

LTCC-SNC increasing 4-year degree options

The application-registration process for Sierra Nevada College's bachelor's degree program at Lake Tahoe Community College is open.

Open houses are scheduled through August for prospective students to meet faculty and learn about the programs. SNC Tahoe opened the center at LTCC in 2016. Eligible students will be able to pursue programs in global business management, psychology, elementary education, and ski business resort management at the center this fall.

The partnership between SNC Tahoe and LTCC brings an affordable four-year degree option to LTCC's campus. The program is designed for students who wish to earn a bachelor's degree without having to leave South Lake Tahoe.

Open houses are 6-7 each night:

- May 17 at LTCC (inside the main lobby)
- June 15 at LTCC (inside the main lobby)
- July 11 – at Tahoe Mountain Lab (3079 Harrison Ave., South Lake Tahoe)
- Aug. 15 at LTCC (inside the main lobby).

For more info, including the time of the programs, go **online**.

Free drinks – not for all

gamblers

By Andrea Sachs, Washington Post

The free drinks at casinos make everyone feel like a winner. However, two casino behemoths are killing the buzz: At select properties, MGM Resorts and Caesars Entertainment are no longer providing gratis cocktails to bar patrons who are drinking and yakking more than drinking and gambling. The new mantra: must play for a cocktail.

“We are making a concerted effort to reward our larger-spending customers,” said Rich Broome, executive vice president of communications at Caesars. “This discourages people who are just looking for a free drink.”

At the moment, the new policy applies only to casino bars with video-poker machines. (To clear up any misunderstandings, the bars never provided complimentary drinks to non-gambling guests, though the rule was not always enforced.) After a short trial in late 2015, Caesars introduced the comp notification system at nine properties throughout Nevada, including those in Lake Tahoe, Las Vegas, Laughlin and Reno. Within the last year, MGM has rolled out a similar program at MGM Grand and TopGolf, an entertainment venue on the Strip. A company executive said that MGM could expand the program to its casinos in New Jersey and Mississippi. (Gamblers in Michigan and Maryland don’t have to worry; by law, they were never allowed free alcohol.)

Read the whole story

5 slot myths: Why what you think you know is wrong

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Slot players are simply wrong.

Talk to people who study, market and design slot machines, and you quickly realize that many of the ideas players have about their inner workings and how jackpots are paid are myths.

In other words, players can tell when the house edge (or hold percentage) is larger for some slots or some casinos, and smaller for others. It's an important concept because casinos boast of having loose slots and many gamblers have strong ideas about where to find the loosest slots.

There's no independent way to confirm if marketing claims about loose slots are true. The Gaming Control Board does not release the house edges for individual slot machines or specific casinos. As a result, gut feeling is the only publicly available measure.

Read the whole story

El Dorado County Fair tickets on sale

Ribbons & Rides is the theme of this year's El Dorado County Fair.

Most of the contests in the fair entry guide include a

division to use the fair theme in a project.

For the second year, Paul Maurer Shows will be bringing the carnival rides with updated LED lighting and bright colors.

The fair is June 15-18 in Placerville.

There will be special events every day. For details and discounted early tickets, go **online**.

Author-farmer to talk about high altitude gardening

Third-generation farmer and author of “July & Winter: Growing Food in the Sierra” Gary Romano on May 20 will answer questions about gardening and mountain farming.

The free talk will be at the South Lake Tahoe Library at 2pm.

Romano will share tips and techniques for growing food in the Sierra Nevada, including the foothills and the east slope. The talk is sponsored by the Friends of the Library in partnership with the UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe. “July & Winter” will be available for purchase.

Romano, owner of Sierra Valley Farms in Beckwourth, will discuss which varieties are right for different areaa, whether to use seeds or transplants, when and how to plant to maximize yield and the benefits of biodiversity. He’ll also talk about soil, water, nutrients, pest management and how to extend your growing season.

In “July & Winter” Romano details his experience growing food at Sierra Valley Farms. Despite the challenging mountain

climate and soil, Romano has successfully grown food on his 65-acre organic farm and shares his experiences in ten essential chapters. Romano hosts the state's only certified organic on-site farmers' market each summer, along with barn dinners and concerts. He can also be found in the summer at the Tahoe City, Truckee and Reno farmer's markets.

"July & Winter" is available through Bona Fide Books and Gaialicious in South Lake Tahoe, Word After Word and Bespoke in Truckee, Sundance Books & Music in Reno, the Villager Nursery in Truckee and Amazon.

Placerville business takes chance on hiring autistic adults

By Sammy Caiola, Sacramento Bee

On the sun-soaked patio of Placerville's Lava Cap Winery, Richard eyed the case of empty blue bottles he was picking up from wine club manager Kevin Jones. Without any prompting, Richard launched into a lecture as he worked.

"The blue comes from cobalt and nickel, the green from copper oxide," said the eager 29-year-old about the bottles in Jones' arms. "Red glass you don't see very much because it's made from gold."

He would have gone on had his mother not gently reminded him it was time to load the bottles into the car. Like many adults on the autism spectrum, Richard has an uncanny knack for memorizing details, but doesn't always choose the best moments

to share them.

