

Exploring gender stereotypes at the bar

By Aliza Kellerman, VinePair

“Clear liquor is for rich women on diets.”

So says Ron Swanson, one of the most quotable characters on television today. In this case, I find myself disagreeing with his typical wiseness, but the goal of this article isn't to give a takedown of an internet meme, but rather to ask why? Why are certain spirits and tastes considered feminine while others are considered manly?

Let's first consider taste. Do women really like sweets more than men? Try to recall food commercials you see on TV. Without thinking too hard, which foods do you associate with women, and which do you associate with men? When it comes to female-targeted commercials, the first thing I think of is chocolate. When was the last time you saw a chocolate commercial geared toward men? In the U.S., they're nearly always marketed toward women, typically as an indulgence. CollegeHumor parodied this theme in their skit “If Chocolate Ads Were Honest.”

The skit plays off of how chocolate is often advertised as a guilty pleasure, something women should eat in secret, hilariously enough giving the candy both sexualization and shame. The food commercials aimed toward men, however, typically tell a different narrative. First off, they don't push candy, they push meat. And men aren't shown nibbling burgers in private, they're shown chomping down on steaks or grilling proudly. Thus, meat – a savory taste – is shown as “strong,” something to aspire to like, while chocolate – a sweet taste – is shown as “weak,” something to be ashamed of enjoying. I'm afraid to say this line of marketing is more

sinister than simply sweet equals weak. It's also saying sweet equals weak and therefore equals female. This is an idea that's played ad nauseum in American advertising and media. It must at least partially contribute to why sweetness in a drink is thought of as embarrassing. Perhaps this is why ordering a Margarita is more embarrassing than, say, a Manhattan.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Peluche

Peluche is a sweet little 1-year-old Cockerpoo (cocker spaniel and poodle). He is quite playful, walks nicely on the leash, and is very affectionate. They don't get much cuter than this!

Peluche, which means plush in Spanish, has beautiful fur that will need regular grooming and he likes other dogs.

Peluche is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe shelter's

Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz

Drought doesn't prevent Tahoe development



Crews work on the golf holes that will be rerouted to accommodate Edgewood Lodge. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Anne Knowles

Large commercial development projects around Lake Tahoe are moving along unchanged in the midst of a historic drought.

Squaw Valley's proposed 94-acre hotel, condo, timeshare and recreation area, Edgewood Tahoe's 154-room lodge, and the Chateau's multiphase retail and hotel project at Stateline are all on track.

A fourth project, Homewood Mountain Resort's redevelopment, is mired in litigation but owner JMA Ventures expects to begin construction on the \$500 million project a year from now.

Placer County has requested an update to the water supply assessment for the Squaw Valley Specific Plan environmental impact report, according to Alex Fisch, senior planner for Placer County.

That EIR became available in mid-May and public comment on the project is being accepted through July 17.

The update to the water supply assessment, provided by the Squaw Valley Public Service District, will include data on precipitation and aquifer pumping through 2014.

Fisch said the county requested a 25-year assessment of water availability. By law, a 20-year assessment is required for all projects constructing 500 or more dwelling units.

The controversial Squaw Valley plan on 85 acres includes up to 1,493 bedrooms in 850 units; 297,733 square feet of commercial space, including conference rooms, retail and restaurants; 90,000 square feet of recreational features such as movie theater, indoor rock climbing and pool and water slides; and parking. Housing for up to 300 employees and 20,000 square feet of additional commercial space is planned on another 8.8-acre parcel.

The development is expected to take 25 years to build and, according to the EIR, will need 234 acre-feet of water

annually by 2040.

“It’s difficult to say how much water it will need in the intervening years,” Mike Geary, SVPSD general manager, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

“The county, to its credit, is allowing a flexible phasing plan. So many projects are affected by market forces so the county just said build it how you want.”

SVPSD plans to drill four wells on the property to deliver the water.

SVPSD is also developing an 8-mile pipeline to the Martis Valley to import water into Olympic Valley as a redundant, emergency source of water for existing customers, says Geary.



Water purveyors are still working out the details for future phases of the Chateau project in South Lake Tahoe.

Also in Placer County is Homewood's controversial redevelopment project, which includes hotel, retail and new base area. That project's EIR outlines two alternatives for water. One alternative calls for Tahoe City Public Utility District to be the sole water provider. A second alternative says TCPUD would supply water to the south base area while Madden Creek Water Co. would supply the north base.

It estimates water demand at 385 acre-feet per year for the south base, 134 acre-feet per year for the north base and 43.6 acre-feet a year for snowmaking.

