

Congress having a food fight over GMO labeling

By Tony Dokoupil, MSNBC

There's a food fight exploding in Congress.

The House of Representatives passed a hotly contested bill last week that would block states from requiring labels identifying food made with genetically modified ingredients. Now a similar bill is expected in the Senate, where North Dakota Republican Sen. John Hoeven is currently looking for a co-sponsor.

The measure would preempt a GMO labeling movement that has already helped establish laws in Maine and Connecticut. In Vermont, the first to pass such a law, the labels are scheduled to appear by next summer. And the Congressional effort to block these measures has lit a flame beneath culinary crusaders.

Read the whole story

Nev. far behind top states for commercial drone use

By Daniel Rothberg, Las Vegas Sun

The number of companies in Nevada approved for commercial drone flights is about on par with most states but lags far behind leaders like California and Arizona, according to an analysis of the first 500 waivers issued by the Federal

Aviation Administration.

Nevada companies were issued six exemptions from the rules otherwise banning commercial drone flights.

California, meanwhile, led the nation with 70 approved operators, followed by Texas with 46, according to an analysis of FAA data released last week by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International.

Read the whole story

Stargazing event at Washoe Lake Park

The Northern Nevada Astronomical Group will conduct a star party and astronomy program at Washoe Lake State Park on Aug. 15.

There will be a short slide presentation and a variety of telescopes set up for viewing stars and planets. Participants should bring lawn chairs and a jacket. Red flashlights are recommended as they do not affect night vision.

The event starts at 8pm.

This event is free, but it costs \$7 to park. Nevada residents receive a \$2 discount.

Study: Economic benefits to raising Shasta Dam

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A long-awaited study requested by Congress concludes that enlarging Shasta Dam by 18.5 feet is technically and economically feasible, though the Bureau of Reclamation declined to make a formal recommendation to move ahead with the project.

The study found the most viable expansion option would cost an estimated \$1.4 billion and provide an economic benefit of \$30 million annually from increased salmon populations, water supply, flood control and recreational opportunities.

However, it was unclear who would be willing to take on the cost of construction.

The report said nonfederal alternative financing would have to be secured for a majority of the construction costs before the secretary of interior could recommend the project.

State officials made it clear that the project is ineligible for funding through a recently approved bond proposition.

The federal government typically funds construction of major reservoirs that Congress authorizes and is then repaid from the project's beneficiaries over the course of several decades.

California voters last year approved \$2.7 billion for additional water storage as part of a bond proposition.

Nancy Vogel, deputy secretary for communications at the California Natural Resources Agency, said the project is not eligible for funding from Proposition 1, as funding cannot go to any project that would negatively affect a river protected

under the state's Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Raising the dam would inundate portions of the protected McCloud River.

California is in the midst of a four-year drought that has forced tough decisions for many cities and farmers. Gov. Jerry Brown has ordered communities throughout the state to collectively reduce water use by 25 percent.

To prepare for future droughts, some federal and state lawmakers have said securing more water storage through new or expanded reservoirs is critical. They have grown frustrated with how long it has taken for the Bureau of Reclamation to complete feasibility studies on a handful of projects.

Congress first authorized the Shasta study in 1980.

Shasta Lake, the state's largest reservoir, is located on the upper stretches of the Sacramento River about 160 miles north of Sacramento.

Federal officials looked at an array of options for the dam, from raising the 602-foot concrete structure by 6.5 feet to raising it by 12.5 feet, then to 18.5 feet.

The most beneficial alternative calls for an 18.5-foot increase, adding spawning gravel to the upper Sacramento River and restoring habitat along the river.

The higher lake level would require the relocation of utilities and bridges as well as the modification or total replacement of several marinas, boat ramps and trails.

Expanding the dam by higher than 18.5 feet would require much more extensive and costly relocations, including for Interstate 5, the report said.

The study said the most economically beneficial option would increase the amount of water stored in the reservoir enough to

cover 634,000 acres with a foot of water. About a third of that additional water would be used to benefit fish populations.

Members of Congress have been calling for more water storage projects in the state, but their immediate response to the study has been cautious.

“Ensuring that local residents, businesses and infrastructure are given proper consideration is key,” said Rep. Doug LaMalfa, R-Richvale, whose district includes Shasta Lake and surrounding communities. “Should this project move forward, I will work to ensure that those residents and businesses that could be affected are justly compensated and have an opportunity to relocate on the lake.”

Doug Obegi, an attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council, said raising the dam would destroy sacred tribal sites and provide “virtually no environmental benefits.”

3-day seminar on writing-publishing memoir

Suzanne Roberts, an award-winning memoirist and travel writer, and Kim Wyatt, the founding editor and publisher of Bona Fide Books based in Meyers, are putting on a three-day writing seminar next month in Virginia City.

Writing and Publishing Your memoir – A Women’s Retreat is Sept. 11-13.

Have you always wanted to tell your story? When you talk about your life, do people say you should write a book? Are you

already polishing up your memoir, hoping to submit it for publication? No matter where you are, this all-women's writing retreat will provide support and guidance in the process.

