

Tickets on sale for Nevada Day celebration events

A limited number of tickets are for the inaugural Nevada Day Steampunk Ball, a costume fundraiser (for ages 18-plus) at the Carson Nugget Ballroom on Oct. 31 from 7pm to midnight.

The event's theme combines the formality of old-time nostalgia with a light-hearted science fiction twist, and includes dance music by Rock-N-Roll Rebels, a no-host bar, sweet treats, and costume contest with prizes. Tickets are \$25 per person, on sale online.

Also new this year is the Nevada Day FamFest. It is a designated family-friendly fun zone which takes place from 11am-5pm on Parade Day at the Horseshoe Club parking lot on the corner of Proctor and Curry streets in Carson City.

The fourth annual Governors Banquet is the signature kickoff gala to the Nevada Day celebration. It is at the Grand Sierra's Summit Pavilion in Reno on Oct. 28.

Carson City's Lone Mountain Cemetery Tour (aka: "Friends In Low Places") returns Oct. 31 at 2:30pm and 5:30pm.

For a complete listing of Nevada Day events, go online.

MontBleu to host comedy competition

Sixteen comedians will be in Lake Tahoe on Sept. 13 as part of the 39th annual San Francisco Comedy Competition.

They will have about 7 minutes to woo the audience and judges. The finals are Oct. 5 in San Francisco.

This year's host is a past contestant Kris Tinkle. Tinkle's latest album, "Maybe I Don't Feel Like Smiling," is in the top 10 on iTunes. He is also a regular on "The Artie Lange Show."

The show at MontBleu in Stateline starts at 9pm.

Tickets are \$30, plus a \$3 facility fee, and available through Ticketmaster or by calling 888.829.7630.

STPUD employees may receive 3-year 9% raise

By Kathryn Reed

South Tahoe Public Utility District's board on Sept. 4 is expected to approve a three-year contract with employees that includes raises each of those years.

The union this week ratified the contract. The deal affects about 100 of the 112 employees.

For the first year workers will receive a raise of 2 percent. This is retroactive to July 3, when the pay period started for the start of this fiscal year.

Raises for years two and three will be based on the Consumer Price Index for Small West Coast Cities All Urban Consumers. However, the minimum the raise can be is 2 percent for each the next two years. The maximum raise for the three years cannot be more than a combined 9 percent raise.

“What took us the most amount of time was to develop protections on the low and high side for workers and the district,” Richard Solbrig, general manager for the district, told *Lake Tahoe News*. He said there were 12 negotiation sessions.

Another change to the contract includes getting Martin Luther King Jr. off instead of Lincoln’s birthday. This takes effect in 2015.

In the past, employees received 11 set holidays plus three hours of floating holiday pay. That has been increased one full floating day.

The old contract called for an extra day of vacation to be added when employees reached years 20 and 25. That has been changed to years 15 and 20.

The management contract is still under review. It was a four-year contract that stipulated at year two, which is now, the contract could be opened to discuss salaries and the possibility of a market survey. Solbrig said there is no appetite to pay for a survey, but salaries are under consideration.

Medical insurance rates are not going up at the district in the next year.

Any CalPERS increases, per the contract, are split between the district and employees – at least up to the maximum CalPERS allows. After that, the district must pay the bill. This was a requirement carried over from the previous contract.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Kingsbury Grade will be closed at the summit starting Sept. 2. This will last through October. It will reopen to allow access for the Genoa Candy Dance on Sept. 27-28.

- Climate Change, Forests, and Fire in the Sierra Nevada: Implications for Current and Future Resource Management is the subject of Hugh Safford's talk Sept. 15 from 6-8pm at the Tahoe Tree Company in Tahoe City.

- Sugar Pine Foundation and Himmel Haus are hosting a benefit concert called Reggae in the Pines to raise money for planting 10,000 sugar pines in the Tahoe region. The event is Sept. 6 starting at 8pm at Himmel Haus, 3819 Saddle Road, South Lake Tahoe. Cost is \$10.

- The U.S. Forest Service is having an open house at its South Lake Tahoe office on Sept. 18 from 6-8 pm regarding the draft analysis of a proposal from Heavenly Mountain Resort to expand year-round, non-skiing activities.

- The El Dorado County Mental Health Clinic is moving to 1900 Lake Tahoe Blvd. in South Lake Tahoe next week, with clinic doors expected to be open for clients Sept. 8. County Alcohol and Drug Program services will also be located at the new address. Clinic and staff telephone numbers will remain the same. For more info, call 530.573.7970.

S. Tahoe-El Dorado County draft rec plan released

South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County's draft Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan is now available online for review.

Officials say the plan provides direction for enhancing recreation opportunities for residents and visitors by increasing collaborative efforts and focusing resources where they are most needed.

The key recommendations are: regional coordination and collaboration, park and facility maintenance, renovations and improvements, new park, facility and trail development, recreation activities, programs and events, and operations and management.

There will be an open house Sept. 25 at 7pm for the public to share ideas on the recommendations within the plan. It will be at the recreation center at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

A survey about the plan is online.

Mushroom forays in Lake Tahoe Basin

Tahoe Institute for Natural Science is planning a weekend around mushrooms in September.

The last weekend of September, TINS will sponsor excursions into the woods to search for these organisms. People will

learn about their ecology and identification. Expert mycologists from Tahoe, Reno, and coastal California will be on hand.

Email Will at will@tinsweb.org to join the Sept. 27-28 forays.

Gala benefits Live Violence Free

Live Violence Free's 15th annual Sunset Gala is Oct. 19.

