

A craft brew language primer

By Blair Anthony Robertson, Sacramento Bee

If you're looking to become part of the thriving beer scene, it can be a lot of fun. But it can also be intimidating, especially when it comes to the language of beer. What, exactly, does your beer geek friend mean by "hoppy?" And did he say "bread" or "brett" when referring to the yeast? Session beer: Is that a good thing? And are you considered cool if you still love Pliny? Or you've moved on?

With excellent brews flowing around all sorts of areas, what follows is an informal primer to get you up to speed and help you feel at home at your favorite brewery or beer-centric pub.

Craft beer: This refers to the little breweries, the underdogs, the up-and-comers. But wait. Aren't behemoths Sierra Nevada and Lagunitas craft breweries? Well, yes. Craft beer gatekeepers keep changing the definition.

Read the whole story

Child safe after LTUSD bus driver 'loses' him

By Kathryn Reed

It was probably the longest hour of Libi and Jason Fenley's life. Their son was missing. He didn't get off the school bus at day care. And no one knew where he was.

Corben is a 6-year-old first-grader at Sierra House Elementary School in South Lake Tahoe. His teacher and principal confirmed he got on the bus at about 3:20pm last Friday.

Jason Corben got a call at approximately 4:10pm from the day care center saying the bus did not drop Corben off.

"We freaked out because we knew neither of us had him," Libi Fenley told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I called the bus garage. They said he was not there."

South Lake Tahoe Police Department received a call from the Fenleys at 4:34pm Dec. 11. In about five minutes officers were at the bus garage.

The bus driver, who is reportedly a veteran at her job – even a trainer, searched the bus three times. No Corben.

"The bus driver said he got off at the wrong stop," Fenley said. She said this before film from the cameras was reviewed.

All LTUSD school buses have two cameras, some have three. They are there for safety and security.

There was quick talk among the Fenleys, officers and Lake Tahoe Unified School District transportation officials that a search should begin in the neighborhood where Corben may have gotten off. This was going on despite there being no proof he got off somewhere else.

Then suddenly there was banging on the bus garage door. It was Corben.

He had actually been on that bus that was supposedly searched by the driver. He had fallen asleep. It's not the first time. And he's not the first kid to do so.

"He was fine, he was scared. He woke up in the dark in a scary place," Fenley said of her son.

But she's not happy how the district handled things. When Corben got on the bus Monday the driver didn't offer an apology. Fenley was flabbergasted Christy Blach, director of transportation, seemed to care more about her employee than Fenley's son. She was miffed Superintendent Jim Tarwater had not responded to her email.

Blach was short with *Lake Tahoe News* on Dec. 15. "He was at the bus garage for maybe 10 minutes," she said.

That might be true, but no knew it. Corben was found at 5:04pm that Friday.

Tarwater didn't know about the incident until *Lake Tahoe News* called on Tuesday. He said that is not normal protocol.

"I would say they slipped up, didn't they?" he said of not being told. "I can see why she would be upset," Tarwater said of the distraught mother.

Fenley said, "If the driver is not going to be accountable, what procedures are going to be put in place other than flashlights will be used for looking for items (and people) on the bus?"

With neither the superintendent nor the board being told about the incident by staff, change couldn't happen as fast as Fenley would have liked.

Letter: B&B appreciative of real estate agents

To the community,

On Dec. 7, Robert Stiles hosted a Bread & Broth Adopt A Day of Nourishment dinner. He brought Cindy Richter, Paul Windt and Janessa Howard to serve with him on his sponsor crew.

Stiles and his three crewmembers are all local real estate agents serving Northern Nevada and the South Lake Tahoe area.

Stiles has been sponsoring an annual Adopt A Days for the last three years and he views his sponsorship as “always a great experience contributing to the community.”

As the Dec. 7AAD host, Stiles and his crew saw the nutritious and well-balanced meal that was funded by the \$250 AAD donation, and more important, experienced the really positive impact the meal has on the hungry, at risk people who attend as dinner guests for the evening.

B&B would like to thank Stiles and his crew for the outstanding job they did helping the B&B volunteers with all the many tasks that needed to be done to feed up to 100 meals.

Windt enjoyed the dinner experience so much that he “would like to help again.”

