

Women's Center needs help helping others

By Anna Richter

With the holidays just around the corner, many of us are beginning to think about warm meals with loved ones, and the joys of exchanging gifts. Many other local families with few resources are struggling to rebuild their lives after experiencing violence and they are solely focused on how they will pay rent, and provide food and winter clothing for their children.

For the ninth year in a row, South Lake Tahoe Women's Center is organizing an opportunity for community members to come together to provide happier holidays for struggling adult and child survivors of violence.

Last year, the community adopted 300 individuals working closely with the Women's Center. Each mother and child adopted expressed gratitude, and many mothers cried when they saw and wrapped the gifts donors brought for their children. We know that in these challenging times, more families than ever need your help.

There are many ways you or your business can help local families who have been working closely with South Lake Tahoe Women's Center:

- * Adopt a family and receive the Wish List completed by the family. You could really get into the holiday spirit and deliver these gifts to the family yourself, or arrange to drop the gifts off at the Women's Center where the family can pick them up. There are families of all sizes to fit any budget.

- * Donate non-perishable groceries or gift certificates for

pre-cooked holiday meals at local grocery stores (such as Safeway) so families can enjoy special holiday meals and make happy memories together!

- * Make a special end-of-the-year tax deductible donation toward the Women's Center's Adopt-a-Family Program or to support our other comprehensive and trusted services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

- * Donate a \$25 Safeway card to support our Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter's life-skills program.

- * Donate BlueGo bus passes to help our clients get to work, doctor's appointments, counseling, and to other agencies providing support toward self-sufficiency.

- * Drop off your holiday party bottles and cans at South Tahoe Refuse and let them know you'd like to donate the proceeds to South Lake Tahoe Women's Center—they take care of mailing us a check.

- * Call to learn about the many different ways we could put your energy to good work as a volunteer—one hour per week or even one per month would really help.

Call the Women's Center, located at 2941 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe at (530) 544.2118 or email Sarah at sutzig@sltwc.org to let us know how you would like to make a difference in the life of a family affected by violence this holiday season.

Anna Richter is development director for the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center.

South Tahoe tree and menorah lighting

WHAT: South Lake Tahoe's Annual Community Tree and Menorah Lighting festivities include:

- Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus and their elves

- Free sleigh/carriage rides from Borges Sleigh and Carriage Rides compliments of Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority

- Pony Express Christmas card ride – bring your holiday card addressed with regular postage. Horse drawn delivery will take your message from Folsom to Old Sacramento, hand canceled with a Pony Express and USPS commemorative stamp then finally off to your recipient.

- Book signing with Dianna Borges author of “Sleigh Rides in Lake Tahoe” Memoirs of Sam Borges

- Music by Derek Tarpey, Lake DJ, and carols sung by Tahoe Schools Choir

- Complimentary hot chocolate, cider and cookies.

- Food and Toy drive – please bring donations for “Christmas Cheer”

- Santa will be available for picture taking – please bring your own camera

- Additional parking available at the city of South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center on Rufus Allen Boulevard.

WHEN: Dec. 4, 5-7pm

WHERE: Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority (LTVA) Visitors Center, 3066 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, near the Senior Center, across from Rojo's.

Better diagnosis in the field for heart patients



SLT
firefighter
Doug Bailey
straps a heart
monitor onto
colleague
Brennen Davis.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Wires are strapped to Brennen Davis's chest. A South Lake Tahoe Fire Department paramedic reads the squiggly line on the monitor to analyze what is going on with the patient's heart.

Brennen is a healthy 24-year-old "no heart problems. He's the model for the day to demonstrate the latest piece of equipment he and other firefighter-paramedics at SLT and Lake Valley fire departments are using in the field.

The previous heart monitor didn't have a diagnostic

capability. This 12-lead device is designed to tell first responders if the patient needs to go to a cardiac hospital or not.

The various leads give different views of the heart.

Capt. Chris Hertel said with the old equipment it was not possible to always definitively tell if someone was having a heart attack.

The information gathered allows paramedics to relay to emergency room personnel what to expect when the ambulance arrives.

“I like to leave it on during transport because there may be a change,” explained firefighter-paramedic Doug Bailey.

Tahoe-Douglas Fire Protection District has been using the monitor for about 18 months. With Carson-Tahoe Hospital in Carson City having the closest cath lab, Tahoe-Douglas drives patients there.

El Dorado County is working with Barton Memorial Hospital so starting next year patients would go right to Carson-Tahoe if need be. Most likely the person would be driven to Lake Tahoe Airport and airlifted by CalSTAR.

Five of the devices were bought for South Tahoe and Lake Valley at a cost of \$112,000.

Additional training was required by the staff to use the monitor. However, these devices are now part of regular schoolwork to become a paramedic.

