Opinion: Make better decisions on spending ski money

By Julie Brown, Powder

I don’t think twice about buying a season pass. It’s a line item in my budget and as important to my happiness as a roof over my head, and unless my friends decide to mass migrate to another mountain, I’m probably going to stick with the resort I’ve skied at my entire life. But lately, in a year as politically active as this one, I’ve been wondering whether, as skiers, we should be thinking more about where we spend our dollars, and how we can support the businesses that pay it forward to our communities and environment—and that includes where we buy our season passes and lift tickets.

This year has been a strong example of consumer activism, a textbook tool of social change that is as old as the American Revolution and the boycott on British goods. Last spring, Patagonia spearheaded a movement in the name of public lands to take the Outdoor Retailer tradeshow out of Utah, landing a $45 million hit on the state’s economy. When Uber continued to provide service to JFK airport last winter on the night President Trump’s travel ban was first announced, the #DeleteUber movement caused the business to lose 200,000 clients.

Skier dollars matter, too, especially right now when the ski industry is becoming more corporate (which means business decisions are more removed from local communities) and the stakes of climate change are becoming more critical. We don’t have to boycott ski resorts. But we should be more informed about the resorts where we ski, and whether their practices deserve our business.

Read the whole story

Best foods to stockpile for an emergency

By Vanessa DiMaggio, Food and Wine

Fueling your body during an emergency is very different from your everyday diet. Because you'll probably expend more energy than you normally would, you should eat high-energy, high-protein foods.

And because you'll have a limited supply, the higher-quality foods you eat—and the less of them—the better.

"In a disaster or an emergency you want those calories," says Barry Swanson, a food scientist at Washington State University. "You want some nutrients and some fiber—something to keep your diet normal."

Read the whole story

More opioid prescriptions than people in some Calif.

counties

By Jim Miller, Sacramento Bee

Trinity County is the state's fourth-smallest, and ended last year with an estimated population of 13,628 people.

Its residents also filled prescriptions for oxycodone, hydrocodone and other opioids 18,439 times, the highest per capita rate in California.

The problem also has a decidedly geographic dimension in California. Besides Trinity, other counties with more prescriptions than people include Lake, Shasta, Tuolumne and Del Norte counties. In the Sacramento region, El Dorado, Placer and Sacramento counties had prescription rates above the statewide average, with Yolo County slightly below the state average.

Read the whole story

Star Guide: Capturing the total eclipse – again

By Tony Berendsen

I've been married to a wonderful woman – Jackie – for 45 years this September. She is not the geeky one in the family. I hold that distinction. For our 25th anniversary I booked a Sky and Telescope Astronomy Tour on the Holland America Ryndam to see a total solar eclipse off the coast of Barbados: would you expect anything less from the Star Guide?

On the morning of Feb. 26, 1998, about 1,600 miles from our port of departure Ft. Lauderdale the Ryndam slowed to a halt. The captain announced the eclipse was beginning and invited everyone to the upper deck. At first the only evidence of the moon covering the sun was our view through special glasses, and announcements through the P.A. system by the captain. But soon the bite of the sun by the moon became so big that the warm Caribbean air began to noticeably cool.

The top deck of our ship filled with 1,200 passengers watching as the horizon started to dim sending a shadow lunging across the water toward us; so quietly, but so powerfully. In a whisper, the last bit of sun was hidden and our prize, the beautiful corona, blazed above us as planets and bright stars shown in the darkened sky.



Total eclipse from Wieser, Idaho, in August. Photo/Ryan Berendsen

It was 19 years later on Aug. 21 the experience repeated itself for me on a dusty farm field in Wieser, Idaho. I had

traveled from Reno the day before with my son, Ryan, and our friend KC Rodrigue to watch the totality of the Great American Eclipse. We had left early in the morning on Sunday anticipating miles and miles of traffic jams along our path, but instead drove the speed limit through Nevada, Oregon, and Idaho to reach our destination.

We hadn't anticipated the heat and dust of our eclipse camp in Wieser, so we headed to the local hardware store for a large tarp and gazebo where we met other eclipse travelers, who like us were buying heaps of supplies to the delight of the town merchants. I'm sure it was a banner day for sales in Wieser.

The field where we camped for $50 a night was filling with campers in anticipation of Monday's eclipse. There were people from all parts of the United States, with a couple campers from Japan and Germany. Sunday night's sky was filled with clouds along with some really bright street lights that ruined Ryan's plans for astrophotography. But the forecast for the morning looked good.

Monday morning we awoke to a beautiful clear blue sky. Partial eclipse began at 10:10 MDT that morning as we watched with our special glasses and telescopes fitted with solar filters. Soon, as before in 1998, the bite of the sun by the moon became large enough that the temperature dropped noticeably and the sky began to dim slightly.

I took a picture under a nearby tree of hundreds of projected eclipse images on the ground as the eclipse progressed. Ryan and KC were taking pictures with their cameras getting ready for totality. Then the last bit of sun slid behind the moon and the corona appeared. I didn't see the shadow coming this time, but it became dark enough for street lights to come on during the day.

So for the second time in my life I was able to look at the sun with my unfiltered eyes and see one of the most beautiful

sights in my life. KC told me, “It was so amazing that I instantly looked up when the next one will take place.”

Two minutes and 4 seconds later totality was over and the sun began to return. We watched again with our special glasses until the bite of the moon was completely gone. The experience reminded me of the closing line of an Emily Dickinson poem “Dissolved as utterly, As birds’ far navigation, Discloses just a hue; A plash of oars-a gaiety, Then swallowed up to view.”

