

Realtors learn to cooperate to boost sales

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Consider it one of those ideas so crazy it might work.

Realtor Susanne Wolter said it took a couple of drinks to come up with the concept, but once she did folks signed on right away.

Six El Dorado County real estate competitors decided, for at least one weekend, to try to work together – even if it means driving their customers to buy someone else's listing.

Read the whole story

N. Nevada man turns luck into financial success

By Ray Hagar, Reno Gazette-Journal

Friends, family and business associates all say Mike Pegram is one lucky guy.

It's a good thing, because the noted Kentucky racehorse owner and McDonald's restaurateur is becoming a major player in Northern Nevada gaming.

"I have always loved action, whether it was the racing or card games or dice games," said the 58-year-old Pegram. "You can say I have a propensity for gaming and that is just my personality."

Two years ago, Pegram and his partners – the Carano family of Reno and Eldorado executive Rick Murdock – built and opened Bodines, a 250-slot casino and sports book in Carson City. The choice of location – next to U.S. 50, which takes visitors to and from Lake Tahoe – was strategic.

Read the whole story

Trafficking – a concern for Soroptimist across the world

By Laurie Brazil

“Hopes and Dreams for Everyone” is the appeal to Soroptimist members worldwide to work together collaboratively to prevent violence against women and children. This week Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra hosted an international member, Rita Offerson, who shared the vision of her Hillerod Soroptimistklub in her hometown in Denmark which is working to address this issue.

In today’s globalized and changing world, it is time to make a difference by addressing the root causes of violence against women and girls – to promote women’s equality and ensure that rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

According to the United Nation’s Secretary General-Ban Ki-mooni, “Violence against women and girls continues unabated in every continent, country and culture. It takes a devastating toll on women’s lives, on their families and on society as a whole. Most societies prohibit such violence – yet the reality is that too often, it is covered up or tacitly condoned”.

The facts in evidence are that violence against women occurs every day in every country in the world. Every woman faces the possibility of violence but those from indigenous, ethnic, indigent, or other minority communities are even more at risk. Lack of access to economic and social rights such as education, land and housing as well as discrimination and violations of civil rights increase women's vulnerability.

One of the worst forms of violence against women and girls is human trafficking; 66 percent of those trafficked are women and 13 percent are girls. Humans are trafficked for many reasons – although most reported cases of trafficking involve sexual exploitation, but trafficking for forced labor is also rapidly growing, rarely reported, and much harder to detect, with trafficked persons working in 'invisible' locations, such as agricultural fields in rural areas, mining camps, garment factories, or within closed environments of the home in domestic servitude.

Some of the projects and ideas that these clubs bring to life are providing life-skill education and sustainable living conditions for women and vulnerable children. The aim is to give young girls knowledge about the danger of trafficking, access to education, a place to live, work possibilities, and an economy that enables them to maintain a decent way of living in familiar surroundings.

"There was so much need to reach out to the girls, to empower them and give them hope. We realized that they needed food, counseling, clothes, skills and much more" states a Women in Crisis.

Protecting women and girls from violence is central to the attainment of women's human rights therefore women's rights organizations, such as Soroptimist International, were pivotal in first drawing these issues out of the private domain and into the spotlight of the public eye. In fact, a recent convention in Reno featured a well informed and riveting

speaker, Truckee Police Chief Nicolas Sensley, who focused directly on this concerning issue.

Both South Shore Soroptimist clubs endeavor to make a difference by inspiring and taking action to improve the status of women and girls through their projects, at local, national, regional, and international levels. Together, we can add to the worldwide effort to learn more about what works by collecting stories and sharing these conditions. Rita not only enjoyed our unique beauty of the Lake Tahoe area, which she will share back in her native country, but also illustrated that we can join our voices together for international advocacy efforts. We can contribute to worldwide learning about the different forms of violence women and girls around the world experience, and our combined forces are critical to developing and implementing successful interventions.

Laurie Brazil is a member of Soroptimist International Tahoe Sierra.

Logging company altering future of Amador County railroad

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

Along the rusted tracks of the Amador Foothills Railroad, woodpeckers hammer drooping oak trees and hawks cry overhead. The birds command attention, because the sharp clatter of train wheels has stopped – perhaps forever.

The railroad runs 10 miles from Ione to Martell in Amador

County, one of the curviest and steepest short-line railroads anywhere. Built in 1904 to serve bustling gold mines in a time before



Photo/Sierra
Nevada Logging
Museum

the automobile, the railroad may have seen its final train car last month.

Read the whole story

Powwow embraces region's Indian culture

By Lenita Powers, Reno Gazette-Journal

The sixth annual Spring Powwow, which provides Northern Nevadans an opportunity to enjoy American Indian dancing, singing, food and crafts, will be this weekend at the University of Nevada, Reno.

