

Giving back comes in many forms

By Mandy Kendall

My Soroptimist group had a meeting recently that focused on all the different committees that exist within the club, outlining all that they do and what would be required of someone joining that committee. I can tell you that there are a lot of things to do in that club and it seemed totally overwhelming to think about which committee to join, let alone what to do once you signed up. I think most people would like to do something to contribute to a community, whether locally or globally, but often get put off before they even start; so I decided to focus this week's piece on how to find the best way for you to give back.

Why give back? Most people probably have very personal reasons for giving back. A great sense of belonging, satisfaction, fulfillment and pride can come with giving back to your community.



Mandy
Kendall

Everyone, especially kids, benefits from giving back. It provides an opportunity to experience cultures, lifestyles and situations you might not come across in your day-to-day life. It teaches tolerance, commitment, responsibility, compassion and shows how one person really can make a difference.

Whether you are getting back into the workforce or would like to make more friends, volunteering can be hugely sociable (if that's what you want) and may end up helping you while you are helping others. There are often opportunities to learn new skills that will serve you in other areas of your life. Maybe you're looking for a career change? Community service can be a great way to sample different workplaces and can offer opportunities you may never have thought of. Community service can also be a great education, offering a chance to experience a variety of jobs that will serve you well in any future career choice.

Where do you start?

How much time do you have? – Before you even start investigating how you can give back, first spend some time outlining what works best for you. How much time do you have to spare? I recommend you start with less time than you think you have to spare as you can always commit to more but it's often very difficult to cut back once you've committed yourself to something.

What do you like doing? – I have a colleague that works tirelessly for a local charity but he is very upfront about not doing any of what he calls the touchy feely stuff. So he does all the heavy lifting, driving and logistical things and everyone is happy. Giving back often means donating some of your precious spare time so it's worth making sure you're going to enjoy it. Some people prefer group activities; others are more lone-ranger types. Some like planning while others like doing. There will be something that suits your personality and strengths.

Research – Just asking friends and neighbors will often produce lots of good ideas about how to give back to your community most effectively. Alternatively you can go directly to those places most often in need of help and find out what they need. (Community center, hospital, church, halfway house,

historical restoration, youth organization, food bank or soup kitchen, neighborhood adoption or cleanup programs, Boys and Girls club, animal shelter to name a few).

Interview them – Find out what's involved with a particular project and what would be expected of you if you were to join.

Don't want to take time away from your family? Look into projects you can do as a family. Making baskets to give to less fortunate families at holiday times or helping a neighbor with chores they can't manage on their own (many hands make light work!). Helping out at a local animal shelter is a great education and fun too. Finding an organization that serves the elderly and taking food to people who are home-bound brightens everyone's day. Done together, these types of projects strengthen family bonds and offers lessons in commitment and responsibility to the kids too.

There are many different ways you can give back.

Organize – Events/meetings/clean up – a lot of people love doing things but they just don't like organizing. So if you have been blessed with the planning gene you can often galvanize a lot of bodies into action...most people will help out if they are told what needs to be done.

What can you donate? Giving your time, donating money, offering expertise, loaning equipment or just spreading the word ... everything helps.

Share your skills – Most of us have at least one pretty cool skill we could offer to teach a group or an organization or use on their behalf.

Share contacts – You might not be able to help yourself, but you may know people who can or even companies that have services or products needed by a voluntary organization. Making the right connection or introduction can make a huge difference to a project.

Sponsor – Maybe you own, or know, a company that could help out a local charity by sponsoring an event. A win-win situation.

If you can't find a project that interests you, go ahead and start your own. With a little research you are likely to find a lot of like-minded people who would love to help you.

Until next time.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe. If you have any questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and wellbeing topic, please 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.

‘Death by Golf’ opens on the South Shore

In “Death by Golf” an escaped convict, an anxious bride, a scheming new husband, and a suspicious attorney all convene at grandpa’s house. It doesn’t take long for grandpa to realize he has to reschedule his golf game.

This combination of uproarious comedy and terrifying murder mystery revolves around the uncanny resemblance between the escaped convict and the recent bridegroom.

The play comes to life starting tonight at the Boathouse Theatre on the South Shore.

The play is July 19-21 at 7:30pm, July 22 at 2pm, and July

26-29 at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$18 in advance. Buy them online or call (530) 541.4975. If tickets are available at the door, they are \$20.

More seniors decide not to live with adult kids

By Anita Creamer, McClatchy Newspapers

SACRAMENTO — In a spirit of gratitude and giving back to the parents who raised them, Bill and Jackie Merz's daughters have extended a generous invitation.

"They both live in Chicago now," said Bill Merz, 75, a retired Sacramento State psychology professor. "One was willing to put an extra floor on her house and install an elevator for us so we could live there. The other wanted to convert her basement for us.

"I told them we'd have somebody shoot us before we did that."