Tony Berendsen runs Tahoe Star Tours. He may be reached at 775.232.0844 or tony@tahoestartours.com.

How oceans impact Western reservoirs and rivers

By Emily Benson, High Country News

As Houston cleans up after Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma barrels through the Caribbean and Florida, this year’s Atlantic hurricane season offers a stark reminder of the power of oceans over weather. But ocean influences aren’t limited to the Atlantic. Last winter, rain and snow drenched California, much of it the result of “atmospheric rivers,” storms that channeled water from the Pacific straight to the Sierra and across the West. Torrents of rain flooded cities and damaged dams, but also helped end five years of drought in the Golden State.

In a region that relies heavily on snowmelt to supply homes and irrigate fields, Western water managers need to know how much precipitation they can expect in the coming years. While

scientists understand the broad strokes of how wet and dry periods are driven by energy traveling through the atmosphere, new research is refining that understanding – something that may ultimately help officials trying to fill the reservoirs and rivers of the West.

The world's oceans and its atmosphere are tightly connected. Because of that link, and global forces like wind and ocean currents that shuttle energy through the atmosphere, far-flung ocean conditions can influence weather.

Read the whole story

USFS working to stabilize Upper Truckee River

Damage from last winter has forced the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit to stabilize the Upper Truckee River project near Lake Tahoe Airport.

Work began in August on the airport side of the new river channel and will continue on the neighborhood side of the river starting Sept. 11. It should be finished by the end of the month.

Heavy equipment will be brought in to complete the work. This will impact neighborhood trails in the meadow and neighborhood access routes.

Olson attorney wants off bankruptcy case

The attorneys representing former South Lake Tahoe resident Patty Olson in her drawn out bankruptcy proceedings want to stop representing her.

Darby Law Practices have filed the paperwork to withdraw as legal counsel. That request is scheduled to be heard next month. According to court documents, Olson has retained another attorney.

Court documents say, “DLP seeks to withdraw as counsel of record to Mrs. Olson because she has insisted on taking and has taken actions contrary to the advice of counsel. Additionally, continued representation of Mrs. Olson is a financial burden on DLP. DLP has performed substantial legal services for Mrs. Olson for which it has not been compensated.”

The firm has represented her since January 2016.

Olson’s commercial property in the Bijou center where Tahoe Wellness Cooperative operates is tied up in the bankruptcy case. She has appealed the bankruptcy court’s ruling that it cannot hear the case based on her tenant who operates a business not recognized by the federal government as being legal.

The court had stayed the foreclosure process for now.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Regulators mull ways to expand esports betting

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada’s Gaming Control Board will soon begin allowing sports books to offer bets on a year’s worth of esports events, the board’s chief of enforcement Karl Bennison said Thursday at a gambling and esports conference at the Westgate.

Currently, books can only get permission to offer bets on one event at a time. Under the new procedure, the books would be able to ask for permission to offer bets on a series of events, possibly a year’s worth, if the events are hosted by the same company.

The change could mean more esports betting in Nevada and reflects a growing comfort Nevada’s regulators have with the industry. There have only been three events listed in books since the board began approving them last year.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

· At the Sept. 12 Lake Tahoe Unified School District board meeting the elected are expected to approve a 2 percent salary increase for Superintendent Jim Tarwater. This brings his annual base salary to $188,917.81, with an additional $3,428 for his master’s and doctorate stipend, for a total of $192,345.81. This is retroactive to Jan. 1. His contract is now good through June 2020.

· Suicide Prevention Awareness and Mental Health 101 will be presented entirely in Spanish on Sept. 12, 5-7pm at the Family Resource Center on Spruce Avenue in South Lake Tahoe.

· El Dorado County Republican Party is hosting a dinner to honor first responders. It will be Sept. 21 starting at 5:30pm at the Rescue Community Center, 4180 Green Valley Road in Rescue. Guest speakers include Assemblyman Kevin Kiley; El Dorado County District 3 Supervisor Brian Veerkamp (former El Dorado Hills fire chief); and Sheriff John D'Agostini. Dinner tickets are $30 per person, or $35 at the door. A portion of all proceeds will be donated to fire and law enforcement charities. To purchase tickets, contact Todd White at 530.417.0807 or Terry Gherardi at 530.677.4294.

· According to a study by UC Davis, Highway 50 in El Dorado County is the 10th worst highway in the state when it comes to vehicle accidents involving wildlife.

· FireFest will be at the Hard Rock Lake Tahoe on Sept. 30 from 10am-3pm.

Judge allows Little Valley Fire lawsuits to proceed

By Jason Hidalgo, Reno Gazette-Journal

A District Court judge denied a motion by the state to dismiss legal action brought against it for the Little Valley Fire.

Washoe County District Court Judge Scott Freeman ruled this week to allow the lawsuits against the state of Nevada to proceed.

The Little Valley Fire was caused by a prescribed burn done by the Nevada Division of Forestry that went out of control in the early morning hours of Oct. 17, 2016. The burn was done on Whittell Forest land owned by UNR. By the time the fire was brought under control five days later, it had burned through 2,291 acres, destroying 23 homes and 17 outbuildings, which included some historic structures. A *Reno Gazette-Journal* analysis estimated that property damage from the fire could exceed $80 million.

Read the whole story