The alcohol-free event is open to the public and charges no admission.

The cultural celebration is held by UNR's Center for Student

Cultural Diversity, the Native American Alumni Chapter and Native American Student Organization.

Read the whole story

Monster de Mayo at Squaw Valley



Beginning at 11am May 1, fiesta-loving skiers and riders can head to the High Camp Lagoon & Spa at Squaw Valley for Monster de Mayo – piñatas, Mexican eats, and disc jockey by the pool.

Entry to Monster de Mayo is \$6 for all skiers and riders with a lift ticket or season pass.

The Monster de Mayo Fiesta will kick off with Wacky-Tacky Snow Golf at High Camp. Teams of two will take on five holes of golf on the snow to win prizes including lift tickets, golf games, golf gear and goggles. Registration is \$5 per person. Squaw will provide the snow golf balls, but teams must bring their own golf clubs.

At 1pm, the Monster de Mayo pool party will commence at the High Camp Lagoon & Spa. DJ Royal will spin Latino beats for the Fiesta and Mexican-style barbecue will be available for purchase on the pool deck. Party-goers can play games of piñata on the hour or hit the ball around on the on-snow volleyball net.

More information on Monster de Mayo is available on

www.squaw.com or by calling (530) 583.6985.

Soroptimist honor Whittell High's young women

By Kathryn Reed

It wasn't the usual Wednesday Soroptimist lunch.

On this particular afternoon it all about four girls who aren't even members – but they might be one day.

Jacquelyn Baines, Lauren Andrew, Morgan King and Gabriella Tracy – all seniors at Whittell High School – were recognized as Young Women of Distinction by Soroptimist International South Lake Tahoe.



Whittell's
Young Women of
Distinction.
Photo/Provided

"They are all absolutely wonderful girls," Principal Sue Shannon told *Lake Tahoe News* before the lunch at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

She has watched these women enter the Zephyr Cove school as

freshman and grow into young women who she eagerly helped honor on Wednesday. She also didn't hesitate to write letters of recommendation for each girl to help them get into college.

Shannon on Baines: Jacquelyn is an outstanding student in academics, leadership and athletics. She is a quiet leader who leads by modeling the acceptance of responsibility, positive interactions with other students, and by setting high expectations for herself. She has worked diligently to maintain her current overall weighted grade of 4.33. She maintains her high GPA while participating in athletics and leadership. Jacquelyn has been a member of the WHS varsity volleyball team for four years. Jacquelyn has assumed many leadership roles at WHS. In the future Jacquelyn hopes to combine majors of architecture and interior design."

Shannon on Andrew: "Lauren is an outstanding student in the areas of academics, sports, music and leadership. She has maintained an overall 4.236 gpa while consistently pursuing AP and honors courses. Lauren is greatly respected by students and staff for her work ethic, her interpersonal skills, her school spirit and her sense of responsibility. She has served as captain of the varsity volleyball team as well as an officer in both Key Club and National Honor Society. In the future Lauren hopes to be teacher, probably in the area of science."

Shannon on King: "Morgan is an exemplary student in academics, athletics, leadership and the promotion of school spirit. Morgan has maintained a 4.2 cumulative weighted GPA while pursuing multiple honors and Advanced Placement classes. She currently serves as secretary to the Whittell High School National Honor Society. One of Morgan's strengths is her desire and ability to help others. Morgan has a tremendous sense of responsibility and follow-through when she is responsible for school projects. Morgan is an excellent athlete. In addition to pursuing dance lessons her first two years, she has been on the varsity cross country and track

teams for three years. She has been named to the all-state cross country team and all-state academic teams. Morgan plans to pursue a career in business management.”

Shannon on Tracy: “Gabriella is a superior scholar, an excellent athlete, and a highly involved Whittell student. Gabriella has maintained a GPA of 4.3 while pursuing multiple AP and Honors classes. She was named the Whittell Student Academic Athlete of the Month in recognition of her outstanding scholastic and athletic achievements. She was also named to the Nevada All-State Academic Soccer and Basketball Teams. Gabriella is a respected quiet leader among her peers. In the future, Gabriella plans to attend a four-year university and major in the areas of biology and pre-medicine.”

McCall to turn real estate profits over to 5 charities

By Kathryn Reed

Thane McCall’s generosity could be monumental if the South Shore housing market returns to the glory days.

Even if home sales sputter as they have been, McCall has pledged to donate a total of \$20,000 to five area charities. If profits are better than that for the entire calendar year, the larger sum will be divvied up among the recipients.



