

In-N-Out rewarding young readers with burgers

The Douglas County Public Library is again joining with In-N-Out Burger for the Cover to Cover Club reading program from March 3 to April 14.

Children ages 4-12 are eligible to receive certificates for a free In-N-Out hamburger or cheeseburger by reading books. The Zephyr Cove and Minden branches of the library are participating in the program.

Children must fill out a file card at the library to enroll in the program. Each reader will earn an Achievement Award redeemable for an In-N-Out®hamburger for every five books read at their reading level. Each participating child may earn up to three award certificates. Children too young to read may have a parent read to them.

The Douglas County Public Library is located at 1625 Library Lane in Minden and 233 Warrior Way in Zephyr Cove.

For more information, call the library at (775) 782.9841.

Ex-STHS football player on a new track – without heroin

Publisher's note: *This is the second of two stories about heroin use on the South Shore. [Click here to read the first article.](#)*

By Jessie Marchesseau

Josh does not look like your stereotypical Hollywood heroin addict. In fact, he sat two tables away from me at a local café for nearly 20 minutes while I waited for the subject of my interview to walk in, someone who *looked* like a heroin addict.

In black pants, black beanie and a white long-sleeved shirt, Josh looks like a typical Tahoe twenty-something-year-old snowboarder. He is clean shaven with a strong, muscular build, something he attributes to working out six days a week and eating healthy.

By looking at him, you would never guess that eight months ago Josh (whose name has been changed) was in a very different place. He was 60 pounds heavier, homeless, living on the streets in Los Angeles and instead of working out, he was shooting up heroin.

“I’ve replayed the whole thing, how it started, how it just spiraled all the way down, and I ended up at the very bottom,” he said. “I can’t imagine any lower you could go than Skid Row in LA. I can’t imagine anyplace worse.”



“It’s like a horrible relationship, you know the person’s so bad for you, but you can’t get away from them because

**it's all you
know, and it's
all you want."
– Josh**

Now 27, Josh's downward spiral started 10 years ago, in high school. He was athletic, had lots of friends, snowboarded and played football for South Tahoe High School. When a doctor prescribed him pain killers for a football injury, he remembers liking it right from the start.

Though Josh did not get addicted to the pain killers, he did continue to dabble in other drugs. It was not until after high school that he tried heroin for the first time. A friend had done heroin before, and the pair drove all the way to the Bay Area to get some. Josh decided to just snort the drug at first, but after seeing the instant high his friend had from injecting it, he reached for the needle.

"It was all over from there," Josh said. "I was 19, and until just seven months ago, it was constant."

Back here in Tahoe, heroin was not readily available. But OxyContin, another opiate, was. Injecting the prescription painkiller became a multiple times per day habit for nearly five years.

At first, Josh was able to hold together a fairly normal life. He had a girlfriend, a car, a job, even enrolled in the culinary program at Lake Tahoe Community College. He managed to hide his habit from family and friends.

But as the spiral continued downward, those things ceased to matter. He started blowing off work, sold his car for two eight balls of heroin (an eight ball is one-eighth of an ounce), and gave up trying to hide it. The only thing that mattered was getting high and getting enough money to get high. He sold everything he could and began stealing from friends and family: money, ATM cards, anything he could pawn.

At the same time, OxyContin was becoming harder to find and more and more expensive, up to \$80 for a pill that would last about six hours. Heroin, on the other hand, was becoming easier to find and was only \$5 to \$10 for a bag that could last just as long. Making the switch was easy. After all, this had all started with that first hit of heroin. But Josh's addiction was also escalating. One point, or a tenth of a gram, is considered a single dose of heroin for most people. Josh was doing six at a time.

His first run-in with the law was in 2008. Josh was pulled over with methadone in his possession, something he kept around for emergencies when he could not find heroin fast enough. He went to jail. Over the next three years he would go to jail six or seven more times. Even though he would detox while he was there, as soon as he was released, Josh would start using again.

"In my head it seemed like if I didn't have it, I didn't know who I was," he said. "It's like a horrible relationship, you know the person's so bad for you, but you can't get away from them because it's all you know, and it's all you want."

