

Future forest health needs fire to fight fire

By Debbie Arrington, Sacramento Bee

California's strides toward cleaner air can quickly go up in smoke during one big wildfire.

The constant threat of wildfire calls for a radical shift in attitudes toward forest management, not just to save homes and lives but the state's overall air and water quality. That conclusion spurred the state's Little Hoover Commission to recommend a coordinated effort to rethink how California cares for its forests.

"We see what happens when you don't manage forests," said commissioner Janna Sidley, who chaired the independent oversight agency's subcommittee. Its report, "Fire on the Mountain: Rethinking Forest Management in the Sierra Nevada," was released Monday.

Read the whole story

Public comment sought on Nev. preservation issues

The Nevada State Historic Preservation Office is seeking public involvement in the development of a new Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan that will identify goals that federal, state, and local governments should accomplish in the coming years.

Every eight years, SHPO is required to produce a new statewide preservation plan to guide those efforts.

Public input will help the office better understand the needs and desires of Nevadans on preservation issues, and help establish priorities and goals for SHPO, its partners, and the State's heritage preservation community.

The current plan, which expires December 2019, can be found **online**.

The public is invited to take an **online survey** that will be available until May 31.

Mountainfilm tour coming to North Shore

Alpenglow Sports kicks off the 2018 Winter Mountain Festival with Mountainfilm on Tour, presented by FlyLow Gear.

This series of documentary films curated from the Mountainfilm Festival in Telluride, Colo., will be shown at the Olympic Village Inn on Feb. 17 at 7pm.

Mountainfilm's mission is to use the power of film, art, and ideas to inspire audiences to create a better world.

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased in advance **online**. Doors open at 6:15pm.

Mountainfilm began in 1979 and is one of America's longest-running film festivals.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Squibbles

Squibbles is a beautiful German shepherd mix puppy who is about 6 months old. She is sweet and full of puppy energy and wriggles. Squibbles would love to go to training classes.

Squibbles is spayed, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal 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**.

South Lake Tahoe pot rules blowing in the wind

By Kathryn Reed

Marijuana – it seems to be the high point of so many South Lake Tahoe City Council meetings. Tuesday shouldn't be any different.

The morning will start with the electeds meeting in closed session to discuss the lawsuit with Tahoe Wellness Collective. Last month there was no reportable action when it was on the agenda.

At issue is the medical marijuana dispensary's permit to operate. By court order it is able to. If owner Cody Bass buys the building at the Bijou Center, that could make the issue go away. There is no hearing date for the writ.

Since the first of the year Bass has had trouble stocking the shelves with medicine based on how the state changed its regulations and the city saying TWC is not operating with a valid permit. Multiple patients last month gave the council an earful about how what seems to be a personal vendetta against Bass is hurting local residents.

But **Bass changed his designation** with the state, which has prevented him from being able to get product. Much of the disruption in his business is his own doing despite his desire to place blame on the city.

The next closest dispensary is in **Incline Village**.

At the Jan. 23 meeting the council extended the urgency moratorium on recreational marijuana. The original 45-day urgency ordinance was OK'd Dec. 12. Last month it was extended by 10 months and 15 days, as the law allows. It is possible for the council to revoke the ordinance before then, likely replacing it with rules to allow recreational marijuana and more medical dispensaries.

There was consensus at that meeting to bring back an amendment on Feb. 6 that would allow development agreements to go forward. However, it's not a done deal until a vote is taken. Councilman Austin Sass was the force behind this, with Councilman Tom Davis saying he was against it.

Development agreements could allow entities to open a pot shop before an ordinance is in place. It's also possible they would have to alter their business practices to comply with any ordinance that might be forthcoming.

On the Feb. 6 agenda is the urgency ordinance, not just an amendment. The change has to do with the development agreement.

Interim City Attorney Nira Doherty, who calls herself an expert in California cannabis law, refused to answer *Lake Tahoe News'* questions.

Those questions included:

- Why does the urgency ordinance for pot look like it's coming back as the whole ordinance and not just an amendment as was discussed at the last council meeting?
- If it's all new, what is new? How does this affect the time line?
- Is this even legal?

Davis along with Councilwoman Brooke Laine have been working with a 15-member group of community members to come up with a

framework for a recreational marijuana ordinance. Their last meeting was last month.

This Cannabis Subcommittee at Tuesday's council meeting will update the rest of the council about its work. It will be informational only, with no vote to be taken. Future public workshops and action will be scheduled.

