South Shore counselors get firsthand look at fire academy

MEYERS – South Lake Tahoe counselors came together June 4 to discuss various career paths available to students through local academic programs.

Lake Valley Fire Protection District Station 7 in Meyers was the site for the informational workshop hosted by Virginia Boyar, director of Career and Technical Education at Lake Tahoe Community College.

The workshop focused on all career and technical education programs available at the college, with a special emphasis on the Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Academy.



Lake Tahoe Community College Fire Academy cadets put on a demonstration. Photos/Tracy Owen Chapman

Counselors from the middle school, high school and LTCC discussed the career paths and CTE programs that are most inquired about by students, and the differences they

experience when counseling students who are interested in receiving training that will lead immediately to a career as opposed to transferring to a four-year university.

Attendees learned about the new physical therapy aide program that will launch this fall at LTCC, as well as updates on collaborative efforts with the high school in the areas of dental assistance, culinary arts and digital media arts.

With South Tahoe High School able to construct a slew of buildings from the voter approved $64.5 million bond and subsequent matches from the state, it has also meant an expansion in programs. The Theater Arts and Design Academy will be open for the 2011-12 school year. This will enable the school to offer more classes in the digital arts, which in turn will prepare them for classes at LTCC.

One of the most successful CTE programs at the college has been the fire academy. The next crop of cadets graduates at the end of the month.

Leona Allen, fire academy administrative coordinator, briefed the counselors on the ins and outs of the Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Academy.

Students from various backgrounds (a recent female high school graduate, 40-year-old local businessman with a family, and a student who self-identified himself as being at “high-risk” in high school) spoke to the counselors about the challenges and growth opportunities they have experienced while participating in the academy.

A former cadet and current instructional aide for the academy talked about his time in the program and subsequent professional experiences, including being “first in” at a recent Kirkwood structure fire.



Tere Tibbets of LTCC finds out what it's like to be a firefighter.

Counselors were then able to observe the academy in action. Students demonstrated skills related to donning breathing aparatuses and personal protective equipment, tying knots, raising ladders, and charging hoses. Three counselors (Pete Dixon and Tere Tibbets from LTCC, and Bob Sullivan from STHS) went a step further and learned how to put on SCBAs.

Other workshop participants included JoAnn Hernandez (South Tahoe Middle School), Michelle Riley (South Tahoe High School), and Aaron Barnett, Norine Hegy, Esta Lewin, Tracy Owen Chapman, Janice Tait, and Tracy Thomas (Lake Tahoe Community College). Tom Greene (vice president of Academic Affairs and Student Services at LTCC) and Jamie Rhone (CTE technician at LTCC) also attended.

This activity was funded through the Folsom Lake College Collaborative SB70 grant.

– Lake Tahoe Community College staff

Nevada losing clout in Washington

By Erin Kelly, Gannett

WASHINGTON – The departure of disgraced former Sen. John Ensign has set off a political chain reaction that will weaken the clout of Nevada's small congressional delegation, analysts say.

"We're going to have an exciting and competitive election season, but when it's over, we'll end up with a lot less clout in Washington, D.C.," said David Damore, a political scientist at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

For the past several years, the five-member delegation had enjoyed outsized influence as its members gained seniority and stature in their respective parties.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., holds by far the most power as the top Democrat in Congress – a post he has used to funnel billions of federal dollars to Nevada and to stop the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump from being built.

But Reid's continued clout depends on the outcome of the 2012 election and whether Democrats can maintain their Senate majority. Meanwhile, other members of the delegation have already ceded influence – or will do so soon – as they give up House seats to run for Ensign's former job.

Read the whole story

Time still to comment on Calif. redistricting plans

The Citizens Redistricting Commission is continuing to take testimony from Californians before drawing its first round of draft maps, which will be released June 10.

There will be a public input hearing in Sacramento on June 28 from 6 to 9pm at the state Capitol, Room 4203, Sacramento.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can submit comments in the following ways:

* Call 866.356.5217

* Fax 916.322.0904

* Email to votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov

* Mail comments to the Citizens Redistricting Commission at 1130 K St., Ste. 101, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Final district maps must be certified by the commission and presented to the secretary of state by Aug. 15.