B&B would like to express our appreciation for the support of Stiles over the last several years as he continues to participate in B&B’s Adopt a Day of Nourishment program. Bread & Broad’s repeating AAD sponsors are very special because they are our on-going partners in easing hunger in South Lake Tahoe.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

School attendance numbers hide big problems

By Elissa Nadworny, NPR

Every morning, the familiar routine plays out in hundreds of thousands of classrooms: A teacher looks out over the desks, taking note of who's in their seats and who isn't.

On any given day, maybe there are one or two empty chairs. One here, one there. And that all goes into the school's daily attendance rate.

But here's what that morning ritual doesn't show: That empty desk? It might be the same one that was empty last week or two weeks ago. The desk of a student who has racked up five, 10, 20 absences this year.

It's called chronic absence. The official definition: missing more than 10 percent of the school year – just two days a month.

And the real-life implication: a warning sign for a student on the brink of failing or dropping out.

Read the whole story

EDC general plan EIR vote involves controversy

By Joann Eisenbrandt

PLACERVILLE – At its Dec. 15, meeting the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors certified the EIR for the **Targeted General Plan Amendment/Zoning Ordinance Update** (TGPA/ZOU), adopted the Statement of Overriding Considerations, and the Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Program. The board also adopted the Zoning Ordinance Update as well as a list of community design standards and directed staff to return in approximately a year to review implementation of the project.

Supervisor Shiva Frentzen was the lone dissenting vote on all items except the direction to staff to review the project in a year and on the community design standards (with the exception of mixed use design where she voted no). Supervisor Michael Ranalli recused himself for the vote on the ag opt-in resolution because he owns property impacted by it.

Some confusion arose as to whether additional public comment would be heard at the meeting. After hearing that the public comment period had been closed on Nov. 12 and that no additional comment would be received, resident Sue Taylor told board Chairman Brian Veerkamp from the audience that she had been told in a phone conversation before the meeting by Jim Mitrisin, clerk of the board, that it would be allowed. Mitrisin confirmed this conversation with *Lake Tahoe News*, but added that his office had assumed that it would be allowed as it is at all board meetings and referred LTN to interim CAO Larry Combs and to Deputy County Counsel Kay Ann Markham for more specifics.

The meetings on Nov. 10, 12, 13 and Dec. 15 were all part of one extended meeting, not independent individual meetings,

Shawna Purvines of long range planning explained to the board at the outset of Tuesday's meeting. Because of the large scope of the project it could not be presented by planning staff in a one-day meeting and so was continued over the four days. When public comment was closed in November it was closed for the entire meeting.

A second issue raised by Taylor was that the agenda on the county website as well as the hard copies distributed at the meeting listed five resolutions, but the board actually voted on seven. The differences between the published agenda and the items voted on by the board were that the mixed-use design standard was separated out for its own motion on Dec. 15, and the ag-opt in guidelines were also voted on in a separate motion, but they did not appear in the text of the published meeting agenda.

Under the Brown Act – California's open meeting law – all items that are voted on must appear on the agenda so the public has the opportunity to know what will be discussed in advance of the meeting. Deputy County Counsel Markham noted during the meeting that some of the items had been renumbered, but all items were also included by reference in the new numbered list from which the board made its motions.

Rural Communities United (RCU) attorney Tom Infusino told the board members on Nov. 10 that if they certified the EIR and approved the TGPA/ZOU, that RCU would file a lawsuit based on the failure of the environmental impact report to meet all the requirements set out by the California Environmental Quality Act for such a project by a public agency.

Judge denies emergency stay in Conner case

By Kathryn Reed

Round 1 in the case of Councilwoman JoAnn Conner v. the city of South Lake Tahoe goes to the city.

Conner's attorney filed an emergency stay on Dec. 14. The hearing was before Judge Steve Bailey on Dec. 15 in El Dorado County Superior Court.



JoAnn Conner

Bailey denied Conner the emergency stay because Jacqueline Mittelstadt, Conner's attorney, could not prove Conner is not able to do her job. A stay is much like an injunction.

At the late afternoon Tuesday court session in South Lake Tahoe the judge said there was no evidence showing Conner was not getting the same information as other councilmembers and that she could get her questions answered if they were to be asked.

Conner is suing the city and City Manager Nancy Kerry, the latter who is actually Conner's employee. Conner believes Kerry has no right to keep her from **talking to staff** and believes the other councilmembers erred when they voted to censure her.