The Merzes, who live in their own home in Roseville, adore their extended, close-knit family, which also includes two sons in California and 11 grandchildren. But the idea of living with the kids in their older age leaves them cold.

"My first reaction was, 'I don't want you telling me what to do,'" said Jackie Merz, who is also 75 and a retired teacher and counselor.

Most older adults tend to be a bit more euphemistic about it: Typically, they say that they don't want to be a burden to their kids, or that they don't want to impose. But statistics show a plainer truth. In huge numbers, seniors relish their

freedom, and they want to live on their own as long as they can.

[Read the whole story](#)

South Tahoe explorers conquer competition

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department's Explorer Post brought back several trophies from the July 13-15 traveled Central Valley Explorer Competition in Tracy. The team of Joey Acker, Daniel Loyola, Allison Roberts and Hector Vasquez as well as adviser, police Officer Rebecca Inman made the trip.

The competition included 28 explorer teams from Northern and Southern California competing in 14 events. The events varied from conducting a traffic stop to rescuing people taken hostage on a bus.

The South Lake Tahoe team took first place medals and trophies in Traffic Stop, Vehicle Search, Burglary in Progress, Hostage Negotiation and interacting/assisting a mentally disturbed person.

They took a second in the Obstacle Course and third place medals and trophies in the Bus Assault, High Risk Stop and Crime Scene Investigation.

The group also took home the coveted Chief's Award Trophy for being the top team at the competition.

Bijou Bash evolving into lifestyle festival

Bijou Bash has been renamed Lake Tahoe Lifestyle Festival.

The annual South Lake Tahoe event is now a city and Barton Health event.

The Lake Tahoe Lifestyle Festival mission is to promote a healthy lifestyle and environment for residents and visitors to South Lake Tahoe. Participants can look forward to interactive booths and an overall experience highlighting the outdoors in a fun and festive atmosphere.

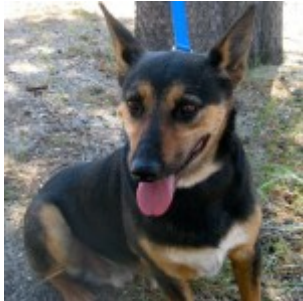
Guided hikes, mountain bike skills clinics and fun runs will be some of the activities offered.

The festival will be Sept. 8 from 10am–4pm.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets

in South Lake Tahoe

Donny is a great all around dog. We can't figure out why his owner didn't come looking for him.



He's very sweet and calm, likes other dogs, and is house trained.

Donny is about 5-years-old, may be a cattle dog-Shepherd mix. He weighs about 50 pounds, just the right size. He walks nicely on the leash, but he seems to be just as happy curled up at your feet.

Donny is neutered, microchipped, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Go online to see photos and description of all pets at the shelter.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

— Karen Kuentz

Monthly speakers delve into various Tahoe topics

During July, August and September, the public is invited once each month to gain insight on area history, facts and adventures.

North Lake Tahoe Historical Society's Third Thursdays monthly speaker series is at the Gatekeeper's Museum in Tahoe City.

July's topic is Take Me to the River: Fly Fishing and Why It's So Cool. On July 19 at 6:30pm, famed fly fishing guide Matt Heron will reel in the audience with the appeal and adventure of fly fishing. In the last portion of the program, Heron will offer a casting clinic to give attendees a hands-on experience.

August will feature Weather Thou Goest: Sierra Weather Facts & Fancy with Storm King Mark McLaughlin. A noted local author and weather expert, McLaughlin will educate listeners about the Sierra's changing weather patterns. McLaughlin will explain how apparent changes in local climate relate to the hot topic of climate change. He will also explain how "normal" weather patterns are determined. The event is Aug. 16 at 6:30pm.

On Sept. 20 at 6:30pm, the topic is Breaks, Brains and Balls with author David Toll discussing the life and adventures of Mustang Ranch founder Joe Conforte. In Conforte's own words, he went from being, "a street-smart kid in New York City to owning the Mustang Ranch east of Reno, putting millions into a Swiss bank account and thumbing my nose at the IRS all the way." Toll, Conforte's biographer, will spill details of the infamous ranch and the equally infamous Nevada businessman who started it all. Copies of Toll's book will be sold at the event and the author will be signing.

Each Third Thursday speaker series event is free for NLTHS members, \$10 suggested donation for non-members.

For more information, call (530) 583.1762.

Beach Boys back on tour as gray-haired men

Publisher's note: *The Beach Boys play at 7 tonight as Harveys in Stateline.*

By Andrew Romano, Newsweek

Brian Wilson, the lumbering savant who wrote, produced and sang an outlandish number of immortal pop songs back in the 1960s with his band, the Beach Boys, is swiveling in a chair, belly out, arms dangling, next to his faux-grand piano at the cavernous Burbank, Calif. studio where he and the rest of the group's surviving members are rehearsing for their much-ballyhooed 50th Anniversary reunion tour, which is set to start in three days. At 24, Wilson shelved what would have been his most avant-garde album, *Smile*, and retreated for decades into a dusky haze of drug abuse and mental illness; now, 45 years later, he has reemerged, stable but still somewhat screwy, to give the whole sun-and-surf thing a final go.

