Ledbetter financial gifts keep improving LTCC

Lake Tahoe Community College’s garden continues to grow. Local philanthropist Jessica Ledbetter chose the college’s garden as a way to memorialize her parents, Bev and Bill Ledbetter. Her generous donation created the Ledbetter Terrace, an outdoor performance and classroom space that was opened in September 2009.

Ledbetter has continued her support and the LTCC Foundation will dedicate the Erica Faye Ledbetter Interpretive Center on Sept. 12, in memory of Ledbetter’s sister.

Ledbetter’s gift paid for the terrace and continuing improvements and renovations to the garden. The garden was started in 1990 and demonstrates successful landscaping and gardening at Lake Tahoe. The site was originally very disturbed by human activity. It served as a borrow pit for the construction of roads and later as a recreation area for off road vehicles. Along with the improvements to the interpretive center Ledbetter’s gift allowed the foundation to install low level lighting and power to the terrace and interpretive center, make planting improvements, update signs, and renovate many aspects of the garden.

The dedication ceremony will begin at 11am and light refreshments will be served. The Ledbetter Interpretive Center is located to the left of the Demonstration Garden entrance. Parking is permitted in the G Wing parking lot behind the Child Development Center.

Lake Tahoe Basin's forest supervisor moving to Alaska

By Kathryn Reed

Being connected to the land, walking it, seeing what her employees are working on – these are things Terri Marceron likes about being forest supervisor of Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

She might not have the same luxury when she takes over as forest supervisor of the Chugach Forest in Alaska in October.



Terri Marceron

After close to five years at the helm of the office based in South Lake Tahoe and managing about 153,000 acres, Marceron is headed to Anchorage to manage 5.4 million acres. It's the second largest national forest behind Tsongas, which is also in Alaska.

"It's similar in that what they try to do is maintain quality habitat and recreation experiences," Marceron said of Chugach compared to Tahoe.

The Exxon Valdez oil spill of 1989 impacted islands she will be responsible for. Her experience dealing with Tahoe's lake clarity issues should benefit her there.

She will also be taking over at a time when money for restoring the damage done by the spill is drying up, much like

she and others here are contending with fewer dollars from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act.

Tahoe was always a draw for the 50-year-old. In her youth she spent time backpacking and hiking in the Sierra Nevada. This was one forest she always wanted to work in.

“The basin is such a unique forest. It’s political, has a lot of stakeholder interest, is a small area, has enormous recreation use, some conflicting values and activist people who want in on it,” Marceron said. “On the one hand I am really sad to leave, and on the other I am really excited to apply what I learned here in Alaska.”

As special as the Sierra is to Marceron, Alaska has that same draw for her husband. But she expects to one day again call Tahoe home – once she’s retired.

Her replacement has not been named.

In Alaska, Marceron will oversee the Copper River Delta, one of the largest wetlands in the United States. It provides critical habitat for the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. The forest is home to all five species of Pacific salmon.

Marceron is proud of the work she has accomplished since arriving here in 2005.

“It’s the employees who deserve the credit. It’s a really special place for that. There are a lot of employees who are really good at what they do. I’m glad I could support them,” Marceron said.

For many locals, the nearly 3,100-acre Angora Fire of 2007, which burned mostly Forest Service land, is one of the more visible issues Marceron had to deal with during her tenure.

“Angora to me was probably the hardest thing I had to go through on this unit. The loss of homes. The whole magnitude of that event was distressing,” Marceron said.

Other significant accomplishments Marceron points to include: resolution to the Meyers Landfill lawsuit, acquiring Incline and Quail lakes for public access, creation of Generation Green Program, completion of Heavenly Mountain Resort's master plan, improving recreation via things like the Van Sickle Bi-state Park and Daggett Summit decision.

One thing she won't be able to complete before the end of October is the new Forest Plan.

"There will be things I wish I could have finished before I left, but I'm going to work my tail of the next two months," Marceron said.

Nonprofits may compete for $100,000 from celebrity golf tournament

The American Century Championship is keeping $100,000 in the community that helps make the annual event a success. Livestrong, the celebrity golf tournament's nationally designated charity, has committed funds to benefit Lake Tahoe area nonprofit organizations.

The donation is in partnership with the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, NBC Sports and American Century Investments. South Lake Tahoe area nonprofits organizations are invited to apply for donations.