Calls to JMA Ventures to clarify the project's plans were not returned.

Water for the long-delayed build out of the Chateau project is still being ironed out. When the project was initially permitted, South Tahoe Public Utility District was going to deliver service to the bigger portion of the development, the convention center and a 400-unit hotel, while Lakeside Park Association was set to supply so-called project B, 125 time-share units.

Now, the two purveyors are in negotiations about who and how to deliver service to the significantly altered project. STPUD provides service to the retail that has already gone in. The storefronts currently use 1,480 gallons per day, according to Richard Solbrig, STPUD general manager.

(The permit on STPUD's portion of the original plan, for a convention center and hotel, called for 77,700 gallons per day, Solbrig said.)

Solbrig told *Lake Tahoe News* it's unclear where the overall project is going next, although a 32-room hotel with pool big enough to accommodate two planned hotels and 19,000-square-feet of retail space is being designed now for the next phase that could break ground this summer.

STPUD and Lakeside agreed on a revenue sharing deal, since Lakeside lost most of its customer base when the project went belly up, and are working out the details now, according to Solbrig and Jack McLaughlin, president of Lakeside Park Association.

The Edgewood Lodge project is moving along, with corollary work being done now and construction on the hotel itself starting later this summer. But it's unclear how much water the project will consume. Douglas County's EIR on the project only mentions water quality, like what is required for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Patrick Rhamey, vice president of real estate, said an analysis of water demand exists, but he didn't have the time to provide it to *Lake Tahoe News*.

The water purveyor is Edgewood Water Co., a small company that delivers water to properties totaling about 2,000 rooms, said Rhamey.

"Edgewood Lodge's 154 rooms, excuse the pun, are a drop in the bucket," he said.

Opinion: EDC CAO signs backdoor PI contract

By Larry Weitzman

El Dorado County interim Chief Administrative Officer Pamela Knorr, with a sign off from the new County Counsel Robyn Truitt-Drivon, has hired a private investigator.

The PI contract was hidden under a "consultant" contract with

a law firm that Knorr has dealt with when she was CAO of Alpine County. Ditto for the private investigator. This all ties back to a lawsuit brought by the Alpine undersheriff against Knorr, who subsequently left Alpine under a cloud.



Larry Weitzman

El Dorado County has a policy that allows the CAO to execute contracts less than \$50,000 without Board of Supervisors approval (because of inflation it is a bit more than \$60,000 now). It is the same policy that is followed in most California counties.

Pamela Knorr as CAO of Alpine County entered into a contract on March 1, 2011, with Ken MacHold of MacHold Investigations, a private investigation firm at the rate of \$50 an hour not to exceed \$50,000 to investigate the sheriff's department, with emphasis on the undersheriff.

The total incurred cost of that contract is unknown and a California Public Records Act request for invoices and payments have initially been rebuffed by County Counsel Dave Prentice of the law firm of Prentice, Long and Epperson. This private practice is contract county counsel to four small counties, including Alpine County – and now El Dorado County – and about a dozen more small government agencies, such as the Fresno Kings Madera Health Authority as general counsel. This information comes directly from the firm's Website.

The Alpine County investigation is partly and directly responsible for a federal lawsuit for damages in the U.S District Court against the county of Alpine, Pamela Knorr, and

various other county officials. Trial has been set for the middle of next year.

Fast forward to early 2015.

Pamela Knorr essentially hires the same investigator for El Dorado County, but does so in an apparent subterfuge by hiring the investigator through an attorney's office, possibly giving her an attorney-client secrecy privilege.

The 11-page contract was executed by CAO Knorr and El Dorado County Counsel Robyn Truitt-Drivon on March 2.

The purpose of the contract is stated on page 1, which contains the following recitals: "Consultant has represented to county (EDC) that it is specially trained, experienced, expert and competent to perform the special services required hereunder and county has determined to rely upon such representations; and county (EDC) has determined that the provision of these services provided by Consultant is in the public's best interest, and that these services are more economically and feasibly performed by an outside independent consultants as well as authorized by El Dorado County Charter...."

Why the foregoing is important is that if you check the law firm's Website, it shows no current services in investigations except for El Dorado County, which became a client and is the firm's only investigatory client as a result of this contract.

In other words, this is essentially the contract of Ken MacHold with the name and contract rates for services changed.

Article III of this contract provides for compensation and charges for services and it lists the cost per hour for the investigator at \$110 an hour.

Remember, the direct contract with MacHold from 2011 with Alpine County was at \$50 an hour. It obviously would have been

less expensive to contract direct, about half as expensive.