It will feature music by Acoustic Solution, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, and a large silent auction with all proceeds directly benefiting the programs and services of Live Violence Free.

The 5-8pm event is at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course. Tickets are \$65.

For further info or to buy tickets, contact Hannah Greenstreet at hgreenstreet@liveviolencefree.org or 530.544.2118, ext. 7634.

Tahoe to take on ALS ice bucket challenge

Lake Tahoe residents are gathering on the South Shore on Aug. 31 for what is being called one of the largest non-water

wasting bucket challenges for ALS.

Bring a 5 gallon bucket to Lakeview Commons. Lake water will be used for the challenge; with people standing in the lake.

A \$10 (or more) donation is suggested that will go toward ALS.

The event is at 3pm.

LTCC banking on Measure F to pay for upgrades



Lake Tahoe Community College is seeking its first general obligation bond. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe Community College is going to be different in the coming years. How different depends on voters.

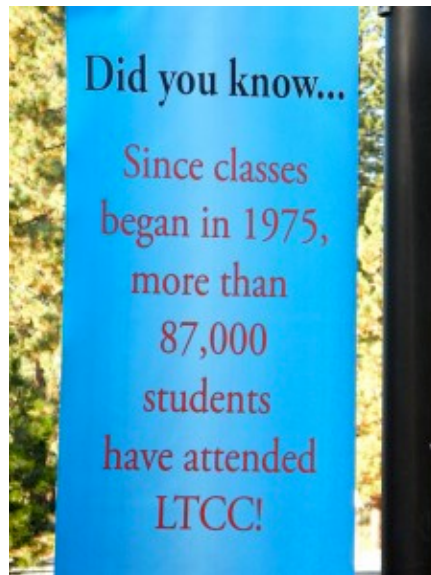
Measure F – as in facilities – is on the Nov. 4 ballot. It is a \$55 million general obligation bond that property owners in the district would pay back over the course of about 30 years. The amount owed cannot exceed \$25 per \$100,000 of assessed value. That means owners of a house valued at \$300,000 would pay \$75 per year. To pass, it must receive at least 55 percent approval.

The college expects to deliver \$107 million worth of projects over 10 years. The other \$52 million will come from matching dollars from the state or other grants.

No argument in opposition to Measure F has been filed with the El Dorado County Elections Department.

The money is entirely for facilities. No money can go toward salaries or benefits.

While the South Lake Tahoe institution has been putting some money away for major repairs, those dollars are not enough to keep up with the major maintenance costs and ongoing technology upgrades that are needed. Nor does it come close to being able to cover expenses associated with new facilities. Plus, LTCC has been contending with five years of budget cuts.



Informational signs are scattered throughout the campus.

LTCC, while it turned 40 this year, has been at the current location for 25 years. To the untrained eye, the outside still looks fairly new. But President Kindred Murillo said closer inspection reveals the wear and tear on the facilities through the years, especially because of being located in a harsh climate like Lake Tahoe.

But the college is also contending with science labs that are 25 years old, a campus that doesn't have adequate wireless capabilities for a generation of students who have their own mobile devices, and safety issues that decades ago were not even on the radar – like protecting people on campus if there were a gunman.

For students coming to LTCC from South Tahoe High School, the facilities are like taking a step backward after the multi-million upgrades delivered from the 2008-voter approved Measure G bond.

The college bond is designed to bring LTCC into the 21st century “to give students and teachers the best environment.”

“I hate to send a highly qualified instructor into a classroom where they have to fight with heating, cooling and technology,” Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Plus, some of the upgrades will actually reduce some bills – like electrical and heating.

And if the bond doesn’t pass?

“We will probably have to downsize classes and programs because we will need to shift money to things that need to be fixed,” Murillo said.

She said the vision of the college – to be California’s premier destination college – wouldn’t change. What will change is the time line to accomplish that goal. Murillo wouldn’t say how many years it would put the college behind, but said it would take a lot longer to get to where the staff and board want to go.

With passage of the bond, what people would notice right away is the main building would be modernized, which includes being retrofitted for energy efficient lighting; crumbled sidewalks near the gym replaced; and the patchwork of roof repairs gone.



Broken concrete in front the physical education building gives the campus a rundown look.

The college is seeking matching money from the state to build a public safety training facility. This would tie into the school's fire academy. This would also act at the community's office of emergency services.

LTCC is also planning to create a university center. Senate Bill 850 is on the governor's desk. This would allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees that don't compete with those that are available in the CSU and UC systems.

Murillo said staff is discussing a program that would be Tahoe specific. The college could either offer its own four-year degree or partner with an established institution.

Friends of Lake Tahoe Community College has been established to be the advocacy group for Measure F. A website will be launched in September with more information.

Letter: EDC auditor questions budget items

Publisher's note: *This letter was submitted to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors on Aug. 26, 2014.*

Dear Board Members:

I would like this item continued until after the budget hearings.



Joe Harn

A \$20,000 appropriation was included in the budget that was adopted in June for the Placerville Pool. There is NOT a \$60,000 appropriation in the budget for these three proposed MOUs. Your board will need to modify the budget in order for these MOUs to be lawful.

Of far greater concern is the CAO's budget forecast for 2015-16. It indicates a \$12 million problem for the general fund in 2015-16. Further, the \$12 million shortfall is based on the assumption that the Fenix implementation will save the general fund \$5 million in 2015-16. At this time, I do not believe that this is a reasonable assumption.

Your board and the CAO need to start making very difficult decisions now to avoid a huge budget problem next summer. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Joe Harn, auditor-controller