Thane
McCall

At a press conference this morning, McCall and representatives of the five agencies – Lake Tahoe Boys & Girls Club, CASA, South Lake Tahoe Police Activities League, South Lake Tahoe Women’s Center, and Tahoe Youth & Family Services – spoke of what his donation means.

“I wanted to do something that would help kids in our community and kids that are put in a position where they might be at-risk due to things that are out of their control,” Thane told *Lake Tahoe News* before the conference. “Typically we are going after younger kids that haven’t made poor decisions already, where it’s a lot easier to steer them in the right direction.”

McCall won’t guess as to what kind of money could be raised this calendar year. He said real estate sales are picking up and called April a “great” month.

This is McCall’s 30th year to live in Lake Tahoe. It’s his second stint at owning a real estate company bearing his name. He sold the company in 2005 and reopened McCall Realty last year.

“It really isn’t about McCall Realty as it is about the community,” McCall said. “It’s hard for me to predict what the consumer is going to do when they hear about this. Typically in the past all of my contributions have been quiet. This one I think we can raise the public awareness to raise more money for the charities.”

McCall said some of the charities he is working with have told him they’ve been trying to engage the business community to

get different fund-raising campaigns under way.

“This might be what they need to kick it off,” McCall.

He shied away from offering a challenge to other businesses to see what they could raise in the same time period.

With funding being cut, grants not as prolific, donations diminishing, but the need increasing for the services these five charities provide, McCall said it was time to stop thinking about what he could do and instead create a plan where he could be writing hefty checks at the end of the year or in early 2011.

2 days of dancing at Genoa festival

The Genoa Cowboy Poetry & Music Festival features an unprecedented line up of nationally known Cowboy poets and musicians including Waddie Mitchell, Don Edwards, Paul Zarzyski, Lacy J. Dalton and the Dalton Gang, David John and the Comstock Cowboys, Dave Stamey, Larry Maurice, Richard Elloyan, Sourdough Slim, Old West Trio, Cross Town Cowboys, Dennis Golden, Tom Weatherby, Ron Scofield and more, but there's more to do than listen.

On Friday and Saturday nights, the historic Genoa Raycraft Dance Hall will echo to the sounds of boots scuffling on the wooden floor as the Festival hosts Cowboy Dances. On April 30, The Old West Trio brings their combination of contemporary and traditional Cowboy music to the stage and on May 1, it'll be the Cross Town Cowboys providing the melodies. Both dances start at 7, and tickets are only \$10.

If your two step is a little rusty, Donna and Tom Betterton will be giving Western Swing Dance lessons at 5:30 each night at the Raycraft Hall. A Festival day pass is required to take advantage of those dance lessons. Those day passes will not only get you into the dance lessons, but also over 80 Western related workshops and demonstrations presented by talented artists.

Including storytelling, melodramas, a discussion about what a Cowboy poet is, what it is like to be Cross Town Cowboys Poet in the West, writing cowboy poetry and a discussion led by Lacy J. Dalton and the "Let 'em Run" Foundation on wild horses in Nevada. Demonstrations will include Dutch oven cooking, leather tooling, saddlery, silversmithing, Cowboy gear and blacksmithing.

All of this in the authentic setting of Genoa, the oldest settlement in Nevada. Lodging specials at a variety of Carson Valley properties are available for festival goers. For more information, visit us at www.genoacowboyfestival.com or call (775) 782.8207 or (775) 782.8696.

El Dorado County seeks grand jury members

The opportunity for citizens to submit their names for possible nomination for the 2010-11 El Dorado County Grand Jury is available. The grand jury acts as an investigative body to ensure county, special district, and city government is being effectively run.

The grand jury is not a jury for a trial. The judges of the Superior Court shall select names from those submitted, as

well as other nominees, and currently seated grand jurors who wish to be held over, to be put into the jury pool. Nineteen jurors are then selected in a random drawing from this pool. Jurors serve for a period of one year. Final selection will take place the end of June and you must be present.

The El Dorado County Grand Jury generally meets two or more times per month to conduct its regular business. In addition to the monthly business meeting, members frequently meet in committee meetings to study particular concerns and problems.

Meetings are compensated at the maximum rate of \$15 per day of meeting, plus a mileage expense is compensated at the rate payable to employees of El Dorado County for each mile actually and necessarily traveled for purposes of said sessions or committee work. No other compensation is provided.

Qualified citizens who have an interest in this unique type of service may pick up an application form at the Superior Court, 495 Main St., Placerville. The application is also available online at www.edcgov.us/grandjury. You can also call (530) 621.6451 and request an application/questionnaire to be mailed to you. May 21 is the deadline for submitting your application.