Also in Article III is the real giveaway: "Vehicle travel (non-standard trips more than 150 miles from consultant's Roseville office) ... current IRS per mile rate."

Why is that critical? The consultant, Prentice, et al, doesn't have an office in Roseville. According to the Internet and verified by a phone call, consultant's offices are in Redding and Fresno. Not Roseville.

Who has an office in Roseville? Ken MacHold.

The county contract routing sheet also indicates that this is a modified MacHold contract, as it states, "Blue route and memo for previously approved boilerplate are attached. Changes are limited to Article III."

Reliable sources say it is MacHold who is the investigator interviewing EDC employees. The questions are back to the issue of a "respectful workplace. " And they are not being done anonymously.

The county under Terri Daly, in contracts approved by the BOS, has already spent \$249,240 with the Van Dermeyden Maddux Law Firm (\$52,063) and MRG group (\$197,177) on the alleged "climate of fear" (Knorr was the contract administrator).

The results of the spending were that if there were any climate of fear issues in the county, it was from CAO, Terri Daly, Kim Kerr and in the IT department.

On March 2, according to the county contract routing sheet, Knorr signed the contract prematurely. Before a contract can be signed it must be approved by risk management. On March 4, two days after Knorr executed the contract, Prentice, et al LLP's professional liability insurance was disapproved because the limits of liability were insufficient and remained so until April 29. County rules require no contract shall be

signed until it meets all requirements. Additionally, it is unclear if Workers' Comp insurance has been complied with.

Because we are unaware of the contractual relationship of MacHold and Prentice, et al, liability insurance may still not meet the requirements.

There is more. A bill arrived recently for this consulting contract in the amount of \$15,627. The CAO's office directed that these invoices be paid and that they be encumbered to "Facility ACO Projects" fund. The payments are to be charged to the budget line "Fixed Asset: Project Management" and the description of the User Code is "New Courthouse."

Is the new courthouse being investigated or or the alleged "climate of fear?" Does the state Judicial Council know about this county investigative expense allocation to the "New Courthouse?" Is a private eye a capital expense?

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Opinion: Strengthening the educator-pupil bond

By Brandon Sportel

About four years ago, I found myself asking a question many teachers ask their students: "Why would you do something like that?"

I was sitting down with a fourth-grade student I had just been asked to counsel. I had success at getting to the bottom of students' issues and I had earned a reputation as a teacher version of "Columbo."

The student had been sent to the principal's office for hurting another kid during recess. The reports were that he had also kicked another student for taking his place in line. I had worked with this student in the past for similar behavior toward peers. Now the behaviors were getting worse, and the parents were not responding. The boy answered my question about his motivations by saying, "Students were cutting in front of me," and, "Two days ago they were calling me names."

I had this realization that I was expecting the student to somehow psychoanalyze himself and come up with a grand justification for his behavior and actions. Asking the "why did you do it" question did not help me to solve the issue – and I realized it never would. It was simply a fallback question for adults when they were not sure what to do.

This was the beginning of my attempts to engineer ways for myself and other teachers to take care of the emotional lives and mental health of our students.

I first knew I wanted to be a teacher when I was in middle school in Michigan. I got paid a \$25 stipend for running a basketball clinic with little kids and discovered I was good at motivating students. As I pursued teaching, I moved to California, and became an assistant in a classroom with students that had developmental disabilities, emotional disturbances, and aggressive behaviors. This environment, along with excellent training, challenged me to figure out how to support students with multiple challenges and give them a better quality of life. I currently teach two special needs classrooms at Canalino Elementary School in Carpinteria.

Every good teacher I've talked to wants to build better relationships with their students. But lack of time is a major barrier. A typical classroom has 25 to 30 students and if a teacher devoted just 2 minutes to each student, that would add up to an hour every day, which would have to come out of

valuable instructional time in this academic-focused (and test-crazy) era. And even if they had time, teachers rarely have the resources to handle social, emotional, and mental health challenges. Improving professional development in this area would help. So would clear, practical, and efficient protocols that are used school wide.

What teachers most need is the ability to teach students strategies and techniques to meet the expectations of a challenging school day. To this end I developed the "Think Time," protocol –, a process for identifying student's needs by connecting their feelings and actions. My brother, a fellow teacher and a mentor to me, and UC Santa Barbara student psychologists worked with me to create a paper-and-pencil form that took teachers through the steps of asking students questions such as "What were you feeling before the problem occurred?" It gave them suggestions to pass on to students – for example, conveying that, "a better choice next time, rather than acting out, would be to ask to speak to the teacher privately."

