Dog photos needed for Humane Society calendar

Photographs of your beloved rescued or adopted dog or dogs enjoying the good life are wanted for the Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe's 2011 Calendar Photo Contest.

Whether your dog's mug is playful or pensive, goofy or grateful, snapshots of all personality types are encouraged. Photos must be taken in the great outdoors of the Truckee-Tahoe area. The top 12 dogs will be featured in this year's "Rescued Dogs of Truckee-Tahoe" calendar.



Submit up to five favorite photos of your dog along with a completed Official Entry Form and a $10 entry fee to dale@hstt.org. Include a short story about your rescued pet(s) to include if your photo is chosen. All submissions will be judged by HSTT.

For more information on this contest, click here. All entries must be submitted by Oct. 1.

The Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe is dedicated to saving and improving the lives of pets through adoptions, community spay/neuter services and humane education programs in the Truckee and North Tahoe area. To meet adoptable dogs, go to HSTT's Adoption Day, every Saturday from noon to 2pm at the Town of Truckee Animal Kennel, or call (530) 581.3199 to schedule an appointment. To learn more about HSTT, call (530) 587.5948 or visit www.hstt.org.

Affleck returns to star form as actor-director in ‘The Town’



The Town

Rated R

4 bagels out of 5

By Howie Nave

There’s a lesson I would like to share with future filmmakers: if you can’t star in a successful movie, try writing and directing one yourself. Maybe that’s what Ben Affleck should have done a half dozen movies ago. I mean he directed (and co-wrote) 2007’s “Gone Baby Gone” (receiving good reviews) but this time he has gone completely Eastwood staking out just about every aspect of movie writing, directing and starring in his latest adaptation, “The Town.”

He brought home the Oscar for co-writing (along with friend/actor Matt Damon in 1997’s “Good Will Hunting” so it just took a few crappy movies before taking matters into his own hands. And just like that movie, Affleck has kept this one close to home in the northern Boston neighborhood of Charlestown.

What works immediately in this movie (adapted from Chuck

Hogan’s novel “Prince of Thieves”) is the depth of its characters. From the opening scenes you find yourself absorbed into the setup of the story, the intense action and realize that some of the people on the good side of the law don’t always equate to them being the good guys.

Ben Affleck plays Doug MacRay, a bank robber who is the son of a criminal following in his dad’s footsteps. Doug’s father (played briefly but exceptionally by Chris Cooper) had been in the family business until being convicted of killing his victims winding up in prison. Doug’s close friend, Jem (played by Jeremy Renner from last year’s Oscar winner “The Hurt Locker”) shares a similar story to that of his friend. Doug’s mother split when he was 6, so the backdrop is set up revealing how impossible it is to break the cycle of crime in this rough and tumble neighborhood of Boson.

Turns out Charlestown is a hotbed for turning out bank robbers and is rated No. 1 in the country. I bet the Charlestown Chamber of Commerce loves that honor, eh?

Although the original story took place in the ’90s, the movie has been updated to take place in the present. What is so gripping is that someone who was raised in such an environment where it was easy to break the law wants to throw that away and make an attempt to go straight. But when you’re in a tight-knit group that includes your friends who know your torrid past it’s like a reverse peer pressure effect where it’s comfortable in an odd way remaining where you are but knowing it’s just a matter of time before the outcome could be devastating. I do have to say that I’ve never seen bank robbers make zombie apparel look so fashionable for committing their crimes. The nun look was kind of creepy too.



Ben Affleck and Jeremy Renner in "The Town." Photo/Provided

In one of his coolest roles ever, AMC's "Mad Men" lead character Jon Hamm easily slips into his role as that of FBI Agent Frawley who is a jerk. Not an overt one, but I found myself cheering for the bad guys here because deep down it's Affleck's character that ultimately is the good guy. Maybe that's because we see a side of him that is brought out when a hostage (Rebecca Hall) situation gets more personal than usual (and not just with Doug either).

Rounding out the impressive plot line are some impressive action sequences to balance out the human element. What would an action movie be without some explosive grinding steel in your face?

Kudos to Ben Affleck for tackling all his jobs behind the camera without sacrificing where it counts in front of the camera – playing it cool, subdued and not over-the-top.

"The Town" is rated R for strong violence, pervasive language, some sexuality and drug use with a running time of 2 hours and 5 minutes.

