

Cohabitation among unmarried older couples on the rise

By Anita Creamer, Sacramento Bee

The ceremony in February seemed like a traditional celebration. One of Charlotte Benedict's sons walked her down the aisle in the Eskaton Village Carmichael auditorium, while two of Jim Jordan's sons stood up with him. A minister blessed their union.

"We had 150 people there," said Jordan, 85, a retired architect and engineer. "But we didn't have a wedding license."

It's a quiet little fact of senior residences across the country: Grandpa is living with someone else's Grandma.

In their 70s, 80s and beyond, older couples meet in seniors-only housing and live together unencumbered by marriage vows. Their relationships are committed and bonded, meant to last the rest of their lives, sometimes even informally blessed by clergy.

According to U.S. census figures, co-habitation numbers for people 65 and older have tripled in the past decade, jumping from 193,000 in 2000 to 575,000 in 2010.

A generation or two ago, the idea of older adults living together might have been shameful, even scandalous. That's changed, in part because societal attitudes toward marriage have changed.

Only 52 percent of all American adults identified themselves as married in the 2010 census – and almost 60 percent of people age 50 and younger have lived with a partner without being married, the Pew Research Center says.

Read the whole story

Celebration of Writers lineup released

Tahoe Writers Works will host the third annual Celebration of Writers Around the Lake on Sept. 16 at 7pm at the Valhalla Grand Hall.

It's an evening of literature at the lake with eight writers who call Tahoe home or find their inspiration here. The \$10 admission includes a wine reception featuring the Après Wine Company followed by readings from award-winning writers. Books will be available for signing and purchase.



The event will showcase several South Shore writers including Suzanne Roberts reading from her third collection, "Three Hours to Burn a Body," and Andrew Homan ("Life in the Slipstream: The Legend of Bobby Walthour Sr."), Janet Smith ("All of a Sudden, Nothing Happened"), and Terry Easley ("The Kismet Blade"). Also appearing are Janet Kaidantzis ("Fallen Leaf Lake: A Lake and its People, 1850-1950") and Joseph Flannery of Tahoe City, who will read from "Grizzly Country."

Two renowned Reno poets round out the bill. Nevada Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts recipient and UNR Professor Gailmarie Pahmeier ("Shake It and it Snows"), and BEtheCAUSE founder, writer and activist Benjamin Arnold ("Synaptic Traffic: Intersections of Prose & Poetry") will bring their powerful stage presence to Tahoe.

Local publishers will also be represented. Jared Manninen, publisher of Makoto Press, will discuss his latest project, an illustrated story about hiking the Appalachian Trail, and Bona Fide Books publisher Kim Wyatt will feature forthcoming titles.

Tahoe Writers Works, formerly the Lake Tahoe Writing Club, is a nonprofit organization based in South Lake Tahoe. Each year, the group organizes events to create a stronger literary and arts community in Lake Tahoe, including Bare Bones Open Mic and Murder Mystery Theater at Valhalla. The group also publishes the literary journal "EDGE". For more information, go online.

Never too early to discuss end-of-life issues with parents

By Anita Creamer, Sacramento Bee

When Roberta Battle and her 10 siblings gathered in Washington, D.C., twice each year for their parents' birthdays, her mother, Helen Harper White, always initiated a family business meeting. The agenda included her and her husband's wills, their health care wishes, their financial situation – the entire spectrum of issues that experts call end-of-life planning.

When White died in 2009 at age 92, the family was prepared.

"With that background, I should be better prepared than I am myself," said Battle, 67, a retired consultant who is

president of Sacramento's Older Women's League. "I haven't even done my own health care directive. I've just told my daughter things."

For many families, it's the most uncomfortable conversation they'll ever have: How do their elders see their final years? What kind of life can they afford? How far do they want doctors to intervene in their last hours?

For millions of baby boomers and their parents, this conversation is the elephant in the room. And in today's volatile political and financial landscape, experts say, frank discussions between the generations about money, health care and other end-of-life issues are all the more crucial.

Even when older people have carefully planned for their retirement years, today's plummeting home values and rocky financial market can lead to concerns that they'll outlive their resources – especially with the future of Social Security and Medicare in question.

Experts also note a more basic truth: You can't honor your parents' wishes if you don't know them.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Regional Young Professionals collect cash, food for Christmas Cheer

As local young professionals sang karaoke and danced at Murphy's Irish Pub, attendees filled buckets with cash and food donations for South Lake Tahoe's Christmas Cheer All

Year.

"We were able to deliver \$542.60 and two large boxes of canned food and toys to Christmas Cheer," Rebecca Wass, co-founder and president of Tahoe Regional Young Professionals, said in a press release.

Christmas Cheer is assisting about 700 households or 1,700 people a month.

TRYP is a newly formed organization in South Lake Tahoe aiming to connect Tahoe's next generation to help the Lake Tahoe region and encourages members to partake in fundraisers, socials, networking opportunities and build a better community.

The next event is a full moon stroll on Sept. 12, then participating in the Great River Sierra Cleanup on Sept. 17.

For more information and upcoming TRYP events, go online or email tahoetryp@gmail.com.

