serve them to us.

I ran into someone at Grocery Outlet when I was buying some who said her office was just discussing Brussels sprouts. She is a fan of them, but said they stink when you cook them.

Mine didn’t smell bad. Not even a hint of bad.

In doing a bit of research on this veggie – which has nothing to do with Belgium – I found out overcooking Brussels sprouts is what releases sulfur compounds, and therefore the nasty smell.

What I was excited to learn about them is how wonderfully

nutritious they are. Lots of vitamin C and other good stuff. But the most impressive thing about Brussels sprouts is their cancer fighting components – colon cancer in particular. Considering there is a history of colon cancer in both of our families, Brussels sprouts may become a regular in our diet.

Kim found the recipe on Epicurious, but it was originally from the February 1999 issue of *Gourmet* magazine.

Pan-Browned Brussels Sprouts (serves 2-3 as side dish)

½ pound Brussels sprouts

2 large garlic cloves

1½ T unsalted butter

1 T olive oil

2 T pine nuts

Trim Brussels sprouts and halve lengthwise. Cut garlic into very thin slices. In a 10-inch heavy skillet (preferable well-seasoned cast iron) melt 1 tablespoon butter with oil over moderate heat and cook garlic, stirring, until pale golden. Transfer garlic with a slotted spoon to a small bowl. Reduce heat to low and arrange sprouts in skillet, cut sides down, in one layer. Sprinkle sprouts with pine nuts and salt to taste. Cook sprouts, without turning, until crisp-tender and undersides are golden brown, about 15 minutes.

With tongs transfer sprouts to a plate, browned sides up. Add garlic and remaining ½ tablespoon butter to skillet and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until pine nuts are more evenly pale golden, about 1 minute. Spoon mixture over sprouts and sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper.

Workshops to be taught by organic farming expert

Organic farming expert Eliot Coleman is coming to Northern Nevada.

Coleman, a bestselling author, researcher and farmer, is putting on a two-day workshop through Western Nevada College Specialty Crop Institute Feb. 11-12.

“Four Season Farming with Eliot Coleman” meets Feb. 11 from 9am-3:30pm at the Reno High School theater, 395 Booth St. The workshop will focus on season extension practices for small farms. Cost is $75 before Jan. 27, and $85 afterward. Lunch is included.

Two additional 90-minute workshops will be offered Feb. 12 at Rail City Garden Center, 1720 Brierley Way, Sparks. Session 1 is 10:30am-noon, and Session 2 is 1:30-3pm.

Cost per session is $45 before Jan. 27 and $50 afterward. They will focus on season extension practices for the home gardener, including how to use portable tunnels for the home garden. Each workshop will cover different topics, and participants can choose one or both.

Registration is required for all workshops as enrollment is limited.

Coleman has written several bestselling books, including “The New Organic Grower”, “Four Season Harvest and the Winter Harvest Handbook”. Coleman has been farming for more than 40 years. He and his wife own and operate Four Season Farm, an experimental market garden in Harborside, Maine.

For more information or to register, contact Ann Louhela at (775) 351.2551 or louhelaa@wnc.edu.

Can Thin Mints be dethroned?

By Cara Kelly, Washington Post

The Christmas cookies are gone, the Hanukkah doughnuts have been eaten and millions of Americans have made New Year's resolutions to eat better. But in a few weeks, more sugary temptations will find their way into the office and onto adorable stands outside the grocery store.

That's right, Girl Scout cookie season is nearly upon us. And this year, to mark the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting, a new cookie will make its debut. Meet Savannah Smiles, a bite-sized treat with a dusting of confectioner's sugar and a lemony kick. The name was inspired by the home of Girl Scout founder, Juliette Gordon Low .

Although it's doubtful the cheerily named confection will beat the perpetual front-runner, the Thin Mint, it stands a better shot at a top ranking than the last lemon-flavored snack.

Read the whole story

Vegans muscle their way into

bodybuilding

By Mary Pilon, New York Times

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — Jimi Sitko gets up at 4 most mornings, works out two to four hours a day and can bench-press nearly twice his weight. He has a shaved head and a brightly colored tattoo on his left arm, and he can easily be mistaken for a Marine separated from his platoon.

His apartment is filled with medals and trophies from bodybuilding competitions, snapshots of his tanned, rippled physique in full flex. His uniform is an assortment of sweat pants and hoodies, which he occasionally lifts when his abs look particularly fierce.

But most surprising is what is inside Sitko's stomach: tofu, fresh greens and plant-based protein powder.

Sitko is among a niche community of vegan bodybuilders.

As the popularity of veganism has spread in recent years — fueled in part by a flurry of food-focused documentaries like "Super Size Me," "Food, Inc." and "Forks Over Knives" — its imprint can be seen in industries like publishing (VegNews) and fashion (hemp tote bags).

It has even entered bodybuilding, perceived by many as a population of vein-popping men and women thriving off meat and artificial enhancements. Competitors like Sitko are forging a distinctive subculture of antibeef beefcakes who hope to change more of their competitors' eating habits.

As a vegan, Sitko, 29, does not eat meat, dairy or, he said, "anything else that comes from an animal." As a bodybuilder, he spends hours at the gym lifting barbells, running on a treadmill and sculpturing his 5-foot-11, 180-pound body. Then he spray-tans and parades before a panel of judges in a posing

suit, known in the sport as a mankini. He is preparing for a competition in March.

Read the whole story

Soup competition in Tahoe City

The Soup and Chili Showdown is going into its third year at the Rideout Community Center in Tahoe City on Feb. 25. The Tahoe City Recreation Department is inviting all amateur and professional cooks to show off their culinary talent in this year’s event which will feature a variety of categories in the soup and chili division.

Entry into the friendly competition is free, but preregistration is required. The event is from 6-8:30pm.

For more information, contact Shaun at (530) 583.3440, ext.14.