For more information about the process, the commission, or for guidelines in preparing testimony, go online.

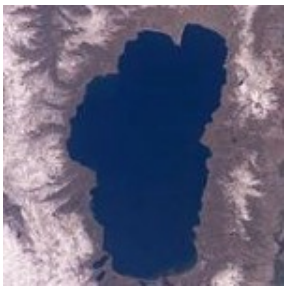
Nev. bill to alter TRPA being massaged, vote likely Monday

By Anne Knowles

CARSON CITY – The bill to pull Nevada out of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency unless the body implements certain reforms passed out of the Assembly's Government Affairs committee Saturday evening.

The bill passed with a vote of 10-1, with the lone no vote cast by Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson, D-Reno, who had expressed opposition to the bill during two days of hearings last week.

"Withdrawal could cheat Nevadans of having a say on what happens on more than half the lake," Benitez-Thompson said during the Friday hearing.



Politics cloud the future of Lake Tahoe.

Assemblyman Ed Goedhart, R-Amargosa Valley, and Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce, D-Las Vegas, were both absent. Pierce, who was reportedly sick with food poisoning, was expected to vote no on the bill.

The latest version of the bill includes an amendment introduced by Secretary of State Ross Miller, who sits on the TRPA board, that changes the agency's voting structure so approval of projects at Lake Tahoe would require a total of nine votes from the board with at least four of those votes made by members from the state where the project is located. Current requirements now call for a total of eight board votes with at least five coming from members of the project's state.

The bill also included additional language clarifying the role of an oversight committee that will produce a report on the TRPA and Nevada's role in it before legislators and the governor decide whether to withdraw.

Senate Bill 271 is expected to be voted on by the Assembly Monday, the last day of the 2011 legislative session. If it passes, it goes to Gov. Brian Sandoval, who has already expressed support for the bill, for his signature.

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30 years later and still learning about AIDS

By Lawrence K. Altman, New York Times

At first it seemed an oddity: a scattering of reports in the spring and early summer of 1981 that young gay men in New York and California were ill with forms of pneumonia and cancer usually seen only in people with severely weakened immune systems.



In hindsight, of course, these announcements were the first official harbingers of AIDS – the catastrophic pandemic that would infect more than 60 million people (and counting) worldwide, killing at least half that number.

But at the time, we had little idea what we were dealing with – didn't know that AIDS was a distinct disease, what caused it, how it could be contracted, or even what to call it.

As AIDS has become entrenched in the United States and

elsewhere, a new generation has grown up with little if any knowledge of those dark early days. But they are worth recalling, as a cautionary tale about the effects of the bafflement and fear that can surround an unknown disease and as a reminder of the sweeping changes in medical practice that the epidemic has brought about.

Reports of the initial cases were confusing. The first federal announcement, 30 years ago this week, concerned “five young men, all active homosexuals,” with pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, or P.C.P., a disease “almost exclusively limited to severely immunosuppressed patients.” Initial suspicion fell on a known infectious agent, cytomegalovirus.

A month later, on July 3, 1981, I wrote The New York Times’s first article about AIDS, this one headlined “Rare Cancer Seen in 41 Homosexuals.” (“Gay” had yet to be accepted by The Times’s style manual.) The cancer was Kaposi’s sarcoma, and until then it had seldom been seen in otherwise healthy young men.

Read the whole story

$100,000 pension club of Calif. retirees is growing

By Phillip Reese, Sacramento Bee

The $100,000 pension club is growing fast.

Almost 9,000 retirees in the California Public Employees’ Retirement System receive at least $100,000 in annual benefits, more than quadruple the number getting that much

during 2005, according to a *Bee* review of CalPERS data.

Collectively, these pensioners will receive about $1.1 billion in benefits this year – roughly triple the general fund budget of the Sacramento City Unified School District.

Such payouts are a hot topic as leaders float competing pension reform plans at the state Capitol. Those who want to curtail big pensions say they are a root cause of huge unfunded liabilities – and the growing pension bill presented each year to taxpayers. Others say large pensions are straw men brandished as a tool to cut the modest benefits of most government workers.