A committee of tournament representatives will consider each submission. To be considered for funding, organizations must meet 501(c)3 certified nonprofit guidelines and complete a

formal donation request. The American Century Championship Contribution Committee will distribute awards ranging from $2,500 to $10,000 in 2011. In the request, each organization is asked to outline its mission, specify how the donation will be used and expected impact in the community.

Local nonprofit organizations may submit requests for donations in writing by Sept. 17 to:

American Century Championship Contribution Committee

P.O. Box 5878Stateline, NV 89449

Click application for the form.

Since the tournament's inception in 1990, more than $3.5 million has been raised for a variety of national and local charities.

Last year, 15 Lake Tahoe area nonprofits received donations courtesy of Livestrong. A goal of the annual celebrity tournament is to assist area organizations in need.

The 22nd annual American Century Championship takes place July 12-17, 2011.

Astrobiology presentation at Sierra Nevada College

Microbe Planet: Life on Earth, Extreme Environments and Astrobiology will presented by Alison Murray of the Desert Research Institute on Sept. 9.

What kinds of life inhabit extreme environments? What

strategies do they use to survive? What significance does this research have for the history of life on Earth and future studies on other planets?

As an overview of Murray's current research, this program will provide a better understanding of the unseen life forms that dominate this planet and connect the study of life on earth and studies elsewhere in the Universe.

The discovery of a Martian meteorite in the Antarctic with evidence of microbial life resulted in a new field of science called astrobiology. This field has grown rapidly in the last 10 years as evidence of water on Mars and the moon of Jupiter and other bodies in the solar system have been discovered.

Murray's research in aquatic and ice-laden environments utilizes new approaches for exploring the diversity and complexity of microbial life in order to understand how life functions and adapts to its surroundings here on earth. The implications of this work have far-reaching significance for understanding the history of life on Earth.

Murray has led a research program at the Desert Research Institute since 2001 focused on studying free-living and symbiotic aquatic microorganisms and their ecology to understand their capabilities for survival in often extreme environments. Murray's research utilizes molecular tools to examine diversity, activity, community composition and genomic structure. Her work is interdisciplinary in nature, drawing upon oceanography, geosciences, computational biology, and chemistry. She has also worked in Lake Tahoe to characterize the diversity of organisms throughout the water column.

The program is presented by Squaw Valley Institute and UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center. For additional information, visit www.squawvalleyinstitute.org or terc.ucdavis.edu.

Time: 6:30pm no-host bar; 7pm program

Cost: $10

Location: Assembly Rooms 139 and 141 Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village, on the campus of Sierra Nevada College.

Cousteau links world water troubles in forum at Tahoe

By Stephen Ward

INCLINE VILLAGE – Twelve years ago, the body of water that shaped the geography of the Western United States for more than 200 years stopped reaching the Sea of Cortez.

The Colorado River, still of cardinal importance to the 30 million people in its surrounding region, is facing collapse because of the harsh conditions of a climate change that's only expected to get worse. Alexandra Cousteau was quick to point out it's a frightening myth to think North America will never face a water issue similar to those in other parts of the world.



Alexandra Cousteau

This was one of several daunting issues addressed at the 2010

Siebens Binz Tahoe Forum at Sierra Nevada College's Patterson Lawn, which featured environmental conservation luminary Cousteau, granddaughter of world-famous French explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau.

Cousteau provided 10 suggestions on how to conserve water in the Lake Tahoe area, such as paving driveways with permeable material to prevent the numerous environmental issues resulting from water runoff, or choosing low-impact recreational activities to reduce carbon footprints.

Many attendees praised the Aug. 28 event for its substance and considerations.

"I like how she shared with us the impacts, not only in other parts of the world, but in Lake Tahoe as well," David Cummings of Incline said.

Julie Hernandez, also of Incline, said, "It forced us to see what industrialization and contamination (are) doing to our water supply."

The forum underscored the work of Cousteau from the last few years, including her journey to India where she discovered the sacred nature of the Ganges River, and to Palestine and Jordan in the Middle East where water is scarce and is one of many crises being considered by the war-torn countries.

Cousteau discussed her childhood and the memories she had of her late grandfather. One memory involved her and her grandfather making believe they were "steward kings of the underwater world," where they would talk to each species as a subject and honor the "biodiversity of their kingdom." This evocative recollection reminded her of an important lesson she learned from her decorated grandfather; we don't live this life because of how it will end, but for all the reasons we live for.

Despite the immense catalog of stories and lessons being

delivered by the speaker, one broad message oscillated throughout the entire segment; the systems people rely on have a limit to growth, and opportunities are steadily reshaping themselves into obstacles.