With the price of heroin going up, and Josh unable to hold a job, he and his new girlfriend decided to move to LA where the drugs were cheap. Once there, they blew all their money on heroin and ended up on Skid Row, sleeping on a cardboard box, all their worldly belongings in a shopping cart. He was arrested twice, held up at gunpoint and their shopping cart stolen. Josh had hit rock bottom.

"I just woke up and was like, 'Who am I? What the hell has happened?'" he said.

For the first time in his life, he did not want to do heroin anymore. Josh had already been through court-mandated rehab numerous times, counseling, Narcotics Anonymous, methadone programs. Nothing had worked because he had never *wanted* to

quit. This time was different. June 12, 2011, he called his mom and caught a bus back to Tahoe.

With a warrant out for his arrest, it was not long before the police caught up with him. He had never been so happy to be arrested. Josh spent the next three months in El Dorado County jail sobering up. It was finally over.

Clean since the day he went to jail, Josh said he has had no urge to start using again. His girlfriend also returned from LA and joined him on his journey to recovery. They motivate and support each other, neither one looking back.

At 27, Josh said heroin has taken nearly a decade from him. He is starting over, building a new life from the ground up. He is taking care of his body for a change, he and his girlfriend want to get married, and he hopes to finally finish culinary school.

While Josh got a second chance, not everyone is so lucky. Two of his friends made the El Dorado County coroner's list of heroin-related deaths last year, and several others are in jail.

Josh said he feels like he has a good head on his shoulders today, and he never would have met the love of his life if he had not gone through this. Even so, if he could do it all over again, he wouldn't.

"If I could go back in time and not stick that needle in my arm, I would have never, ever done it, knowing what I know now."

Region is No. 1 area for organ donations

By Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

The regional organ, eye and tissue donor agency serving Sacramento and neighboring counties led the nation in organ recovery.

Sierra Donor Services was the top agency in the country in the number of organs recovered per donor at 3.78 for the first nine months of last year, the latest statistics released. The national mean is 3.13 organs per donor.

SDS serves nearly 4 million people in Northern California and Northern Nevada. The nonprofit agency's service area includes El Dorado, Amador, Placer, Colusa, Calaveras, Nevada, Yolo, Sutter and Yuba counties.

SDS also for the first time in 26 years saved 243 lives through organ transplants – a 65 percent increase in organs transplanted over the previous year.

Tissue donors were up 17 percent to 698, and eye donations were up 40 percent to 352 last year.

Burning Man changing ticket policy

By Geralda Miller, Reno Gazette-Journal

Burning Man organizers spelled out on Wednesday a plan for resolving their ticket crisis after conducting their first ticket lottery, which left many long-time attendees ticketless.

A lengthy post on the organization's website told those eagerly awaiting the news that the 10,000 tickets scheduled to be sold next month in an open sale now will be "manually redirected" to groups necessary to the weeklong experience in the Black Rock Desert.

In January, the lottery awarded 43,000 tickets after collecting about 120,000 registrations for the lottery.

"It's clear that the current situation has created holes in our social fabric," Marian Goodell, spokeswoman and a founding board member of Black Rock City LLC, wrote on the website post. "Many of the core volunteers, major interactive camps, art car projects, performance groups and funded and unfunded art projects do not have enough tickets to bring their works to the playa."

Read the whole story

Learning to take control of

stress

By Mandy Kendall

With the snowfall we have had these past few days I wondered if it would, at last, relieve a little of the stress that local businesses must have been feeling over the last few dry months?

A small amount of stress is vital for our well-being, but too much stress and we risk our mental and physical well-being. Thousands of years ago, for our ancestors, stressful situations tended to involve things like running from or fighting with Saber tooth tigers. (Pretty stressful I should imagine.) Hormones would flood the body to speed up certain responses such as heart rate and blood flow to muscles, but also slow down less immediately vital ones, like digestion, so that they could flee to safety. Once they'd decided which one of the fight or flight responses were best, generally it was all over fairly quickly.



Mandy
Kendall

Once they had survived, the body's hormone responses would quickly go back to normal. However, these days, stressful situations tend to be much less life threatening, but often much longer in duration.

Unfortunately, our bodies have not evolved since those primal times and this often means our bodies are pretty much racing, like a car in a high gear, for much longer than they are

designed to. If these stressful situations last over a prolonged period, this can do a lot of harm to our body's engine.

But what can we do about it? Can we limit how much stress we experience when so much of it seems totally out of our control?

