

Last Calif. drought one of the worst since 1600s

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

Just how bad was California's last drought?

For most of Southern California, it was either the worst or second worst since the century Columbus landed in the New World, the Ottoman empire was started and Joan of Arc was burned at the stake.

In other words, it was one of the worst since the 1400s, according to a study released Monday by the California Department of Water Resources.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Tariffs turn abundance into scarcity

By Tom McClintock

Frederic Bastiat, the great 19th Century economist, posed a simple question we need to think about carefully as we consider tariffs and trade wars.

What is better: abundance or scarcity? The answer might seem self-evident, yet protectionists throughout history can't seem to grasp it.



Tom McClintock

If a dollar can only buy one widget from Pittsburgh, but two from Ontario, the path to abundant widgets for America is obviously through Canada. If we slapped a dollar tariff on Canadian widgets to “level the playing field,” then we have just cut our own country’s available supply per dollar by half. It’s a perfect way to create scarcity from abundance.

Similarly, by imposing a tariff on Canadian steel (by far our biggest foreign supplier), the price of steel for Americans rises, and with it, the price of everything from cans to cars.

To the protectionists, this is a small price to pay for “saving” American steel jobs. Yet, as Bastiat reminds us, the unseen is just as important as the seen. We see the American steel jobs preserved by ridding them of international competition. What we don’t see as clearly are the jobs soon to disappear in every American industry that uses steel, as demand for their products declines in response to higher prices. Every producer in a society is also a consumer. No consumer benefits from higher prices and no producer benefits from scarcer materials.

This has been the consistent experience of every nation that has succumbed to the sophistries of protectionism. Thomas Jefferson thought that high tariffs could fund the government and promote domestic manufacturing. The result was a devastating recession that nearly destroyed our fledgling economy. Herbert Hoover responded to the recession of 1929 with the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act. It didn’t end well.

All trade is the exchange of goods, and both parties must benefit if the trade is to happen. If I pay you a dollar for a cup of coffee, I'm telling you that your coffee is worth more to me than my dollar, and you're telling me that my dollar is worth more to you than your coffee. We both take away something of greater value than we had.

Now suppose someone slaps a dollar tariff on that cup of coffee. I end up buying less coffee, or less of other products to afford the higher price, or switching to tea.

True, some governments subsidize their exports, undercutting their unsubsidized domestic competitors. But how does it harm our overall economy if other countries are willing to help pay for the stuff we buy? As Milton Friedman observed, that's simply foreign aid to American factories and consumers, paid for by the unfortunate taxpayers in the exporting countries. Thank you.

We will lose some of the 140,000 American jobs that produce steel. But the other 6.5 million Americans who manufacture products using steel can make more of their products, causing their producers to hire more workers and to pay them more. Jobs disappear in the steel mills, but reappear as better jobs in industries that can now obtain more steel at lower prices.

Writing 150 years ago, Bastiat asked the question we still hear today: "What shall we do in case of war, if we have placed ourselves at the mercy of Great Britain for iron and coal?" He answered, "This sort of dependence which results from exchange ... is a reciprocal dependence. We cannot depend on the foreigner unless the foreigner depends on us." If war clouds should gather between Canada and the United States, we may face the prospect of losing cheap Canadian steel, but Canada would face the loss of cheap American resources and products that their steel exports buy. Trade reduces the risk of war because it increases the value of peace.

Bastiat noted how much we invest in ports and harbors, railroads and highways, all for the sole purpose of surmounting the obstacles that nature has placed in our ability to trade. What sense does it make to erect artificial barriers to replace the natural barriers we have overcome?

By that same token, President Trump has set the stage for rapid economic expansion by reducing the tax and regulatory burdens that were crushing our economy, and the economy is responding. What sense does it make to replace the taxes and regulations we have shed with new ones?

Republican Rep. Tom McClintock represents the California side of Lake Tahoe.

More states consider animal abuser lists

By Mary Esch, AP

Son of Sam, Ted Bundy, Jeffrey Dahmer and the Columbine High School shooters are among the infamous criminals who had a history of hurting animals before they went on to target humans, a tendency that's part of what's behind a movement to create public online registries of known animal abusers.