There will also be optional one-on-one manuscript critiques for an additional fee.

To purchase your tickets or find out more information about the event, go **online**.

Study: Exercise during teens reaps long-term benefits for women

By Patricia Reaney, Washington Post

Playing team sports and exercising during adolescence can have long-lasting benefits for women and may even reduce their risk of dying from cancer and other causes later in life, a new study showed last week.

Researchers who analyzed how often women exercised while in their teens found that being active for just 1.3 hours a week had a positive impact as they got older.

"The main finding is that exercise during adolescence is associated with a reduced risk of mortality, or death, in middle-aged to older women," Sarah J. Nechuta, an assistant professor of medicine at Vanderbilt Epidemiology Center and Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center in Nashville, said in an interview.

Read the whole story

SLT crews demonstrate extrication intricacies



South Lake Tahoe firefighters demonstrate extricating a person from a vehicle is complicated. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

A woman sat slumped in the driver's seat. The car a heap of metal. There was no way to get to her without removing the door and roof of the vehicle.

What seemed like an inordinate amount of time passed before she was loaded onto a litter board.

It's not easy work to extricate someone from a mangled car. That was proven by South Lake Tahoe firefighters as they demonstrated the process to City Council members and others.

Each department head is tasked with presenting to the electeds – and public – what it is their employees really do. Not all will be as visual as what Fire Chief Jeff Meston delivered.



Tools of the trade.

Firefighters used this as an actual training for what it would be like to respond to a car crash where the driver is unresponsive and stuck inside. Besides injured people, the crew was concerned about fire and leaking hazardous materials.

Their safety is of utmost importance so the necessary gear must be put on before the work begins. Hoses are brought from the trucks. A variety of tools were needed to cut through the metal. It was a team approach to dealing with each aspect of the rescue.

Paramedics do what they can for the driver. A neck brace is put around her while still in the vehicle, other care is provided as well as the firefighters work to free her from could have been a metal tomb.

Being such a small city, most of the department's resources are deployed to a serious crash. At the demonstration – just like if this were a real accident – Tahoe Douglas and Lake

Valley fire departments back up city personnel.

“We use up all of our resources on a pretty regular basis,” Meston told the council. “No agency is able to do their own thing.” Mutual aid is what saves everyone in the basin.

Meston said California has the most sophisticated mutual aid system in the world.

Fundraiser benefits Kelly Ridge residents

The seniors at Kelly Ridge Senior Affordable Housing Community in South Lake Tahoe are having a fundraiser at Primo’s Italian restaurant on Sept. 9 from 4:30 to 8:30pm.

The proceeds will benefit the seniors by providing them with a benevolent fund to access when there is a special need.

The residents at Kelly Ridge are low income and live on limited budgets.

Tickets are \$11, which includes one pasta dish with a choice of one of three sauces. For tickets, call Gia Richards at 530.541.2812.

AP U.S. history course

revised to emphasize U.S. ideals

By Rebecca Klein, Huffington Post

After facing months of intense scrutiny over a new Advanced Placement U.S. history course outline that some conservatives perceived as containing anti-American biases, the College Board released a new framework for the class Thursday morning. This structure places more of an emphasis on concepts surrounding American national identity, the country's founding leaders and documents and the effective role of free enterprise in U.S. history.

The College Board, the company that created and runs the Advanced Placement program, said the updated course framework reflects feedback it received from educators and historians during a public review period. The changes make it so "statements [in the framework] are clearer and more historically precise, and less open to misinterpretation or perceptions of imbalance" and so that specific important individuals and documents are clearly included, according to the group's website.

After deciding to redesign the course in 2006, the College Board released a new course outline last year that hit classrooms in the fall. It was designed by a committee of professors and teachers, and generated controversy from critics who said it took an overly critical approach to teaching American history.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• The 19th annual Reno Gay Pride Festival is Aug. 15 from 11am-6pm. For more info, go **online**. The free Opening Night Party will be at the Sapphire Lounge located inside Harrah's Reno on Aug. 14.

• Nancy Harrison has been hired as executive director of the Lake Tahoe Community College Education Foundation.

• Dementia Training – Effective Communication Strategies is the title of a class on Aug. 26 from 1-2:30pm at the Placerville Senior Center, 937 Spring St., Placerville. This seminar is presented by El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency Family Caregiver Support Program and the Alzheimer's Association. To register, email ptardio@alz.org.

• A VIP AYSO soccer program is starting in South Lake Tahoe for children with special needs. Even if a child is unable to be active on the field, organizers we will find a way to make sure there is a spot for everyone. If interested or any questions about the program, contact Jessie Cooksey at 530.600.0219 or jessc.hernandez@gmail.com.

• South Lake Tahoe mountain bike pioneer Gary Bell is sponsoring a History of Lake Tahoe Mountain Biking Exhibit at the Meyers Mountain Bike Festival on Aug. 9. For more info, go **online**.