U.S. students lose ground on academic tests

By Joy Resmovits, Los Angeles Times

For the first time in about a decade, steady academic progress has halted for fourth- and eighth-grade students nationally and locally, according to new standardized test results released Wednesday.

After years of small but steady increases in scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress since its first administration nationally in 1990, the trend began to reverse this year.

The results were interpreted differently across the education spectrum. “The overall news from this round isn’t good,” said U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. “Anyone who claims to have this all figured out is peddling a personal agenda.”

Duncan theorized that the changing trend is due to an “implementation dip” caused by chaos from curricular changes in schools as districts teach new academic standards.

Read the whole story

Walgreens buys Rite Aid in $17.2 billion deal

By Jackie Wattles, CNN Money

In a pharmacy mega-merger, Walgreens is buying Rite Aid.

The $17.2 billion deal puts together the nation’s second and third largest pharmacy chains that combined will have nearly 13,000 U.S. stores. That would catapult the merged company above CVS, which has 7,800 stores.

Rite Aid (RAD) stores would keep their names “initially,” but Walgreens plans to create “a fully harmonized portfolio of stores” over time, the company said in announcing the deal Tuesday.

Read the whole story

Letter: Moose take a turn at Bread & Broth

To the community,

Bread & Broth would like to thank the South Lake Tahoe Moose Lodge No. 1632 for the Adopt A Day sponsorship for the Oct. 12 evening dinner. Thanks to the Moose Lodge’s generous donation, the 91 folks who came for dinner were served baked salmon with orange sauce, spaghetti with red sauce, a mixed green salad, a lovely strawberry-cantaloupe salad and a wide assortment of desserts.

Although heaping servings were doled out during the first serving at 4pm, 27 diners returned for the 5pm “second” serving of this tasty and nutritious dinner.

Working the serving line is always a favorite part of volunteering at the B&B dinners and this was the case for Moose Lodge sponsor crewmembers Rick Ainsworth and Scott Blumenthal.

“Many thanks for the opportunity to serve my fellow men, women and children in our community,” said Blumenthal. “This was great!”

Besides serving, Ainsworth and Blumenthal helped pack the giveaway food bags distributed at the dinner. These bags are filled with fruit, vegetables, dairy products, canned goods and breads-pastries. These items are made available through B&B donors and local businesses and stores.

For Ainsworth and Blumenthal, this was their first time volunteering at a B&B dinner. They were great to work with and they stayed to the very end of the event to help with the dinner’s cleanup.

“Thank you for giving me this experience,” was Ainsworth’s comment. “This was quite enjoyable working with a wonderful team.”

What makes B&B volunteer team members so great is the rewarding experience they have of sharing their joy of serving others with the folks and sponsors who make the weekly dinners possible.

To help B&B as a donor or sponsor, contact me at 530.542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Fire districts losing tax votes point finger at state

fee

By Jim Miller, Sacramento Bee

Frank Treanor doesn’t have exit polling to help explain why almost 38 percent of voters in the fire district he leads north of San Francisco voted against a November 2012 ballot measure to increase what property owners pay the district annually.

But Treanor, chief of the Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District, said he is sure of the reason: Most of the district falls within the vast swath of the state where property owners pay a state fire prevention fee, in addition to any local charges.

In the four years since lawmakers approved it, a state fire prevention fee on properties in about a third of the state’s rural areas had yielded more than $300 million through June for prevention-related activities.

The money has gone to administration and statewide prevention, such as defensible space inspections and vegetation clearing, amid concern by some local officials that non-profit fire safe councils haven’t received more money

Read the whole story

Sketch of South Shore

kidnapping suspect released

South Lake Tahoe police officers are now calling an Oct. 10 incident near the state line an attempted kidnapping.

A sketch of the suspect was released today.



A 36-year-old female tourist told officers a man approached her about 9:40am Oct. 10 near Park and Cedar avenues, telling her to go with him or he would shoot her. The suspect told the woman he had a gun and appeared to be holding an object concealed in his sweat shirt pocket, according to police.