Here are a few *Qwik-e* tips (quick and easy, because let's face it who has time for anything else!) to help ease up on our body's gas pedal a little.

Focus on what you can control – “Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.” Try to take an objective look at the top five stressors in your life (there are likely to be more, but let's not overwhelm ourselves before we start). Typically the top stressors involve family, work and money. Try to look objectively at each stressor and ask yourself “is there anything I can do to change this?” If the answer is yes, then you have something to work on. If the answer is no, then try to see if you can look at/react to the situation differently. For example, you might hate your job, however the job is not likely to change but you can change how you view it. List all the things you do like about it; being paid, getting health insurance, the people you work with, or maybe how you help other people because of the work you do. Sometimes a change of attitude can put a helpful new perspective on a situation.

Calm things down – What ever works for you; exercise, talking with a loved one, playing with your kids or your pets, yoga, meditation. There will be something that is the best way, for you, to unwind the day. Try to avoid using substances (alcohol, etc.) to relax, as these just tend to become replacement stressors on the body.

Just breathe – Oxygen is nature's great relaxing agent. A few

deep breathes help to flush out the stress hormones from the body and help our systems return to normal. Breathing deeply can also give us that “count to 10” type space to help us not make that heat of the moment snap decision that is often fueled by the physical effects of those over active stress hormones. A wonderful meditation teacher once told me that the simplest meditations were often the best. He recommended purely thinking the word “accepting” as you breathed in and “releasing: as you breathed out. He insisted you needn’t worry about what exactly you were accepting and releasing, if it weren’t obvious, as your subconscious would do that for you. So maybe just try it and see what happens.

A problem shared is a problem halved – Maybe we think we are the only ones that can deal with the stresses in our lives? Maybe our family and friends would love an opportunity to help us, if only we would share with them what is going on. Quite often sharing problems can bring up solutions, clear up misunderstandings, or just plain share a heavy burden that might become easier to bear.

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.

'Miss Representation' – a plea to stop exploiting women

By Kathryn Reed

OLYMPIC VALLEY – A mother of two young children is worried the 21st century is little better than the last 100 years when it comes to sexual stereotypes and the consequences that follow. Her daughter – the elder of the two – received compliments about her beauty when she was born in 2009. Her son (born in 2011) received letters from the president and vice president, and many predictions he would one day be president.

Jennifer Siebel Newsom told the more than 200 women at the Feb. 15 Queen of Hearts lunch at the Resort at Squaw Creek that she knows women have progressed, but fears the steps are not great enough to ensure her offspring will be offered equal opportunities.



Jennifer
Siebel Newsom
speaks Feb. 15
about her film
"Miss
Representation
" at the
Resort at
Squaw Creek.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

She laments the fact that girls are taught at an early age that looks are important – especially to be successful, while boys are told they are natural leaders. And with those teachings boys learn to treat girls as though they are not equals.

Newsom wrote and directed the film “Miss Representation”. It debuted at the Sundance Film Festival in 2011. The 90-minute film was shown at the Wednesday lunch.

“This film is meant to be more than a film. It is meant to be a call to action,” Newsom said.

She spoke before the film was shown and then took questions afterward. Newsom shared stories from her youth. While she comes from a background of privilege, her life has not been easy. Being pretty did not shield her from tragedy or abuse.

But what bothers Newsom is the prolific exploitation of women in the media. The media being news outlets, television shows, Hollywood films – the whole spectrum.

“... the film exposes how mainstream media contribute to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence in America. The film challenges the media’s limited and often disparaging portrayals of women and girls, which make it difficult for women to achieve leadership positions and for the average woman to feel powerful herself,” the movie’s website says.

Newsom doesn’t believe change will come until younger women – even girls – get involved in the discussion. That is why she and others involved with the film are promoting the movie to schools, with a curriculum component available.

She said it is time people standup to sexism.

The movie says women spend more money trying to look beautiful than they do on their education.

The film uses examples from most mediums to show sexism and sexual exploitation of women.

It also provides some statistics that aren't often reported in mainstream media.