Richard now has a safe place to practice those skills while working for Forever Glass, a young Placerville company that makes and sells glass bowls from recycled wine bottles. His mother, Cathy Porter, who launched the business last year to hire adults with developmental disabilities, said Richard and others like him can become valuable employees, with the right support. The Bee is only using Richard's first name at the request of his mother.

Read the whole story

Bike race promoting safety for everyone



A broader message is being delivered at the Amgen bike race.
Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

Safety beyond the riders is a mantra of Amgen bike officials this year.

On the back of the volunteers' T-shirts it says, "If you see something, say something."

This is the first year the Tour of California has taken to promoting this message. Volunteers at all the stages will be wearing shirts that have this on the back.

"We want to remind people you should always have your eyes open wherever you go," Michael Roth, vice president communications for Amgen, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We just thought it would be a nice friendly reminder."

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Plants available through Nevada Nursery Program

The Nevada Division of Forestry Washoe State Tree Nursery in Washoe Valley is open now through mid-October.

The Nevada Nursery Program's mission is to assist landowners by providing plant material suitable for conservation uses such as, but not limited to, windbreaks, soil erosion control, water conservation and wildlife habitat. Plants purchased at the Washoe State Tree Nursery must be used for conservation purposes.

Trees, shrubs, grasses and perennials are available. The plants are grown and maintained at the nursery and conditioned to survive Northern Nevada's cold winters and hot summers.

Plants will be available on a first come, first served basis. Prices vary according to container size, from \$2.50 to \$20.

The nursery will be open to the public from 9:30am-3pm, Thursday through Saturday.

Ganong helping next generation at SV Academy

Truckee native Travis Ganong is now director of snow sports for Squaw Valley Academy.

As the leading American downhill skier on the Audi FIS World Cup tour, Ganong's eyes are set on representing the country again in South Korea for the 2018 Olympics as well as at Beijing's 2022 Olympi

Starting in the 2017-18 academic year, Squaw Valley Academy's new competition ski program will enable alpine ski racers to achieve a college-preparatory education while training full-time with Squaw Valley Ski Team and racing at the U14, U16 and FIS level. Focused on the development of the student-athlete, Ganong will add a unique elite-athlete perspective to the experience through his mentorship role.

As part of this newly-aligned partnership, the Travis Ganong Scholarship program has been created. This scholarship will be awarded annually to two promising student-athletes that embody Ganong's passion for education and alpine ski racing. This merit-based award provides full or half tuition until graduation and is open to all students entering grades 9 and 10 for the 2017-18 school year.

For more information and to apply for a Travis Ganong Scholarship, so **online**.

Grow more edibles with keyhole gardening

By Melinda Myers

Raise your gardening efforts to a new level with keyhole gardening. You'll increase your garden's productivity in a smaller space, while using less water and fertilizer.

This intensive technique was first used in Africa where it's hot and dry and the topsoil is shallow. Now gardeners growing in a variety of climates around the world are using this technique. You'll even find keyhole gardens in urban and suburban backyards.

Keyhole gardening grows abundant produce while composting plant-based kitchen scraps in one raised garden plot. Grow plants in the outer ring of a circular, 6-foot diameter or larger raised bed. Create an inner circle for composting kitchen scraps, coffee grounds and garden debris.



The keyhole gardening technique allows people to grow abundant produce and compost plant-based kitchen scraps in one raised garden plot. Photo/Gardener's Supply Company

Design a small pie shape notch in the circular bed. This

provides easy access to the inner composting circle and gives the bed its distinct keyhole appearance.

Build the sides of your raised bed garden from stones, cement blocks, bamboo or any available materials that can withstand the rigors of your climate. Select a height that works for you and makes planting, tending and harvesting easy.

It may be easiest to purchase a keyhole garden kit. Select a kit with all the basic building supplies made from long-lasting materials.

Once the walls are built, create an inner compost basket. Use chicken wire or a similar material that allows moisture and nutrients to move from the compost basket into the surrounding soil. It should be at least 12 inches in diameter with the bottom anchored to the ground and top extending above the soil surface.

Fill the bottom of your raised bed with compostable materials. Start with a layer of cardboard on the soil surface. Then alternate 4- to 6-inch layers of brown and green materials just as you would when building a compost pile. Use twigs, straw, dried leaves, paper, cardboard and other carbon rich materials for your browns. Include herbicide-free grass clippings, manure, kitchen scraps, fresh plant debris and other nitrogen rich materials for your greens.

Add kitchen scraps and garden debris to the compost basket throughout the growing season. As these decompose water helps move nutrients from the compost basket to the surrounding soil.

Continue layering until three fourths of the raised bed is filled. Top it off with compost rich soil for plants to root and grow. Slope the surface so the highest point is next to the compost basket.

Allow the planting area to settle for several days. Then fill

your garden with your favorite vegetables. Leave just enough space between plants so they can reach their mature size. Water new plantings thoroughly. Mulch the soil with shredded leaves, evergreen needles or other organic material to help conserve moisture and continue to add organic matter to the soil.

Check the soil moisture and water the garden bed and compost basket as needed throughout the season.

Soon you'll be enjoying the convenience of harvesting and composting in one bed. And you just might find yourself looking for another sunny spot to add an additional keyhole garden or two.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including ""Small Space Gardening. She hosts "How to Grow Anything" DVD series, including the latest "Food Gardening for Everyone DVD" set.