New York is among 11 states with animal abuse registry bills pending in their legislatures, following Tennessee, which started its in 2016 along with a growing number of municipalities in recent years, including New York City, and the counties that include Chicago and Tampa, Fla.

"Animal abuse is a bridge crime," said the sponsor of New

York's bill, Republican state Sen. Jim Tedisco, who noted that Nikolas Cruz, accused of killing 17 people in the Parkland, Fla., high school shooting on Feb. 14, reportedly also had a history of shooting small animals.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Lake Valley Fire Protection District will be hosting its 3rd annual Community Easter Egg Hunt on April 1 at 10am at Tahoe Paradise Park in Meyers. There will be 10,000 eggs. Find golden eggs to win a prize. Call 530.577.3737 for more information.
- There will be a blood drive at Whittell High School on March 20 from 8:30am-2pm in the gym. Sign up **online**.
- "Musical Comedy Murders of 1940" will be staged at South Tahoe High School on March 23-25 and March 29-31. The Sunday show is at 2pm, the rest are at 7pm. Tickets are available **online**.
- Bob Leri, superintendent of Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, will give the state of the district address on March 20, 5:30pm at Olympic Village Lodge in Squaw Valley.
- Tahoe Fund and Tahoe Water Suppliers Association raised \$52,000 for the Tahoe Resource Conservation District to purchase at least 150 bottom barriers, and other necessary supplies, for the control of aquatic invasive species at Lake Tahoe.

Calif.'s reliance on solar becoming a problem

By Sammy Roth, Desert Sun

Less than 2 percent of U.S. electricity comes from the sun. But last week, on a cool Sunday afternoon when there was plenty of sunlight and no need for air conditioning, the bulk of California briefly got 50 percent of its electricity from solar power.

It was a record for the Golden State, and it wasn't the only one. The next day, more than 10,400 megawatts of solar power hummed along simultaneously on California's main power grid – 500 megawatts above the previous record, which was set last summer.

The world's sixth-largest economy kept building sprawling solar farms and installing rooftop panels during the first year of the Trump administration, despite the president's efforts to support dirtier energy sources like coal. But the people responsible for keeping the lights on say California's growing reliance on solar is starting to become a problem.

Read the whole story

Shots fired in S. Lake Tahoe

roommate squabble

A roommate dispute in South Lake Tahoe ended with shots being fired and one person arrested.

Robert Choate Jr., 34, was arrested on March 14 on charges of assault with a deadly weapon. He was being held on \$100,000 bail.

The incident started March 12 about 10pm when people called 911 about shots being fired in the 3700 block of Aspen Avenue. While officers were there, a man went to the police department to report what happened.

The victim, who was not shot, was roommates with Choate. He told officers that Choate had been stealing from him and wanted Choate to move out.

“During a confrontation between the victim and Choate, Choate pulled a shotgun out and pointed it at the victim. The victim wrestled Choate for the shotgun, during which the shotgun discharged. The victim was able to get the shotgun away from Choate and brought it to the police department to report the incident,” officers said.

Choate was located at a Stateline area hotel and arrested without incident.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Tahoe youth in regional Boys

and Girls competition



Mya Rossi

Mya Rossi of South Lake Tahoe has made it to the Northern California Regional Finals for the Boys and Girls Club of America Youth of the Year competition.

The 14-year-old has been a member of the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe for more than six years. Twice she has won the Club Youth of the Year competition. This was the first year she was old enough to be entered into the national competition.

The regional finals will take place this Friday in San Jose. Mya will give a three-minute speech on her club experience and her goals for young people of the future. She will also participate in panels and questioning.

Student march a different experience in DCSD

By Kathryn Reed

Douglas County high schools experienced very different outcomes to the nationwide student protests on March 14.

At Whittell High School more than 15 students left class at 10am and walked around the campus in silence for 17 minutes.

Seventeen is significant – it pays homage to the 17 people who were shot and killed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., a month ago today.

“They were all respectful. It was pretty good, actually,” Principal Crespín Esquivel told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Unlike at **South Tahoe High**, at Whittell there had been no discussion about an organized event prior to today.

At Douglas High School there was an “unsubstantiated threat which caused a lockdown while being investigated,” according to sheriff’s Sgt. Bernadette Smith.