Opinion: Why Mexico over the U.S. for Olympics

By Ailene Voisin, Sacramento Bee

Robby Franco thought about it long and hard, and as we have learned, these skiing/snowboarding acrobats have minds of their own. So when he recovered from doing the splits – he had one ski in Mexico, one ski in America – the El Dorado High School graduate decided to take his talents south of the border.

The one-time Cougar speedster will be one of four skiers competing for Mexico in the PyeongChang Olympics.

While that sounds more than a little crazy, it also is a neighborly thing to do. One ski glove scratches the other, so to speak. After Franco failed to qualify for Team USA's 2014 squad in slopestyle, he went with the more favorable odds and turned his attention to the 2018 Games and growing the sport as a descendant of Mexican immigrants.

Read the whole story

Nassar's abuse reflects more than 50 years of men's power over female athletes

By Anne Blaschke, *The Conversation*

"You've got a lucky boyfriend." These were the words the physician's assistant conducting my gynecological exam in 1998 uttered as he suggestively smiled down at me over my paper gown. I lay on the exam table, 20 years old, wondering what to say back. Feeling angry, embarrassed and violated, I called my mom afterward. We both reported him. Whether he still works there, I don't know.

That experience disgusted me then and now, from my current perspective as a historian who studies gender and American political culture. But I recognized that I was fortunate in several ways. My mother believed me. It was an inappropriate comment perhaps perversely meant as flirtation, however predatory, rather than an assault. And I never had to see him again.

America's elite female gymnasts had far more devastating experiences under recently convicted sports medicine doctor Larry Nassar. On Jan. 24, the court sentenced Nassar to 40 to 175 years for his sexual abuse of more than 150 young female athletes, in the biggest sexual abuse crisis in American sport history. In the context of #MeToo, Nassar is perhaps the only sexual predator more monstrous in the public eye than Harvey Weinstein.

But a look at the history of women athletes in America shows that Nassar's abuse represents a historical pattern of sexual

violation of young females by male power brokers in sport. After World War II, millions of women streamed into sport, where men had increasing access to, and control over, young female athletes.

Most sport leaders have supported athletes rather than abused them, and postwar federal laws like Title IX and the Amateur Sports Act aimed to empower athletes across gender. But since educational institutions, Olympic authorities and the federal government have not strictly enforced these laws, they've ironically created opportunities for abuse.

Female control, feminine education

In the early 20th century, very few men associated with young female athletes. Men disdained women's competitive sport, and women physical education teachers insisted on control of girls, lest male coaches "masculinize" the female sex or harm them in any way.

With girls securely under their control, and to avoid suspicion that female administrators were turning students into lesbians, physical education teachers front-loaded femininity by emphasizing ladylike fitness and decorum, rather than the exhilarating experience of competition. Academic administrators also barred "respectable" – meaning white Protestant – girls from interscholastic contests.

Most men didn't come into contact with these female athletes until the Cold War began. Then the Soviet Union racked up medals in women's events at its first Olympiad in 1952, rattling Americans by placing second. U.S. politicians, diplomats and male coaches decided to take women's sport seriously to score national wins in glamorous international competitions.

Female athletes of color, as well as religious and ethnic club athletes, had long dominated American women's "mannish" competitive sports, like track and field. But the 1950s now

saw white Protestant teens competing in “acceptably” feminine sports like figure skating, gymnastics and swimming, in order to further cultural diplomatic wins for U.S. capitalist democracy.

Federal sex equality in law

During this time, no law existed to protect young athletes from men’s sexual abuse in educational institutions. For example, in 1964, when 14-year-old swimmer Diana Nyad’s elite coach began a three-year pattern of sexually assaulting her, her high school principal was not legally bound to investigate suspicious rumors about the coach.

Then, in 1972, the U.S. passed Title IX, a law mandating equal treatment for the sexes in educational institutions receiving federal funding. In a massive score for gender equity improvement, female athletes flooded into competitive sport.

At the same time, Title IX increased men’s access to female athletes. Even during “women’s liberation” of the 1970s, endemic sexism prevented women from achieving at least partial parity in leadership positions. As the NCAA grew increasingly eager to control women’s sport and Americans saw female athletes as legitimate, schools and private organizations increasingly hired men for authority positions that women had often previously held, like coaching, management and athletic directorship.

As in most national industries, men commanded higher salaries and prestige than females. Today, in college sports, just 40 percent of women’s coaches and 22.4 percent of athletic directors are women.

Men also continued to dominate sports medicine. Though increasing numbers of women became medical doctors after Title IX mandated their acceptance in graduate programs, men still hold the majority of sports medicine jobs in prestigious power roles, like Nassar’s at USA Gymnastics, the U.S. Olympic

Committee and Michigan State.