Here is a typical example: A student was sent to me after getting multiple warnings for disrupting the math lesson. The teacher reported that the student struggled to sit still and focus, blurting out answers without raising his hand, and was disrupting the students at his table by fidgeting and tapping his pencil. When we began, he was asked to identify his feelings from a chart. He chose energetic, excited, and anxious, which helped me understand his impulsive behaviors. The student then listed the actions that were connected to his feelings – in this case, (blurting out and fidgeting). Once I better understood the feelings that motivated his actions, I realized he just needed to choose a more socially appropriate way to cope with his feelings. We settled on having him discreetly step outside the classroom, take a three-minute break to move around, and return to the lesson ready to try again.

Of course, not everything was smooth when I began to roll this program out at my school. Teachers struggled to find the time to sit down with students and go through the process. They had trouble finding the right replacement behaviors, and struggled to understand the true purpose of the process.

So we improved the protocol by providing training to teachers that explained the rationale, created and implemented lessons for students, revamped the questions teachers should ask students, hired mentors to assist the teachers, and made the process digital.

After these tweaks, teachers reported that students were using replacement behaviors, which increased instructional minutes and improved communication with parents. But we also realized that we were only reaching the students with chronic disruptive behaviors (typically two to five kids per class). What about the needs of the other students?

Students with difficult behavior are not the only ones who struggle emotionally. Students often internalize feelings and lack the ability to express their needs appropriately, which makes it nearly impossible for teachers to recognize what is motivating their actions. We tested a “positive version of Think Time,” where all students could record things they were proud of, or simple acts of kindness that showed good citizenship.

From there, we developed the “check-in system.” This system teaches students how to reflect on their feelings routinely and to express them appropriately to get their needs met.

Our helloyello.net web app allows students to let teachers know what’s going on in their lives good or bad, wrong or sad, daily. And the app gives teachers the opportunity to “close the loop” quickly – within seconds– to strengthen their relationships with students.

The results have been stunning. For instance, a teacher

recently shared with me that her student checked in that she was struggling to stay awake at school because her baby brother's crying was keeping her up at night. The teacher closed the loop by letting the student know she had read her check in and asked if she could email her parents. The teacher sent a friendly email to the parents, who in turn were grateful and quickly solved the problem at home.

"Check-ins" are particularly good at addressing bullying. Students feel safe reporting problems on the playground or in the bathroom since they can confidentially reach their teachers without having to tell them face to face, in view of the bully. In one example, a student wrote about feeling bad because he participated in teasing someone; teachers, armed with additional information, are able to step in before the conflicts escalate.

Our HelloYello team is confident our procedures can help other schools in California. My school, Canalino Elementary is a Title I school, meaning at least 40 percent of students come from low-income families. Many of our students are also English language learners, requiring us to take extra care to find ways to make sure the kids understand the questions and the behaviors expected of them. Of course, schools better off than ours also struggle with the emotional well being of their students.

Taking care of our students' social and emotional health isn't an end just in itself. Research studies have shown that social and emotional well being has a significant impact on student achievement. Teaching students to express themselves appropriately, with reasoning and evidence, is a recurrent theme in the Common Core Standards. Teachers cannot help students achieve their academic potential or demonstrate how much they've learned if they do not know how the students are feeling, what they are thinking, and what's going on in their daily lives.

Brandon Sportel has been selected as the Carpinteria district teacher of the year, and Santa Barbara County teacher of the year. He was the California winner of this year's Milken Educator Award. He wrote this for "Reimagining California," a partnership of the California Endowment and Zocalo Public Square.

Danger of concussions on memory and grades

By Mandy Morgan, Deseret News

Research has long shown that concussions are not healthy in any case, but a recent study finds children and teenagers who sustain a concussion while participating in sports could also be affected in their academic performance.

Student-athletes with concussions "may experience more problems concentrating, keeping up and paying attention in school," Time reported about the study. "The symptoms are worse for students who have recently been injured, but remained significant even for those who had recovered."

The study, published in the journal Pediatrics, focused on 349 students ages 5 to 18 who had sustained a concussion. Some were recovering, some no longer feeling effects and others still experiencing symptoms.

Read the whole story

Expo to focus on all things related to wildfire

There will be a Wildfire Safety Expo on June 20 from noon to 3pm in South Lake Tahoe.

People will learn about how to be prepared for a fire, making an evacuation plan, and creating defensible space.

Smokey Bear will be part of the festivities.

The free event will be in the parking lot at TJ Maxx.