Donner Party belongings to be in Bay Area museum exhibit

By Samie Hartley, Discovery Bay Press

Two porcelain dolls that belonged to Francis Eustis Donner Wilder, one of the surviving members of the doomed Donner Party, will grace the East Contra Costa Historical Society Museum's collection of treasures when it opens for the 2010 season.

Frances moved to Byron in 1866 after she married William Wilder, and she remained in East County until she died in 1921. Her granddaughter, Doris Wilder Shera, recently donated the dolls to the museum, along with a few antique clocks from the 1920s.

Read the whole story

Harrah's showroom – a 50-year history



By John Packer

STATELINE – In 1955, budding casino magnate William F. Harrah took a chance on the then-sleepy, seasonal resort town of Stateline on the South Shore of Lake Tahoe. He bought the

Gateway Club on the lake side of Highway 50 and opened his second gambling house in Nevada, nearly 18 years after opening the bingo parlor that became Harrah's Reno.

Looking to expand, the next year he bought the former Stateline Country Club across the highway and, in 1958, added the adjacent Nevada Club to his holdings. These moves gave him the property needed to realize his vision for Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

In 1959, Bill Harrah decided it was time to roll the dice and spend more than \$3.5 million of borrowed money to expand Harrah's Tahoe and build a state-of-the-art nightclub and dinner theater with "Vegas-type stars performing every night of the year."

Built in just nine months, with construction crews often working around-the-clock, Harrah had insisted that his dream 850-seat theater (fairly large by the standards of the day) be ready in time to host the expected horde of visitors coming to the 1960 Winter Olympics in nearby Squaw Valley.

In December 1959, Harrah opened the South Shore Room with the one-and-only Red Skelton as the headliner.

The plan to attract the Olympic visitors, however, fell fairly flat: After spending their days watching the myriad events on the slopes, people were just too tired to trek to the South Shore for a show.

Despite a massive advertising and PR campaign, shows in the first quarter of 1960 – which included such contemporary stars as Patti Page, Fred Waring, Liberace, Victor Borge, Marlene Dietrich, Nat King Cole and Ray Bolger – drew disappointing numbers.

Undaunted, Harrah continued to insist on booking the top names in entertainment for two-week runs, two shows every night. Once again, his vision was vindicated. As April turned to May,

vacationers and gamblers began to flock to the new entertainment Mecca.

The South Shore Room soon became “the place” outside of Las Vegas to see the biggest stars of the day.

For nearly 50 years, hundreds of the world’s most popular singers, comedians, Broadway shows, pop bands and rock bands have graced the maple boards of the legendary showroom, some on numerous occasions over several decades.

Superstars from today and yesterday, including Frank Sinatra, Jack Benny, Judy Garland, Barbra Streisand, Sammy Davis Jr., Bob Dylan, The Smothers Brothers, Jerry Lewis, Marlene Dietrich, Robin Williams, Willie Nelson, Tom Jones, Emmett Kelly, Huey Lewis & The News, Jonny Lang, Liberace, Johnny Mathis, Wayne Newton, Patti Page, Don Rickles, Diana Ross & The Supremes, The Lawrence Welk Show, George Burns, Donna Summer, Danny Thomas, Sarah Vaughan, Dionne Warwick, Bryan Adams, Andy Williams, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Loretta Lynn, Belafonte, Scott Hamilton & Dorothy Hamill, Tony Bennett, Sonny & Cher, Radio City Music Hall’s Rockettes, Carol Burnett, The Muppets, George Burns, Paul Anka, Ray Charles, Nat King Cole, Sammy Hagar, Billy Crystal, David Letterman, Bill Cosby, John Denver, Liza Minnelli, and many others, have played the famed Harrah’s Lake Tahoe stage. The list goes on and on.

In 2006, the South Shore Room underwent a multi-million dollar renovation. The project included a \$500,000 state-of-the-art sound system and a top to bottom renovation of the theater. The stage, which many performers have recognized for its efficient design, friendly feel and impeccable acoustics, was left relatively untouched – looking much like it did when the curtain first rose on Red Skelton on Dec. 21, 1959.

For more information about who is next to visit the South Shore Room, call 800.786.8208.

John Packer is regional director of entertainment for Harrah's Northern Nevada.

15-week science program for students

Are you a high school student who is interested in learning more about science? Would you like to add a great experience onto your college resume while having a great time?

High school students interested in science may apply for the Youth Science Institute (YSI) program by Dec. 30. This afterschool program is offered on Wednesdays from 4-6pm at the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences in Incline Village beginning Jan. 27 and running through May 26.

UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center and Space Science for Schools will be hosting the third annual Youth Science Institute. This 15-week program is for students in grades 9-11 who have an interest in exploring different scientific disciplines.

Students will conduct science experiments and activities including stream monitoring, fish dissection, earth science geology hikes, astrobiology, biochemistry, green building demonstrations, lake science on the UC Davis Research Vessel John Le Conte and more.

The students will not only gain knowledge and skills in various scientific fields and work with scientists, but will receive opportunities for paid internships, fulfill community service hours, and receive letters of recommendation.

Eligible students for the 2010 program will be in grades 9, 10, and 11, return a completed application, have a minimum GPA of 3.0, and have a commitment to the program. All applicants will go through an interview and accepted students will need to pay tuition of \$250. Many students in past years have been able to receive both partial and full scholarships.

Send applications or questions to Megan Farka at mjfarka@ucdavis.edu or (775) 881.7560, ext. 7483.

Additional details and the application are available at http://terc.ucdavis.edu/education_outreach/educationprograms/youthscienceinstitute.html.

Paralyzing experience at Heavenly doesn't stop contractor

By Mark Emmons, San Jose Mercury News

The construction site in East San Jose is a clutter of tools, building materials and heavy machinery. Everyone must wear a hard hat and it's not easy to get around.

That's especially the case for someone in a wheelchair.

But here is Mark "Sparky" Muhn, 20 months removed from a ski accident that left him paralyzed, still doing the contracting job he loves. Even if it means having his wheelchair strapped to a forklift sometimes and carried to a concrete slab foundation where he can supervise his work crew.

Muhn isn't the sort who allows challenges to stop him.

Improv comedians floating between Harveys and Harrah's

By Howie Nave

Happy Thanksgiving friends of stand up. Hopefully, we'll be getting more of the white stuff that draws the people to the mountains and in turn fills the resorts, hotels and casinos.

You see, snow is Tahoe's stimulus package this time of year and why we give thanks long before the bird is on the table this week.

Let's celebrate in advance by receiving some much needed laughter. Join us won't you?

The Improv by the way is over at Harrah's South Shore Room Wednesdays and Thursdays and then back at Harveys across the street Friday through Sunday until the middle of next month. Locals get a special discounted ticket price on Wednesday and Thursday.

As always, call me anytime at (775) 586.6266 and leave a message so I can call you back or post to me at Facebook (type in Howie Nave).

Happy Turkey one and all and for my vegetarian friends out there I have found some great tofu turkey recipes online.

Howie Nave is emcee of the Improv at Harvey's in Stateline. Check out www.howienave.com or follow his rants at <http://howienave.blogspot.com>.

Stuff – what is it good for?

The holiday season is here, which means it's time to go shopping. Shopping for gifts, decorations, new clothes, new electronics – for stuff.

This will do some damage to Americans' bank accounts, but what is the real cost to people, the environment, the economy, to the world as a whole? From extraction to production to consumption to disposal, when one takes a closer look at consumerism, there are considerable hidden costs.

In the "Story of Stuff", author and activist Annie Leonard candidly examines stuff: where it comes from, where it goes, and how it affects people and the Earth along the way. Leonard's 20-minute film is simple, straightforward, and hopeful.

The UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center and Sierra Nevada College are hosting a screening of "The Story of Stuff". Madonna Dunbar, resource conservationist with the Incline Village General Improvement District will be on hand to field any questions on how to cut down on trash and how to recycle.

The Truckee High School Envirolution Club and Sierra Nevada College art students will be showcasing Trashion creations and art made with postconsumer materials. There will also be demos on how to make fun things like wrapping paper or bows out of what otherwise would have been trash.

Date: Dec. 5

Time: 4-5:30pm. Art reception to be followed by film screening

Cost: Free. No-host bar.

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

Turkeys become symbols of thanks



By Kathryn Reed

Construction paper in a rainbow of colors fills the round tables.

Magic markers and glue sticks are strewn about.

Giggles fill the room even though these youngsters are serious about the task their teacher Jo Anna Chamarro has given them.

They are making turkeys and giving thanks at the same time.

“I put I’m thankful for my cousin,” kindergartner Jasmine Gonzalez said.

Purple is her favorite color, but hers, like all of the birds, had multi-colored feathers.

On each “feather” they wrote a different person or thing they are thankful for. This included: mom, dad, grandma,

family, Princess Goldie, friends, school, sister, brother, dog, cat, grandma and home.

Banana nut bread and apple cider were part of the festivities. This particular food was chosen because the students have been learning B and N sounds.

This is the third year Chamarro, who teaches at Sierra House Elementary School in South Lake Tahoe, has been doing something like this to infuse a bit of the true meaning of Thanksgiving into her students.

Several parents were also part of Tuesday afternoon's festivities.