The city contends Conner receives the same correspondence and

materials the other councilmembers get, that she has declined the opportunity to meet with staff before the council meetings to go over the agenda, and that she can get her mail at city offices.

What changed earlier this fall is that Conner does not have a card key to get into the inner sanctum of city hall and she must go through the city manager or city attorney to speak to staff. In the city code it says councilmembers are not to go directly to staff.

Bailey took some issue with Conner's badge being deactivated when the other councilmembers have access.

The judge set an evidentiary hearing for Jan. 4. This will allow him to review videotapes of the council meetings since September to see if Conner is treated the same as the other four electeds. It also gives each side time to present other evidence.

Bailey said he was not going to touch the **censure issue**, saying it was a political issue, not a legal one.

The city and Kerry were represented in court by William Chisum of Kronik Moskovitz Tiedemann law firm out of Sacramento. This is because City Attorney Tom Watson is a party to the case.

Snow putting heads in Lake Tahoe beds

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

A white Christmas at Tahoe and across the High Sierra has set off a rush for holiday lodging and driven up prices across the

board.

Even the 1-star hotels are getting in on it. For New Year's weekend at South Lake Tahoe, a 2-star hotel on Hotels.com is going for \$219 a night for a New Year's Eve check-in. Motel 6 was sold out. For Christmas weekend, Motel 6 was selling rooms at \$135 a night and had only five rooms left.

At the other end of the spectrum, the 5-star Ritz Carlton, Lake Tahoe, located near Northstar, had a no-view room for \$1,169 per night. As of Sunday, only five rooms remained at that price for New Year's weekend.

Read the whole story

Missing Nevada woman found dead in vehicle



A Sparks woman was found deceased Dec. 14, two weeks after being reported missing. Photo/Provided

A Sparks woman who was missing for two weeks was found

deceased Monday, having driven down an embankment off Highway 28 near Sand Harbor.

Betti Jean Fernandes, 72, was traveling south when the vehicle left the road and rolled downhill for more than 50 feet.

Nevada Highway Patrol officers are investigating the accident to determine what led to the accident. She was not wearing a seat belt.

Troopers said it's possible the vehicle has been there since Fernandes went missing on Nov. 30. The vehicle was not discovered until Dec. 14.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Enviros give Calif. mixed marks for drought management

By Matt Stevens, Los Angeles Times

More than four years into a drought, California's efforts to manage the crisis have produced mixed results, according to a report card issued Monday by a leading environmental nonprofit organization.

The state received high marks from the Natural Resources Defense Council for its urban conservation and water recycling but performed poorly in areas such as stormwater capture and restoring the San Francisco Bay Delta.

"The state is making decent strides in some areas, while completely falling down on the job in others," said Kate Poole, the report card's lead author and senior attorney for

the council's water program. "The bottom line is that we can take steps to create enough water for the residential, business and agricultural needs of California, while protecting the healthy environment that Californians deserve."

The council used a point system to issue the state letter grades across five categories. Each category, they said, represents a strategy the state can use to "achieve a sustainable and drought-resilient water future." The group gave California a B, B-minus, two Ds and an F.

Read the whole story

Tips to ensure Christmas trees are safe

Here are South Lake Tahoe Fire Department Christmas tree fire safety tips:

- Select a fresh tree with good color and firm, flexible needles that do not easily pull from the branches.
- Place the tree in plain water immediately after re-cutting the trunk at least one-half inch above the old cut. The container you use for your tree should hold 2 to 4 quarts of water. The longer you wait to place your tree in water, the greater the chances are that it will lose the required moisture content to keep it fresh through the holiday season. Never place your tree on a wooden stand.
- Locate the tree away from sources of heat. Avoid placing the tree near heaters, wood stoves, fireplaces, large appliances, such as TVs, and direct sunlight. Be careful not to block a door or other exitway with the tree or

rearranged furniture.

- Use mini-lights on your tree and never place candles on or near your tree. Remove your Christmas tree as soon as possible after the holiday. Never burn your Christmas tree or wrapping paper in the fireplace. The rapid burning and excessive heat can damage the firebox and chimney creating a serious fire hazard.

The SLTFD wants to wish everyone a fun and safe holiday season.

– *Sallie Ross-Filgo, SLTFD*