Howie Nave is host/emcee/manager of The Improv at Harveys. You can hear him Monday-Friday 6 to 10am on KRLT FM-93.9.

History: Retracing the steps of the Barton family

Publisher's note: ***This is from a fall 1972 Lake Tahoe Historical Society newsletter.***

By Marie Walsh, Lake Tahoe Historical Society

Special program guest for the annual meeting was Alva Barton, a well-known Tahoe pioneer who had much to share with her audience.



Lake Tahoe Historical Society

Miss Barton is a 66-year Tahoe resident, having lived here continuously since the year 1906. She also has the unique distinction of being a direct descendant of one of the Lake Tahoe's earliest pioneer families, a family whose name has long since become legend at Tahoe.

Alva Barton began her talk by taking her listeners back to well over a century ago when her grandparents came west from New York on the train that brought the news of President Lincoln's assassination. After first settling at Sutter's Fort in Sacramento [her grandmother cooked the first Thanksgiving

dinner at the fort, and her mother was the first white child to be born at the fort], they moved to the Sierra foothills and spent their summers ranching at Tahoe – over in Hope Valley, and on property they homesteaded in the Meyers area that today is the site of the Lake Tahoe Country Club.

Her own parents the Wm. D. Barton's, daried at Webber Lake [where she was born outdoors in a mountain meadow], and then move to the South Shore in 1915. They settled on property that today is occupied by the South Lake Tahoe Airport, and established a dairy that was known as Meadow Edge.

Later on, she and her parents and her sister Fay ran a milk route which took them, every morning, to Echo Lakes, Camp Sacramento, Twin Bridges, Tahoe Meadow, Beecher's Country Club [where Harrah's is now], and to Camp Chinokis [then located behind the present Crescent V Shopping Center].

Several years later her parents built a one-room cabin [which today still exist as part of Miss Barton's tidy green and white home] just south of the present Tahoe Valley Y. "This was when the Y area was wide-open land, and when the only 'road' in the Basin was Pioneer Trail," recalled Miss Barton. It was in this cabin that the dozen or so youngsters in the Basin at the time attended school – "until 30 children showed up one day, and we had to move school over to Lampson's Market."

At the Y, the Barton Family also ran a 200 horse stable and rented horses to such groups as the Mt. Ralston Fish Planting Club. Interestingly, it was her parents' horses that were used in the movies "Lightnin" [made at Emerald Bay in 1939 and starring Will Rogers], and "Rose Marie" [made in 1935 at Emerald Bay and starring Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald]. "Those fancy horses from Hollywood just weren't used to this altitude and the cold water, so we painted Papa's horse and let them jump in the lake!"

By 1927, the Barton Ranch in Tahoe Valley has grown to 1,000 acres, encompassing land which extended from the Y, along Pioneer Trail to the old garbage dump, then running north through Barton Meadow by the present hospital and continuing all the way to Camp Chinokis.

The Barton family name is still very much a part of the Lake Tahoe today, not only in lore but in natural and physical elements also. It was Alva Barton and her sister, Fay, who donated the land for the Barton Memorial Hospital, named in memory of their pioneering parents, William Delos Barton and Ouida Kyburz Barton.

SF International Comedy Fest to make stop in Tahoe

The preliminary round of the 35th annual San Francisco International Comedy Festival will be at MontBleu casino in Stateline on Sept. 18 at 8pm.

Tahoe's comedy elimination competition will feature a dozen finalists who make it through qualifying rounds of hundreds this week at various Northern California venues. Comics have 5-7 minute to woo the audience and judges. The final round of competition is Oct. 3-9.

For details, click here.

Contestants from past years include Robin Williams, Ellen DeGeneres, Dane Cook, Dana Carvey, Roseanne Barr, Mark Curry and represent the pedigree of hot, national comedy club talent.

Karen Rontowski, an upbeat, granola-esque comedian is the evening's host.Described as a "New Age Hippie," her experience has earned headliner billing worldwide opening for legends such as Bob Hope and Ray Charles.

Tickets are $25 and are available at www.ticketmaster.com or the MontBleu box office at 800.648.3353.

Authors give women rescue workers of 9/11 a voice

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Where are all the women?

Seeking the answer to that question completely changed the lives of the two women asking the question as well as the lives of the 30 women who answered it.

The media and politicians seemed to have not noticed the women in uniform on Sept. 11, 2001, and the days after who were part of the effort that saved 25,000 lives as New York City struggled to cope with the terrorist attacks. Then Mayor Rudolph Giuliani praised the men in several speeches. Then President George W. Bush put his arm around a public servant, thanking all the men for their selfless heroics.