"The outliers are driving the discussion," said Steve Maviglio, a spokesman for Californians for Retirement Security, a union consortium. "It's frustrating."

The rapid growth in the number of $100,000 pensions is largely a consequence of enhanced retirement benefits approved by local and state governments during the last decade. Tens of thousands of public safety workers, for instance, can retire at age 50 and get most of their annual salary for life.

Read the whole story

Judge denies Garridos private meeting

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

The last time Nancy Garrido will ever see her husband likely came at 9:26 a.m. Thursday, as she was being escorted out of a Placerville courtroom and headed off to begin her 36-year

prison sentence.

“Love you,” she mouthed to Phillip Garrido, who sat shackled in the courtroom jury box waiting for the judge to hand down his sentence of 431 years to life.

She had asked for a final, private meeting with him after they were sentenced, but El Dorado Superior Court Judge Douglas Phimister was having none of it.

“The request to meet with the co-defendant is denied,” the judge said.

Her attorney, Stephen Tapson, asked if the judge would allow her to watch the sentencing of her husband.

“I will not,” the judge said, and with that Nancy Garrido was taken away.

This is how the pairing of these two ends, with the 60-year-old Phillip Garrido soon to be packed off to a state prison.

Read the whole story

Mom who took daughter cross country to Tahoe accepts plea deal

By Tom Haydon, Star-Ledger

In August 1984, after Nancy Dunsavage heard that a judge in Somerville had awarded temporary custody of their 6-year-old daughter to her ex-husband, the mother fled the state with the child.

Friday, in the same courthouse, Dunsavage pleaded guilty to interfering with custody and was sentenced to 18 days, the length of time she was in custody after she and her now 32-year-old daughter were discovered living in Incline Village last October.

“I feel relief that it’s over,” Dunsavage said after walking out of the courtroom and receiving hugs from her now married daughter, Melissa Olszewski, and a gathering of other relatives.

Although the fourth-degree crime of interfering carries a maximum penalty of 18 months in prison and a $10,000 fine, Dunsavage, as part of a plea agreement, will not go to prison and will not be on probation.

Read the whole story

UC Davis seminars go online, including ones about Tahoe

By Kathy Garvey, Daily Democrat

Professor James R. Carey knows that the value of seminars is invaluable.

When the UC Davis entomology professor chaired the UC Systemwide Committee on Research Policy, he called for a strategic approach to record, broadcast and archive the hundreds of seminars that take place weekly on the 10 UC campuses. He presented his plan to the Systemwide Academic Council, received enthusiastic approval, and then launched a pilot program at UC Davis to field-test it.

Now, three years later, his strategic approach has become a groundbreaking reality. The UCTV Seminars project is online, free, and available to all.

Described as a higher-education milestone, it’s the first of its kind in the United States.

“This will not only help the UC system become a scholarly resource, but will fulfill our public service mission,” said Carey. “And the cost to capture these seminars is low – a one-time expenditure of about $200 for both the webcam and software.”

“One of the great intellectual achievements of the University of California is its ability to bring the best minds from within the university and across the world to our campuses to share ideas, spark innovation, and build collaboration,” said Peter Siegel, UC Davis chief information officer and vice provost for information and educational technology. “As Professor James Carey has demonstrated through some of his most recent work, technology offers exciting new opportunities for expanding and re-inventing these

conversations.

“Each campus,” Siegel said, “has multiple opportunities each day for faculty, students, and colleagues to join in the great dialogue that ensues within their academic seminars, conferences and colloquia. “What if these rich and exciting dialogues weren’t limited to the faculty on a single campus, but in fact were available to everyone?”

Read the whole story

Camp Concord making upgrades to South Shore property

Camp Concord is looking to make improvements to its facilities on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe.

The Bay Area city operates a camp near the trailhead for Mount Tallac.

Bids are being taken on making the family bathhouse compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Improvements will be made to the men's and women's restrooms, showers, creating an ADA accessible shower, building a new laundry room, and storage room.

Bids are due June 22. A non-mandatory bid conference is June 9 at 2pm at the camp – 1000 Mt. Tallac Trailhead Road, South Lake Tahoe.

Estimated cost of the project is $280,000.

For more information, call (925) 671.3361.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report