School district Superintendent Teri White described Wednesday’s incident in the valley like this, “DHS received a threat to students and it was decided that it was safest to put the school into a stay put. There was no lockdown, nor bomb threat, nor counter protest.”

Before the incident at DHS, White told *Lake Tahoe News*, “We are not planning walk out activities, but our schools are each engaging in and encouraging other types of remembrances and honors for the lost lives. Some are conducting moments of silence, some are encouraging walk-up activities.”

She described walk-up activities as “an effort to help the students who might be outliers or otherwise not connected, become connected and thus works to eliminate the isolation and feelings of despair that may cause someone to want to do a mass shooting. It is a mental health/social health movement to help kids connect.”

STHS kids make a statement in nationwide march



South Tahoe High students express why they were marching March 14. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

We march because ...

- *Things need to change.*
- *Too many lives have been lost.*
- *I march for those who are afraid to.*
- *Mental health matters.*

. *We march because this is happening to us. We are the ones who have to go to school and be scared.*

That's what South Tahoe High Schools had to say about why they left their classrooms at 10am on March 14. They marched to the front of the school where three students and a teacher shared their thoughts about guns, safety, mental health and the need for adults to do more. Then everyone assembled in the gym where they could write why they were there, offer condolences to the family and friends of the Florida school shooting, register to vote, express how they want their campus to be safer, or meet with a counselor.

Student marches were happening through the country on Wednesday as a way to mark the one-month anniversary of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Fla. It was to show solidarity, a chance for students to say enough, to point fingers at the adults who are not protecting them, and say gun violence matters.

For 17 seconds the hundreds who gathered at STHS stood in silence to remember the 17 people who were gun downed in February.



STHS student Daniella Valdivia honors the 17 who died at a Florida school in February. Photo/Kathryn Reed

While some say this won't happen in Tahoe, that is being naïve. Bad things happen everywhere.

It was in Columbine, Colo., that the country first seemed to be truly awakened to gun violence at school. That was April 19, 1999, when 15 people were killed.

But years before Columbine there was the Cleveland Elementary School shooting in Stockton. On Jan. 17, 1989, Patrick Edward Purdy took three minutes to kill five children, wounding one teacher and 19 students. He had once lived in South Lake Tahoe. So, the South Shore already has a connection to a deadly school shooting.

"I'm not against guns; I'm against gun violence," Daniella Valdivia told her peers. She advocated for students to be

kinder, to talk to those who are “wall flowers.” She said saying hello can change the world in so many ways.

Student Cole Proctor said, “We have so little regard for mental health. Instead of trying to solve that problem, we want to box them in. We see them as killers instead of kids who have problems.”

He would like better mental health programs on camps.

For Tevan Martorana he believes this is his generation’s moment to make a difference. He is going to fight until every student feels safe at school.

“If we want to make change, we need to recognize the humanity in all of the other people around you,” teacher Barbara Bedwell said.



Hundreds of South Tahoe High students march in unison on March 14. Photo/Kathryn Reed

For senior Jessie Brown what she has noticed in the last month since the Florida massacre is teachers at STHS are talking more – about security, what can be done.

She carried a sign promoting building bridges, not fences. This was in reference to the school district’s proposal to put

a fence around STHS.

That, Brown said, would only isolate people more and create a sense of fear, not protection.

It wasn't just students who were at the march. Kelly Shanahan showed up with doughnuts for the kids and a sign that said, "Thank you students for leading the way. #Enough."

"We have failed them as adults. I'm here with them 100 percent," Shanahan said.

NHP coming to Stateline for Special Olympics event

Troopers from the Nevada Highway Patrol, as well as other employees for the Department of Public Safety, will be volunteering their time to raise money for Special Olympics of Nevada and California on March 16 at the Hard Rock Café in Harveys.

Officers will be volunteer waiters and waitresses as they assist the restaurant staff that day while they work for "special tips."

As diners are greeted, each volunteer will leave an envelope at each table for those wishing to make a donation. These tips are in addition to the server's regular gratuity. All of the extra tips will stay in Northern Nevada and Northern California to pay for the sports, training and competition activities for athletes enrolled in Special Olympics Nevada/California programs.

The special tips will be collected from 5-9pm.