Susan Hagen and Mary Carouba sign books after speaking Sept. 15 in Stateline. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Three thousand miles away Susan Hagen and Mary Carouba were yelling at the television, baffled at where the women were. Why, they wondered, was the coverage so gender specific?

Words do matter, the authors told the crowded room at Harveys casino Sept. 15, where they had been invited by Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe.

“To be left out of the national conversation … it’s huge,” Carouba said.

They were in their mid-40s, both with careers, both wondering what they could do. Hagen had been a reporter in the 1970s before becoming a firefighter in 1994. Carouba was an investigative social worker who also did some standup comedy.

“In that moment we realized we couldn’t let it go. That’s how the book was born. We could go to New York and find those women,” Hagen said.

They had no media credentials. They knew no one in New York. They had never been to New York. They had never written a book. They pooled the limits of their credit cards to come up with a budget. Within a couple weeks they were in New York.

Now, where are the women? They asked a cab driver to take them wherever female cops might be hanging out. To a dark bar they were delivered. After a bit of posturing by the women in blue, they came around. They had many stories to tell.

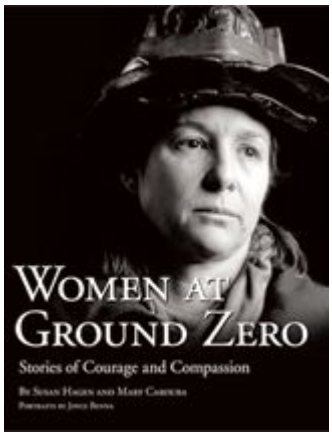
More than 6,000 of the 34,500 police officers in New York City are women. About one-third of the emergency medical technicians are women. Of the 12,500 firefighters, 25 are women. There might not be any female firefighters if it weren't for a court ruling mandating they allow 25 in. They've never allowed any more than that number.

As word got out about Hagen and Carouba being in town, the women showed up at all hours of the day and night at the budding authors' hotel room. Tears were shed. Words not before uttered were shared with these Californians.

NYPD's requirements were two days of therapy that had to be taken within a year of the towers collapsing.

Carouba spoke to the families of the three women rescuers who died. Their stories are also in the book "Women at Ground Zero: Stories of Courage and Compassion."

Hagen and Carouba, who still live in Sonoma County, are working on a second book that will be out next year for the 10-year anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center. It will be a look at where the 30 women, who are still all alive, are today.



In there poignant, yet comedic, tale of how their book came to fruition, the duo spoke of bringing the 30 women and five others to the Wine Country a little more than a year after the planes crashed into the towers. They wanted to pay for everything. The invitations went all. Everyone accepted. Then Hagen and Carouba realized they had no idea what they were

doing, and had no money to put the gang up.

People with money, they realized, weren't big spenders. It was a bag of $99 in coins from high school students in Sebastopol who were looking for a way to help a 9/11 cause that was the seed money.

This was also the first time the authors realized what exactly Soroptimist could do. They can raise money and organize events. Hagen and Carouba credit the women's group in Sonoma County for being instrumental in helping raise $140,000 so the New Yorkers could have a weeklong respite.

"These women had to come all the way across the country to get the recognition they should have gotten in New York," Carouba said.

For more information about the book and the authors, click here.

Overcoming odds makes Kenyan a hearty American

By Kathryn Reed

Hellen Barclay could be the poster woman for Soroptimist and the American Dream.

She survived being born in Kenya in the 1970s when daughters were the less desired gender – and in many ways still are. She survived an abusive marriage – which many women are still trapped in. She survived the humiliation of being a single mom in a culture much less accepting of those circumstances than the United States is. She overcame moving to a foreign country

10 years ago and feeling like an outsider.



Hellen Barclay

Barclay, who is a member of Soroptimist International Tahoe Sierra, spoke to the group last week about her life, her struggles, her triumphs and her dreams.

“My father said he wanted to empower his daughters. (For them) to be a voice in the village,” Barclay said.

Her father ignored the village leaders who brought women to their home for him to marry, saying his wife – her mother – was bad luck for giving birth to so many daughters. Men could have multiple wives. Daughters were and are still seen as a burden.

It was unusual for girls to get an education. But all the boys did. It was even more rare to go to college. But that’s just what Barclay did. She went to India, earning a master’s in business administration.