Men disproportionately specialize in orthopedics – and, because so many elite athletes suffer bone or muscle injuries, they often see these specialists.

As Aly Raisman emphasized in her testimony against Nassar, other adults pointed to his orthopedic expertise as a reason the girls had to continue to be treated by him. Nassar's patients started reporting his abusive behavior in the 1990s. Had any of the adult authority figures to whom they reported actually followed up on the students' Title IX complaints, two decades of abuse could have been avoided.

No consequences, more abuse

The 1978 Amateur Sports Act, which chartered the U.S. Olympic Committee, and the 1998 Ted Stevens Act, which modernized it after the Cold War, are other examples of federal law intending but failing to protect girls and women.

These laws direct the U.S. Olympic Committee to appoint separate national governing bodies, like USA Gymnastics, to autonomously govern their sports under the U.S. Olympic Committee umbrella. But that federal approach does not, according to the charter, absolve the U.S. Olympic Committee of its ultimate responsibility to athletes. Instead, the law also chartered the U.S. Olympic Committee to ethically support athletes' medical and sports safety and to provide "amateur athletic opportunities for women."

But neither USA Gymnastics nor the U.S. Olympic Committee acted to protect female athletes under Nassar. They failed to follow up on many reports of abuse or pass claims along to law enforcement. In sheltering Nassar and other male perpetrators at the expense of female athletes' health, the U.S. Olympic Committee failed every girl and woman whom Nassar examined under the authority of USA Gymnastics.

This failure isn't unique to gymnastics. When Yasmin Brown's Taekwondo coach began abusing her in 2010, neither USA Taekwondo nor the U.S. Olympic Committee took concrete steps to remove the coach, leading to his continued abuse of Brown and other girls.

In the cases of both Title IX and the Ted Stevens Act, had the adults in charge of these predatory men taken female athletes' need for protection seriously, athlete abuse could have been curtailed.

For predators, this lax oversight created increasing opportunities to assault young women, even as those laws gave females initial access to sport. Because the federal government has historically enforced Title IX weakly at best, schools don't feel pressured to act on reports of abuse. No educational institution has ever lost its Title IX funding.

Nassar's sexual abuse of girl athletes represents decades of male-dominant institutions, such as elite sport organizations and athletic departments, whose policies and actions protected perpetrators rather than athletes. When these groups refuse to act, they choose to win at the expense of athletes' safety and well-being.

Anne Blaschke is a visiting assistant professor of history at the College of the Holy Cross.

Nev. could give away nearly 3,000 free-range horses

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nearly 3,000 free-range horses in Nevada's Virginia Range could be under new ownership by the end of May, according to state officials.

The Nevada Department of Agriculture on Tuesday published a request for proposals for people willing to take ownership of the iconic herd.

Opponents of the proposed giveaway say it "spells disaster" for the herd, which many consider symbolic of Nevada's western culture.

Read the whole story

Big-air snowboarding to make Olympic debut

By John Jeremiah Sullivan, New York Times

The history of snowboarding dates to 1938 in Yosemite National Park. A slight young man named Robert Trumbull, a Honolulu newspaper editor who wrote a weather column under the byline Sol Pluvius (Rainy Sun), was on vacation. Chicago-born, Trumbull had seen plenty of snow, and he had been surfing. That was the all-important crossing of the wires. "Yesterday Sol showed the natives a new trick," reported The Honolulu Advertiser, "snow-surfing, or as Sol called it, 'snurfing.' " He coined the word.

That may all be sports trivia, but it's about to become important trivia, because soon, in this very winter of 2018 – 80 years after Trumbull's breakthrough – will occur the Olympic debut of a sport known as "big-air snowboarding,"

which is the snurfer equivalent of big-wave surfing.

It is best described as the most beautiful, insane, stupid, dangerous, death-wishing, insane and beautiful sport ever perpetrated on innocent spectators.

Read the whole story

Letter: Bijou Pines resident says thanks

To the community,

I want to thank everyone in the community, and especially in my neighborhood who contacted me in regards to **my article** on the warm room and the homeless affecting Bijou Pines.

To date I have had 20 emails, 24 phone calls, and eight neighbors who have stopped by to say how happy they are that I wrote the article. All of the people that responded to my article say that they too have been negatively affected by the homeless since the warm room opened in our area.

I have not, as of this writing, received one email in support of the warm room being located, basically in a residential neighborhood.

Perhaps that is something the City Council should take to heart.

Catherine Whelan, South Lake Tahoe