Another delicate subject explored at the forum was the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, where Cousteau has been spending much of her time. The speaker had little good news to say in regard to the area, saying the community is broken and the environment is ruined. She elaborated by describing the turmoil of the fishermen who have lost their pride and ability to provide for their families. When asked about the area and the spill, the fishermen soberly tell her “this isn’t our water anymore.”

Nevada continues to woo Chinese travelers

The Nevada Commission on Tourism is expanding its promotion in the lucrative Chinese travel market to Shanghai, while cutting office operating costs countrywide 50 percent.

The new office, which opened in Shanghai this month, is in the heart of the city’s business district in the U.S. Commercial Center and shares quarters with the U.S. Commerce Department and other American tourism-oriented agencies. The 6-year-old Beijing office moves to a smaller facility. The total cost of office space in China will be cut in half while the value and strength of NCOT’s representation will be multiplied.

“We wanted to aggressively expand promoting tourism to Nevada in Shanghai, China’s largest city and a major hub of commerce and culture, and we found a way to accomplish this goal and cut costs at the same time,” Brian Krolicki, NCOT chair, said

in a statement.

NCOT was granted the first license issued by the Chinese government to a U.S. tourism agency to advertise to outbound Chinese travelers in 2004 and opened an office in Beijing. Karen Chen, NCOT's representative in China, will work with both the Beijing and Shanghai offices, each staffed with a fulltime representative for Nevada.

"The Shanghai office will give Nevada tourism a direct and affordable presence in China's largest financial center, port and retail market and provide great opportunities to work with other U.S. partners to extend our reach," NCOT Director Dann Lewis said.

NCOT has brought numerous Chinese journalists and tour operators to Nevada this decade to promote statewide attractions.

Social networking firm does the online work for businesses

By Kathryn Reed

FB friends, tweeting, linking. LOL without making noise. Emots with keyboard strokes.

Lost?

The Information Age can be mindboggling. Missy Potalivo, owner of Social Sense Marketing, is helping businesses make sense of it. Her business it all about creating an online social

network for businesses.

“If you are stale for a week, you lose out. People don’t find you,” Potalivo said. “You have to constantly update posts.”



Missy Potalivo explains how social media helps businesses. Photo/Kathryn Reed

With print nearly dead when it comes to phonebooks and newspapers, it’s online where people are searching for businesses. Facebook isn’t just about finding out what friends did last night. People are using it to find businesses.

“Most people don’t want to buy a newspaper. They want to go online whenever they want something,” Potalivo said.

That is why the more places a business has an online presence, the greater likelihood there is of it popping up several times on the first page of a search.

Potalivo’s background is marketing. She worked for Pro Growth for seven years, where she became an expert in social media. Now the company is a client of hers.

She believes social media marketing is good for most businesses. The only one that hasn’t been a fit is a law firm because the lawyers kept fretting over legal issues.

Potalivo is also working with South Lake Tahoe's program called TIES. It provides consulting and coaching to businesses.

What Potalivo finds is most small business owners don't have the time or desire to put in the online work. They are too busy with day-to-day operation of the main business.

Many business owners may not like to be so connected personally, but it comes down to attracting customers and retaining them – the same principles of good business that have been used for generations.

Social media is a different way of marketing and advertising. All indicators point to online being the future of businesses and how people conduct business.

For a fee, which depends on how much work she does per month, Potalivo will create and maintain that online presence for businesses. Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In, Blogspot and online newsletters are where she focuses her attention because that is where the public is mostly going.

She links a business' FB account to the other sites to create a seamless flow of information.

"Social media marketing is not instant gratification," Potalivo warns. "It can take six months. You have to be patient."

The purpose is to drive clients/customers to a business' website. It's up to the business owner to have a viable website the public will use, or where they can find the information they seek, or see what they want that prompts a call or visit to the business.

For one of her real estate clients she takes the broker's newsletter and pulls information from that to post online. It could be new listings or events in the area.

She likes her clients to have an ad on Facebook because they can be targeted to specific ages, cities or states, and interests. The cost is based on criteria selected for who could see the ad and then totaled per click. A maximum daily amount can be set.

Potalivo says this is much more cost-effective than adwords.

Analytics through FB show the number of clicks and impressions the ad has received. This, like advertising stats *Lake Tahoe News* and other online businesses can provide advertisers, is tangible feedback compared to old-school print.

For more information about Social Sense Marketing, email missy@SocialSenseMarketing.com.