Today is she is manager of the Wells Fargo branch in Round Hill.

“I don’t know how I could have lived in Kenya. You are supposed to be seen and not heard,” Barclay laughs.

Though her accent is still strong, her English is impeccable. Her self-deprecating nature is combined with a self-assuredness that makes one believe she could make her native continent be full of women to be reckoned with.

Each year she goes home to visit her family. She talks to groups about standing up for themselves, against girls being used as instruments of income, against rape and for equality.

“Men do things they can’t do here,” Barclay said. “There are so many organizations here to help you.”

When she was growing up it was a right of passage from girlhood to womanhood to have the lower six teeth removed. It happened to her mother. Her father would not allow it for his daughters.

“I want to advocate and educate girls. I want to tell them not to take the abuse – that you can’t just be raped,” Barclay said.

At the meeting last week, a basket was passed around to collect money for the Dolphin organization that helps fight rape and to control AIDS in Africa. It’s a group this Soroptimist club is giving $1,000 to. It’s also been a beneficiary of the local Vagina Monologues troupe.

Barclay hopes to visit the non-governmental organization later this fall when she visits her family in Nairobi.

Though life has improved in her homeland, it was just last year that her parents got electricity. The village doesn’t have it. Her parents have a pump for water in the house. She grew up having to haul water on her head.

Today, when Barclay returns to her village she said she is a role model for girls. On this day, she was clearly a role model for the women listening to her.

South Tahoe honors the living and the dead

By Kathryn Reed

It was a somber morning. A time to honor the longevity of one life and the shortness of two others.

The Rev. John Grace, who claims to be retired, was honored by South Lake Tahoe on Sept. 14 for his service to the community. The Catholic priest turns 90 on Sept. 18.

The sons of Patty Smith and Brad Williams were also honored Tuesday. Both died in combat.

Tim Smith, 25, of South Lake Tahoe died in April 2008 in Iraq.

Brandon Williams, 21, of Gardnerville was killed in October 2006 while fighting in Iraq.

Both parents spoke of the outpouring of love from the community and how the continued support helps them carry on.

Sept. 20 is being recognized as Sgt. Timothy M. Smith Day in South Tahoe – his birthday. A potluck for the occasion will be at the American Legion Hall. For more information, call (530) 577.9222.



Mayor Kathay Lovell honors the Rev. John

Grace. Photos/Kathryn Reed



Patty Smith, left, listens to Mayor Kathay Lovell.



South Tahoe police officers surround Sgt. Brad Williams.

Belly dance competition at

LTCC

Jewel of the Sierra Belly Dance Competition is Sept. 18 from 11am-10pm.

Participants will compete in five categories: Sapphire (Non-Professional), Ruby (Groups), Emerald (Live Music), Crystal (fusion of different dance and music), and Diamond (Professional).

The judges will be scoring each competitor based on appearance, musical interpretation, technique, use of stage, presentation, entertainment value, and personality.

The event is at Lake Tahoe Community College's Duke Theatre, One College Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (530) 541.4660, ext. 207.

The entrance fee for the Jewel of the Sierra competition show is $15.

'Bridezillas' Tahoe bachlorlette bash to be on national TV

By Leigh Grogan, Sacramento Bee

Jenny Coleman filled out the application to appear on We network's hit reality show "Bridezillas" because she figured she'd make a perfect monster bride: Girl from California getting married in Mississippi.

Two different perceptions, she said.

“A hillbilly town and rednecks vs. blonde, tanned, ditsy and we-all-surf California.”

Coleman, 31, of Citrus Heights, and her bridal entourage, including husband-to-be Jereme Eggert, were picked for the show and will appear in two episodes – at 9 tonight and 9pm next Sunday on We.

The show follows their road to wedded bliss – from a bachelor/bachelorette bash in Lake Tahoe to the March nuptials in Eggert’s hometown in Mississippi.

Read the whole story

Monday night creative writing workshops

Tangled Roots Writing of Truckee offers Monday Night Creative Writing Workshops to explore creative writing of any genre in a fun supportive environment for any level of writer.

Read, write, discuss, and generate new material each week, receiving feedback from the group and instructor Karen Terrey.

The next sessions are Sept 13, Oct. 11 and Nov. 8 from 6:30–8pm in Truckee.

For more information, call (530) 386.3901 or email tangledrootswriting@gmail.com.