- The number of youth getting cosmetic surgery tripled between 1997 and 2007.
- Seventeen percent of teen girls cut. Cutting is self-mutilation.
- Cuba, Iraq, China and Afghanistan have more women in politics than the United States.
- Nine states consider domestic violence a pre-existing health condition and therefore women can be denied health insurance.
- Films made in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s portrayed women as more capable and intelligent than what is produced today.
- G rated movies – especially animation – have female characters as scantily clad as R rated movies do.
- Twenty percent of teens have sex before age 14.
- More news outlets report on celebrity happenings and gossip because it's cheaper to produce.

"Miss Representation" also has interviews with Condoleezza Rice, Nancy Pelosi, Katie Couric, Rachel Maddow, Margaret Cho, Rosario Dawson, Dianne Feinstein and Gloria Steinem and others.

Pelosi talked about how when she ran for office and her youngest child was a senior in high school people asked her, "Who is going to take care of your children."

In the film she says, "I don't think men are ever asked that question."

Feinstein expresses her frustration with the media using the verb “complained” for women who are quoted and “explained” for male respondents.

Rice said no male presidential candidate is asked if they are tough enough to be commander in chief, but women are.

The images of women delivering television news were like watching soft porn with all the cleavage. The point was made that what’s being said is not important, but the dressing or package that delivers it is.

Couric winced at images of herself in short skirts on the “Today Show” – even questioning if she contributed to this need to wear something that really isn’t appropriate for the job.

Then there were the comments about and photos of female candidates – on both sides of the political aisle – that their male counterparts are never subjected to. The film makes a clear case that women’s looks and sexuality are part of what they do – even if they are running for president or vice president of the United States of America.

When it comes to Hollywood, it’s advertisers who are saying what goes on. Men in the 18-34 bracket have money to spend. Advertisers want the products those guys buy to be in films and the films to appeal to that age group. That is why there are so many films that lack substance.

Product placement is not new, but this line of advertising is a bit more covert. The movie points out how it’s similar to the early 1950s after World War II when women wanted to keep working, but instead the government and corporations wanted them back in the home.

The television show “Father Knows Best” came out and with it came advertisers placing their products to appeal to women – demonstrating the latest appliances, showing a happy family is

one where mom stays at home. This was a covert ploy to get women to get back to “where they belonged”, according the men in power.

If change is to come, it will be from the consumer, the film pointed out.

“The consumer’s voice is probably the most powerful voice, aside from the voters,” the film says.

In other words, if people keep watching programs or movies, or buy print, or view online media that degrade women, then the practice will continue because there will be no financial incentive for the industry or corporate America to change.

USFS office in Truckee earns LEED gold classification

The U.S. Forest Service district office in Truckee has received gold level certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program.

This is the first LEED certified building for the Forest Service in all of the Pacific Southwest Region.

The rating is achieved partly in the design process, partly in the construction process and will be confirmed in the operation of the building over time. The site design was completed by Gary Davis Group and the building design was by Ward Young Architecture in collaboration with Beaudin-Ganze Consulting Engineers. The contractor was Geney/Gassiot INC General Contractors and the commissioning performed by Bender Engineering. They are all Truckee firms.



The U.S. Forest Service office in Truckee is LEED certified gold.

Photo/Provided

The ranger district office building utilizes an open floor plan, which meets several objectives. It allows for easy communication, great use of natural light and by taking advantage of the site's southern exposure, it allows the design to maximize solar gain in the winter. The solar gain is achieved through a two-story south facing sunspace corridor, which has slate floors, concrete block half walls and high performance windows that allow high passive solar heat gain and minimize heat loss. The windows in the buildings were designed to allow the occupants to view the outdoors, including a view of Lookout Mountain from almost every part of the building.

Skylights at the ridge and light wells through the second

floor bring natural light into the center of the building. Automatic lighting control systems measure daylight and dim electric lights accordingly. The architectural, mechanical and electrical design projects savings of more than 50 percent for electricity and natural gas compared to California and industry standards.

During the construction, over three-quarters of onsite generated construction waste was diverted from the landfill and recycled products were used for structural steel, building insulation, aluminum doors, and other products. More than half of the materials were harvested or manufactured regionally and products used were within healthy indoor environmental standards.

2 performances of ‘The Vagina Monologues’ in South Lake Tahoe

V-Day South Lake Tahoe joins the global effort to stop violence against women and girls with a benefit production of “The Vagina Monologues”.