South Tahoe's Anderson gets Gnu pro model

By Mary Fenton, ESPN

Among the ranks of professional snowboarders, relatively few riders earn pro models. Factor in the female component, and for this year's crop of boards, that number dwindles to precisely six: 2010 Olympians Torah Bright and Gretchen Bleiler, Dutch slopestyle sensation Cheryl Maas, Anne-Flore Marxer, Lisa Filzmoser, and the lady with the longest-running pro model, Barrett Christy.

This October, at long last, Christy will have company on Gnu with the release of the Ladies Choice by Jamie Anderson. It's fitting: Not since Christy, the 10-time Winter X Games medalist, dominated the comp scene in the late-'90s and early '00s has a female rider won with as much consistency and grace as Gnu's newest pro (save Tara Dakides and Janna Meyen-Weatherby).

Just 21 years old in September, the South Lake Tahoe native has been a sponsored rider since she was 9 years old. Among her slopestyle accolades (a list that's becoming so ridiculously long, it's almost Michael Phelps-ian): the last two TTR World Tour overall wins, the last two Winter Dew Tour overall wins, a Burton Global Open Series win, a U.S. Open win, three Winter X gold medals (also: the youngest medalist and youngest female gold medalist in Winter X history), an Arctic Challenge win. And with two wins in New Zealand already this season – and the promise of Slopestyle on the Winter Olympic program come 2014 – it doesn't seem like she's slowing down anytime soon.

Read the whole story

Bali-themed event to raise money for SLT Women's Center

South Lake Tahoe Women's Center's 12th annual Sunset Gala Bali Bash fundraiser on Sept. 17 from 5-8pm at the Bali inspired home of Sean Degnan.

This year the women's center will be using the home's Bali design as a central theme for the gala. In addition to fine wines, hors d'oeuvres and desserts, classical guitar, and

silent auction, the event will feature local fire dancers, tropical mixed drinks and a Most Fabulous Flip Flops contest.

Purchase tickets online for \$50 each or stop by 2941 Lake Tahoe Blvd. to purchase tickets.

Reno Balloon Race to honor those who died on 9/11

The Great Reno Balloon Race board of trustees, together with officials from Nevada, Reno, Sparks and Washoe County will honor the heroes and remember the lives lost in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the last day of the Great Reno Balloon Race – Sept. 11.

The official ceremony, which will take place at 6:30am before Mass Ascension, is scheduled to commence with a brief address from Gov. Brian Sandoval.

During Mass Ascension, all balloons will carry an American flag to decorate the sky in remembrance.

For early risers, the music tribute will begin at 5am with accompanying patriotic music and commentary during the Glow Show and Dawn Patrol.

The Great Reno Balloon Race is a nonprofit event provided to the community at no cost. The event celebrates its 30th anniversary Sept. 9–11, 2011. For more information, go online.

Writers from around the lake to congregate in Meyers

Kim Wyatt from Bona Fide Books is hosting a meet and greet for the North and South Shore writing groups at Bona Fide Books in Meyers.

This will be an opportunity to network with writers from around the lake.

Bring a dish to share and something to drink.

Pass this invitation along to people in your writing groups.

It is Sept. 30 from 6-9pm at Bona Fide Books, 1069 Magua St., No. 4, Meyers. This is behind the Getaway Cafe.

Toccata performance in honor of 9/11 anniversary

Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (Toccata) commemorates the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy with a concert series that features famed violinist Elizabeth Pitcairn performing Mozart's Concerto for Violin No. 3 in G Major on the legendary Red Stradivarius

Violin. The program concludes with Beethoven's Symphony No. 9.

Performances are:

Sept. 11 at 3:30pm at St. Theresa Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe

Sept. 13 at 7:30pm at St. Thomas Aquinas Cathedral in Reno

Sept. 16 at 7pm at Trinity Episcopal Church in Reno

Sept. 17 at 3pm at the North Tahoe Events Center in Kings Beach.

Tickets are \$30 adults, \$25 seniors, (62 and up), and \$5 students. Preferred seating is available for \$40 and can be reserved online.

Tickets may be purchased in advance by credit card online or at the door by cash or check. For more information, call (775) 313.9697.

Nonprofit helps fledgling businesses survive

By Darrell Smith, Sacramento Bee

Starting a business in a recession is tough. Keeping it on course in a rough economy is even more of a challenge.

Volunteer business counselors from the nonprofit organization SCORE see the challenges Sacramento-area business owners face as they reach the two-year mark.

Seven of 10 new firms survive at least two years, but just half stay open at least five years, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. Now SCORE is launching a program aimed at business owners looking to grow and expand during that critical time.

Titled "Becoming a Well-Run Business," the first six-week

class begins at 7am Sept. 7 at Maidu Branch Library, 1530 Maidu Drive in Roseville. It's the first site in a trio of Sacramento-area locations that will host the classes.

Plans are to launch similar classes in El Dorado County in January and Sacramento County in March, said SCORE counselor Bill Duthler, who will teach the classes with fellow counselor Jack Mayfield.

Read the whole story