Green lodging translates into healthy accommodations

By Glenn Hasek, Green Lodging News

Days two and three of the West Coast Green Lodging Conference, held at the Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe Hotel & Ski Resort, were highlighted by presentations by the following: Kelly May, who is with the California Department of General Services' California Green Lodging Program; Janine Chicourrat, general manager, Portola Hotel & Spa; and Sara Schoen, LEED AP, commercial real estate associate, U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

In her presentation, May described how more than 200 hotels in California are benefiting from participating in that state's Green Lodging Program—a program focused on minimizing waste,

conserving energy and water, green purchasing, improving indoor air quality, and hazardous materials management. The state program currently has 150 hotels waiting to be certified at either the Participation (one palm) or Leadership (two palm) level. Those properties earning a point total of from 250 to 299 join the program at the Participation level; those earning 300 points or more earn Leadership status. May said the program eventually will have a third and fourth certification level.

Why green your hotel? In addition to increasing your property's value and reducing energy and water costs, May said, "Being green means your staff and guests are healthier."

Read the whole story

Valhalla festival goes strong through September

Lake Tahoe's Valhalla Arts, Music and Theatre Festival has a solid line-up of performing arts and cultural events running through September.

Here's the upcoming schedule:

Tahoe Dance Band performs at the Grand Hall on Sept. 3 at 7:30pm. The 17-piece band plays big band and swing with fox trots, waltzes, tangos, and polkas. Tickets are $15/$12/$5.

On Sept. 4 from 10am to 5pm is Viva Valhalla, a celebration of Tahoe's Latino culture. This free event takes place on the Grand Lawn with Cerveza and lots of local Latino food. People can enjoy the sounds of Spanish culture and watch the colorful

dancing.

From Sept. 9-12, The Good Guy performs at 7:30pm Thursday through Saturday and 2pm Sunday. This comedy by Sacramento radio and television personality Paul Robins explores super crime fighting for those who have to do it as a lifetime career. Tickets are $15/$12/$5.

On Sept. 16 at 7:30pm, Ruby Dee and the Snake Handlers perform at the Boathouse Theatre. It’s an Americana honky-tonk rock ability bands from Austin, Texas. The four-piece combo plays for $18/$15.

On Sept. 17 at 7pm A Celebration of Writers will perform at the Grand Hall. The Tahoe Writers Works hosts talent from around the lake in a smart funny inspirational night of prose. The $10 includes the 7pm wine reception and 7:30pm reading.

On Sept. 24 Joni Morris as Patsy Cline performs at the Boathouse Theatre. It’s a musical tribute presented by Joni and her four piece band After Midnight. Tickets are $25/$20.

Bare Bones Open Mic takes the Boathouse stage at 7pm on Sept. 28 with a variety of music, comedy, spoken word and a creative stage for musicians, writers, comedians and all other performing artists.

For tickets or information about the South Shore festival, click here or call (530) 541.4975.

Labor Day begins season of

fall events on South Shore

Labor Day at Lake Tahoe South Shore is the kickoff to Indian Summer season with fireworks, more warm weather and a multitude of events and entertainment.



Labor Day 2009 fireworks. Photo/Kurtis Rix-Amazing Imagery

A special pyrotechnics display highlights the weekend. The fireworks are visible throughout town with numerous vantage points including the Tahoe Queen and M.S. Dixie II paddle-wheelers, Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, Regan, and Nevada beaches.

A simultaneous broadcast to music will be featured on KRLT FM-93.9 and KOWL AM-1490.

Launched from three offshore barges, the display will ignite the alpine sky Sept. 5 at approximately 8:30pm.

With the average high temperature for September in the 70s and plenty of sunshine, fall boasts all of summer’s glory, with fewer crowds and discounts at area attractions.

The 8th annual Tour de Tahoe Bike Big Blue will have participants circumnavigate the lake Sept. 12.

For ladies only, the Aflac Iron Girl Triathlon is Sept.19.

Run, walk, swim, paddle, peddle or golf during one of the many Lake Tahoe Marathon events, Sept. 22-26.

The inaugural Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week, Sept. 5-12, offers pre-fixe menus for $20, $30 and $40 at 29 restaurants around the lake. www.tahoerestaurantweek.com

The Kokanee Salmon Festival on Highway 89 on the South Shore is Oct. 3-4. The Kokanee Salmon Run includes a Kids Fun Run, 5k, 10k and half marathon along the trails near Fallen Leaf Lake where Aspens are changing color reflected in glass-like water. Information: www.camprichardson.com or (530) 542.6550.