

Sleep deprivation common for all ages

By Debra Goldschmidt, CNN

I won't take it personally if you yawn while reading this story.

Chances are you're sleep deprived.

Sleep deprivation is such a rampant problem that last year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention called insufficient sleep a public health epidemic.

Teenagers may be suffering the most. Researchers at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health called the problem "The Great Sleep Recession" in a new study published in the journal Pediatrics.

They surveyed more than 270,000 teens in eighth, 10th and 12th grades between 1991 and 2012 and found teens are getting less and less sleep.

The average amount is seven hours a day, which is two hours less than the nine hours they should be snoozing. African-American and Hispanic boys are the least likely to sleep enough. But why?

[Read the whole story](#)

Calif. may make bike helmets

mandatory

By Lydia O'Connor, Huffington Post

Legislation that would make California the first state requiring adult bicyclists to wear helmets has some biking advocates worried the mandate would discourage people from becoming bike commuters.

A bill introduced last week by state Sen. Carol Liu, D-La Cañada Flintridge, would extend California's youth helmet requirement to adults, mandate reflective clothing while biking at night and fine cyclists \$25 for not complying.

Liu pointed to National Conference of State Legislatures claim that 91 percent of cyclists killed in 2009 were not wearing helmets. Research on the effectiveness of helmets, however, is spotty. One study suggests there have been fewer injuries in the 21 states with helmet laws for young riders, but another shows no effect.

Read the whole story

Reid on a course to run for re-election

By Amber Phillips, Las Vegas Sun

WASHINGTON – Will he or won't he?

That's the question entertaining Nevada and Washington's political class this winter as they debate whether Harry Reid will run for a sixth term to represent Nevada in the U.S.

Senate.

The case for the doubters: Despite the fact he's said publicly and privately he's running, the 75-year-old would be 84 by the time he finishes the term. His latest approval ratings barely pass 41 percent in Nevada, and polls show he's got an uphill battle to win re-election against any number of opponents. The \$1.4 million sitting in his campaign account today is relatively low. Couple all that with a brutal exercise accident on the first day of 2015 that could leave him partially or totally blind in one eye, and it's easy to see a path for Reid to retire.

But those close to the Democratic leader say that argument completely misses a fundamental understanding of what drives Harry Reid – and why he's almost definitely running for a sixth term in 2016.

Read the whole story

Cause of SLT house fire under investigation

Update: Feb. 20 5:49pm

No official cause has been determined in the Thursday night fire that destroyed a residence in South Lake Tahoe.

"We are curious" is how police Lt. Brian Williams put it to *Lake Tahoe News*. This is because police are "familiar" with the man who sustained severe burns to his face and hands. The name of the victim has not been released. He is being treated at UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento.

While the initial call came in as drug lab explosion, officers now do not believe that is the case.

Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News* that the occupant told first responders that he used the gas stove to light a cigarette, he walked away and something on or near the stove ignited.

Liberty Utilities did not find any leaks in the system or with the appliances, according to Meston.

The police department is in charge of the investigation of the fire at the two-story house on William Avenue that started about 9:30pm Feb. 19.

The six people who were living in the two-unit structure are not able to do so now because of the amount of damage. The upstairs is considered a total loss by the fire department, while the lower unit sustained considerable water damage. The property loss is estimated at \$350,000.

Also injured was a firefighter. He was treated for smoke inhalation.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Nev. considering tax breaks for aviation industry

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

If Nevada is going to compete for aviation services and the

emerging, potentially lucrative commercial drone industry, it must be more business-friendly in terms of tax relief surrounding states already offer.

That was the message Thursday to a joint legislative hearing to consider Senate Bill 93, which would offer partial tax abatement for aviation-related businesses and is being pushed by the Governor's Office of Economic Development as well as the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority.

"This is a game-changer. We can do this in a way that's very bipartisan. We stand shoulder to shoulder today," Lt. Gov. Mark Hutchison, a Republican sitting alongside Assemblywoman Irene Bustamante Adams, a Democrat from Clark County, told the Senate Revenue and Economic Development and Assembly Taxation committees.

Read the whole story

Scientists measure snowpack with laser-equipped plane

By David Bienick, KCRA

High above the Sierra Nevada mountains, scientists on board a propeller plane wear oxygen masks as they stare at computer screens.

When they pull a cord, a door in the belly of the plane slides open and reveals a large lens.