Before that can happen, though, the reconstituted Beach Boys must learn how to sing "That's Why God Made the Radio," the first new A-side that Wilson has written for the band since 1980. They are not entirely happy about this. Earlier, I heard

keyboardist Bruce Johnston, who replaced Wilson on the road in 1965, talking to the group's tour manager about an upcoming satellite-radio gig. "Just so you know," the manager said, "Sirius wants you to perform 'That's Why God Made the Radio' tomorrow night."

"Oh really?" Johnston responded. "And how are we going to do that when we don't know it?"

And so the band has gathered, once again, around Wilson's piano. I'd like to imagine that this is how it was when they first accustomed their vocal cords to, say, "California Girls." Except it's not, exactly: back then, in 1965, Wilson was the maestro, conducting each singer as his falsetto floated skyward and his fingers pecked out the accompaniment. Now he stares at a teleprompter and sings when he's told to sing, ceding his bench to one member of the 10-man backing band that will buffer the Beach Boys in concert and looking on while another orchestrates the harmonies and handles the loftier notes. At first, the blend is rough: Wilson strains to hit the high point of the hook; frontman Mike Love and guitarist Al Jardine miss their cues. But after eight or nine passes the stray voices begin to mesh. They begin to sound like the Beach Boys. Close your eyes, shutting out Wilson's swoosh of silver hair and Love's four golden rings, and 1965 isn't such a stretch.

Or it isn't until someone's iPhone rings. Jardine's. He turns away from the piano and presses the device to his ear. "I'm going to have to call you back, because—wait, what?" He hangs up, shaking his head. "Dick Clark just passed away," he says. The room begins to murmur; the makeup lady covers her mouth with her hand.

Read the whole story

Protect your medicines from the summer heat

By Jessica Stoller-Conrad, NPR

As record-breaking temperatures sweep the nation, it's hard to keep anything cool, especially if the power goes out.

And, try as you might, it's hard to find health products – from prescription drugs to over-the-counter pain relievers – that don't caution against storage in high temperatures.

The labels on many products specify storage at room temperature. What does that mean? Well, the Food and Drug Administration has told its inspectors that 75 to 77 degrees is the sweet spot.

Though the future may bring medicines that are resistant to heat, we wondered: What happens if you can't keep medicines at the recommended temperature?

[Read the whole story](#)

More people than ever traveling with their pets

By Anne Kadet, SmartMoney

Karen Goldberg may be single, but when she hits the road,

she's hardly lacking for travel companions. Every year she joins her extended family for a long cruise or grabs a friend to explore new cities like New Orleans. Last summer, however, the 39-year-old CPA took a gamble and turned to someone new: Riley, her 86-pound golden retriever.

The plan was to spend \$1,100 on a four-night stay at Canine Camp Getaway, a Lake George, N.Y., retreat for pets and their owners. But retreat suggests quiet – in practice, the lodge in the Adirondacks was more like a madcap convention for the pet set. At night Goldberg and Riley shared a room, but each had a double bed. By day, the two joined 40 other humans and 70 dogs for goofy bonding activities, from decorating homemade dog biscuits to making paw paintings and drinking beer at “yappy hour.” Just like at a human summer camp, Goldberg says, cliques formed; the labs and retrievers would congregate poolside, while the border collies hung out at the advanced agility course and the hounds gathered for a scent-detection workshop. The humans? They spent all day talking about dog training, dog nutrition and, of course, their pet-centric expeditions. Clearly, it wasn't exactly the typical family vacation. “All the conversations revolved around dogs,” she says.



People bring their four-legged family members hiking in Tahoe.
Photo/LTN

Tales of pet pampering gone wild are hardly surprising in the age of Swarovski crystal collars and air-conditioned dog mansions. But for anyone out and about this summer, with or without Fido, it'll be hard to ignore the fact that dog mania has reached a tipping point. Upstanding citizens who might otherwise be considered perfectly lucid are taking the "animal companion" concept to a new level – bringing their pets to the movies, shopping and out for dinner in fancy bistros. And, in an economy where a four-legged customer is better than none, businesses are happy to accommodate them. Well-behaved canines are welcome at retailers like Apple, The Gap and Pottery Barn, while some restaurants and hotels go a step further, offering pet menus and puppy-sitting. Even tourist agencies are boarding the gravy train. Washington state's Yakima Valley Visitors & Convention Bureau, for example, just launched a website listing the area's dog-friendly wineries, restaurants, museums and stores. "We want to be known as a very pet-friendly wine destination," says CEO John Cooper.

Read the whole story