Feds propose land controls to preserve Nev. sage grouse

By Steve Tetreult, Las Vegas Review-Journal

WASHINGTON — The Department of Interior on Thursday proposed added controls across 17 million acres in rural Nevada and northeastern California to preserve habitat and avoid an endangered species listing for the imperiled sage grouse.

Solar and wind energy development would be excluded or subject to added scrutiny across Northern Nevada, according to a new environmental impact report. Controls would be put in place for geothermal and oil and gas exploration over 15 million acres and restricted outright in 1.5 million acres of the most sensitive areas where the range birds flock.

There would be potential effects on mining and grazing in the

best remaining areas for the grouse, whose population has dropped from the millions to about 200,000 to 500,000 across the West.

Read the whole story

Slow start, gradual improvement for U.S. Internet gaming

By Wayne Parry, AP

ATLANTIC CITY – Internet gambling is off to a slow start in the United States, with banks hesitant to handle credit card payments for online bets and some politicians and casino moguls pushing to ban it, but there remains potential for great growth, participants in a major gambling conference agreed Wednesday.

Despite the nascent industry's many challenges, including illegal offshore websites that casinos admit are easier to use, gradual improvements are happening, they said.

Three states currently offer Internet gambling: New Jersey, Delaware and Nevada. Other states are considering doing so, including California and Pennsylvania.

New Jersey took in \$122 million from Internet gambling last year; Delaware took in nearly \$2.1 million and Nevada won \$8.1 million at poker, the only game it offers online, from February to November of last year, when it stopped reporting online revenue results.

In March, Morgan Stanley cut its estimate of the potential U.S. Internet gambling market by nearly half. The firm now estimates the nationwide online betting market at \$2.7 billion by 2020, down from an initial estimate of \$5 billion.

Speaking at the East Coast Gaming Congress in Atlantic City, casino operators, payment processors and legislators agreed the legalized online gambling industry is still being held back by the refusal of some banks to handle Internet betting transactions, and the relatively limited liquidity in games of online poker that would be improved by having more states join together to increase prize pools.

"The biggest challenge of Internet gambling in the U.S. is that this is an industry still looked at as having been born out of sin," said Gil White, whose law firm represents 888 Holdings. "The new world of Internet gambling is clearly regulated and regulatable."

When online gambling began in 2013, many customers had a hard time making deposits to fund their accounts because banks refused to authorize the transactions. That has improved somewhat with new transaction codes adopted by Visa last month to narrowly recognize Internet gambling transactions from state-regulated, approved sites. That has raised Visa acceptance rates for Internet gambling from the 18 to 22 percent when it first started to about 50 percent now, said Joe Pappano, senior vice president of Vantiv Gaming Solutions, which handles electronic transfers for New Jersey online gambling sites.

Thomas Winter, vice president of online gambling for the Golden Nugget Atlantic City, also said his casino is seeing half of all attempts to fund Internet betting accounts using Visa cards accepted.

"It's improving, but it will take time," he said.

Raymond Lesniak, a New Jersey state senator who sponsored his

state's Internet gambling law, was blunt about the biggest challenge facing online gambling.

"The biggest problem is Sheldon Adelson," he said of the Las Vegas Sands chairman who has vowed to spend as much as necessary to ban Internet gambling in the U.S. Adelson says he fears for exploiting "vulnerable people" and worries about children being able to access betting websites.

"When a billionaire says he'll spend whatever it costs to stop Internet gambling, that scares the bejeezus out of legislators," Lesniak said.

Proposed legislation to ban Internet gambling is being considered by Congress but has not yet been brought to a vote.

David Rebuck, director of New Jersey's Division for Gaming Enforcement, said the crucial questions of preventing illegal activity and protecting customers have already been mastered, which should encourage other states to approve Internet gambling as well. He also said sports betting, if it is legalized nationwide, will take place primarily over the Internet. New Jersey is waging a court battle to overturn a ban on sports betting in all but four states.

Rebuck also said state lotteries could be the next wave of growth for Internet gambling nationwide.

House fire displaces 2 Tahoe City residents



North Tahoe firefighters mop up a fire that burned the better part of a house in Tahoe City. Photo/Provided

A family dog is being credited with saving the lives a Tahoe City couple.

The fire was reported just before midnight on May 30 at 495 Tamarack Lane. When firefighters arrived they found 60 percent of the house engulfed in flames.

“Two occupants got out alive thanks to their dog who woke them up. They spent the night at neighbors,” Dave Zaski with North Tahoe Fire Protection District told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The blaze was contained to the one structure, which is no longer habitable.

Meeks Bay and CalFire crews assisted with the fire.

The cause is under investigation.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*