As the plane reaches a certain point above Yosemite National Park, mirrors behind the lens begin to spin and fire invisible laser beams at the snow-covered peaks below.

Every second 800,000 laser beams, a technology known as LIDAR, hit the snow's surface then bounce back up to sensors on the plane.

"This is basically what's measuring the distance from the plane to the ground," explained Brandon Benjamin, an engineer from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

By comparing that distance when the mountains are bare to when they are covered in snow, Benjamin and other scientists are able to create 3-D maps that show snow depth to within about a half-inch.

Read the whole story

3 arrested in stabbing death of Placerville man

By Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

Three people have been arrested in the stabbing death three weeks ago of an El Dorado County man.

On Feb. 3, El Dorado County sheriff's deputies responded to a residence in the 3200 block of Sand Ridge Road in unincorporated Placerville where they found the body of 55-year-old Pete Thomas.

Thomas was dead from a stab wound to the chest, according to sheriff's Lt. Tom Murdoch. Since then, detectives executed 17 arrest and search warrants during the investigation into the death of Thomas.

Read the whole story

‘Career criminal’ guilty of burglary

A jury this week found an El Dorado County man guilty of three felony counts of first-degree residential burglary and two counts of attempted burglary.

Bradley Zaun, 27, went a on a drug-induced crime spree in October and November 2013 between Single Springs and Pollock Pines. El Dorado County District Attorney’s Office called him a “career criminal”. Sentencing is set for April 10. Zaun faces 26 years in prison, as well as additional time for violation of his parole.

The two-week trial in Placerville ended Feb. 18.

Alexander Cochran, 21, has pleaded guilty to similar charges. Other suspects are awaiting trial.

According to the DA’s office, the suspects would knock on the front door of a residence and if the homeowner answered the door, the defendants would leave. If no one answered the door, the defendants would gain entry through an unlocked door or force entry. On at least one occasion the residents were home and the defendants were able to avoid arrest under voter approved Proposition 47, which allows some convicted felons to have certain drug and theft, related offenses reduced to misdemeanors, thus allowing for reduced sentences or immediate release from custody.

“The above mentioned case involves Prop. 47 and has created

numerous obstacles during court proceedings,” the DA’s office said in a statement.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

States leaving standardized tests behind

By Haley Sweetland Edwards, *Time*

If you had wandered late last year into Matthew Tosiello’s third-grade science class at Abingdon Elementary School in Virginia, you would have encountered an army of frogs. Origami frogs, that is—palm-size critters made of green index cards, each equipped with a tongue made of either masking tape or water-sodden paper.

Tosiello had asked his 8- and 9-year-old students to design an experiment to determine which natural adaptation—a sticky tongue or a wet tongue—was better for lapping up flies, a role played by eraser-size chads left over from a three-hole punch. The kids then had to describe their hypotheses, methods and findings in a lab report.

It may not have looked like it from a distance—there were no blue books or timed segments, and the classroom was far from silent—but the origami-frog project was actually an exam. A Virginia law that went into effect this year eliminated a handful of mandatory, fill-in-the-bubble standardized tests in public schools, including one for third-grade science. Instead, the law asked teachers to perform “alternative assessments”—performance-based projects to monitor students’ progress.

In the origami-frog unit, for example, Tosiello was able to determine which students were struggling with mathematical concepts like symmetry or measurement (frogs had to be folded precisely, with their tongues exactly 6 cm by 2.5 cm) and which grasped the more complex scientific ideas. "It's a more appropriate way of looking at a student's growth," explained Joanne Uyeda, the principal at Abingdon Elementary. "It's more authentic."

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- There will be a reception for plein air painter Ginny Schankerman on March 6 from 6:30-8:30pm at Bona Fide HQ, 1069 Magua St., No. 4, Meyers.
- Sugar Pine Foundation is having a fundraiser at Paint and Sip in South Lake Tahoe on Feb. 23 at 6:30pm. For more info, call 530.600.0662.
- Lake Tahoe Community College's accreditation was reaffirmed at the highest level by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.
- The California controller's website has been updated to include salaries of special district workers in 2013.
- Camp Richardson's Snowshoe Cocktail Race returns Feb. 21 at 7pm. Snowshoes many not be required; so it will be a sand race. Racers with cocktail trays in hand, navigate through

obstacles and up and down the beach. The winner is the fastest and driest at the finish. Signups begin at 5pm at the Beacon restaurant.