She ran for safety and the suspect left before officers arrived.

The suspect is described as Caucasian or light skinned Hispanic male in his mid-20s, about 5-feet-6, medium build, a scar or injury near his right eye, wearing black wire-framed prescription glasses, wearing a grey hooded sweat shirt, dark pants and had a white bicycle.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Truckee man accused of fleeing fatal accident

A Truckee man has been arrested on charges stemming from a fatal motorcycle accident on Oct. 24 on Interstate 80 east of

Pyramid Highway in Sparks.

According to the Nevada Highway Patrol, Jonathan Navarro, 18, of Reno was riding west on a red Honda street bike at about 11:50pm. Navarro was in the left inside shoulder illegally passing traffic occupying the fast lane, officers said. The bike came into contact with a black Subaru Impreza in the fast lane. Navarro lost control of the motorcycle and was ejected. He was then struck by a pickup pulling a fifth-wheel trailer and pronounced dead at the scene.

The black Subaru fled the scene. The driver has since been identified as Jose Arellano, 19, of Truckee. Arellano was arrested on charges of felony duty to stop at the scene of a crash involving death, and a misdemeanor crime of duty to give information and render aid.

It is not know if either driver was impaired at the time of the crash.

Anyone who may have witnessed this incident is asked to call 775.689.4623 or email dhildebrand@dps.state.nv.us.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

EDC Animal Services mail stolen

El Dorado County Animal Services mailbox in Diamond Springs was broken into last weekend.

It is not known how much mail was stolen. Anyone who mailed a check to the Diamond Springs location in the last week is urged to call 530.621.5795. This way staff will be able to

verify if the money arrived.

Until the mailbox is fixed Animal Services' mail will be collected at the post office and picked up daily.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

3.1 temblor shakes Carson Valley

A 3.1 earthquake rattled parts of the Carson Valley this morning.

The temblor was located 6 miles northeast of Johnson Lane in Gardnerville.

It struck at 7:22am Oct. 28.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

'Code Black' reveals realities of hospital's ER

The movie "Code Black" is a behind the scenes look at the day-to-day activities of Los Angeles County's Emergency Department.

Three of Barton Memorial Hospital's emergency physicians attended residency at LA County and will provide an insider's perspective of LA County and Barton hospitals after a free screening of the movie.

"Code Black" will be shown Nov. 7 at 6pm in the board room at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe. It features some graphic medical scenes, so parent discretion is advised.

Reno sees future, and it isn't casinos

By Jim Carlton, Wall Street Journal

RENO—For much of the past half century, Reno moved in lock step with its glamorous big sister, Las Vegas, their fortunes rising and falling with their mainstay industry, gambling.

But Reno is now betting on a different economic future, turning its back on casino tourism as an economic driver in favor of becoming a manufacturing hub for everything from drones to car batteries.

Since 2011, the "Biggest Little City in the World" has recruited about 100 companies to locate or expand here with more than 10,000 new jobs—many cajoled by a former West Point cadet who instilled military discipline into Reno's economic-development office.

Reno landed the Tesla deal in no small part because of a $1.3 billion tax-break package signed by Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval. Critics saw the tax break, the state's largest ever

and among the biggest such enticements nationally, as a giveaway of public funds.

Many cities across the U.S. are trying to do the same thing as Reno: diversify away from once-bedrock industries that have cratered or become too volatile. Houston, for example, has tried to branch out from energy production into technology and health care. For many Rust Belt cities, the makeover process has been a struggle, in part because they started too late, says Gary A. Hoover, chairman of the economics department at the University of Oklahoma.

There are signs Reno’s strategy is starting to pay off. Before Nevada’s top two metro areas went into recession in 2008, both had unemployment rates below 4 percent. While the jobless rate in both soared to 14 percent in 2011, Reno’s has fallen to 6.1 percent, as of August, vs. 7 percent for Las Vegas, according to Labor Department estimates.

Read the whole story