The Feb. 24 and Feb. 25 7pm performances of Eve Ensler’s award winning play will be in the Loft at the Blue Angel Café.

This is the ninth year that V-Day will be celebrated in South Lake Tahoe. Last year more than 5,800 V-Day benefits were conducted throughout the world raising funds and awareness toward ending violence against women. These events raised more

than \$5 million.



"The Vagina Monologues" returns to South Lake Tahoe on Feb. 24 And Feb. 25. Photo/LTN file

"The Vagina Monologues", which was first performed off-Broadway by Ensler, dives into the mystery, humor, pain, power, wisdom, outrage and excitement buried in women's experiences.

V-Day is a global activist movement to stop violence against women and girls. The V-Day movement is growing at a rapid pace throughout the world, in 140 countries from Europe to Asia, Africa and the Caribbean and all of North America. V-Day, a nonprofit corporation, distributes funds to grassroots, national and international organizations and programs that work to stop violence against women and girls.

The V in V-Day stands for Victory, Valentine and Vagina.

To learn more about V-Day Tahoe, call Natalie Yanish at (775) 843.7142 or email natalie@realtordeb.com.

Admission is \$15. Tickets are available at South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center at 3501 B Spruce Ave. and at the door.

Local beneficiaries are South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center, Tahoe Youth & Family Services, Live Violence Free, and Court Appointed Special Advocates.

Other V-Day events include:

“The Sex Show” – a Jeopardy based sex education game show on Feb. 22 at 7pm at the Divided Sky in Meyers. Tickets are \$5 at the door.

“HONK” – a rally to raise awareness on Feb. 20 from 5-6pm at the Y in South Lake Tahoe.

Agriculture inspections going to the dogs

By Cynthia Hubert, Sacramento Bee

Under the light of a nearly full moon early Friday morning, Sacramento County’s newest agricultural inspector reported for duty.

Dozer, an 86-pound Labrador retriever mix, bolted out of a white van and into OnTrac’s bustling shipping warehouse on the end of a leash held by his human partner, inspector Jennifer Berger.

“Let’s go!” Berger said. “Check!”

Dozer went to work at the facility near the former McClellan Air Force Base. Within seconds, he pounced upon a box labeled “California Flowers” that likely held someone’s Valentine’s Day bouquet. Racing through the facility, he sniffed pallets of copy paper, stacks of tires, even a package that held live

lobsters, with nary a reaction.

Then he encountered a box with the words “Living Herbs” and pounced again, scratching at it frantically.

“Good boy!” Berger said, and passed him a treat from a pouch attached to her waist.

Dozer is one of 13 highly trained former shelter and rescued dogs that work to sniff out fruit and other plants that may be carrying agricultural pests such as fruit flies that pose a threat to California crops.

Read the whole story

Valentine's Day can be big business

Expressing one's love to another is a celebrated custom on Valentine's Day; whereby sweethearts and family members present gifts to one another, such as cards, candy, flowers and other symbols of affection. Opinions differ as to who was the original Valentine, but the most popular theory is that he was a clergyman who was executed for secretly marrying couples in ancient Rome.

In A.D. 496, Pope Gelasius I declared Feb. 14 as Valentine Day. Esther Howland, a native of Massachusetts, is given credit for selling the first mass-produced valentine cards in the 1840s. The spirit continues today with even young children exchanging valentine's cards with their classmates.

California in 2009 led the nation in the number of chocolate and cocoa manufacturing establishments, with 135, followed by

Pennsylvania, with 111, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Total value of shipments in 2009 for firms producing chocolate and cocoa products was \$12.6 billion. Non-chocolate confectionery product manufacturing was a \$7.4 billion industry

In 2010, Americans ate 24.7 pound of candy per capita.

The combined wholesale value of domestically produced cut roses in 2010 for all operations with \$100,000 or more in sales was \$17 million.

In February 2011, U.S. jewelry stores sold \$2.27 billion in merchandise.

The number of marriages performed in Nevada during 2009 was 108,150. So many couples tie the knot in the Silver State that it ranked fifth nationally in marriages, even though its total population that year among states was 35th. California ranked first in marriages.

The number of dating service establishments nationwide as of 2007 was 393. These establishments, which include Internet dating services, employed 3,125 people and pulled in \$928 million in revenue.